THE PROSODIC THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PATMORE, HOPKINS AND BRIDGES

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THE PROSODIC THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PATMORE, HOPKINS, AND BRIDGES

by

Neil A. Murray, B.A. (Hons.)

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Abstract

The first premise of all prosodic research must be that metre is a special ordering of the elements of spoken language. The factors which have been taken to govern metre — among them accent, quantity, and syllabic enumeration — exist only in speech, and cannot be studied in any other context. In many past writings on the subject, confusion and error have resulted from an inadequate knowledge of the linguistic foundation of prosody. This can be avoided by the contemporary prosodist, who has at his disposal the many important discoveries of the modern science of linguistics.

The Victorian poets, Coventry Patmore, Gerard Manley Hopkins and Robert Bridges advocated theories of prosody which were advanced for their time, but which in the light of modern findings are not without flaws. All three wrote verse in experimental forms; and their theories were intended, at least in part, to account for the irregularities evident in these new verse-forms.

Patmore belonged to that school of prosodic thought which attaches great importance to the analogy between the rhythm of verse and that of music. He believed that all metrical language must be divided by accents into equal intervals of time; and that in English verse these intervals are paired in double measures or 'dipodes'. He also regarded long measured pauses as an integral part of the structure of verse.

In terms of this system he attempted to show that the irregular ode — a form which he practised with more care and elaboration than any previous poet — was actually as regular as any other kind of metre.

One lapse in particular makes Patmore's isochronic theory unacceptable on linguistic grounds: this is his failure to recognize the objective reality of stress in speech. His excessive reliance on pause is another serious weakness.

Hopkins devised a complex theory of 'sprung rhythm' to explain his own metrical innovations. This theory depends on the substitution of natural speech-stress for conventional syllabic accentuation as the basis of prosody. The main principle of 'sprung rhythm', thus outlined, is theoretically quite sound; but in practice Hopkins' recognition of speech-stress was too arbitrary to be considered a valid prosodic standard.

As a metrist Bridges was more eclectic than Patmore or Hopkins. He worked on the assumption that English verse could be written according to more than one prosodic system. At different stages of his career he attempted to write verse on the accentual, quantitative, and syllabic models. His practice of 'sprung verse' may be compared with that of Hopkins, from whom he derived it. The experiments in quantitative verse are less successful. Bridges' 'Neo-Miltonic' syllabic verse is the most original of his metrical accomplishments, but has no real prosodic regularity.

All three poets were able to introduce freer rhythms into English verse. They were not entirely successful in their attempts to provide complete theoretical justification for these innovations; but such justification is hardly needed in view of the intrinsic excellence of their achievement.

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Preface

In this thesis I am chiefly concerned with the experimental verse-forms created by three Victorian poets — Coventry Patmore, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Robert Bridges — who were also metrical theorists. (Their work in conventional forms will not be considered here.) I shall inquire whether their metrical innovations can be accounted for in terms of their own prosodic theories. My conclusions will be determined by the result of this attempt to establish in each case some continuity between prosodic theory and metrical practice. Some of my own views on the theories in question and on the subject of prosody in general should become clear during the course of the investigation. The findings of the modern science of linguistics will be used as an objective standard throughout this study.

It will be necessary to make use of various systems of notation for the purposes of scansion and analysis. The Trager-Smith system, described in the first chapter, will be most frequently referred to; other markings will be explained briefly as they occur in the text.

The passages of prose quoted from Bridges' Collected Essays (1929-36) are altered in one respect: there is no attempt to preserve the peculiar system of spelling devised by the author for this edition. There are several good reasons for this. The system is hard to reproduce, because of the inclusion of several unfamiliar letters; it is difficult to read, on account of its odd appearance; and it is, from the phonetic point of view, neither logical nor consistent in itself. All other quotations are exact.

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Chapter One

THE LINGUISTIC BASIS OF PROSODY

Those writers who have explored the problems of prosody most fully have regarded them, in one way or another, as problems of language. They have seen the necessity of stating explicitly which elements of language may become the basis of metre; and while statements of this sort may be accepted as truisms, failure to make them could lead to confusion and ambiguity.

In any line of English, whether prose or verse, some syllables stand out from the rest because of a certain prosodic prominence. Any English speaker knows which syllables must be given this prominence; a speaker who places it incorrectly is at once branded as a foreigner. That English metre consists in the arrangement of such prominent syllables in ordered patterns seems clear enough. However, the precise nature of the metrical prominence has long been in dispute. All sounds, including linguistic ones, have besides their distinctive quality or timbre three further attributes: loudness, pitch, and duration. All three seem to be involved to some extent in the contrast between metrically prominent and unprominent syllables. Whether one of them can be singled out as the essential element, and which one, are questions of the utmost importance to prosody.

The value of the writings of early prosodic theorists is often limited by a failure to raise or deal adequately with questions like these. Thus even George Gascoigne, whose Certayne Notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or ryme in English (1575) is the first, and possibly the best, Elizabethan manual of prosody, did not attempt any analysis of the effect of metrical prominence; he discussed accent solely in terms of pitch and equated it with quantity. Nor did such later writers as Puttenham, Campion and Daniel, Bysshe, Gray and Johnson make any advance in this respect. They wrote under two conflicting influences: that of classical Greek and Latin foot-scansion based on quantity; and that of the syllabic system of French verse. (Both influences were in fact modified by an awareness of accent as a factor in English metre). Those of them who were practising poets have provided us with a useful guide to their own prosodic intentions, while the others have indicated the likely trend of opinion in their own times; these services perhaps outweigh their contribution to our knowledge of the foundations of metre.

The first real attempt to grapple with the fundamental problems was made by William Mitford in his comprehensive survey of the field of prosody, Inquiry into the Principles of the Harmony of Language (1774; second enlarged edition 1804). He clearly made the distinction between accent and quantity which most earlier writers had left in obscurity. To demonstrate the point he quoted the opening lines of Paradise Lost with the accents misplaced, and remarked that no matter which syllables one chose to make long or short the lines were no longer metrical. He concluded:

> This seems proof fully sufficient that ACCENT is the FUNDAMENTAL EFFICIENT of English versification. This position is by no means new. It has on the contrary been generally allowed, and its truth indeed scarcely ever doubted but by those who having first mistaken accent for quantity in the pronunciation of Greek and Latin, carry the same error with them to the consideration of their own language. This remarkable difference between our verse, and that of the Greeks and Latins that ours is fundamentally constituted by a measured disposition of accents, theirs by a regular arrangement of long and short syllables, has probably contributed not a little to the confounding of accent with quantity in the minds of so many learned men. (1)

After settling on accent as the basis of English metre, Mitford went on to declare that English quantity is not entirely governed by accent, that is, that the syllable which receives the strong accent is not always long. He also tried to ascertain whether the non-quantitative metrical prominence, or accent, depends on increased stress (loudness) or on a raising of pitch. In the following argument he seems to have implied that it depends mainly on stress:

> The Scots differ in this from all other people of whose pronunciation I have any knowledge, that their strong accent is a grave .... But all well educated Scotsmen uniformly give their strongest accent to the same syllable to which the English give it, and it is the strongest accent, whether of higher or lower tone that will determine

> the accentual rhythmus. The accentuation therefore, as far as it can affect the construction of verse, is in both pronunciations essentially the same. (2)

Thus Mitford, writing in the eighteenth century, took an unequivocal stand on the most basic questions of prosody — a stand, incidentally, which would be acceptable to the majority of modern linguists.

The most important prosodic theorist between Mitford and the Victorian writers who are to be the main subject of this study was Edwin Guest. While many of Guest's opinions may be deemed eccentric, his great work A History of English Rhythms (1836-38; re-edited by Professor Skeat in 1882) deserves consideration as the most thorough and scholarly account of the subject which had yet appeared. The system which he proposed was based entirely on accent, or, more specifically, on stress. His explanation of the composition of the English accent was eminently reasonable:

> But though an increase of loudness be the only thing essential to our English accent, yet it is in almost every instance accompanied by an increased sharpness of tone .... Besides the increase of loudness, and the sharper tone which distinguishes the accented syllable, there is also a tendency to dwell upon it, or, in other words, to lengthen its quantity .... We often find it convenient to lengthen the quantity even of the longer syllables, when we wish to give them a very strong and marked accent. Hence, no doubt, arose the vulgar notion, that accent always lengthens the quantity of a syllable. (3)

Guest denied that time has any function in English metre, and chided Mitford for taking what he considered an ambiguous position:

> It has been said that our English rhythms are governed by accent; I, moreover, believe this to be the sole principle that regulates them. Most of our modern writers on versification are of a different opinion. I have seen the title of a book which professed to give examples of verse measured solely by the quantity, but have been unable to procure it. Mitford, too, after dwelling on the great importance of accent, seems half to mistrust the conclusions he has come to; for he adds, strangely enough, and not very intelligibly, "variety is allowed for the quantities of syllables, too freely to be exactly limited by rule. A certain balance of quantities, however, throughout the verse, is required ... so that deficiency be no where striking. Long syllables, therefore, must predominate". I do not feel the force of this inference, and much less do I acknowledge it, as one of the essentials of our "heroic verse".(4)

It is nonetheless clear that Mitford's view, however he may have qualified it, was essentially the same as Guest's: that English metre is founded on accent. But as Guest rightly observes, this was by no means a universally held opinion. The dissenters, who were probably in the majority, insisted that the essence of metre is time. Almost all of them thought of time solely in terms of 'quantity' or syllabic length fixed by rules, in the context of classical prosody. There was one notable exception. Joshua Steele, in an obscure and idiosyncratic work called Prosodia Rationalis (1775), put forward a theory of metre based exclusively on the measurement of equal intervals of time. He derived this approach from a close analogy between the rhythm of verse and that of music; the inclusion of pauses as an essential part of metrical structure again proceeds from this analogy. The same musical bias is evident in the later prosodists, including Coventry Patmore and Sidney Lanier, who favoured a strictly temporal explanation of rhythm in poetry. Patmore, a sympathetic critic, summed up Steele's contribution as follows:

> Joshua Steele has the praise of having propounded more fully than has hitherto been done, the true view of metre, as being primarily based upon isochronous division by ictuses or accents; and he, for the first time, clearly declared the necessity of measuring pauses in minutely scanning English verse. He remarked the strong pause which is required for the proper delivery of adjacent accented syllables, and without which the most beautiful verses must often be read into harsh prose. But the just and important views of this writer were mingled with so much that was erroneous and impracticable, that they made little or no general impression. (5)

The prosodic features which these writers were the first to investigate occur in metrical verse with a calculated regularity; they occur also, less evenly, in common speech. Hence, an exact account of the importance of these features in English speech as a whole cannot help but clarify the workings of metre. It must be assumed that what belongs to the structure of the language is common to all utterances, metrical and non-metrical. The special ordering of prosodic features by which metre is differentiated cannot be assessed without some reference to the larger design.

A valid frame of reference for prosodic studies has been provided by the modern science of linguistics. In the past twenty years the consensus of linguistic opinion has arrived at a workable analysis of those aspects of speech — stress, pitch, and time — which have been singled out as relevant to prosody. The solution proposed by George L. Trager and Henry Lee Smith in their Outline of English Structure (originally published in 1951) brings together the most significant advances which have been made during this period in a coherent survey of the field, and has been very widely accepted. An account of the linguistic basis of prosody from this and other sources will be the most useful prelude to an examination of specific prosodic theories.

The main concern of modern linguists is to reveal the structure of language, as opposed to making a random collection of facts. The basic concept which has resulted from this approach, at the level of speech-sounds or phonology, is that of the 'phoneme'. Briefly, the total number of sounds or 'phones' used in a language can be reduced to a smaller and more definite number of significant units of sound, which may be set in contrast with each other and are then not interchangeable. For example, the distinction between the words "sin" and "sing" depends on the difference between the sounds represented by "n" and "ng"; it follows that this difference is significant in terms of English structure. On the other hand, the clear "l" of "lake" and the dark "l" of "fill" are not phonetically identical, but there is no case in which the substitution of one for the other can bring about a distinction of meaning. A phoneme, then, is a group of sounds functioning as a significant unit of language; the non-distinctive sounds which make up the group are called 'allophones'. Sound-groups comprised of vowels, semi-vowels and consonants are known as 'segmental' phonemes. The prosodic elements of stress, pitch, and time are also essential to English structure, and so make up a separate class of 'suprasegmental' phonemes. In speech the suprasegmental features are combined into larger stress sequences and intonation patterns; but they have each their own phonemic organization, and are best treated individually.

The modern authorities have confirmed the observation of Mitford and Guest that stress (loudness) rather than pitch is the basic constituent of accent. This point is well made by Kenneth L. Pike (6) He notes that the difference between the meaning of the verb "per'mit" and that of the noun "'permit" depends on the position of the accent. As usual in most kinds of utterance, the increased loudness of the accent is accompanied by higher pitch. If, however, the words are spoken with a rising intonation, as in a question — "per'mit?" and "'permit?" — the prominent syllable is low-pitched in the latter case, but the accent remains distinct.

As it stands, this example also shows the phonemic status of at least two degrees of stress. From this it is an easy step to the system of stress phonemes put forward by Trager and Smith. In their initial statement on stress they reaffirm the conclusions already drawn:

> English utterances containing more than one vowel exhibit marked differences in loudness, concentrated on the vowels. These different loudnesses are found to be consistent in their RELATIVE strengths, and their location is seen to be constant within systematic possibilities of variation. The presumption is that they are indications or results of the presence of phonemic entities. (7)

It is to be noted that degrees of stress may only have phonemic significance if they can be placed in contrast with one another, as regards distribution as well as relative strength. This condition is met in a contrasted pair of words such as that given above. The strong stress of a word like "permit" becomes Trager and Smith's primary stress phoneme. (In their notation, a phonemic symbol is enclosed by slant lines (/ /) in place of brackets).

> The degree of loudness heard in the monosyllables yes, go, in the first syllable of under, going, and in the second syllable of

> *above*, *allow*, may be used as a standard of measurement for other stresses. From the disyllabic examples it is apparent that loud stress, (´), and soft stress (˘), are two different entities; some would prefer to say that the non-loud syllables under discussion have no stress, but since we are talking at this stage about hearable things, it seems better to have a positive rather than a negative terminology. On the basis of the data so far, there must be a stress phoneme whose characteristic is maximum normal loudness, which we may call PRIMARY STRESS and indicate as /´/, putting the accent mark over the vowel. (8)

They go on to decide that the soft stress in the given examples should be regarded as an independent phoneme, presumably with the characteristic of minimum normal loudness; and incidentally raise the question of allophonic variation in stress phonemics.

> Do the instances of (˘) constitute a phoneme, or are they merely indications of the absence of (´)? Let us examine trisyllabic items like *animal*, *terrific*. In *animal* there is (´) on the first syllable; the last two syllables are soft stressed, but the last is a bit stronger than the middle one, say (˘) and (˘̲). In *terrific* the primary is on the middle syllable and the first and last syllables are about equally (˘). Since it is precisely degree of loudness that we are examining, it cannot be said that these differing softer loudnesses are merely characteristics of the vowels of syllables without /´/. They must be allophones of a phoneme of loudness, in this case a WEAK stress, /˘/. (9)

The underlining of the symbol of weak stress here indicates the presence of an allophone of slightly increased loudness. Such an allophone can only be perceptible when two syllables with the same stress phoneme are placed in contrast by juxtaposition. H.L. Smith in a later article (10) has enlarged on this point, and formulated a new law. It is that when two syllables with the same stress phoneme come together, the second is always somewhat louder than the first. Besides the example of "animal", cited above in the Outline, he gives the instance of a sequence of monosyllabic adjectives before a noun: in the phrase "an old stone house", "stone" has a slightly louder stress than "old". According to the same principle, when the same stress phoneme occurs more than twice in succession, each allophone of stress is somewhat louder than that on the preceding syllable. This distinction, whether valid or not, is by no means an obvious one. It has implications for the prosodist which will be pointed out later.

The phonemes of maximum and minimum normal loudness are so sharply defined as to be unmistakable. There are also intermediate degrees of stress which are not so easily recognized, but which can be shown to be equally distinctive elements. In the Trager-Smith system they comprise two further stress phonemes, secondary and tertiary. The tertiary phoneme is arrived at in this fashion:

> In items like animate (verb), refugee (with primary on the first syllable), it is found that the last vowel is louder than the instances of /˘/ examined above, say ($\overset{\smile}{=}$). (11)

Trager and Smith acknowledge that, since the last syllable of "animate" (verb) bearing ($\overset{\smile}{=}$) and the last syllables of "animate" (adjective) and "animal" bearing ($\overset{\smile}{-}$) have different vowel sounds, these examples leave the possibility that the extra loudness is allophonic in relation to the difference of the vowels bearing the stress. But in the pair "refugee" and "effigy" the last syllables have the same vowel-sound, and the contrast in stress is still there. They conclude:

> So ($\overset{\smile}{=}$) is in phonemic contrast with ($\overset{\smile}{-}$), and must then be set up as a phoneme, which we may call TËRTIARY stress, written /ˋ/.
>
> ..... Once again remembering that we are dealing with degrees of loudness, we conclude that wherever there is ($\overset{\smile}{=}$), it constitutes an allophone of the phoneme /ˋ/, whether or not there is direct minimal contrast with /˘/.
>
> So we have sýntàx, cóntènts, ànĭmátiŏn, hètĕrŏgénĕŏus, díctiŏnàry̆, etc. (12)

Trager and Smith describe the secondary stress phoneme in terms of its association with a special feature of intonation to be discussed later. For the present purposes it may be defined equally well in terms of the other stress phonemes. As their main example Trager and Smith give the compound word "elevator-operator" (person who operates an elevator). In isolation both "elevator" and "operator" have a primary stress on the first syllable, with a tertiary on the third. In the compound, however, the first syllable of "operator" has a stress which is weaker than the primary but stronger than the tertiary. If this stress be transcribed for the moment as (ˋ̲), the compound word becomes "élĕvàtŏr-ò̲pĕràtŏr". In a third item, "operation", the disposition of the primary and tertiary stress is reversed, thus: "òpĕrátiŏn". In the compound "élĕvàtŏr-òpĕrà̲tiŏn", (ˋ̲) is still in contrast with /ˋ/; hence it cannot be an allophone of tertiary stress but must be regarded as an independent secondary stress phoneme, to be marked /ˆ/. Other examples may now be found with /ˋ/ and /ˆ/ contrasting, such as "òld máid" (spinster) and "ôld máid" (former servant). Archibald A. Hill (13) gives an instance of phonemic contrast between /ˆ/ and /ˊ/: it may be heard on the word "brief" in "bríefcàse" (portfolio) and "brîef cáse" (case at law which is brief). To summarize, there are in English four stress phonemes: primary /ˊ/, secondary /ˆ/, tertiary /ˋ/, and quarternary or weak /˘/. A syllable may accordingly be defined for linguistic and prosodic purposes as the domain of any stress level.

The last examples given above furnish the answer to another important question: do English words have each their own intrinsic level of stress, unaffected by changes of syntactic position? Evidently they do not. The relative disposition of stresses within a given word of more than one syllable is fairly constant. Which specific phoneme or phonemes of stress a word may be given in any individual case is largely determined by its function in the utterance as a whole. One such contextual modification of stress occurs when emphasis on a particular word is required by the meaning. If the syllable to be emphasized is one which would otherwise bear a secondary, tertiary or weak stress, it is given prominence by a shift to primary stress. This phenomenon is called 'contrastive' stress by Trager and Smith. They give as an example of its application the question "How do they study?" with four possible variations of emphasis, as follows:

Hów do they study?
How dó they study?
How do théy study?
How do they stúdy?

When, as in the last of these instances, the meaning calls for emphasis on a syllable which already has primary stress, the effect of added contrast is usually achieved by raising the pitch.

The would-be prosodist who has assimilated the four-stress system of Trager and Smith must reconcile this knowledge with the fact that English verse has always been written with only two degrees of stress — a stronger and a weaker — being taken into account. If the English language does have four stresses, then verse which is written in English must also have four; and this holds good for the poetry of the past, since there is no reason to believe that the essential prosodic structure of the language has changed. Yet it would seem that our poets have, unconsciously for the most part, adapted their normal speech-patterns to the two-stress convention of metrical form. This fact must be accepted by the prosodist; for if English verse has an order distinct from that of prose, it must be the result of a deliberate application of the metrical convention by the poets themselves. An insufficient regard for the poets' own intentions is behind many unsound prosodic theories. (Of course, this is not to say that poets are always aware of the exact nature of their own metrical accomplishments). Systems like that of Trager and Smith are devised to explain ordinary speech or 'prose'; they cannot usefully be applied to verse without being adjusted in some way to account for the differences between metrical and non-metrical language. The reduction of the stress system is one such adjustment.

The method of bringing about this reduction which has been most widely accepted by prosodists is that first proposed by Otto Jespersen (14). Long before Trager and Smith's book was published, Jespersen was already advocating a four-stress system essentially similar to the one which they were to adopt. (The stress levels which he numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 correspond to Trager and Smith's weak, tertiary, secondary and primary stress phonemes).

> It is the relative stress that counts. This is shown conclusively when we find that a syllable with stress-degree 2 counts as strong between two 1's, though it is in reality weaker than another with degree 3 which fills a weak place because it happens to stand between two 4's.

The same principle was stated more recently by Archibald A. Hill.

> English verse recognizes only a strong and a weak stress. This means that the two extremes of natural stress (primary and unstressed) are fixed in verse. The two middle grades of natural stress (secondary and tertiary) are variable in verse, according to whether they are adjacent to stresses stronger or weaker than themselves. (15)

It is worth noting that Jespersen and Hill regard a syllable as metrically strong or weak in relation to both adjacent syllables — not just the preceding or following one, as would be sufficient for the purposes of traditional 'iambic' or 'trochaic' verse. Other prosodic theorists who have adopted their principle have followed the same procedure. Thus Harold Whitehall writes:

> In this adaptation, the primary stress (ˊ) always indicates a metrically stressed syllable and the weak stress (˘) a metrically unstressed syllable; the two medial stresses (^) and (ˋ), however, indicate metrically stressed syllables if surrounded by weaker stresses and metrically unstressed syllables if surrounded by stronger stresses. (16)

And likewise Seymour Chatman:

> In general, I work on the principle that a metrical point can be filled by anything from tertiary to primary stress — that what it takes to fix a syllable as a metrical point is not any specific level of stress but a stress that is stronger than that carried by adjacent syllables. (17)

By a 'metrical point' Chatman means a place in the metrical pattern where an accent is to be expected.

It was Chatman who pointed out (18) that acceptance of this position as defined by Jespersen, Hill, Whitehall and himself involves a denial of the traditional concept of the metrical foot, since the accent is equally related to both surrounding syllables. This assumption is confirmed by the fact that all of these writers have actually discarded the foot in their published analyses of verse. Such a practice is open to the same objection brought up previously in another context. It leaves unasked the question of whether the poets themselves had the concept of the foot in mind when they wrote, and whether they adapted their verse to fit that concept. That this was usually the case appears in the prosodic writings of many poets from Gascoigne onwards.

Again, all four writers are agreed that the primary and weak stresses are fixed in verse, the one being always metrically strong, the other always metrically weak. However, according to the modified stress system advanced by H.L. Smith and outlined above, this view would have to be abandoned. Smith, it will be recalled, laid down the principle that when two syllables with the same stress phoneme come together the second stress is always somewhat stronger than the first. He has suggested in another paper (19) how this may be applied to prosody in support of the traditional iambic principle of English verse. If it be granted that any increase of stress is sufficient for a metrical accent, then feet consisting of two primaries (a rare construction which would not normally occur in uninterrupted sequence), two secondaries, two tertiaries or two weak stresses must be accepted as genuine iambs, rather than spondees or pyrrhics according to the classical analogy. Smith gives as an example Donne's line

> Mâkes mêe hĕr Médăll, ănd mâkes hêr lôve mee

(Elegy X, 1.3), in which the feet "Mâkes mêe", "-ăll, ănd", "mâkes hêr", are regarded as "indistinctive" iambs.

The admission of this kind of foot would allow an easy explanation of constructions like Shakespeare's 'the marriage of true minds', which as John Crowe Ransom has pointed out (20) are fairly common in English verse. Ransom would describe the group "-iage of true minds" as an 'ionic' or double foot, made up of two weak syllables followed by two strong ones. Scanned with Smith's principle in mind, it would become a simple iambic sequence, perhaps 'thĕ mârriăge ō̆f trûe mínds': three iambs, of which the second is 'indistinctive'.

Besides stress, two other elements of speech — pitch and time — have been considered to have a bearing on prosody. Trager and Smith have set up, in addition to the four kinds of stress, two further classes of suprasegmental phonemes. One of these has to do with pitch; both pitch and time are involved in the other.

Trager and Smith agree with the conclusion reached earlier by Pike in distinguishing four phonemic levels of pitch. (These levels are relative, not absolute). Their analysis of pitch phenomena also provides for allophonic changes and variations.

> Symbols used to indicate levels of pitch are: (1) for lowest, (2), (3), (4), for successively higher levels; variations within any level are shown by (v) for the lowest, (°) for the next higher variety, (^) for still higher, (–) ('under-line') for the highest, as (2 2 2 2). (21)

Some idea of the interaction of these levels of pitch may be gained by noting their distribution in the more common types of utterance. A declarative utterance or statement generally begins on pitch 2, rising to pitch 3 at some point, and sinking to pitch 1 before fading out at the end. Some kinds of interrogative utterance may begin on pitch 3, the rest of the utterance being altered accordingly. In fact the patterns of pitch are quite varied, subject as they are to every nuance of attitude or 'tone' on the part of the speaker. The highest pitch level, number 4, is reserved for exclamations and other emphatic forms of speech.

The function of pitch in English prosody is marginal but real. It has been shown that pitch is not essential in producing the metrical accent, but that it is commonly a contributing factor. Trager and Smith show how the stress conditions the pitch to bring about this result. The allophones of a particular pitch phoneme vary directly with the stress: thus, a syllable on pitch 2 will have the allophone ($\underset{\vee}{2}$) if it bears a weak stress, ($\underset{\circ}{2}$) if the stress is tertiary, ($\underset{\wedge}{2}$) if it is secondary, or ($\underline{2}$) if it is primary. It is when the stress is strongest that pitch contributes most forcibly to the metrical prominence. (The necessary reservation made by Pike (22) — that the association of heightened pitch with the accent disappears when the utterance has a rising intonation — should be kept in mind.)

The third class of suprasegmental phonemes proposed by Trager and Smith has to do with 'junctures', or distinctive transitions between sound-groups. This class consists of one internal open transition or 'plus' juncture, transcribed as (+), as well as three 'terminal' junctures. The plus juncture is that phonemic entity by which we are able to distinguish between such a minimal pair as "nitrate" and "night+rate". The two different kinds of transition perceived in this and similar pairs are actually differentiated in speech — the distinction is not merely one of spelling. Perhaps the best account of junctures is that given by Hill (23). He explains that they are essentially a function of timing, being produced by prolongation of the sound on which the transition takes place, that is, of the segmental phoneme which immediately precedes the phoneme of juncture. (The word 'pause' should not be used, since there need not be any cessation of sound.) In the case of the plus juncture, the prolongation is so slight as to be virtually imperceptible; but its effect on the surrounding sounds is heard and signals the phonemic transition. This juncture takes place with no change of pitch. Trager and Smith stated the rule that whenever the secondary stress occurs, the presence of a plus juncture is indicated (24).

A pattern of stresses with the possibility of including one or more plus junctures is called by Trager and Smith a 'superfix'. The group "light house keeper" can be given three different meanings by the use of three contrasting superfixes:

líght+hôuse+kèepĕr (housekeeper who is light in weight)
líght+hòuse+kêepĕr (person who keeps a lighthouse)
lìght+hóuse+kêepĕr (person who does lighthousekeeping)

These may be compared with the readings given by N. Chomsky, M. Halle, and F. Lukoff, who reject the whole Trager-Smith system along with the concept of suprasegmental phonemes, and propose a simplified prosodic notation. They write:

> Given two juncture elements - (internal juncture) and = (external juncture) and a single accent element ´ , we can present three (in fact, many more than three) distinct representations, e.g.,
>
> (a) líght=hóuse-kéeper
>
> (b) líght-hóuse-kéeper
>
> (c) lighthóusekeeper (25)

Trager and Smith's three terminal junctures are of a type similar to the plus juncture, but are marked by a longer and more obvious prolongation of the transitional sound. The examples given by Hill to illustrate the nature of these junctures are the two sentences 'He will act, roughly in the same manner' and 'He will act roughly, in the same manner', in which the transitions are represented by commas. The shortest of these terminals is called by Trager and Smith the 'single-bar' juncture, marked as /|/: it is produced, like the plus juncture, by prolongation on a level pitch, but is considerably longer and more distinct. Hill remarks (26) that it serves to contrast the two sentences "The sun's rays| meet" and "The sons| raise meat", when there is any contrast at all. He adds that it is not commonly represented at all in standard punctuation, but is occasionally indicated by a dash. Pitch as well as time is involved in the two remaining terminals. One of them is the 'double-bar' juncture /||/, somewhat longer than /|/, and signalled by a rise of pitch from the level of the preceding sound. In standard punctuation it is often represented by a comma if the preceding pitch level is low, and by a question mark if the preceding level is high. The longest of the three terminals is the 'double cross' juncture, transcribed /#/: it is perceived as a rapid fall in pitch accompanied by a fading out of sound. It corresponds often, but not always, to a period or full stop in punctuation. These three junctures are 'terminals' in that they may occur at the end of word-groups or phrases; they may also come at the end of sentences, although the single-bar juncture does so rather infrequently. Trager and Smith use the term 'intonation pattern' to describe a series of pitches with a terminal juncture.

The exact importance of junctures in English metre has not been very thoroughly investigated. Whitehall speaks of the 'time-marking' function of plus junctures in isochronic verse (27), but gives no further explanation. Since this juncture occupies a time-lapse too slight to be perceptible, it cannot itself be included in the measurement of intervals of time, unless by the procedure which Whitehall goes on to suggest:

> Needless to say, skilful poets can manipulate junctures to produce effects either of syntactic repetition or syntactic variety: often they "finger" the speech flow in such a way that the junctures proper to ordinary speech are "promoted", (+) becoming (|), (|) becoming (||) or (#), and so forth.

Chatman has examined certain metrical features — caesura, end-stop, and enjambement — in terms of the four junctures (28). He observes that these features belong to the performance of a poem rather than to the written text; they are merely suggested by the punctuation and the sense. Caesura may be explained phonemically as a terminal juncture occurring within the line, usually represented by some form of punctuation stronger than a comma. The end-stopped line is one which ends with a terminal juncture; enjambement may be said to occur when one line runs on into the next without a terminal juncture intervening.

The enjambed or run-on line will normally end with a plus juncture. The assumption is that different forms of punctuation at the end of a line stand for different junctures, and hence for different time-lapses.

The place of time in the structure of English, if indeed it has a place, is of particular interest to the prosodist. Only one aspect of it — the temporal basis of junctures — has been discussed so far. A point worth settling is whether the traditional concept of syllabic quantity has any foundation in linguistic fact. To support that concept one would have to find evidence of a significant pattern in the relative lengths of vowels and consonants. Trager and Smith acknowledge differences in the length of segmental phonemes, but regard them as allophonic — that is, without structural significance. We are provided with two diacritical marks for consonantal length: (:) for long, and (˘) for extra short. (Only continuant consonants like 'm' and 's' can be made long; stops like 't' for practical purposes have no length.) According to Trager and Smith vowel length is not intrinsic but is conditioned by the following consonant. In speaking of long and short vowels they appear to be referring to duration as such. They give four symbols for allophones of vowel length: (:) for long, (˙) for rather long, (˘̇) for somewhat long, and (˘) for short (29).

Daniel Jones is one linguist who assigns to vowel length some functional value:

> Any particular degree of duration may be termed a chrone .... The relative values of different chrones may often be estimated roughly by ear .... As the actual lengths of sounds are often conditioned by phonetic contexts, the various durations (chrones) can be grouped together into what may be called chronemes, in the same sort of way as qualities (phones) may be grouped into phonemes. They differ from the latter, however, in that though there are many distinguishable chrones in most languages, there are seldom more than two chronemes. (30)

Most other authorities, however, argue that whatever difference of duration may exist between 'long' and 'short' vowels is not distinctive; and that the real difference is one of quality. This view seems to be confirmed by the experiment carried out by A. C. Gimson, in which several subjects recognized the 'long' and 'short' vowels as such even when the relative lengths were deliberately reversed (31).

In order to confirm any possible function of timing in metrical feet and double-feet, some unit of speech larger than the single phoneme must be made to correspond to these units of metre. The grouping for which Trager and Smith use the term 'phonemic clause', constituting a minimal complete utterance, is the most likely to be of use in this connection. A 'phonemic clause' is a stretch of speech-sound either beginning and ending with a terminal juncture, or beginning from silence and ending with a terminal juncture. It may contain one or more plus junctures (but no terminals between the ones by which it is delimited). There may be one or more levels of pitch; and also one or more degrees of stress, which must however include one and only one primary stress. (As was seen in the example 'How do they study?' given above, the primary stress will fall as near the end of the group as possible, unless a contrastive shift takes place.) From this it follows that a terminal juncture must always intervene between one primary stress and the next.

Trager and Smith do not recognize any pattern of timing on this level. They observe that certain phenomena of speech transcend linguistic segments, and are to be regarded as matters of style. One such phenomenon occurs when for the purpose of unusual emphasis the whole of an utterance is delivered with greatly increased loudness and extra high or extra low pitch, often accompanied by drawling or marked retardation. This and all other matters of tempo are included under the heading of 'metalinguistics' — as opposed to 'microlinguistics', the field of segmental analysis (32).

Some authorities, however, discern more regular patterns in the tempo of speech. Pre-eminent among these is Pike with his theory of stress-timing:

> The timing of rhythm units produces a rhythmic succession which is an extremely important characteristic of English phonological structure. The units tend to follow one another in such a way that the lapse of time between the beginning of their prominent syllables is somewhat uniform. Notice the more or less equal lapses of time between the stresses in the sentence *The 'teacher is 'interested in 'buying some 'books*; compare the timing of that sentence with the following one, and notice the similarity in that respect despite the different number of syllables: *'Big 'battles are 'fought 'daily*. (33)

(He goes on to add that this tendency is controlled strictly and mechanically in poetry.) Pike's 'rhythm unit' corresponds more or less, but not exactly, to Trager and Smith's 'phonemic clause'. It should be noted that he is here working with only three degrees of stress: unstressed syllables left unmarked, strong stress marked ' , and emphatic stress marked '' .

Jones, also writing outside the context of the four-stress and four-juncture system of Trager and Smith's *Outline*, which had not yet appeared, stated the same isochronic principle:

> In stress languages there is usually a tendency to make the strong stresses follow each other at fairly equal intervals, whenever this can conveniently be done. This tendency produces the effect commonly termed 'rhythm'. It often determines the length of sounds. Thus if a number of weakly stressed syllables intervene between a strong stress and the next following strong stress in the sentence, various shortenings may take place in the unconscious endeavour

> to make the 'stress bar' equal in length to other 'stress bars'. (34)

(Not all of those who support the principle of isochrony agree as to its exact nature. Pike and Jones have stated that the intervals between strong stresses are equal. According to W. Jassem, however, it is the 'rhythmical units' — as in Pike, groups containing one strong stress and bounded by 'pauses' — that are of equal duration (35). This is by no means the same thing.)

Whitehall has attempted (36) to correlate Pike's version of the isochronic theory with the Trager-Smith suprasegmental system, his aim being to explain metre in terms of equal intervals of time. He refers to

> another feature of English — one not mentioned in the Outline and one not directly a significant part of English linguistic structure. This is the fact, first noticed by Pike, that the time-lapse between any two primary stresses tends to be the same irrespective of the number of syllables and the junctures between them. In short, unlike such "syllable-timed" languages as Spanish, English is "stress-timed" or isochronic. Since isochronism is produced not only by accelerating and crushing together the syllables between primary stresses but also by increasing or decreasing the pauses which always may follow the three terminal junctures, its close association with the juncture phenomena is obvious.

(Presumably the 'time-marking' function of plus junctures mentioned previously by Whitehall takes place within the intervals marked off by stresses.) He continues, applying all this to metre:

> Thus, the fully orchestrated "pentameter" line, for instance, is likely to possess either three or four peaks of primary stress with isochronic stretches of more weakly stressed syllables and junctures between them:

> Thĕ cúrfèw / tôlls thĕ knéll / òf pârtĭng dáy /

Here Whitehall, in disregarding the five-foot structure which Gray undoubtedly had in mind, invites criticism on the same grounds insisted on earlier in this chapter. Apart from this, he does not account for the difficulties involved in combining the system of Pike with that of Trager and Smith. The terminal junctures can be added to Pike's concept without much trouble: they may be equated with the pauses marking off his 'rhythm units'. It is clear, however, that not all of the syllables marked with stress by Pike would be considered to bear Trager and Smith's primary stress. Pike's stress-mark is often used to indicate what appear to be secondary or even tertiary stresses. For instance, his example "'Big 'battles are 'fought 'daily" actually has no more than two primary stresses: "Big" would normally receive a secondary, while the stresses of "fought" and the first syllable of "daily" cannot both be primary — "daily" would probably have it in this case. Thus, when Whitehall writes that the intervals between primary stresses are equal, he is not stating the same principle as that advanced by Pike.

These objections have to do with inconsistencies in the stated application of isochronism, not with the theory itself. The case against isochronic theories of metre in general has been put most strongly by W.K. Wimsatt and M.C. Beardsley (37). They write:

> It may be thought that the correctness of the modern isochronic view is a purely empirical question: we need only devise stop-watch or oscillograph methods for determining whether readers of verse do in fact tend to time their strong stresses equally. At present, the empirical evidence in this matter does not seem to be conclusive, although it inclines to the negative. But in any case it is our main contention that the question is not to be settled this way. For if such equal timing ever occurs, it is part of the performance of the poem, not the poem itself -- it is something that can be done to the poem, or done with it, and perhaps for some poems should be done, and for others should not. But the timing of the syllables is not a part of the correctness of English speech; it does not belong to the poem as linguistic object; and it therefore cannot be manipulated into the meter of the poem. Some have championed the use of musical notation, with eighth notes and quarter notes, to describe the meter of verse. But given any such description of a line of verse, it is always possible to read the line in some other manner which violates the musical notation but preserves the same meter. The musical notation (although it may accurately and usefully reproduce a given performance) does not describe the meter.
>
> Some of those who have supported the isochronic view with linguistic arguments have defeated their own account by maintaining that all English speech tends to be equally timed. Then, of course, equal timing does not distinguish metrical from nonmetrical discourse.

Some of the metrical concepts discussed so far — notably the isochronic speech-unit and the superfix, as a grouping of weaker stresses around a primary — are applicable not so much to the more orthodox metres as to the individual prosodic systems to be investigated in the following chapters. With regard to these systems, it may be generally stated that they are supposed by their creators to be direct copies of the patterns of language, as opposed to the arbitrary standard of metrical tradition. This means that certain kinds of licence, or departure from the declared norm, which are allowed in conventional metre, need not be equally acceptable in the context of such prosodic novelties.

Inversion or substitution of feet, and the inclusion of metrically redundant syllables at the beginning or end of a line ('anacrusis' and 'hypercatalexis'), are some of the more common licences. In addition to these definite formal changes, many prosodists feel a metrical 'tension' between the ideal pattern of a given metre — for the English heroic line, weak-strong / weak-strong / weak-strong / weak-strong / weak-strong — and the normal speech-pattern of an individual line. The latter, too, is but the abstract representation of a speech-pattern as it exists on the written or printed page; it may be delivered by individual performers in many different ways. Such are the various levels on which the metre of a prosodically orthodox poem may be apprehended. However, this kind of metrical 'tension' has no place in any prosodic system which is claimed to be based directly on the order of speech. For instance, Milton's 'Immutable, immortal, infinite' is accepted as a valid heroic line, although two of the five stresses called for in the abstract metrical design are not supplied by the speech-pattern. But if Milton had been using a system in which only the strong stresses or the intervals between them were counted, the line would have to be considered irregular in the five-stress context. This point should be kept in mind when individual prosodic theories come to be discussed.

All of these modern findings, and the Trager-Smith system in particular, provide the equipment for a detailed consideration of Patmore, Hopkins and Bridges — their prosodic ideas as expressed in their critical writings and exemplified in their own poetry.

Chapter One: Notes

1. *The Harmony of Language* (London, 1774), pp. 91-92.
2. *Ibid*., pp. 95-96.
3. *A History of English Rhythms*, ed. Prof. W. Skeat (London, 1882), p. 75.
4. *Ibid*., p. 108.
5. 'Essay on English Metrical Law', *Collected Poems* (London, 1886), ii, p. 219.
6. *The Intonation of American English* (Ann Arbor, 1956), pp. 82-83.
7. *An Outline of English Structure* (Washington, 1957), p. 35.
8. *Ibid*., p. 36.
9. *Ibid*., p. 36.
10. Introduction to Epstein and Hawkes, *Linguistics and English Prosody*, *Studies in Linguistics* (Buffalo, 1959) p. 7.
11. *Outline*, p. 36.
12. *Ibid*., p. 37.
13. *Introduction to Linguistic Structures* (New York, 1958), p. 16.
14. 'Notes on Metre', *Selected Writings* (London, 1960), p. 654.
15. Review of H. Kökeritz, *Shakespeare's Pronunciation*, *Language*, xxix (1953), pp. 556-557.
16. 'From Linguistics to Criticism', *The Kenyon Review*, xviii, No. 3 (1956), p. 418.
17. 'Comparing Metrical Styles', *Style in Language*, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (New York, 1960), p. 160.
18. *Ibid*., p. 161.

19. 'Towards redefining English Prosody', Studies in Linguistics, xiv, Nos. 3-4 (1959), pp. 68 ff.

20. 'The Strange Music of English Verse', The Kenyon Review, xviii, No. 3 (1956), p. 471.

21. Outline, p. 42.

22. Intonation of American English, p. 83.

23. Introduction to Linguistic Structures, pp. 21-26.

24. Outline, p. 39.

25. 'On Accent and Juncture in English', For Roman Jakobson (The Hague, 1956), p. 66.

26. Op. cit., p. 23.

27. 'From Linguistics to Criticism', p. 417.

28. 'Comparing Metrical Styles', pp. 165-170.

29. Outline, p. 11.

30. The Phoneme (Cambridge, 1950), pp. 126-127.

31. 'Implications of the Phonemic/Chronemic Grouping of English Vowels', Acta Ling., v (1945-9), pp. 94-100.

32. Outline, p. 86.

33. Intonation of American English, p. 34.

34. The Phoneme, p. 125.

35. Intonation of Conversational English (Wrocław, 1952), p. 39.

36. 'From Linguistics to Criticism', pp. 418-419.

37. 'The Concept of Meter', Style in Language, p. 195.

Chapter Two

PATMORE

Coventry Patmore's enduring interest in 'the rationale of verse' had perhaps already been formed when his first book of poems appeared in 1844. He must have frequently discussed questions of poetic technique with Tennyson during the years of their close acquaintance. At any rate the early development of his own theory of metre is to be traced chiefly in three essays on works by Tennyson: the first, on *The Princess*, published in the *North British Review* for May, 1848; the second, on *In Memoriam*, in the August, 1850 issue of the same journal; and the third, on *Maud*, in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1855. This theory was first expounded at length in an article entitled 'English Metrical Critics' printed in the *North British Review* for August, 1857 — the same article which, in a revised form, was used as a preface to *Amelia* (1878), and later appended to the 1886 collected edition of the poems as the 'Essay on English Metrical Law'.

Patmore shows in the 'Essay' an extensive knowledge of earlier prosodic theorists, singling out for special attention Steele, Mitford and Guest. While he speaks respectfully of the others, it is plain that his own views correspond most closely to those of Steele. Like that writer, Patmore sets great value on the analogy between verse and music. He writes, 'The relation of music to language ought to be recognized as something more than that of similarity, if we would rightly appreciate either' (1); and goes so far as to say that perfectly declaimed verse should literally be sung.

This musical bias may be the reason for Patmore's curious treatment of accent. After pointing out that the ancient Greek poets were careful to observe a total separation of accent (which, as he says, with them appears to have been purely a matter of tone or pitch) from quantity, he goes on to state:

> It is also worth observing, that although such separation is absolutely opposed to the rule of our speech, this rule is nevertheless broken by exceptions which serve at least to render the practice of shifting the metrical ictus from one place in a word to another, and of severing 'accent', in the sense of tone, from long quantity, quite intelligible. (2)

He then asserts confidently that the English accent is not pure tone; but having said what the accent, in terms of physical sound, is not, he avoids giving an opinion as to what it is. Instead, he provides a list of several possible explanations without endorsing any of them:

> Some writers have identified our metrical accent with long quantity; others have fancied it to consist, like the Greek, in pure tone; others have regarded it as a compound of loudness and elevation of tone; and others, as a compound of height and duration of tone; others, again, have regarded it as the general prominence acquired by one syllable over another, by any or all of these elements in combination. (3)

Patmore does not proceed to adopt any one of these positions, some of which might be defensible on linguistic grounds; he chooses rather to define accent in quasi-musical terms. At this point introducing his doctrine that both prose and verse should be divided into equal intervals of time, he assigns to accent the function of marking off these intervals (in effect, stating an opinion as to what accent does, again without saying what it is):

> Now, it seems to me that the only tenable view of that accent upon which it is allowed, with more or less distinctness, by all, that English metre depends, in contra-distinction to the syllabic metre of the ancients, is the view which attributes to it the function of marking, by whatever means, certain isochronous intervals. (4)

As he continues, it becomes apparent that he does not even think of the accent as a real and audible speech-sound:

> These are two indispensable conditions of metre, — first, that the sequence of vocal utterance, represented by written verse, shall be divided into equal or proportionate spaces; secondly, that the fact of that division shall be made manifest by an 'ictus' or 'beat', actual or mental, which, like a post in a chain railing, shall mark the end of one space, and the commencement of another. This 'ictus' is an acknowledged condition of all possible metre; and its function is, of course, much more conspicuous in languages so chaotic in their syllabic quantities as to render it the only source of metre. Yet, all-important as this time-beater is, I think

> it demonstrable that, for the most part, *it has no material and external existence at all*, but has its place in the mind, which craves measure in everything, and, wherever the idea of measure is uncontradicted, delights in marking it with an imaginary 'beat'. (5)

Patmore is obviously confusing the speech-stress — an actual physical sound — with the place in an abstract metrical design where the accent is to be expected (what Chatman has called the 'metrical point'). This confusion constitutes a theoretical flaw in Patmore's system, and will be referred to again. For the present, it allows him to equate speech accent with musical accent, in accordance with his favourite analogy:

> Those qualities which, singly, or in various combination, have hitherto been declared to *be* accent, are indeed only *the conditions of accent*; a view which derives an invincible amount of corroboration from its answering exactly to the character and conditions of accent in vocal and instrumental music, of which the laws cannot be too strictly attended to, if we would arrive at really satisfactory conclusions concerning modern European metre. (6)

The question is whether so intangible an accent would be noticed at all. As if to meet such an objection, Patmore claims that it is signalled by alliteration and rhyme: he writes 'alliteration is a very effective mode of conferring emphasis on the accent' (7), and quotes with approval Guest's remark that rhyme 'marks and defines the accent, and thereby strengthens and supports the rhythm' (8).

It is worth inquiring whether Patmore's version of the isochronic theory can be defended against the objections of Wimsatt and Beardsley, quoted in the first chapter. One of their arguments, it will be remembered, is that equal timing is not essential to the correctness of a reading in English; it is possible but not necessary. Patmore, however, does not accept this premise:

> Verse itself is only verse on the condition of right reading: we may, if we choose, read the most perfect verse so that all the effect of verse shall be lost. The same thing may be done with prose. We may clearly articulate all the syllables, and preserve their due connection in the phrases they constitute; and yet, by neglecting to give them their relative tones, and to group them according to time, convert them from prose into something nameless, absurd and unintelligible. (9)

Again, in reply to those who — like Patmore — believe in the isochronic division of both prose and verse, Wimsatt and Beardsley reason that if this division is universal it cannot be the distinguishing principle of metre. According to Patmore, it is not isochrony by which verse is differentiated from prose, but rather the use of a double measure or 'dipode' as the basic unit of timing. This, his central doctrine, is set forth as follows:

> Hitherto I have had occasion to speak only of that primary metrical division which is common to verse and prose. I have now to speak of that which constitutes the distinctive

> quality of verse. Nothing but the unaccountable disregard, by prosodians, of final pauses could have prevented the observation of the great general law, which I believe that I am now, for the first time, stating, that the *elementary measure, or integer, of English verse is double the measure of ordinary prose*, — that is to say, it is the space which is bounded by *alternate* accents; *that every verse proper contains two, three, or four of these 'metres'*, or, as with a little allowance they may be called, 'dipodes'; *and that there is properly no such thing as hypercatalexis*. All English verses in common cadence are therefore dimeters, trimeters, or tetrameters, and consist, when they are *full*, i.e., without *catalexis*, of eight, twelve or sixteen syllables. (10)

By 'common cadence' he means the metrical pattern made by alternate strong and weak accents: in traditional terms, iambic and trochaic metres. He goes on to say that verses in 'triple cadence' — anapaestic and dactylic patterns — obey the same law, but their length never exceeds that of the 'trimeter'.

In Patmore's system 'catalexis' is not just an occasional variation, but is elevated into a general principle. Full and catalectic lines should be read into the same time, the inequality of syllables being made up by pauses:

> Unless we are to go directly against the analogy of music, and to regard every verse affected with catalexis .... as constituting an entire metrical system in itself, which is obviously absurd, we must reckon the missing syllables as substituted by an equivalent pause; and, indeed, in reading catalectic verse, this is what a good reader does by instinct. (11)

Such pauses may come at the end of a line or may be internal, and are especially to be marked between adjacent accents. The middle pause or caesura is essential in verses exceeding the length of the common 'heroic' line. The pauses are said to be strictly metrical, and thus distinct from grammatical stops:

> In beating time to the voice of a good reader of verse, it will be found that the metrical pauses are usually much longer than the longest pauses of punctuation, and that they are almost entirely independent of them. For example, a final pause equal to an entire foot may occur between the nominative and the governed genitive, and, in the same sequence of verses, a grammatical period may occur in the middle of an accentual interval without lengthening its time or diminishing the number of the included syllables. (12)

Patmore asserts that grammatical stops — 'junctures' in the present terminology — are marked by 'tone' rather than time: an opinion which has not been borne out by modern research.

To illustrate his theory of isochronic dipodes Patmore quotes (13) the opening lines of his poem 'Night and Sleep':

How strange it is to wake
  And watch, while others sleep,
Till sight and hearing ache
  For objects that may keep

The awful inner sense
  Unroused, lest it should mark
The life that haunts the emptiness
  And horror of the dark.

The poem's basic measure is a 'dimeter', having the time of eight syllables. Only the penultimate line of this passage is full; the others are catalectic, with a final pause equivalent to two syllables. Although each line has the time of two dipodes, it need not consist of two consecutive full dipodes:

> It is necessary, in connection with this part of the subject, to remark, that although every complete verse, in common cadence, must have the time of two or more metres or sections, (as it may be more expedient to call these primary accentual divisions of verse), it by no means follows that the verse must begin or end with the commencement or termination of a section. In the quotation given above, the first accentual section begins with the second syllable of the first verse, and the second section commences with the last syllable of that verse; and, taking in the pause equivalent to two syllables, ends with the first syllable of the next, and so on, exactly as is the case with the sections in musical composition, which seldom begin with the first note of the strain or end with the last. (14)

Thus the passage may be transcribed, with slant lines marking the beginning and end of dipodes, and a dot indicating a pause equivalent to one syllable:

How/strange it is to/wake . .
And/watch, while others/sleep . .
Till/sight and hearing ache . .
For/objects that may/keep . .
The/awful inner/sense . .
Un/roused lest it should/mark . .
The/life that haunts the/emptiness
And/horror of the/dark . .

The first line only begins with 'anacrusis'.

According to Patmore, the English heroic line or 'iambic pentameter' is really a catalectic 'trimeter', and must always be followed by a pause equivalent to two syllables. Even among those of his critics who can accept the dipodic theory as such, there are many who are unwilling to allow that every line in, for instance, a passage of dramatic blank verse should be separated from the next by a pause of such length. Patmore holds up as confirmation of his view the 'hexameter' which rounds off the Spenserian stanza, and which he regards as simply a filling up of the 'trimeter'. On the other hand, the 'Alexandrine' — used as the basic line of such a poem as Drayton's Polyolbion — is in his opinion an entirely different measure: when completed by a middle and end pause each equivalent to two syllables, it may be scanned as a 'tetrameter'.

The application of Patmore's dipodic theory becomes most intricate and least clear in the case of the 'irregular ode', a form which he himself used with great effect. A comment made in 1850 shows the trend of his thought on this subject:

> Good examples of the irregular ode are so scarce -- Wordsworth's being the only generally satisfactory one in the language, that we cannot venture to pronounce with any confidence upon the law of this measure. Our impression of it is, that each line, however many syllables it may contain, ought to occupy the same time in reading, according to the analogy of bars in music. This view is supported by the best parts of the odes of Wordsworth and Milton, which may and ought to be read, each line into the same time; and also by the necessity which has invariably been felt, for printing the lines in such a manner, that the reader shall know, beforehand, the requisite period to be occupied in the delivery of the line, and in the pauses by which it is to be preceded and concluded. (15)

In this form of verse a great disparity is allowed in the number of syllables making up consecutive lines. Since Patmore would have all the lines occupy the same time in reading, it follows that many of them would consist more of silence than of sound. This is especially the case in view of his late conclusions about the iambic ode, stated in the 'Essay', among which is the assertion that its basic measure is a 'tetrameter' with the time of sixteen syllables:

> The iambic ode, erroneously called 'irregular', of which there exist few legitimate examples in our language, is, if I mistake not, a tetrameter, with almost unlimited liberty of catalexis, to suit the variations of the high and stately lyrical feeling which can alone justify the use of this measure. The existence of an amount of catalectic pause varying from the time of two to fourteen syllables — for the line, in this kind of metre, may change at once to that extent — is justified by the analogy of the pauses, or stops, in a similar style of music. (16)

The musical analogy is again called upon by Patmore to justify the use of very long pauses required by his system. The disposition and extent of these pauses are quite arbitrary, being regulated to fit in with a pre-ordained design, rather than proceeding naturally from the verbal form of the poem. This point was raised by John Cowie Reid in his book on Patmore:

> But the reading of verse is not determined by an antecedently established rhythmical pattern. A proper reading discovers the pattern, and in such a reading grammar, sense-pause and sense-emphasis help to determine accent and rhythm. The metrical scheme, including the pauses, cannot be developed independently of the grammatical structure, as indeed Patmore's knowledge of Milton should have taught him. (17)

Thus, Reid denies Patmore's distinction between metrical pauses and grammatical stops.

Patmore's essential concept is that of the isochronic dipode, corresponding to a musical bar. Since he thought of this more or less in terms of music, and made no clear distinction between musical and metrical rhythm, it would seem to lack a sound basis in linguistic theory. But as was seen in the first chapter, the idea of dividing English speech into isochronic intervals has some modern support. Such authorities as Pike, Jones, and Jassem at first sight appear to vindicate Patmore and his system of timing. In particular, Patmore's description of equal intervals of time being marked off by accents seems very close to the principle of stress-timing stated by Pike and Jones. On closer examination, however, this accord proves to be largely illusory. The difficulty is again with Patmore's inadequate treatment of accent. According to Pike and Jones, the intervals between strong stresses tend to be equal; and while it is not clear precisely which degree of stress — in the context of a four-stress system — they mean by the term 'strong', there can be no doubt that they are dealing with stress as a real physical entity. They contend that in normal speech approximately equal periods of time are allowed to lapse between these strong stresses; but they are certainly aware that the stresses exist independently, and could be heard equally well were they to fall at irregular intervals. With Patmore, on the other hand, the case is entirely different. He conceives of the accent as a mental 'beat' which divides one isochronic section from the next, and which need not correspond to any real sound: thus, in his view it can have no separate existence. This is manifestly absurd. In an exclamation consisting of a single two-syllable word, such as 'Away!', the accent which is felt on the second syllable cannot be 'marking time', since there is no other accent to complete a section. Patmore's mistake about accent leads to a series of inconsistencies. He does not explain how the imaginary 'beat' which marks off sections is set up in the first place — in other words, how a speaker knows when he must end the first section of his utterance and begin the second. Again, Patmore makes the assertion that ordinary English phrases 'exhibit a great preponderance of emphatic and unemphatic syllables in consecutive couples' (18), and adds elsewhere that the accent is to be counted on every second syllable in prose and on every fourth in verse — none of which appears to be supported by the linguistic facts. But as he works out this idea, another logical discrepancy comes to light. By maintaining that prose is only prose on the condition of right reading (that is, with the syllables grouped according to time), he implies that a reading is 'wrong' when the accents are misplaced and the isochrony thus broken: but if accent is a mental 'beat' supplied automatically, and not a physical sound, how can it be misplaced? Similarly, he says that there must be a pause between adjacent accents; but the very proposition that a speaker is able to recognize adjacent accents and adjust his timing accordingly is based on the assumption that the accent has an objective reality and is antecedent to any scheme of timing. The conclusion about isochronic theories must be that while the position of Pike and Jones is comprehensible, that of Patmore is not.

The main theoretical weaknesses of Patmore's system are these: his refusal to recognize the nature of the English stress-accent, with the resultant inconsistencies just pointed out; and his attempt to impose an elaborate pattern of musical timing, complete with measured pauses, on the text of the individual poem, instead of allowing the poem's own pattern to emerge in accordance with the inherent laws of the language. In view of these weaknesses, his explanation of English metre cannot be accepted as the true one. This is not to deny that the system is most ingenious, presenting, once its basic tenets are granted, as much appearance of symmetry and precision as does the notation of music. Moreover, the important corpus of Patmore's own poetry was written within the imagined confines of his prosodic theory. It will be interesting to inquire to what extent his verse _may_ be explained in terms of that theory without violating either.

There are two main divisions of Patmore's poetic work. *The Angel in the House*, which occupied him for nearly a decade, is comprised of a group of poems on domestic love: *The Betrothal* (1854), *The Espousals* (1856), *Faithful for Ever* (1860), and *The Victories of Love* (1862). The work is all in one metre, presenting no difficulties: what Patmore calls 'the most rapid and high-spirited of all English metres, the common eight-syllable quatrain' (19), explained in his system as a full 'dimeter'. The second group of poems, prosodically much more challenging, is the volume of iambic odes, *The Unknown Eros and Other Odes* (1877). There is also the miscellaneous collection of poems *Amelia* (1878), with examples of diverse metres. The title poem, an idyll, has the form of an iambic ode; others are in alternating lines of eight and six syllables, like the poem 'Night and Sleep' quoted from earlier; still others are written in the 'fourteener', which Patmore would regard as a catalectic 'tetrameter' with middle caesura equivalent to two syllables. It will be best, however, to confine this investigation to the *Unknown Eros* odes, which are not only Patmore's most consummate metrical achievement, but also, for the prosodist, his most enigmatic.

The fullest attempt so far to explain the structure of the odes is that made by Frederick Page in his Patmore, A Study in Poetry. Page quotes a passage from W.P. Ker's discussion of Drummond which, in his opinion, provides the clue for an understanding of Patmore's metrical practice (20). According to Ker, the odes of Drummond, as well as those of Spenser and Milton, are examples of pure Italian form, based on a theory which goes back to Dante. The harmony of the Italian canzone, as explained by Dante, consists in the mixing of eleven-syllable and seven-syllable verses (corresponding to English verses of ten and six syllables), 'yet so as still to keep the pre-eminence'. The significance of this, as Page sees it, is that the longer lines impose their own time on the shorter ones; so that Patmore's odes follow the same theory which has governed similar metrical forms ever since the Renaissance. This accords well with the essentially conservative attitude assumed by Patmore in questions of prosody. He thought of himself as simply giving a fuller account of old forms, rather than inventing new ones.

Page is quite willing to accept the principle of measured pauses; he is troubled by the extreme length of some of the pauses required by Patmore, but in the end agrees even on this point. He gives a section of the ode 'Legem Tuam Delixi':

> What is the chief news of the Night?
>
> Lo, iron and salt, heat, weight and light
>
> In every star that drifts on the great breeze!
>
> And these
>
> Mean Man,

asserting that each of the lines 'And these' and 'Mean Man' can be filled out to the length of the others by long pauses, as they must be in Patmore's system (21). Reid, commenting on Page's argument, disputes the plausibility of this:

> Even if it were possible to accept such lengthy pauses as Page proposes for the lines
>
> > And these
> > Mean Man
>
> the same argument can hardly apply to such later lines in the poem as
>
> > For none knows rightly what 'tis to be free
> > But only he
> > Who, vow'd against all choice, and fill'd with awe
> > Of the ofttimes dumb or clouded Oracle ...
>
> The necessary stress on 'he' which prolongs the second line cannot prevent a fairly rapid transition to the 'Who' of the next line, thus keeping 'But only he' comparatively short by comparison with the preceding and following lines. (22)

Page's understanding of Patmore comes to the test in his scansion according to the dipodic theory of a passage from 'Deliciae Sapientiae de Amore'. He begins by explaining how he plans to go about it:

> I will attempt to scan a passage of Patmore in groups of four syllables, or groups having the time of four syllables, each beginning with an accented syllable, and I have only to remind the reader that (according to Patmore) adjacent accents must be divided by a pause, usually equal to one syllable, but (it would seem) by a pause having the time of three syllables if they are equal accents; — by a pause or by a prolongation; for certainly we have to allow for a prolongation of syllables. Thus Patmore says that
>
> Come, see rural felicity,
>
> 'is a verse having the full time of four dactyls, the first two being each represented by a single syllable'. And we must be allowed to pronounce two adjacent syllables in the time of one. Indeed, we are constrained by nothing but the laws of music, and I shall use the tonic sol-fa notation to set out the verse. In that notation Patmore's 'dipode' would be represented thus:
>
> |: | :|
>
> the long bars representing major accents, and the short bars minor accents. Empty spaces represent pauses, and the prolongation of a note in music or a syllable in verse is represented by as many dashes as are required.

There follows the transcription itself:

:|Lo:-|ve:|light:for|me:-|-:|:

Thy|rudd-:iest|bla-:zing|tor:-|-:ch|:|:

That|I: al-|beit: a|beg-:gar|by:the|Por:-|ch:

Of the|gl:ad|Pal-:ace|of: Vir-|gin-:i-|ty:|:

May|gaze:with-|in:and|sing:the|pomp:I|see:-|:

:|Fo:-|r:|crown'd:with|ro-:ses|al:l|:
'Tis|there:O|Love:they|keep:thy|fes-:ti-|val:|:
But|first:warn|off:the|be-:at-|if-:ic|spo:t|:|
Tho:-|-:se|wret:ch-|ed:|who:have|n:ot|
Ev'n:a-|far:be-|held:the|shi-:ning|wa:-|ll:
And|those:who|once:be-|hol-:ding|have:for-|got:|:
And|tho:-|-:se|mo:st|vile:who|dr:ess|:
The|char-:nel|spec-:tre|dre:-|-:ar|:|:
Of|ut-:ter-|ly:dis-|hal-:low'd|noth-:ing-|ness:|:
In|that:re-|ful-:gent|fa:-|:me|:|:
And|cry:-|-:|Lo: -|- :|He:-|re:
And|na:-|-: me|:|:
The|La:dy|:whose|smiles:in-|fla:me|:|:
The|Sph:-|-:ere|:|:|:|:|

He concludes on a note somewhat less than confident:

> It will be seen that I have succeeded in giving each line but one the time of twelve syllables. I believe the lengthened syllables do represent my own reading. I am not sure of the end-pauses, nor do I feel confident that Patmore would have endorsed my notation, nor that I shall persuade anyone else. I have not convinced myself. But the attempt seemed worth making. (23)

Page is right in suspecting that his transcription falls short of being a faithful illustration of Patmore's theory. In an understandable attempt to reduce the proportion of silence to sound demanded by Patmore, he has made his notation too complicated. To begin with, Page takes as his basic measure a 'trimeter', with the time of twelve syllables; whereas Patmore states unequivocally that the measure of the iambic ode is a 'tetrameter'. Apart from this, many of the odes include no lines of more than twelve syllables, and it might appear that these would be more conveniently read into the time of 'trimeters'. But no line of as many as twelve syllables could be read as a 'trimeter' in any case, since according to Patmore all verses longer than the 'heroic' must have a middle pause or caesura. Then, Page assumes that in the shorter lines some syllables should be prolonged, and marks them accordingly; but Patmore explicitly allows any amount of catalectic pause up to the time of fourteen syllables, thus ruling out prolongation as such.

I shall give a scansion of the same passage following as closely as possible Patmore's declared principles. I make allowance for two kinds of internal pause: the caesura in lines longer than the 'heroic', and the pause between adjacent accents. Like Page, I shall admit occasional dipodes wholly or in part in 'triple cadence', with two (or even, with the help of elision, three) unaccented syllables having the time of one in 'common cadence'. This is necessary whenever a line begins with an accented syllable — another instance of the obtrusive reality of accent disturbing Patmore's scheme.

I shall adopt Page's symbols for the major and minor accent of the dipode, omitting the rest of his notation, and indicating a pause equivalent to one syllable by a dot as before:

.|Love .|light for|me .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
Thy|ruddiest|blazing|torch .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
That|I al|beit a|beggar|by the|Porch .|. .|. .|.
Of the|glad .|Palace|of Vir|gini|ty .|. .|. .|.
May|gaze with|in and|sing the|pomp I|see .|. .|. .|.
For|crown'd with|roses|all .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
'Tis|there O|Love they|keep thy|festi|val .|. .|. .|.
But|first warn|off the|bea|tific|spot .|. .|. .|.
Those|wretched|who have|not .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
.|Even a|far be|held the|shining|wall .|. .|. .|.
And|those who|once be|holding|have for|got .|. .|. .|.
And|those .|most .|vile who|dress .|. .|. .|. .|.
The|charnel|spectre|drear .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
Of|utter|ly dis|hallow'd|nothing|ness .|. .|. .|.
In|that re|fulgent|fame .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
And|cry .|Lo .|here .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
And|name .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
The|Lady|whose .|smiles in|flame .|. .|. .|. .|.
The|Sphere .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.

This passage includes two examples of the shortest possible line in Patmore's system — two syllables — with the longest possible catalectic pause; but no instance of a line longer than the 'heroic'. The same tendency towards short lines and long pauses is found in 'A Farewell', one of the most representative of the odes:

With|all my|will but|much a|gainst my|heart .|. .|. .|.
We|two now|part .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
My|Very|Dear .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
Our|solace|is the|sad .|road .|lies so|clear .|. .|.
It|needs no|art .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
With|faint a|verted|feet .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
And|many a|tear .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
In|our op|posed|paths to|perse|vere .|. .|. .|.
Go|thou to|East .|I .|West .|. .|. .|. .|.
We|will not|say .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
There's|any|hope it|is so|far a|way .|. .|. .|.
But|O my|Best .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
When the|one .|darling|of our|widow|head .|. .|. .|.
The|nursling|Grief .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
Is|dead .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
And|no .|dews .|blur our|eyes .|. .|. .|. .|.
To|see the|peach-bloom|come in|evening|skies .|. .|. .|.

Per|chance we|may .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
Where|now this|night is|day .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
And|even|through .|faith of|still a|verted|feet .|. .|.
.|Making full|circle|of our|banish|ment .|. .|. .|.
A|mazed|meet .|. .|. .|. .|. .|. .|.
The|bitter|journey|to the|bourne so|sweet .|. .|. .|.
.|Seasoning the|termless|feast of|our con|tent .|. .|. ./.
With|tears of|recog|nition|never|dry .|. .|. .|.

Alice Meynell, in a passage quoted by Page (24), remarked that the shorter lines in this ode have a tendency to run together into 'heroic' lines, thus: 'With faint, averted feet / And many a tear', 'Go thou to East, I West. / We will not say', and 'Perchance we may, / Where now this night is day' — although the last example would naturally be divided by the internal rhyme. Of course, when the lines are filled out with pauses according to Patmore's system this effect disappears.

The last line but one has twelve syllables, and would require a caesura if it stood alone; but here it becomes an 'heroic' through the acceleration of the first few syllables in 'triple cadence'. For an instance of very long lines with little or no catalectic pause, one must go to the opening lines of the ode 'To the Unknown Eros':

What | rumour'd | heavens | are . | these . | . . | . . | . . | .
Which | not a | poet | sings . | . . | . . | . . | . . | .
O | Unknown | Eros | What this; breeze . | . . | . . | . . | .
Of | sudden | wings . | . . | . . | . . | . . | . . | .
. | Speeding at | far re | turns of | time . | . from | inter | stellar
| space
To | fan my | very | face . | . . | . . | . . | . . | .
And | gone as | fleet . | . . | . . | . . | . . | . . | .
Through | deli | catest | ether | feathering | soft their | soli | tary
| beat
With | ne'er a | light . | plume . | dropp'd nor | any | trace . | . . | .
To | speak of | whence they | came . | . or | whither | they
de | part . | .

The line 'Through delicatest ether feathering soft their solitary beat' cannot possibly be made to fit Patmore's scheme. Without pauses, and with 'feathering' considered as two syllables after elision, it stands as a full 'tetrameter' of sixteen syllables. But with the caesura required in a line of this length, it would be scanned

Through | deli | catest | ether | feathering | soft . | . their
| soli | tary | beat,

and is thus hypercatalectic, or in other words, according to Patmore's own theory, non-metrical.

Apart from a few cases like this one, it has been seen that Patmore's verse may be scanned according to his principles; but this is not to say that it should be, or that the principles themselves are valid. In fact, the objections made earlier are so serious as to rule out the possibility that Patmore's theory of prosody is the right one. Thus it must be concluded that the odes are really, despite Patmore's denial, 'irregular'. It does not follow that they are prosodically unsuccessful; they satisfy the ear as do the best modern examples of 'free verse'.

Chapter Two: Notes

1. 'Essay on English Metrical Law', Collected Poems (London, 1886), ii, p. 232.
2. Ibid., p. 228.
3. Ibid., pp. 229-230.
4. Ibid., p. 230.
5. Ibid., pp. 230-231.
6. Ibid., p. 231.
7. Ibid., p. 247.
8. Ibid., p. 258.
9. Ibid., p. 225.
10. Ibid., p. 242.
11. Ibid., p. 239.
12. Ibid., p. 240.
13. Ibid., p. 243.
14. Ibid., pp. 244-245.
15. 'In Memoriam', North British Review (1850), p. 542.
16. 'Essay', p. 244.
17. The Mind and Art of Coventry Patmore (London, 1957), p. 239.
18. 'Essay', p. 227.
19. Ibid., p. 243.
20. Patmore, A Study in Poetry (Oxford, 1933), p. 150.
21. Ibid., p. 158.
22. Coventry Patmore, p. 277.
23. Patmore, pp. 168-170.
24. Ibid., p. 155.

Chapter Three

HOPKINS

The prosodic theories of Gerard Manley Hopkins have aroused interest and comment from the first. His writings on the subject, known only to a few during his lifetime, have become more familiar since the appearance of Bridges' edition of the Poems in 1918, and have had a major influence on the formal development of modern verse.

The chief sources are an essay on 'Rhythm and the Other Structural Parts of Rhetoric — Verse', included in the Notebooks and Papers, and the 'Author's Preface' to the Poems. There are also the notes which Hopkins supplied in some of his manuscripts, as well as many references in the correspondence. The earlier of the two main documents — the essay on 'Rhythm' — is in the nature of a general guide to his views on prosody; while in the 'Preface' he gives an account of the novel prosodic system which he evolved for his own later verse.

In 'Rhythm', Hopkins at the outset attempts to classify the elementary components of prosody:

> ... we may find the kinds of possible verse by the kinds of resemblance possible between syllables. These are —
>
> (1) Musical pitch, to which belongs tonic accent
>
> (2) Length or time or quantity so called
>
> (3) Stress or emphatic accent; arsis and thesis

> (4) Likeness or sameness of letters and this some or all and these vowels or consonants and initial or final. This may be called the lettering of syllables
> (5) Holding, to which belong break and circumflexion, slurs, glides, slides etc. (1)

The fourth of these has to do with 'timbre', or the class of segmental phonemes; the first and third with pitch and stress respectively; while certain aspects of duration are listed under two headings, 'quantity' perhaps referring to intrinsic syllabic length, and 'holding' to devices of timing within the metrical framework. There is no mention of the isochronic principle, which, of course, would not appear on the syllabic level.

Hopkins then elaborates, in a characteristic metaphor, on the relation between pitch and stress, indicating the dominance of stress in English:

> ... the accent of a word means its strongest accent, the accent of its best accented syllable. This is of two kinds — that of pitch (tonic) and that of stress (emphatic). We may think of words as heavy bodies, as indoor or out of door objects of nature or man's art. Now every visible palpable body has a centre of gravity round which it is in balance and a centre of illumination or highspot or quickspot up to which it is lighted and down from which it is shaded. The centre of gravity is like the accent of stress, the highspot like the accent of pitch, for pitch is like light and colour, stress like weight, and as in

> some things as air and water the centre of gravity is either unnoticeable or changeable so there may be languages in a fluid state in which there is little difference of weight or stress between syllables or what there is changes and again as it is only glazed bodies that shew the highspot well so there may be languages in which the pitch is unnoticeable.
>
> English is of this kind, the accent of stress strong, that of pitch weak — only they go together for the most part. (2)

His remarks on prosody are full of such figurative language, sometimes with the result that his literal meaning is uncertain. He defines the accent of stress in more prosaic terms:

> Accent of stress has been explained — It is the bringing out of the sound of a syllable, especially of its vowel-sound. It is also almost necessarily a heightening of the same syllable in loudness. Unaccented syllables on the contrary are both slurred and soft. An accented syllable is equal to two unaccented roughly speaking but no two weak accents in a word are exactly equal. Commonly those next to the strong are weakest. Perhaps in some people's mouth the strong accent may be equal to all the other accents of the word ..... But some words have a subordinate strong accent — *úndersta̋nding*, *óvercőme*. (3)

What is unusual here is the notion that ratios of stress are perceptible and can in some way be measured in reading. Ideas of proportion and equivalence have been prevalent in connection with theories of quantity and time, but rarely, if ever, have they been applied to stress. Thus, many writers have held that one 'long' syllable equals two 'short', or that all the feet of a poem should be of equal length; but few have claimed that the difference of strength between accented and unaccented syllables could be expressed as a ratio, or that different accentual feet should be equal in total stressing or 'weight'. To Hopkins this was only a vague impression; in practical terms, such ratios could only be verified by measuring in decibels the intensity of each individual sound — not a method to be recommended in prosody. (It is possible that a system of balanced stress grouping might be worked out with Trager and Smith's four degrees of stress — two weak stresses might be taken as the equivalent of one tertiary; three weak stresses, of one secondary; and four weak stresses, of one primary. However, this has never yet been attempted, and would certainly not apply to Hopkins.) At any rate the concept of 'stress equivalence' was clearly important to Hopkins, since he brought it up on several different occasions. In his discussion of what he calls the 'circumflex' accent he seems to blur the distinctions between stress, time, and pitch:

> When we contract two or more syllables into one we try to give as far as possible the new syllable the properties which all the old had or when we make a word of one

> or fewer syllables stand for a word of more syllables; it thus comes to have the heights of two or three tonic accents and the stresses or strengths of two or three accents of stress. This is circumflex accent .... (4)

The 'circumflex' is explained more clearly elsewhere.

According to Hopkins, English 'quantity' has no ratios comparable to those of stress:

> The length so called of syllables in English, by which _wind_ in the ordinary way is short and as rhymed to _bind_ long or _sit_, _got_, _hat_, _met_ short, _sight_, _goat_, _hate_, _meet_ long, is rather strength than length of syllable. Undoubtedly there is a difference of length and so also when you add consonants — _thinkst_ is longer than _thick_, _laststs_ than _lass_ etc but not in the Greek way by ratios of 1:2. (5)

Some modern linguists (such as Gimson, whose work on this question was cited in the first chapter) would agree that the 'long' vowels are not necessarily of greater duration than the others; but would add that they are distinguished not by 'strength', but by quality or timbre. Hopkins is never very explicit in his remarks on quantity. On the whole, he seems rather to lean towards some sort of isochrony; and he must have realized, as Patmore did, that fixed syllabic length and isochronic division by accents are mutually exclusive as principles of metre. It is time, he says, which determines the rhythm and feet in accentual verse:

> .... how are we to determine the _rhythm_ and the _feet_? In quantitative verse (which already has time) by the _beat_,

> in accentual (which already has beat/ in accent) by the time. We must then define rhythm, foot, beat. *Beat*, Latin *ictus*, is metrical accent, *the* beat, that is the strong beat, as *the* accent is the strongest accent, is the strongest beat of a foot. A *foot* is two or more syllables, running to as many as four or five, grouped about one strong beat. (6)

This statement can only refer to the isochronic aspect of timing, and is perhaps most relevant when applied to the special concept of the foot which Hopkins was to expound later in the 'Preface'. Some later observations about accentual verse show the direction which his thoughts were to take:

> This beat-rhythm allows of development as much as time-rhythm wherever the ear or mind is true enough to take in the essential principle of it, that beat is measured by stress or strength, not number, so that one strong may be equal not only to two weak but to less or more. (7)

He gives a number of illustrations, including four lines of Shakespeare —

Tóad that únder cóld stóne

and Sléep thou fírst i'th chármed pót

and Why should thís désert bé?

and Thóu for whóm Jóve would swéar.

The paper on 'Rhythm' is best regarded as a preliminary sketch; some of the ideas which Hopkins first set down in these notes were included among his mature conclusions on prosody, while others were modified or abandoned.

The most definitive account of his prosodic theory which Hopkins has left is the 'Author's Preface'. He begins it with a description of conventional metre, or in his term, 'Running Rhythm'. (This would cover his own early poems, which are metrically orthodox.) In running rhythm all feet must have either two or three syllables; these are grouped around one accented syllable, the 'stress', the unaccented syllable or syllables being called the 'slack'. Hopkins explains the rhythm and scansion of running rhythm as follows:

> Feet (and the rhythms made out of them) in which the stress comes first are called Falling Feet and Falling Rhythms, feet and rhythm in which the slack comes first are called Rising Feet and Rhythms, and if the stress is between two slacks there will be Rocking Feet and Rhythms. These distinctions are real and true to nature; but for purposes of scanning it is a great convenience to follow the example of music and take the stress always first, as the accent or the chief accent always comes first in a musical bar. If this is done there will be in common English verse only two possible feet — the so-called accentual Trochee and Dactyl, and correspondingly only two possible uniform rhythms, the so-called Trochaic and Dactylic. But they may be mixed and then what the Greeks called a Logaoedic Rhythm arises. (8)

(Scholars have pointed out that this use of the term 'logaoedic' is technically not quite correct; but for the present it will do as well as any other.) Hopkins makes it clear that scanning a poem in one way throughout — with all the feet either beginning or ending with the stress — is for him strictly a matter of convenience; but the idea that such conventional metres as the common 'iambic' should be scanned in 'falling rhythm' is nonetheless a prosodic oddity.

He goes on to say that in running rhythm two licences are commonly allowed. The first of these is the use of reversed feet (for instance, the substitution of a 'trochee' for an 'iamb'), which as Hopkins remarks has been the universal practice of English poets since Chaucer. The second licence, which he calls 'counterpoint rhythm', is really an extension of the first:

> If however the reversal is repeated in two feet running, especially so as to include the sensitive second foot, it must be due either to great want of ear or else is a calculated effect, the superinducing or mounting of a new rhythm upon the old; and since the new or mounted rhythm is actually heard and at the same time the mind naturally supplies the natural or standard foregoing rhythm, for we do not forget what the rhythm is that by rights we should be hearing, two rhythms are in some manner running at once and we have something answerable to counterpoint in music, which is two or more strains of tune going on together, and this is Counterpoint Rhythm. (9)

It is this 'counterpoint', Hopkins says, which produces the effect of irregularity in the choruses of Milton's Samson Agonistes.

Counterpoint, it should be noted, is a rare but acceptable variation of conventional rhythm, and not a separate metrical principle. Under certain conditions, however, it may turn into something else:

> .... in fact if you counterpoint throughout, since one only of the counter rhythms is actually heard, the other is really destroyed or cannot come to exist, and what is written is one rhythm only and probably Sprung Rhythm. (10)

The prosodic writings of Hopkins are largely devoted to the exposition of his theory of 'sprung rhythm', which is itself an attempt to explain his own practice in some of his later poems. In a letter to R.W. Dixon dated 1878 — five years before the 'Preface' was written — he gave an account of the conception of this theory:

> I had long had haunting my ear the echo of a new rhythm which now I realised on paper. To speak shortly, it consists in scanning by accents or stresses alone, without any account of the number of syllables, so that a foot may be one strong syllable or it may be many light and one strong. I do not say the idea is altogether new; there are hints of it in music, in nursery rhymes and popular jingles, in the poets themselves, and, since then, I have seen it talked about as a thing possible in critics. (11)

He gives in the 'Preface' some other examples of older verse which he believes to have been written in the 'new rhythm':

> .... though Greek and Latin lyric verse, which is well known, and the old English verse seen in 'Pierce Ploughman' are in sprung rhythm, it has in fact ceased to be used since the Elizabethan age, Greene being the last writer who can be said to have recognized it. (12)

He had no first-hand knowledge of Coleridge's 'new principle', but referred to it in another letter to Dixon:

> I cannot just now get at Coleridge's preface to Christabel. So far as I can gather from what you say and I seem to have seen elsewhere, he was drawing a distinction between two systems of scanning the one of which is quite opposed to sprung rhythm, the other is not, but might be developed into, that. (13)

The general nature of 'sprung rhythm' will have become apparent from these quotations. In the 'Preface' Hopkins makes his final and most complete statement of the theory:

> Sprung Rhythm, as used in this book, is measured by feet of from one to four syllables, regularly, and for particular effects any number of weak or slack syllables may be used. It has one stress, which falls on the only syllable, if there is only one, or, if there are more, then scanning as above, on the first, and so gives rise to four sorts of feet, a monosyllable and the so-called accentual Trochee, Dactyl, and the First Paeon. And there will be four corresponding natural rhythms; but nominally the feet are mixed and any one may follow any other. (14)

As was suggested above, the special character of the feet in sprung rhythm makes an isochronic interpretation possible: since the feet correspond exactly to the spaces between accents, they could be thought of as equal-timed sound-groups. This is nowhere actually confirmed by Hopkins, although some ambiguous comments of his have been taken to confirm it. That he thought of sprung rhythm primarily in terms of stress-counting is undeniable. In a few passages, however, he seems to equate stressing and timing, so that his meaning might be taken in one of two ways: either he imagined the feet in sprung rhythm to be isochronous, like Patmore's dipodes; or else he regarded them as equivalent in total stressing or 'weight'. The following statement from the 'Preface' is open to both interpretations:

> In Sprung Rhythm, as in logaoedic rhythm generally, the feet are assumed to be equally long or strong and their seeming inequality is made up by pause or stressing. (15)

On the whole, it appears that Hopkins favoured the concept of stress equivalence above that of isochrony. In a letter to Dixon he declares explicitly that whereas classical verse was equal-timed, it is the principle of balanced stressing that applies to English accentual verse:

> This practice is founded upon an easily felt principle of equal strengths, as in the classic hexameter the substitution of spondees for dactyls is founded on the principle of equal lengths (or times). (16)

and again

> What I mean is clearest in an antithesis or parallelism, for there the contrast gives the counterparts equal stress; e.g. 'sanguinary consequences, terrible butchery, frightful slaughter, fell swoop': if these are taken as alternative expressions, then the total strength of sanguinary is no more than that of terrible or of frightful or of fell and so on of the substantives too. (17)

Thus, the assumption of many critics that Hopkins adhered to the isochronic theory is not supported by any conclusive evidence in his writings.

These complications arise from the supposed equality of feet in sprung rhythm. Leaving this question aside, the governing principle of the new rhythm as expounded up to this point is clear enough: it consists in the numbering of accents alone, as opposed to counting syllables with some regard for the placing of the accent, as in the traditional English metres. As Hopkins develops his theory, however, some difficulties are encountered.

Hopkins says in the 'Preface' that two sorts of licence are 'natural to sprung rhythm'. Both of these are of such a kind as to disrupt the system of stress-counting which is the measure's one unifying principle. How they can be 'natural' to it is by no means clear. The first and more readily granted licence is the use of 'rests', as in music. This idea is already familiar as the chief premise of Patmore's theory; Hopkins does not rely upon it so heavily, for he declares that the only example of it to be found in his book is that in the second line of 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo'. It is marked there by suspension points:

> How to kéep — is there ány any, is there none such,
>   nowhere known some, bow or brooch or braid
>   or brace, láce, latch or catch or key to keep
>
> Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, . . .
>   from vanishing away?

There is actually another example, indicated in the same way, in the opening line of 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves':

> Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable, vaulty,
>   voluminous, . . stupendous

The 'rests' in these cases are intended to take the place of strong accents. Structural pauses of this kind are theoretically not out of place in a system based on strict timing, like that of Patmore; here, where the verse is controlled only by the numbering of speech-stresses, they may well be.

The second licence demanded by Hopkins is not so easily explained or judged. This is the inclusion of 'hangers' or 'outrides':

> ... that is one, two, or three slack syllables added to a foot and not counting in the nominal scanning. They are so called

> because they seem to hang below the line or ride forward or backward from it in another dimension than the line itself, according to a principle needless to explain here. (18)

Despite the last comment, such a principle certainly does need to be explained further. It is perhaps the most difficult point in the whole theory of sprung rhythm; and this explanation of it is too fanciful to be of much help. The note supplied by Hopkins with the manuscript of his poem 'Hurrahing in Harvest' is a somewhat fuller account:

> Take notice that the outriding feet are not to be confused with dactyls or paeons, though sometimes the line might be scanned either way. The strong syllable in an outriding foot has always a great stress and after the outrider follows a short pause. The paeon is easier and more flowing. (19)

Hopkins himself had not always been very sure of the nature of his 'outrides'. In a letter to Bridges dated 1877 he wrote that they do not occur in sprung rhythm at all, and that 'Outriding feet belong to counterpointed verse, which supposes a well-known and unmistakeable or unforgetable rhythm' (20). He had changed his mind about this by the time the passages quoted above were written.

The difficulty is simply that a reader has no possible way of recognizing the 'outrides' when they occur, unless he is provided with the author's markings.

Since any number of slack syllables are allowed in sprung rhythm for special effects, the added licence of 'outrides' would appear to be redundant in any case. W.H. Gardner gives an interesting account of the subject; according to him 'Metrical "hangers", like flying buttresses, are both functional and decorative' (21). Some examples of the markings provided by Hopkins to indicate 'outriding feet' in his manuscripts — the only reliable guides to what he had in mind — will be quoted later in this chapter.

It should be noted that sprung rhythm, like Patmore's dipodic verse, is to be scanned continuously from one line to the next:

> Remark also that it is natural in Sprung Rhythm for the lines to be rove over, that is for the scanning of each line immediately to take up that of the one before, so that if the first has one or more syllables at its end the other must have so many the less at its beginning; and in fact the scanning runs on without a break from the beginning, say, of a stanza to the end and all the stanza is one long strain, though written in lines asunder. (22)

The idea of continuous scanning is clear enough, but the manner in which it is here proposed is rather surprising. The number of syllables in any line of sprung verse is indeterminate: so that when Hopkins says that a line may have extra syllables at the end, and that the number of syllables in the following line should then be reduced, he appears to be contradicting his own theory. Since all sprung feet begin with the stress, it would be more reasonable to assume that verse is 'rove over' when the slack syllables at the beginning of one line are assigned to the last foot of the preceding line.

Hopkins gives in the 'Preface' a brief summary of the notation which he uses in the manuscripts of his poems to indicate particular metrical effects. A more complete list is supplied with the 'B' manuscript of 'Harry Ploughman':

(1) ^ strong stress; which does not differ much from

(2) 𝄐 pause or dwell on a syllable, which need not however have the metrical stress;

(3) / the metrical stress, marked in doubtful cases only;

(4) ~ quiver or circumflexion, making one syllable nearly two, most used with diphthongs and liquids;

(5) ⌒ between syllables slurs them into one;

(6) ⌒ over three or more syllables gives them the time of one half foot

(7) ◡ the outride; under one or more syllables makes them extrametrical: a slight pause follows as if the voice were silently making its way back to the highroad of the verse (23)

To these may be added two further symbols: ∽ is used over reversed or counterpointed feet, as in the line

∽ ∽
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod

(from 'God's Grandeur'); while ⎴ over two adjacent accented syllables indicates a 'hovering stress' to be counted as a single metrical accent. The latter sign is explained in a note on the manuscript of 'To what serves mortal beauty', from which the following example may be taken:

> See: it does this: $\overbracket{\text{keeps warm}}$
> $\overbracket{\text{Men's wits}}$ to the things that are ....

The fourth item on Hopkins' list is the same 'circumflex' accent described in the essay on 'Rhythm', — the one which is supposed to make a syllable both longer and stronger than usual. The fact that so much of the notation is concerned with length shows that Hopkins attached some importance to matters of timing, although he did not make them the basis of his prosodic scheme.

There may be some foreshadowing of sprung rhythm in the earlier verse. In particular, 'Lines for a Picture of St. Dorothea' is often cited as the poem in which Hopkins made his first attempt at a metre based on accent alone. As such it is not an unqualified success. The first stanza, with the stresses marked by Hopkins, is as follows:

> I bear a basket lined with grass.
> Í am só líght and fáir

Men are amazed to watch me pass
Wíth the básket I béar.
Which in newly drawn green litter
Carries treats of sweet for bitter.

Not all of these lines would normally be read with the required four stresses; the fourth line especially cannot possibly be regular. Some of the stresses indicated by Hopkins later in the poem are equally doubtful, as

Bút they cáme fróm the Sóuth

and

Sérved bý méssengér?

Such readings, if indeed they are to be taken as examples of accentual metre, are so far off the mark as to suggest that Hopkins had a faulty understanding of the nature of stress. This question will be raised again in connection with the mature sprung verse.

The first full-fledged work in sprung verse, and the most ambitious poem in that measure which Hopkins was to attempt, is 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'. It was written in 1875, before the simple theory of sprung rhythm was given its final, elaborate shape; so that, according to Hopkins himself, there are no 'outrides' in the poem. Here is the first stanza, with the scansion proposed by W.H. Gardner (24):

Thóu màstering mé̑
Gòd! gíver of bréath and bréad;
Wórld's stránd, swáy of the séa;
Lórd of líving and déad;
Thou has bóund bónes and véins in me, fástened me flésh,
And áfter it álmost únmade, whát with dréad,
Thy dóing: and dóst thou tóuch me afrésh?
Óver agáin I féel thy fínger and fínd thée.

In this scansion, which is probably very close to what Hopkins intended, the disposition of stresses is on the whole natural and convincing; but the syllables marked with reduced stress in the first and second lines are really no weaker than those with the metrical stress. The pattern of this stanza is repeated throughout, the only change being in the first line, which in the second part of the poem has three stresses instead of two.

Only two of the poems in sprung verse — 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo' and 'Epithalamion' -- may be called 'free', in that the lines have no fixed number of stresses. Some of them have a recurring stanzaic stress-pattern, like the 'Deutschland'; but the majority are sonnets (often very irregular), with five, six, or in the case of 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves' eight, stresses to a line.

'The Windhover has been the subject of more critical analysis than any other poem of Hopkins. Its metrical structure has not escaped the general scrutiny. Since it is a representative example of the mature sprung verse, it will be singled out for special attention in this study as well.

The poem is in sonnet form, nominally with five stresses to a line; and is described by Hopkins in a note as being in 'falling paeonic rhythm, sprung and outriding'. The first published attempt to scan it was made by G.F. Lahey (25). Lahey used the traditional signs for long and short quantity (‾ and ˘) to indicate stress and slack:

Ĭ cāught / thĭs mōrn / ĭng mōrn / ĭng's mīn / ĭon, kīng-/
dōm ŏf dăylĭght's / dāuphĭn, / dāpplĕ-dăwn-drăwn /
Fālcŏn, ĭn hĭs / rīdĭng /
Ōf thĕ rŏllĭng / lēvĕl ŭndĕr / nēath hĭm stĕady̆ /
āir, ănd / strīdĭng /
Hīgh thĕre, hŏw hĕ / rūng ŭpŏn thĕ / rēin ŏf ă /
wīmplĭng / wīng^/
Ĭn / hĭs ēcstă / cȳ! / thĕn ōff, / ŏff fōrth / ĭn swīng,/
Ăs ă skāte's hĕel swĕeps / smōoth / ŏn ă bōw-bĕnd:
thĕ/hūrl ănd / glīdĭng /
Rĕbūffed / thĕ bīg / wīnd.^/My̆ hēart / ĭn hīd / ĭng/
Stīrred fŏr ă / bīrd, — thĕ ă / chīeve ŏf, thĕ /
māstĕry̆ ŏf thĕ / thīng! /

Brŭte bēauty̆ ănd / vālŏur ănd / āct, ŏh, / āir,
prīde, / plūme, hĕre /
Būcklĕ! / ĀND thĕ fĭre thăt / brēaks frŏm thĕe /
thēn, ă / bīlliŏn /
Tīmes tŏld / lōvelĭer, mŏre / dāngĕrŏus, / Ō my̆
chĕvăl / iēr!

Nŏ / wōndĕr ŏf ĭt: / shēer / plōd măkes / plōugh
dŏwn / sīlliŏn /
Shīne, ănd / blūe-blĕak / ēmbĕrs, / āh my̆ / dēar, /
Fāll, / gāll thĕmsĕlves, ănd / gāsh /
gōld-vĕr / mīliŏn. /

Several errors are apparent in this reading. The first line is scanned entirely, and the fifth and seventh lines largely, in the 'iambic' measure, with the stress coming last in the foot; whereas Hopkins recommended that the stress always be taken first. 'Rising' and 'rocking' rhythms may be heard, but are not to be shown in the scansion. The 'amphibrach' (˘—˘) in the fifth line, the two five-syllable feet (˘˘—˘˘) in the sixth, and the 'second paeon' (˘—˘˘) in the ninth, also begin with slack syllables, and so cannot have been intended by Hopkins. The foot 'āir, prīde' in the ninth line is invalid, since feet in sprung rhythm must have one and only one stress. Also, Lahey makes the second and third lines begin with unnatural stresses on '-dom' and 'of', perhaps in an effort to bring out the falling paeonic rhythm. This may be corrected by a proper application of the principle of 'rove over' verse, whereby the slack syllables at the beginning of a line are included in the last foot of the preceding line. Lahey has indicated only three examples: the fourth line running into the fifth, the seventh into the eighth, and the eleventh into the twelfth. The seventh line should not be 'rove over' at all; and by marking it so Lahey has created another invalid 'second paeonic' foot. Again, he is inconsistent in calling the sequence 'dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his' an 'outride', and yet making it a part of the nominal scansion of the poem.

Yvor Winters, after pointing out some of the shortcomings of Lahey's reading, suggested another version of the first four lines (26):

I caúght this mórning mórning's mínion, kíng-
dom of dáylight's dáuphin, dápple-dáwn-drawn Fálcon,
in his ríding
Of the rólling lével úndernéath him stéady aír,
and stríding
Hígh there, how he rúng upón the réin of a wímpling wíng.

He concluded that the passage is irregular, since only the first line has five stresses. However, Winters has marked several redundant stresses: the first syllable of 'underneath', the second syllable of 'upon', and possibly 'dawn' as the second element of a compound, might just as well be slack; so that only the third line need have more than the regular number of stresses.

The scansion which most accurately reproduces Hopkins' intention is probably that furnished by W.H. Gardner (27). Some of it must be regarded as authoritative: the 'outrides', marked with nether loops, are taken from the two extant manuscripts of 'The Windhover'; and a few of the stress-marks have the same conclusive support. The marks of 'hovering stress', on the other hand, are Gardner's own:

I / caught this / morning / morning's / minion, / king-
dom of / daylight's / dauphin, dapple- / dawn-drawn /
Falcon, in his / riding
Of the / rolling level under / neath him / steady /
air, and / striding /
High there, how he/rung upon the / rein of a / wimpling /
wing
In his / ecsta / sy! then / off, off / forth on / swing,
As a / skate's heel sweeps / smooth on a / bow-bend:
the / hurl and / gliding

Re/buffed the / big / wind. My / heart in / hiding /
Stirred for a / bird, — the a/chieve of, the / mastery
of the / thing!

Brute / beauty and / valour and / act, oh, / air, pride,/
plume, here /
Buckle! AND the / fire that / breaks from thee /
then, a / billion /
Times told / lovelier, more / dangerous, O / my cheval/ier!

No / wonder of it: / sheer / plod makes / plough
down / sillion /
Shine, and / blue-bleak / embers, / ah my / dear,
Fall, / gall them / selves, and / gash /
gold-ver/milion. /

Paull F. Baum, in his study of sprung rhythm, disputes the validity of the 'outrides' marked by Hopkins and made available by Gardner. He observes (28) that they do not fit the definition which Hopkins supplied in his note to 'Hurrahing in Harvest', since not all of them can be followed by a pause. Baum gives a list of extra-metrical syllables which might be explained as 'hangers' — 'dawn-drawn', 'underneath him', 'there, how', 'smooth', 'Brute', 'plume', 'from thee then', 'told lovelier' — but concludes by rejecting the whole idea of outriding feet.

Archibald A. Hill has attempted to elucidate a few points in the scansion of the 'Windhover' with the help of modern linguistic methods (29). The problem of adapting the four stresses of speech to the two-stress polarity of metrical convention was dealt with in the first chapter. Hill's solution, it will be remembered, was to regard the primary stress as always metrically strong and the quaternary as always metrically weak, with the two intermediate stresses counted as strong when surrounded by weaker stresses, and weak when surrounded by stronger ones. This procedure may be of great use in the analysis of traditional metre, but Hill is wrong in assuming that it can be applied equally well to sprung verse. For Hopkins, syllables are metrically strong or weak of their nature, and not in relation to the strength of adjacent stresses. Thus, the phrase 'shêer plód' is an 'iamb' according to Hill's principle; but Hopkins marked it 'shéer plod' to show that both words have the metrical stress. The added rule suggested by Smith -- that even groups of two syllables with the same degree of stress should be regarded as 'iambs' -- is ruled out altogether in the case of Hopkins, since the whole point of sprung rhythm is that two adjacent stressed syllables may both be metrically strong.

The first transcription offered by Hill is 'I câught thĭs mórnĭng / môrning's mínĭon', the slant line here representing a terminal juncture. He goes on to say that the internal break of punctuation in 'king-/dom' lengthens the plus juncture to a single bar and confers on the normally weak syllable '-dom' a tertiary stress. Then he argues that the word 'dapple' modifies 'Falcon' rather than 'dawn', so that the phrase is transcribed 'dâpplĕ-dâwndràwn Fálcŏn'. It appears that Hill would have the second line read as a series of trochaic feet:

... kíng-
dòm ŏf / dâylìght's / dáuphĭn, / dâpplĕ-/ dâwn-dràwn /
Fálcŏn / ...

This reading corresponds neither to Hopkins' intention, nor to the natural rhythm of the verse.

I shall attempt to transcribe 'The Windhover' as it might normally be read, marking four degrees of stress and using slant lines to indicate terminal junctures:

Ì câught thĭs mórnĭng / môrnĭng's mínĭon, / kîng-
dŏm ŏf dâylìght's dáuphĭn, / dâpplĕ-dàwn-dràwn
Fálcŏn, / ĭn hĭs rídĭng /
Ŏf thĕ rôllĭng lêvĕl ùndĕrnéath hĭm / stêady aír, /
ănd strîdĭng

Hígh thère, / hòw hĕ rúng / ŭpŏn thĕ rêin ŏf ă
wîmplĭng wíng /
Ĭn hĭs éctăsy̆! / thèn ôff, ôff fôrth ŏn swíng, /
Ăs ă skâte's héel / swêeps smôoth ŏn ă bów-bènd: /
thĕ hûrl ănd glídĭng /
Rĕbûffed thĕ bîg wínd. / My̆ hêart ĭn hídĭng /
Stîrred fŏr ă bírd, — / thĕ ăchíeve ŏf, / thĕ mástĕry̆
ŏf thĕ thìng! /

Brûte béauty̆ / ănd vâlŏur ănd áct, / ôh, áir, / príde, /
plúme / hère
Búcklĕ! / ÀND thĕ fíre / thăt bréaks frŏm thĕe thên, /
ă bîllĭŏn
Tîmes tôld lóvelĭĕr, / mòre dángĕrŏus, / Ô my̆ chèvălíer! /
Nô wóndĕr ŏf ĭt: / shêer plód / màkes plôugh dòwn
sîllĭŏn
Shíne, / ănd blûe-blèak émbĕrs, / âh my̆ déar, /
Fáll, / gáll thĕmsĕlves, / ănd gash gôld-vĕrmíliŏn. /

An inspection of this reading will suggest what kinds of stress Hopkins chose to carry the metrical accent. As a rule the lines have two or three peaks of primary stress; only the ninth has five of them. It is interesting, however, that in eight of the fourteen lines the total number of primary and secondary stresses is five. This

This is the closest approach Hopkins made to a consistent selection of metrical stresses.

Here is the most serious objection to sprung rhythm as practised by Hopkins: that in a system supposedly based on speech-stress, his allocation of stresses is often wilful and arbitrary. It is not uncommon for him to give one strong syllable the metrical stress and leave several others, equally strong, among the slack. Similarly, he sometimes marks the accent on syllables which in any normal reading would be weak. Yet Hopkins thought of sprung rhythm as the natural rhythm of English speech. In a letter to Bridges he wrote:

> Why do I employ sprung rhythm at all? Because it is the nearest to the rhythm of prose, that is the native and natural rhythm of speech, the least forced, the most rhetorical and emphatic of all possible rhythms, combining, as it seems to me, markedness of rhythm — that is rhythm's self — and naturalness of expression. (30)

Again in the 'Preface' he remarked of sprung rhythm that 'it is the rhythm of common speech and of written prose, when rhythm is perceived in them' (31).

Yvor Winters cites (32) the closing lines of 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves', with Hopkins' own markings, as an example of distorted accentuation:

> But thése two; wáre of a wórld where bút these / twó
> tell, each off the óther; of a rack
> Where, selfwrung, selfstrung, sheathe- and shelterless, /
> thóughts agáinst thoughts ín groans grínd.

Winters observes that these lines could be read and scanned quite naturally if it were not for the markings imposed on them by Hopkins. Later in his study Winters points out that the final lines of 'The Lantern out of Doors' are marked in the same unnatural manner (33):

> There, éyes them, heart wánts, care háunts, foot
> fóllows kínd,
> Their ránsom, théir rescue, ánd first, fást, last
> fríend.

He concludes that the system of sprung rhythm was a private invention of Hopkins, indecipherable without his markings, and based on unwarranted deformations of the language.

Walter J. Ong has attempted to explain such unusual stresses as special effects dictated by heightened emotion:

> Often the mark indicates an interpretation dictated by unusual emotional pitch, as the stress on *and* in *Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves*:
>
> . . . Heart, you round me right
> With: Óur évening is over us; óur night /
> whélms, whélms, ánd will end us.

> But an instance like this in the first line of Spring and Fall brings at first sight more difficulty:
>
> / / /
> Margaret, are you grieving
>
> Over Goldengrove unleaving?
>
> If this is sprung rhythm, how justify the stress on the last syllable of Margaret? .... The answer here lies, I think, in the thoughtful deliberation which marks the emotion of this poem and which brings to the interpretation an unusual second heavy accent as the speaker begins slowly and pensively. This second accent need not have the exact physical volume of the first, although it should be heightened psychologically at least. There is no need to explain this kind of enunciation in any other way than by noting its natural place in emotional speech. (34)

This explanation is confirmed up to a point by a remark made by Hopkins in the early essay on 'Rhythm':

> But emotional intonation, especially when not closely bound to the particular words will sometimes light up notes on unemphatic syllables and not follow the verbal stresses and pitches. (35)

It must be admitted, however, that some of the more extreme distortions cited above cannot be justified in this way.

One possible approach to sprung rhythm has not been touched on so far. This is the theory, first advanced by Harold Whitehall, that the verse of Hopkins is really not only isochronous but also 'dipodic'. In this view, the 'new rhythm' which haunted Hopkins' ear was essentially the same dipodic system described by

Patmore in his 'Essay'. There is no suggestion on Whitehall's part that Hopkins took over Patmore's theory without acknowledgement, but merely that the two poets arrived independently at similar conclusions. Margaret R. Stobie, on the other hand, has maintained that Hopkins actually adopted Patmore's ideas, while refining upon them to a considerable extent in his poetic practice:

> While Hopkins agrees with Patmore in the matters of rhyme and stanza, of isochronous measures and of syllabic time, his differences with him are significant ones. He first places the new measure on its true foundation as a rhythm of "common speech and written prose", rather than on Patmore's curious and unreliable "dipodic" rule. He breaks through the inflexibility of Patmore's strictures on the number of measures which may be contained in a single line of poetry. He shows the fallibility of Patmore's observations on the iambic pentameter line, and in the process he produces the most convincing rebuttal of all the terms of Patmore's law. Nevertheless, he uses Patmore's measure forcefully, subtly, brilliantly as a rhythmic basis of verse. (36)

'Dipodes' are in fact mentioned several times in Hopkins' writings. In the essay on 'Rhythm' he refers to the metron or double foot of classical Greek verse, remarking that it has a secondary accent (37). Commenting on Patmore's 'Essay' in a letter to Bridges, he admits that dipodes exist in verse, although not as a general principle (38). Again in the 'Preface' he mentions 'some unusual measures, in which feet seem to be paired together and double or composite feet to arise' (39). Hence, it is not impossible that some at least of Hopkins' poems are dipodic.

Whitehall gives a fairly convincing dipodic scansion of a section of 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves' (40). This is the poem referred to by Hopkins when he wrote in a letter to Bridges: 'This sonnet should be almost sung: it is most carefully timed in <u>tempo rubato</u>' (41). In Whitehall's notation, 'S' indicates a major accent, 'L' a minor accent, 'O' a weak or 'zero' accent, 'p' a pause in the unaccented position, 'P' a pause in the place of an accent, and slant lines the boundaries of 'dipodes':

```
Earnest, earthless, equal, attuneable, vaulty,
 S  0     L    0/  S  0   0 L  0  0/ S  0
                       voluminous, . . . stupendous
                        0 L 0  0/          0 L  0

Evening strains to be, time's vast, womb-of-all,
S 0 0     L     0  0/ S  p   L p / S  0  0
                       home-of-all, hearse-of-all night.
                        L   0  0/    S   0  0   L

Her fond yellow hornlight wound to the west, her wild
 0 / S    0  0   L  0/    S   0   0  L    0 / S
                       hollow hoarlight hung to the height
                        0  0   L  0/  S   0   0       p/

Waste; her earliest stars, earl-stars, stars principal,
 S p P  0 / S  00     L p / S p  L p /  S p  L  0 0
                       overbend us,
                       S 0  L  0/

Fire-featuring heaven ...
 S  p  L 0 0 /  S p  P —
```

In this scansion the passage would be irregular,not all of the lines being of equal time. The second line, since it is 'rove over', would not have the full time of four dipodes; while the third would have five dipodes instead of the regular four.

Yvor Winters does not accept Whitehall's dipodic explanation; he criticizes the above scansion, and remarks of the first line specifically that 'nothing save forewarning of some kind can indicate that the heavy accents are heavier than the light; so long as one regards the language as it really exists, all of the stresses are equal, and their equality is emphasized by the grammatical parallels: the meter as indicated is a pure fiction' (42). As Walter Ong, also commenting on Whitehall's position, rightly observed, 'If we hold a frame of fours in our mind, a set of "dipodies", we can find ourselves slipping all sorts of movements into it' (43). It may be that Hopkins wrote a few poems in 'double feet'; but even if this was the case, it seems most unlikely that he ever accepted Patmore's conception of strictly-timed dipodic scansion.

There can be no theoretical objection to a prosodic scheme based on the numbering of speech-stresses, provided that the choice of stresses to be counted in the scansion is subject to some fixed principle. Thus, the essential theory of sprung verse, shorn of such complications as 'outrides', is perfectly sound. Whether Hopkins successfully employed it to give his verse the desired regularity is another question. It has been seen that his selection of metrical stresses was often quite arbitrary. In such cases it may be that as he wrote Hopkins had in mind a particular rhythm which he was unable to impart to the verse itself, and which therefore had to be brought out by special marks. Like Patmore in his odes, Hopkins in many of his later poems was actually writing an effective kind of irregular verse, which he felt obliged to explain in terms of elaborate prosodic theories. Sir Herbert Read's assessment of sprung rhythm is undoubtedly a just one:

> Except for a few early poems which need not be taken into account, practically every poem written by Hopkins presents rhythmical irregularities. The poet himself attempted a theoretical justification of these, and it is an extremely ingenious piece of work. But there can be no possible doubt — and it is most important to emphasize this — that the rhythm of Hopkins' poems, considered individually, was intuitive in origin. (44)

Chapter Three: Notes

1. 'Rhythm and the Other Structural Parts of Rhetoric — Verse', The Note-Books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins, ed. Humphry House (London, 1937), p. 222.
2. Ibid., pp. 223-224.
3. Ibid., pp. 226-227.
4. Ibid., p. 225.
5. Ibid., p. 226.
6. Ibid., p. 227.
7. Ibid., p. 235.
8. 'Author's Preface', Poems, ed. W.H. Gardner (Oxford, 1948), pp. 5-6.
9. Ibid., p. 7.
10. Ibid., p. 7.
11. The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon, ed. Claude Colleer Abbott (London, 1935), p. 14.
12. 'Preface', p. 10.
13. Correspondence, p. 21.
14. 'Preface', pp. 7-8.
15. Ibid., p. 8.
16. Correspondence, p. 22.
17. Ibid., p. 22.
18. 'Preface', p. 9.
19. Poems, p. 229.
20. The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, ed. Claude Colleer Abbott (London, 1935), p. 45.
21. Gerard Manley Hopkins (London, 1944), p. 85 n.
22. 'Preface', p. 8.

23. *Letters*, opposite p. 262.

24. *Gerard Manley Hopkins*, p. 45.

25. *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London, 1930), pp. 103-104.

26. *The Function of Criticism* (Denver, 1957), p. 118.

27. *Gerard Manley Hopkins*, p. 99.

28. 'Sprung Rhythm', *PMLA*, lxxiv, No. 4, Part 1 (1959), p. 423.

29. 'An analysis of *The Windhover*', *PMLA*, lxx, No. 5 (1955), pp. 968-971.

30. *Letters*, p. 46.

31. 'Preface', p. 9.

32. *The Function of Criticism*, p. 86.

33. *Ibid*., p. 122.

34. 'Hopkins' Sprung Rhythm', *Immortal Diamond*, ed. Norman Weyand (New York, 1949), pp. 141-142.

35. 'Rhythm', p. 225.

36. 'Patmore's Theory and Hopkins' Practice', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, xix (1949), p. 77.

37. 'Rhythm', p. 227.

38. *Letters*, p. 119.

39. 'Preface', p. 5.

40. 'Sprung Rhythm', The Kenyon Critics, *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Norfolk, 1945), p. 47.

41. *Letters*, p. 246.

42. *The Function of Criticism*, pp. 121-122.

43. 'Hopkins' Sprung Rhythm', p. 147.

44. 'The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins', *English Critical Essays*, ed. Phyllis M. Jones (Oxford, 1933), pp. 360-361.

Chapter Four

BRIDGES

It has been seen that Patmore and Hopkins each pursued a single line of thought in all their prosodic writings, with only minor inconsistencies or changes of direction. All that Patmore wrote pointed to a theory of dipodic verse based on isochrony; while the various remarks made by Hopkins always tend to support a view of metre based on stress. (There is this difference of approach, that whereas Patmore tried to explain all verse in terms of his theory, Hopkins regarded sprung rhythm as only one of several principles of metre.) With Robert Bridges the case is again different. He evolved a body of prosodic theory less monolithic, more diverse, than the systems of Patmore and Hopkins.

Bridges, like all serious writers on the subject, regarded prosody as a special ordering of the elements of spoken language, and was careful to maintain the distinctions between those elements. With his musical training he could not have mistaken the three 'prosodic' attributes common to the sounds of music and speech:

> Supposing that you express the rhythm as you wish, you will find that you have freely used the only three means which are at your disposal. First, you will have distinguished some syllables by their comparative length and brevity. Secondly, you will have varied the pitch of your voice. Thirdly, you will have varied the strength of your voice, enforcing some syllables with greater loudness; and you will have freely combined these different components of rhythm. (1)

Bridges, unlike such writers as Patmore, does not begin with the assumption that all kinds of metre must be founded on one prosodic principle. On the contrary, he takes it for granted that particular aspects of language — the duration of syllables, the number of syllables in a given unit, the strength of stresses — may be singled out to serve as the bases of different metrical systems. He names three main kinds of prosody, asserting that all are equally valid:

> .... just as quantitive verse has its quantitive prosody, so syllabic verse has its syllabic prosody, and accentual verse will have its accentual prosody. All three are equally dealing with speech-rhythm, and they all approach it differently, and thus obtain different effects. (2)

In his view, classical Greek and Latin verse was based on quantity, but post-classical Latin verse, after losing its quantitative basis through linguistic and cultural changes, became syllabic; and following this model, most of the verse in modern European languages has also been syllabic. The traditional post-Chaucerian English metres are essentially syllabic in character, but the accent has come increasingly to assert itself: so that if the syllabic framework were to be removed, the metre would be accentual. According to Bridges, all three prosodic systems are applicable to English verse; and at different stages of his career he attempted to illustrate all of them in his own poems. This attitude may be contrasted with Patmore's conviction that all metre must of its nature depend on timing, and with Hopkins' emphasis on accentual prosody as the natural mode of English poetry.

The poems which Bridges wrote in conventional metres are properly outside the scope of this study. The analysis will be confined to his considerable production of experimental verse. This production falls into three distinct classes, corresponding to the division of prosodic theories outlined above. Examples of accentual verse are to be found chiefly in the Poems of 1879 and 1880, incorporated in Shorter Poems (1890); 'quantitative' verse is attempted in the 'Poems in Classical Prosody' included in Poetical Works (1912), and in Ibant Obscuri (1916); while a special kind of syllabic prosody is illustrated in October and Other Poems (1920), New Verse (1925), and The Testament of Beauty (1929). Each of these classes has theoretical support at some point in Bridges' various writings on prosody. Each will be dealt with in turn, with the relevant passages of metrical theory and poetic practice being presented together in each case.

Bridges' one thorough-going excursion into the realm of accentual verse was made quite early in his poetic career (in the years 1879 and 1880), and owed much to the influence of Hopkins. To what extent his version of 'sprung rhythm' resembles that of Hopkins is a question that will be explored later. For the present it should be noted that Bridges, whether or not he accepted Hopkins' system unreservedly at this time, made no sustained attempt to formulate his own theory of accentual prosody until much later. His first considerable work on the subject of metre, Milton's Prosody (1893), contains a full account of his views on accentual verse. The second edition (1901) includes a whole section 'On the Prosody of Accentual Verse', reprinted in an expanded form in the revised final edition of 1921. Of course, the theory of stress-metre advanced by Bridges in Milton's Prosody is not necessarily a reliable guide to his intentions in the early 'sprung verse'; he may have altered his conclusions during the long interval.

In order to understand Bridges' own prosodic theories it is necessary to attend to his explanation of Milton's metrical practice. Bridges and Hopkins agreed on the importance of Milton's work as a source of future developments in prosody. Hopkins, it will be recalled, thought that the choruses of Samson Agonistes represent an intermediate stage between 'counterpointed' and 'sprung' rhythm. For his part, Bridges derived from

Milton's example two entirely different metrical theories — one accentual and the other syllabic. The first of these will now be considered.

As Bridges explains it, the real nature of Milton's verse is syllabic. Every line must have its full complement of syllables, and there are no true instances of 'catalexis'. The opposite deviation, 'hypercatalexis', may seem to occur; but whenever one or more extra syllables are apparent to the ear, certain fixed laws of elision may always be called upon to reduce the line to regularity. (Bridges allows that such redundant syllables, although elided in the scanning, may have been pronounced in recitation.) The only place where Milton admitted an extra syllable was at the end of a line. While scrupulously observing this syllabic law, he did not feel obliged to preserve the 'iambic' alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables: only occasionally do his 'heroic' lines have exactly five stresses. Thus, by letting the stresses fall where they might within the syllabic framework, Milton captured (in _Samson_ especially) something of the rhythm of speech.

Bridges makes this the starting point of a discussion of the possibilities of stress-metre. He observes that if Milton had taken one further step, discarding the syllabic convention and counting speech-stresses instead, he would have arrived at the principle of accentual verse. In the first (1893) edition of the work, Bridges gives a clear account of that principle:

> If the number of stresses in each line be fixed (and such a fixation would be the metre), and if the stresses be determined only by the language and its sense, and if the syllables which they have to carry do not overburden them, then every line may have a different rhythm; though so much variety is not of necessity. (3)

In the section on accentual prosody, first published in the 1901 edition, his views on the subject are set forth in more detail. His method is to present a series of laws, dictated solely by his own ear, in order to define the character of the 'new prosody'. The most important of these laws, which seems obvious enough but actually cannot receive too much emphasis, is as follows:

> THE STRESSES MUST ALL BE TRUE SPEECH-STRESSES: i.e. the rhythm must never rely upon the metrical form to supply a stress which not being in the natural speech-intonation, is introduced only by the necessities of the metre. (4)

This principle emerges still more clearly in the course of a comment on the metre of Coleridge's 'Christabel' (from the expanded section on accentual prosody in the edition of 1921):

> If we take the first five lines of the poem

> 'Tis the míddle of níght by the cástle clóck
> And the ówls have awáken'd the crówing cóck.
> Tu — whít! — Tu — whóo!
> And hárk agáin! the crówing cóck
> How drówsilỳ it créw.
>
> we find, neglecting the ambiguous third line, which seems to have but two accents, the fifth is also deficient. In stress-verse this line can have only two accents thus
>
> How drówsily it créw
>
> but judging by other lines in the poem, it was almost certainly intended to have three, and if so, the second of these is a conventional accent; it does not occur in the speech but in the metre, and has to be imagined because the metre suggests or requires it; and it is plain that if the stress is to be the rule of the metre, the metre cannot be called on to provide the stress. (5)

Certainly Bridges understood the principle of scanning by speech-stresses when he wrote this; to what extent he had been able to apply it to his own early accentual verse will be seen shortly.

The other laws stated in Milton's Prosody are more doubtful, mainly because of the importance which Bridges attaches to quantity. His position is that although only stresses are counted in the prosody of accentual verse, the quantities are an important factor in the rhythm and must be taken into account. His notation shows many concessions to the idea of quantity in the classical sense. The sign ^ is used to indicate a stressed syllable whether long or short. The unstressed syllables, however, are classified according to length. Long unstressed syllables, which he calls 'heavy', are marked with the sign ‾ ; short unstressed syllables (marked ᵕ) include those which are simply short, and also those which are 'light'. This last term denotes syllables which would be long 'by position' according to the laws of classical prosody, but which are short in English. Bridges' system is greatly complicated by the introduction of these notions, which appear to have no kind of linguistic support. His attempt to write English 'quantitative' verse according to classical rules, which will be dealt with later, is at least comprehensible; but the idea that conventions of Greek prosody have any bearing on English accentual verse is not even that.

At any rate, it is with such distinctions in mind that Bridges tries to determine how accentual verse should be divided into feet. While going about this he puts forward a number of rules, two of which may be quoted: 'A heavy syllable must be contiguous with the stressed syllable that carries it' (6); and 'A stress will not carry more than one heavy syllable or two light syllables on the same side of it' (7). Thus, the scansion of accentual verse proposed by Bridges is actually subject to considerations of quantity. He provides the following list of possible feet conforming to his rules:

> We may now give a list of the common stress-units or feet, which are found in the kind of verse which we are describing.
> 1st. The bare stress ^ without any complement. This is frequently found ....
> 2nd. The two falling disyllabic feet:
> ∧ ∪
> ∧ —
> 3rd. The two rising disyllabic feet:
> ∪ ∧
> — ∧
> 4th. The britannics, or mid-stress trisyllabics:
> ∪ ∧ ∪
> — ∧ ∪
> ∪ ∧ —
> — ∧ —
> 5th. The so-called dactyl and anapaest, i.e. the falling and rising trisyllabics:
> ∧ ∪ ∪
> ∪ ∪ ∧
> 6th. The quadrisyllabics:
> ∪ ∧ ∪ ∪
> — ∧ ∪ ∪
> ∪ ∪ ∧ ∪
> ∪ ∪ ∧ —
> 7th. The five-syllable foot:
> ∪ ∪ ∧ ∪ ∪
> which will rarely occur in the rhythms which we are discussing. (8)

This system may be contrasted with that employed by Hopkins in his sprung verse (leaving aside the matter of quantity, to which Hopkins gave only sporadic attention). Like Hopkins, Bridges allows feet consisting of a single stressed syllable. Otherwise, however, the two schemes differ to a considerable extent. In Hopkins' theory, as set forth in the 'Preface', all feet are taken to begin with the stress; whereas Bridges includes feet in which the stress comes in the middle or at the end. Again, Bridges makes it a rule that in no feet can more than two unstressed syllables fall on the same side of the stress; but in Hopkins' sprung verse any amount of slack may follow the stress. In view of this rule, Bridges cannot admit such a foot as the 'first paeon'.

The 'Letter to a Musician on English Prosody' (1909) is in some ways the central document among Bridges' writings on metre. It is in this essay that he describes and assesses individually each of the three kinds of verse referred to in Milton's Prosody - accentual, quantitative, and syllabic. The account of accentual metre is essentially the same as that presented in the earlier work. He still maintains that this is the metre suggested by Milton's example:

> .... in his carefully composed later poetry Milton kept strictly to the syllabic rules, and never allowed himself any rhythm which could not be prosodically interpreted in this fictitious fashion — 'counted on the fingers'. Now the stress-system merely casts off this fiction of Milton's, and it dismisses it the more readily because no one except one or two scholars has ever understood it. (9)

As before, he seems to imply that the future of English verse belongs to accentual prosody, but adheres to the notion of quantity:

> What rules this new stress-prosody will set to govern its rhythms one cannot foresee, and there is as yet no recognized Prosody of stress-verse. I have experimented with it, and tried to determine what those rules must be; and there is little doubt that the perfected Prosody will pay great attention to the quantitive value of syllables, though not on the classical system. (10)

It should be kept in mind, when Bridges accentual verse in Shorter Poems comes to be discussed, that it was produced long before Milton's Prosody and the 'Letter to a Musician' were written. Since he was attempting to write 'sprung verse', it is possible that he was following a system much closer to that of Hopkins than the theories which he expounded later would indicate. The only remarks of his which can be confidently applied to these early poems are contained in a note attached to the Poems of 1880, and dated Christmas, 1879:

> The poems in the smaller type, like those similarly distinguished in the author's last series, are written by the rules of a new prosody, which may well exist by the side of the old. It is left to the judgement of the reader: but the author hopes that these verses will be read with attention to the natural quantity and accent of the

> syllables — for these are the interpretation of the rhythm — and not with the notion that all accents in poetry are alternate with unaccented syllables, nor with the almost universal prejudice that when two or more unaccented syllables intervene between two accented syllables the former must suffer and be slurred over: a prejudice which probably arises from the common misuse of unaccented for short syllables.
>
> The use of feet which correspond to paeons, and the frequent inversions of feet in these new rhythms, render it possible for four or five unaccented syllables to follow on each other.
>
> The author disavows any claim to originality for the novelty: this is almost entirely due to a friend, whose poems remain, he regrets to say, in manuscript. (11)

Bridges' concern with quantity is already apparent here. He differs from Hopkins in minor ways: for instance, he says that several slack syllables may come between the stresses, but does not mention the other possibility of two or more stresses coming together. (In fact, both patterns may be found in the poems.) Also, he refers to the inversion of feet; whereas in sprung rhythm, as Hopkins finally defined it, all feet are scanned the same way and no inversion is possible. It is important to remember, however, that this note was written four years before Hopkins gave his theory its final shape in the 'Preface'.

The Poems of 1879 include four pieces in smaller type; three more are added in the volume of 1880. The first group is comprised of 'A Passer-by', 'The Downs', and two sonnets. Here is my scansion of the first stanza of 'A Passer-by', with the stress-mark / over syllables which Bridges apparently intended to carry the metrical accent:

Whíther, O spléndid shíp, thy whíte sàils crówding,
Léaning acróss the bósom of the úrgent Wést,
That féarest nor séa rísing, nor ský clóuding,
Whíther awáy, fàir róver, and whát thy quést?
Ah! sóon, when Wínter has áll our váles opprést,
When skíes are cóld and místy, and háil is húrling,
Wilt thóu glíde on the blúe Pacífic, or rést
In a súmmer háven asléep, thy whíte sàils fúrling.

(The stresses on 'thóu glíde' were marked by Bridges.) From this example it appears that his grasp of the principle of scanning by speech-stresses was less than perfect. Three syllables — 'sails' in the first line, 'fair' in the fourth, and again 'sails' in the eighth — would naturally have the stress, but are suppressed by Bridges as if the metre were conventional. There are three instances of one stress following another without intervening 'slack': two in the third line and one in the seventh.

How this kind of 'sprung verse' should be divided into feet is problematical. Many ways are possible, but none has the required authority. Besides inversion, Bridges refers in his note to the use of feet corresponding to paeons; but there is no indication whether the first and fourth paeons are to be excluded, as in the system which he proposed later in Milton's Prosody. On the whole it must be concluded that there is not enough evidence to reconstruct the poet's intention in this matter.

The three poems printed in smaller type in Poems (1880) are 'London Snow', 'The Voice of Nature', and 'On a Dead Child'. 'London Snow' is the best known of Bridges' poems in the 'new prosody'; I shall attempt to scan it, marking only the main stresses as before:

> When mén were áll asléep the snów came flýing,
> In lárge whìte flákes fálling on the cíty brówn,
> Stéalthily and perpétually séttling and lóosely lýing,
>   Húshing the látest tráffic of the drówsy tówn;
> Déadening, múffling, stífling its múrmurs fáiling;
> Lázily and incéssantly flóating dówn and dówn:
>   Sílently sífting and véiling ròad, róof and ráiling;
> Híding dífference, máking unévenness éven,
> Into ángles and crévices sóftly drífting and sáiling.

All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;
And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
The eye marvelled — marvelled at the dazzling whiteness;
The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing;
Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
'O look at the trees!' they cried, 'O look at the trees!'
With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder:
When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:
But even for them awhile no cares encumber

Their mínds divérted; the dáily wórd is unspóken,
The dáily thóughts of lábour and sórrow slúmber
At the síght of the béauty that gréets them, for
the chárm they have bróken.

There are many instances of speech-stresses which Bridges omitted from his scansion; they are marked with the reverse accent \ . Also, the line 'Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing' has only four real speech-stresses, the accent on the last syllable of 'snowballing' being conventional and 'fictitious'. In general, however, the rhythm of the poem is most effective.

Jean-Georges Ritz suggests that the difference in the character of 'sprung rhythm' as practised by Hopkins and Bridges can be traced to a difference of poetic temperament:

> Bridges will seldom use monosyllabic feet; he is less intent on concentration and abrupt beats than Hopkins. In fact, the advantage of the new prosody lies for him in its flexibility, rather than in its passionate rush. Finally the difference between the two poets is, in the very use of sprung rhythm, one of mood and theme. The poet of storms and wrecks and harrowing spiritual conflicts could never describe the stately majesty of a splendid ship passing by, nor the lazy floating down of the snow,
>
> Hiding difference making unevenness even.
> ('London Snow', 8.)

> Symbolically these last words are most revealing. Bridges is the poet of 'stealthy' motion, of soft things 'loosely lying'; Hopkins could never make unevenness even. But we are not obliged to choose between the smoothness of the one and the rough-hewn forms of the other, since both possess intrinsic beauty. (12)

It has been seen that Bridges was at all times convinced of the importance of quantity in English prosody. For a brief period this became his exclusive concern, as he attempted to write verse based solely on quantity. Some remarks which he made in the 'Letter to a Musician' already point in that direction. For instance, he writes:

> Indifference to quantity is the strangest phenomenon in English verse. Our language contains syllables as long as syllables can be, and others as short as syllables can be, and yet the two extremes are very commonly treated as rhythmically equivalent. (13)

Again, in his remarks on the possible kinds of prosody he seems to favour the Greek system:

> The system of the Greeks was scientifically founded on quantity, because they knew that to be the only one of the three distinctions of spoken syllables which will give rhythm by itself. (14)

A few years after the 'Letter to a Musician' was first published, Bridges began to write specimens of 'quantitative' verse. The 'Poems in Classical Prosody' are included in the Poetical Works of 1912; Ibant Obscuri (1916) contains further examples. These poems are written according to a system similar to that of classical prosody, and originally formulated by a younger associate of Bridges, William Johnson Stone. Stone's pamphlet On the Use of Classical Metres in English (1898) was reproduced by Bridges as an appendix to the 1901 edition of Milton's Prosody.

Bridges attached a note to the 'Poems in Classical Prosody' purporting to account for their metre. In it he writes:

> Before writing quantitive verse it is necessary to learn to think in quantities. This is no light task, and a beginner requires fixed rules. Except for a few minor details, which I had disputed with Mr. Stone, I was bound to take his rules as he had elaborated them; and it was not until I had made some progress and could think fairly well in his prosody that I seriously criticized it. (15)

Bridges goes on to list a few minor differences with Stone over the laws which supposedly determine 'quantity' in English. He then claims that

> Though the difficulty of adapting our English syllables to the Greek rules is very great, and even deterrent — for I cannot pretend to have attained to an absolutely consistent scheme - yet the experiments

> that I have made reveal a vast
> unexplored field of delicate and
> expressive rhythms hitherto
> unknown in our poetry. (16)

Bridges himself in these remarks seems aware that such a system must of necessity be forced and unnatural. The fact is that English syllables have no consistent quantities which can be arranged in verse. The poems themselves are among the least impressive of Bridges' works. Only in occasional passages is it possible to glimpse the 'delicate and expressive rhythms' alluded to in his note — as for instance these lines from 'Wintry Delights':

> High noon's melting azure, his thin cloud-country, the landscape
>
> Mountainous or maritime, blue calms of midsummer Ocean,
>
> Broad corn-grown champaign goldwaving in invisible wind,
>
> Wide-water'd pasture, with shade of whispering aspen ...

Of course, the success of such passages is not to be taken as proof of the validity of the system itself.

At the time when he wrote the 'Letter to a Musician', Bridges did not think highly of the syllabic system of prosody. In it he assesses that system as follows:

> The 'prosody' of European syllabic
> verse may be roughly set out as
> follows:-

> (1) There must be so many syllables in the verse.
> (2) Any extra syllables must be accounted for by elision.
> (3) Any syllable may be long or short.
> (4) There is a tendency to alternate stress. This is honestly the wretched skeleton (indeed, in Milton's perfected 'iambics' we may add that any syllable may be accented or unaccented), and no amount of development can rebuild its hybrid construction. (17)

The same tone of disparagement appears in some of his other remarks:

> Criticism discovers two weaknesses in the system: one, the absence of any definite prosodial principle, the other, which follows from the first, the tendency for different and incompatible principles to assert themselves, indiscriminately overriding each other's authority, until the house is so divided against itself that it falls into anarchy. (18)

Nonetheless, Bridges must allow for the fact that Milton, for him the great master of English prosody, wrote all his verse within the confines of this system. At this stage, he believes that the excellence of Milton's verse lies in his use of accentual speech-rhythms, and not in the observance of syllabic rules:

> In the syllabic Prosody, in which the prosodial rules were so much relaxed, these speech-rhythms came in the best writers to be of first importance, and in Milton (for example) we can see

> that they are only withheld from absolute authority and liberty by the observance of a conservative syllabic fiction, which is so featureless that it needs to be explained why Milton should have thought it of any value. (19)

Bridges was later to change his mind on this question, and to regard Milton's handling of the syllabic system as an example to be followed. There is one comment in the 'Letter' which suggests his future line of thought:

> A free and simple basis (such as the syllabic system has) probably offers the best opportunity for elaboration .... On the simplest syllabic scheme it is impossible in English to write two verses exactly alike and equivalent, because of the infinite variety of the syllabic unit and its combinations: and these natural and subtle differences of value, though common to all systems of prosody, are perhaps of greater rhythmical effect in the syllabic rather than in the quantitive system. (20)

A long period elapsed before Bridges adopted the syllabic system. It was in emulation of Milton that he finally did so; in 'Humdrum and Harum-scarum, a lecture on free verse', published in 1922 (after he had already written some verse illustrating a new syllabic principle), he declared:

> In the art of English verse my own work has led me to think that there is a wide field for exploration in

> the metrical prosody, and that in
> carrying on Milton's inventions in
> the syllabic verse there is better
> hope of successful progress than
> in the technique of free verse as
> I understand it. (21)

Bridges wrote a number of poems in 'Neo-Miltonic Syllabics' before giving an explanation of the metre. The earliest of these are included in October and Other Poems (1920); most of the examples in New Verse (1925) were written in 1921. The metre introduced in these volumes was used later for the long philosophical poem The Testament of Beauty (1929). An idea of its character may be gained from the first stanza of 'Noel: Christmas Eve, 1913' (from October):

A frosty Christmas Eve
    when the stars were shining
Fared I forth alone
    where westward falls the hill,
And from many a village
    in the water'd valley
Distant music reach'd me
    peals of bells aringing:
The constellated sounds
    ran sprinkling on earth's floor
As the dark vault above
    with stars was spangled o'er.

In a note to October Bridges explained that this and a few companion pieces were examples of a new kind of syllabic verse, based on a continuation of Milton's practice.

In 1923 there appeared the 'Note on Neo-Miltonics', Bridges' only extended account of this new metre. He describes as follows the advantages which led him to adopt it:

> I saw that these twelves, or Alexandrines, had in Milton's practice no title to a fixed caesura. In all his work from earliest to latest he delighted in the Alexandrine without its hemistichs, and here was a promising field of freedom which it was most exciting to explore.
>
> I had no notion how the thing would hold together when thus apparently freed from all rule. It was plainly the freest of free verse, there being no speech-rhythm which it would not admit ..... one of the main limitations of English verse is that its accentual (dot and go one) bumping is apt to make ordinary words ridiculous; and since, on theory at least, there would be no decided enforced accent in any place in this new metre, it seemed that it might possibly afford escape from the limitations spoken of. (22)

The law of the metre, as Bridges explains it, is simple enough:

> This 12-syllable verse then is written by the rules of Milton's Prosody with only this difference, viz. that it forbids the extra-metrical syllable at the end of the verse. All its liberties follow logically from that development.

> The 'elision' of vowels and semi-vowels is the same as in Milton, and as with him optional; only it is less optional, since it is ruled by speech-practice and not by metrical demands; at least it was my intention that my 'elisions' should be quite natural. (23)

Later commentators have tried to enlarge on Bridges' account. A. Guérard, in his analysis of the new metre (24), maintains that the stresses and quantities are distributed freely within the twelve-syllable line, and that there is no division by feet. (The last point is without support from Bridges himself.) Elizabeth C. Wright is not satisfied with an explanation by syllabic rules alone: she holds that the lines, although not measured in quantitative feet, are really isochronous, and that Bridges 'had learned how to adjust the twelve syllables of various duration into lines of equal duration' (25). In the light of linguistic findings, this makes no sense; the only possible way to create some tendency towards equal timing in performance would be to build the lines from isochronic sequences bounded by strong stresses. But Bridges always thought in terms of syllabic quantity, which is not compatible with theprinciple of stress-timing.

Another feature which, according to Mrs. Wright, Bridges incorporated into his new metre but failed to mention in his writings, is the end-pause. (In a passage from the 'Letter to a Musician', cited by her, Bridges deals with the function of pause in metre, without referring to end-pause as such.) She tries to prove statistically that each line is concluded by a perceptible pause, and that these pauses belong to the metrical structure. Her supposed proof is that nearly half of the lines in The Testament of Beauty end with some form of punctuation; and that in many more cases the sense demands a pause, and a fussy punctuator might have used a comma. At this point it may be observed that if Bridges had intended to use end-pause with more than the normal frequency or regularity, he would probably have indicated it by means of the punctuation whenever it was possible to do so. Mrs. Wright believes that all of the remaining lines (amounting to about a quarter of the poem) should also have a pause, although the need for it would not normally be felt. These different kinds of 'pause', of course, are actually different junctures. Chatman, it will be recalled, defines 'enjambement' as one line running into the next without a terminal juncture intervening. Since there are innumerable instances of this in

The Testament of Beauty and the other poems in 'Neo-Miltonics', end-pause can hardly be a part of their metrical pattern. (Pike cites with approval (26) Robert Hillyer's recommendation that in reading verse every line should be followed by a pause: but if this is to be a universal feature of spoken verse, it cannot be peculiar to Bridges' metre.) In fact the distribution of junctures at the end of lines in 'Neo-Miltonic' verse shows no striking novelty. To demonstrate the point, here is one possible reading of the opening lines of 'Come Se Quando' (from New Verse):

> How thickly the far fields of heaven are strewn with stars! #
>
> Tho' the open eye of day shendeth them with its glare ||
>
> yet, if no cloudy wind curtain them nor low mist +
> of earth blindfold us, soon as Night in grey mantle |
> wrappeth all else, they appear in their optimacy |
> from under the ocean or behind the high mountains |
> climbing in spacious ranks upon the stark-black void: ||
> Ev'n so in our mind's night burn far beacons of thought |
>
> and the infinite architecture of our darkness, ||
> the dim essence and being of our mortalities, ||
> is sparkled with fair fire-flecks of eternity |
> whose measure we know not nor the wealth of their rays. #

The syllables to be elided have been underlined.

Bridges wrote some excellent verse both in the early accentual metre and in the late syllabic one. It cannot be said that he succeeded in presenting a unified or soundly based theory of prosody; but, like Patmore and Hopkins, he did introduce freer and more varied rhythms into English verse.

Chapter Four: Notes

1. 'A Letter to a Musician on English Prosody', *Collected Essays*, xi-xv (Oxford, 1933), p. 58.
2. *Milton's Prosody* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 110-111.
3. *Milton's Prosody* (Oxford, 1893), p. 71.
4. *Milton's Prosody* (Oxford, 1921), p. 92.
5. *Ibid*., pp. 87-88.
6. *Ibid*., p. 96.
7. *Ibid*., p. 100.
8. *Ibid*., p. 97.
9. 'Letter', p. 73.
10. *Ibid*., p. 74.
11. *Poems, Third Series* (London, 1880), p. 4.
12. *Robert Bridges and Gerard Hopkins* (London, 1960), p. 101.
13. 'Letter', p. 74 n.
14. *Ibid*., p. 66.
15. *Poetical Works* (London, 1953), p. 408.
16. *Ibid*., p. 408.
17. 'Letter', p. 70.
18. *Ibid*., pp. 67-68.
19. *Ibid*., p. 72.
20. *Ibid*., p. 71 n.
21. 'Humdrum and Harum-scarum', *Collected Essays*, ii-iii, (Oxford, 1928), p. 55.

22. 'Note', Collected Essays, xi-xv (Oxford, 1933), p. 90.

23. Ibid., pp. 90-91.

24. Robert Bridges (Cambridge, Mass., 1942), pp. 281-284.

25. Metaphor, Sound, and Meaning in Bridges' Testament of Beauty (Philadelphia, 1951), p. 25.

26. Intonation of American English (Ann Arbor, 1956), p. 11.

Chapter Five

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE METRISTS

A further insight into the relative positions of Patmore, Hopkins, and Bridges in the matter of prosody may be gained by considering the way in which they assessed each other's theories. In their published correspondence there are several passages of mutual criticism. These are instructive in more than one respect: commenting on their colleagues' work, the three poets were often able to clarify their own views.

The exchanges between Hopkins and Patmore leave the impression that they might have criticized one another's theories much more sharply than in fact they did — considering that their ways of approaching the subject were radically different. In a letter dated 1883 Hopkins commented at some length on Patmore's theory as expounded in the 'Essay'. From his opening remarks it appears that Hopkins had some serious objections which he chose not to voice on this occasion:

> I now make some remarks on the _Study of English Metrical Law_. There are some things in this essay I do not find myself altogether in agreement with, but on these I do not touch; I only point out what seem to be overstatements or understatements and so forth upon the ground there taken. (1)

In the second chapter it was pointed out that Patmore's failure to deal adequately with the phenomenon of stress is the central flaw in his system. Hopkins did not fail to perceive this; and in correcting the mistake he gave a detailed account of his own view of stress:

> The treatment of English spoken accent here is unsatisfactory: you nowhere say what it is. Now if, as you say, the learned are pretty well agreed what the old Greek accent was, which no living ear ever heard, we must surely be able to know and say with certainty what the English is, which we cannot even dispute about without exhibiting as fast as we open our mouths. If some books say it is long quantity, that is so grossly stupid as to need no refutation; it is enough to quote words — 'thŏ́rough pāced blắckguārd, ắgonīsing hĕ́adāche, mĕ́ssēngērs, cắttle mārket, ĭ́llūstrāting, Bĭ́llīngsgate, Lĭ́vērpo͞ol' and so on. But I do not remember ever hearing any sensible man say that. It is plain and, so far as I know, it is commonly agreed that it is stress. The Greek accent was a *tonic accent*, was tone, pitch of note: it may have included a stress, but essentially it was pitch. In like manner the English accent is *emphatic accent*, is stress: it commonly includes clear pitch, but essentially it is stress. Pitch totally disappears in whispering, but our accent is perfectly given when we whisper. But perhaps one ought further to explain what stress is.

> Stress appears so elementary an idea as does not need and scarcely allows of definition; still this may be said of it, that it is the making a thing more, or making it markedly, what it already is; it is the bringing out of its nature. Accordingly stress on a syllable (which is English accent proper) is the making much of that syllable, more than of others; stress on a word or sentence (which is emphasis) is the making much of that word or sentence, more than of others. Commonly and naturally what we emphasise we say louder, and the accented syllables, words, and so on are in fact what we catch first and lose last in a distant speaker; but this is not essential. Also what we emphasise we say clearer, more distinctly, and in fact to this is due the slurring in English of unaccented syllables; which is a beauty of the language, so that only misguided people say Dev-il, six-pence distinctly; still even this is not essential. The accented syllable then is the one of which the nature is well brought out, whatever may become of the others. (2)

The criticism embodied in this passage is more damaging than either Patmore or (it would appear) Hopkins realized at the time. That Patmore was not overly struck by it is clear from his reply:

> I shall give your remarks on the metrical Essay my best consideration together with the rules of the 'New Prosody', which Mr. Bridges has promised to explain to me, before I reprint that Essay, which I propose to do, not in the next edition of my Poems, but in a subsequent vol. consisting of three or four critical Essays which I wrote many years ago in

> the Edinburgh and other reviews; meantime I will only say that much of the substance of your very valuable notes will come in rather as a development than as a correction of the ideas which I have endeavoured — with too much brevity perhaps — to express. (3)

Hopkins expressed agreement with Patmore on just enough points to make Whitehall's assertion that he wrote his verse on the dipodic plan faintly plausible. In a letter to Bridges he wrote thus of Patmore's theory of dipodes:

> The principle, whether necessary or not, which is at the bottom of both musical and metrical time is that everything should go by twos and, where you want to be very strict and effective, even by fours. But whereas this is insisted on and recognised in modern music it is neither in verse. It exists though and the instance Pat gives is good and bears him out. (4)

(The question of Hopkins' possible use of double feet was dealt with in the third chapter.) Also, Hopkins seemingly accepts Patmore's explanation of the 'Alexandrine'; he told him in a letter that

> My theory of it is yours, that ideally every line had 8 feet, 8 stresses; but not equal — 4 dimeters or bars of 2 feet each. Then at the pause in the middle of the line and at the end one of these 8 feet may be and commonly is suppressed, so that 6 are left.

> This gives boundless variety, all of which is needed however to control the deep natural monotony of the measure, with its middle pause and equal division. (5)

It should be noted, however, that Hopkins brings stress into his definition of the measure, and makes no mention of isochrony.

Certainly Hopkins dissented from Patmore's idea of strict, metronomic timing in metre. He remarked to Bridges: 'I think I remember that Patmore pushes the likeness of musical and metrical time too far — or, what comes to the same thing, not far enough; if he had gone quite to the bottom of the matter his views would have been juster' (6).

Whitehall and the other critics who maintain that there is some essential similarity between the prosodic systems of Patmore and Hopkins are hard put to explain the fact that Patmore was baffled by what he knew of Hopkins' 'sprung verse'. If Hopkins' ideas had significantly resembled his own, his reaction would surely have been different.

Patmore explained in a letter to Hopkins why he was unable to respond to 'sprung rhythm':

> I have read your poems — most of them several times — and find my first impression confirmed with each reading. It seems to me that the

thought and feeling of these poems, if expressed without any obscuring novelty of mode, are such as often to require the whole attention to apprehend and digest them; and are therefore of a kind to appeal only to the few. But to the already sufficiently arduous character of such poetry you seem to me to have added the difficulty of following several entirely novel and simultaneous experiments in versification and construction, together with an altogether unprecedented system of alliteration and compound words; — any one of which novelties would be startling and productive of distraction from the poetic matter to be expressed. System and learned theory are manifest in all these experiments; but they seem to me to be too manifest. To me they often darken the thought and feeling which all arts and artifices of language should only illustrate; and I often find it as hard to follow you as I have found it to follow the darkest parts of Browning — who, however, has not an equal excuse of philosophic system. 'Thoughts that voluntary move harmonious numbers' is, I suppose, the best definition of poetry that ever was spoken. Whenever your thoughts forget your theories they do so move, and no one who knows what poetry is can mistake them for anything but poetry. 'The Blessed Virgin compared to the Air we breathe' and a few other pieces are exquisite to my mind, but, in these, you have attained to move almost unconsciously in your self-imposed shackles, and consequently the ear follows you without much interruption from the surprise of such novelties; and I can conceive that, after awhile, they would become additional delights. But I do not think that I could ever become sufficiently accustomed to your favourite Poem, 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' to reconcile me to its strangenesses. (7)

Shortly afterwards, in a letter to Bridges, he wrote this of Hopkins:

> To me his poetry has the effect of veins of pure gold imbedded in masses of unpracticable quartz. He assures me that his 'thoughts involuntary moved' in such numbers, and that he did not write them from preconceived theories. I cannot understand it. His genius is, however, unmistakable, and is lovely and unique in its effects whenever he approximates to the ordinary rules of composition. (8)

It was noted in the second chapter that Patmore was essentially conservative in his approach to matters of prosodic research. The remarks just quoted lend further support to this view.

The correspondence between Bridges and Hopkins is incomplete; Bridges destroyed his own side of it. Thus, his opinions on the prosodic innovations of Hopkins are not known in any detail. (The general trend of his comments can often be gathered from Hopkins' replies.) Clearly his assessment was more favourable than that of Patmore; this is shown by his willingness to adopt the principle of 'sprung rhythm' for some of his own verse. On the other hand, it seems that he did not approve of Hopkins' more radical experiments. Writing to Patmore in 1883, he described the 'new prosody' of Hopkins as follows:

> As to the prosody which should be the subject of this letter. H. pushes it to its extreme limits. If there is an ad absurdum of it he exhibits it. He has (for instance) in my opinion, an absolutely wrong notion of rhyme. He does not consider that it makes necessarily any pause in the rhythm. This would affect his rhythm to my ears unfavourably in whatsoever prosody he wrote, and you will exclude the effect produced by it from the proper effect of the prosody. Then you will see that he is naturally bent towards subtlety of rhythm as well as of expression, and you will have another allowance to make there, and judge where the prosody seems unintelligible at first reading (if it should seem so) that he is playing some trick on it. — His music, for he has written some airs, would give an excellent example of the way in which he loves to elaborate the simplest forms.
>
> The results of all these qualities is a 'product' which is unique. I do not suppose that there is anything like him in the world. Tho' there is much in his poems which I should not defend as useful prosody, yet you will find plenty of passages where the full force of the system, his originality, which I advocate, is well shown. (9)

Some of the most interesting episodes in the letters of Hopkins are those which contain his criticism of the poems which Bridges wrote in 'sprung verse'. These are revealing not so much for his assessment — often faulty and capricious — of the way in which Bridges handled the metre, as for the light they throw on his own conception of it. The first such passage of criticism occurs in a letter to Bridges written soon after the publication of the *Poems, Second Series* in 1879:

> The pieces in sprung rhythm — do not quite satisfy me. They do read tentative, experimental; I cannot well say where the thought is distorted by the measure, but that it is distorted I feel by turning from these to the other pieces, where the mastery is so complete. *The Downs* is the best. But while the line 'Where sweeping' is admirable, you would never in another piece have accumulated epithets as you do in 'By delicate'. The Bird-sonnet shews the clearest distortion, though the thought of the last tercet is truly insighted. The *Early Autumn* very beautiful and tender, but in the octet at all events not perfectly achieved. The *Passer By* in particular reads not so much like sprung rhythm as that logaoedic dignified-doggrel one Tennyson has employed in *Maud* and since. (10)

The lines from *The Downs* referred to are as follows:

Where sweeping in phantom silence the cloudland flies

and

By delicate miniature dainty flowers adorned!

Later Hopkins wrote to Bridges commenting on the metre of 'The Voice of Nature', which was to be included in the *Poems, Third Series* of 1880:

> The poem you send is fine in thought, but I am not satisfied with the execution altogether: the pictures, except in the first stanza, are somewhat wanting in distinction (I do

> not of course mean distinctness), and I do not think the rhythm perfect, e.g. 'woodbine with' is a heavy dactyl. Since the syllables in sprung rhythm are not counted, time or equality in strength is of more importance than in common counted rhythm, and your times or strengths do not seem to me equal enough. (11)

The phrase cited by Hopkins occurs in the line

My hedges of rose and woodbine, with walks between.

The two remaining poems in 'sprung verse' printed in the same volume, 'London Snow' and 'On a Dead Child', are criticized in another letter:

> *London Snow* is a most beautiful and successful piece. It is charmingly fresh. I do not know what is like it. The rhythm, as I told you, is not quite perfect. That of the child-piece is worse and that piece is worse, indeed *it is* Browningese, if you like; as for instance 'To a world, do we think, that heals the disaster of this?' or something like that. You are certainly less at your ease in sprung rhythm. In the snow-piece this has not been a hindrance however, but perhaps has helped it, by making it more original in diction. Truth compels, and modesty does not forbid, me here to say that this volume has at least three real echos (or echoes) of me: I do not wish them away, but they are there.

Hopkins goes on to quote several phrases from these poems in the 'new prosody' which are verbally reminiscent of his own work, especially 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'; he concludes

> It is easy to see why this is: that is the longest piece extant in sprung rhythm and could not help haunting your memory. (12)

Later Hopkins again wrote to Bridges commenting on the metre of the same two poems, 'On a Dead Child' and 'London Snow'. The former he was still unable to appreciate:

> The Dead Child is a fine poem, I am aware, but I am not bound to like it best; I do not in fact like it best nor think it the best you have written, as you say it is. I do not think either the rhythm or the thought flowing enough. The diction is not exquisite, as yours can be when you are at ease. No, but you say it is severe: perhaps it is bald. (13)

His further remarks on 'London Snow' are of particular interest. In the letter quoted above he wrote of this poem that 'the rhythm ... is not quite perfect'. It happens that this statement is correct: as was pointed out in the fourth chapter, Bridges in this and the other poems in 'sprung verse' frequently confuses speech-stress with conventional accent, so that strictly speaking the metre is irregular. But this is not the point made by Hopkins; rather, he suggests that Bridges should 'correct' lines which are already effective and metrically regular:

> I have a few suggestions to make about the rhythm of London Snow, which would make it perfect. In

> 2. for 'the city' read 'London'. Then for 'Hushing' 'It hushed'. Then 'Difference hiding, making uneven even', since 'unevenness', in which the *n* is really doubled, is an awkward word. Then 'To crevices and angles' or 'To crevice and angle'. I suppose you scan
>
> 'The éye márvelled — márvelled at the dázzling whíteness; the éar héarkened to the stíllness of the sólemn áir': this is well enough when seen, but the following is easier to catch and somewhat better in itself — 'Eye márvelled — márvelled át the dázzling whíteness; ear héarkened to the stíllness ín the sólemn áir'. Then for 'nor of foot' read 'or foot'. For 'awhile no thoughts' better 'no thoughts awhile'. 'Is unspoken': 'is' perhaps is better omitted. In the last line omit 'for'. I know that some of the words thus omitted might on my principles as well be in, with underloopings; but there it is: I put the loops, you do not. (14)

Fortunately, Bridges did not make the revisions advocated by Hopkins; they would certainly be most incongruous, and would disrupt the rhythmic flow of the poem. The most striking feature of the alternative wording and scansion suggested by Hopkins for the two lines which he quotes is the forced and arbitrary stressing, as compared with the smooth and natural stress-pattern of the original. In general it may be observed that Bridges, although too often following an irrelevant convention of syllabic accentuation, was more successful than Hopkins in making speech-stresses carry the metre. In this respect Bridges' 'sprung verse' is the better model of accentual prosody; also, his metrical scheme is improved by the omission of 'outrides' (referred to by Hopkins in the above passage).

In 1883 Hopkins again criticized Bridges' use of 'sprung rhythm', this time in a letter to Patmore. He wrote:

> About that new prosody according to which I think English verse might be written and by which Bridges has written parts of Prometheus, as well as some earlier poems, the most beautiful, I think, 'Snow in London', I do not know that Bridges shares all my views; he would, I think, treat it as less strict than I should say it ought to be and has been freer in putting strong syllables in weak places and weak in strong than always pleases my ear. (15)

Hopkins always insisted, with little justification, that his practice in the 'new prosody' was stricter and technically more correct than that of Bridges. It is true that he followed a more elaborate set of rules; but many of these were invalid or superfluous. His apparent reluctance to accept 'sprung verse' produced by hands other than his own tends to confirm the view that it was for him a private system, based on some personal and indefinable rhythm which haunted his ear.

Hopkins came to realize that his efforts to have parts of Bridges' verse recast in his own metrical idiom were misguided. He told Patmore in 1883:

> I shall be more careful about making metrical objections. I used to object to things which satisfied Bridges and we came to the conclusion that our own pronunciation, by which everyone instinctively judges, might be at the bottom of the matter. (16)

The main theoretical difference between the systems of 'sprung rhythm' adopted by Hopkins and Bridges was noted in the fourth chapter: that is, their different methods of dividing the lines into feet. Hopkins was aware that Bridges disagreed with him on this point; and he recognized that the difference was simply one of procedure. He brought up this matter in a letter to Dixon, written in 1880:

> Bridges in the preface to his last issue says something to the effect that all sorts of feet may follow one another, an anapaest a dactyl for instance (which would make four slack syllables running): so they

> may, if we look at the real nature of the verse; but for simplicity it is much better to recognize, in scanning this new rhythm, only one movement, either the rising (which I choose as being commonest in English verse) or the falling (which is perhaps better in itself), and always keep to that. (17)

In the 'Preface', written a few years later, Hopkins was to settle on the 'falling' rhythm as the most convenient for the purposes of scansion.

Hopkins never had the opportunity to criticize Bridges' later experiments in quantitative and syllabic verse. Had he lived to know of them, his reaction would most probably have been unfavourable. He always reserved his highest praise for Bridges' work in the traditional forms.

Bridges and Patmore in their published correspondence give little indication of how they judged one another as metrists; but what evidence there is suggests that they did not have much in common. Hopkins refers to some disagreement between them in a letter to Bridges:

> I am sorry, I must say, for the tussle with Patmore. The cynical remark about forgetting that people believed in their own theories does not please me. (18)

Bridges and Patmore did correspond briefly on the subject of prosody, but without commenting explicitly on one another's theories. In 1883 Bridges wrote to

Patmore urging the older poet to give some account of the 'new prosody' — 'sprung verse', as practised by Hopkins and himself — in the next printing of the 'Essay on English Metrical Law':

> The interest which you take in the grammar of English verse has led me to hope that you would not be disinclined to give an account in print of what Hopkins and I call the new prosody. We both regard it — without prejudice to the conventional prosody, which you will have seen I use independently of it — as the true solution of English verse. Perhaps we write it rather differently; I should say Hopkins most correctly, I more popular or practically — but I think that we both want an outsider to say something. Your learned essay gives you a standpoint, and anything which you say must have a definite meaning; and your judgment would be at once unprejudiced and weighty. Then I think that — supposing the 'new prosody' to be worth your attention — that the completeness of what you have hitherto written rather demands that you should treat this theory. (19)

(Incidentally, it appears from one of these remarks that Bridges did not dissent from Hopkins' evaluation of the relative 'correctness' of their different applications of 'sprung rhythm'.)

Patmore did not, however, take up Bridges' suggestion; there is no mention of the 'new prosody' in any subsequent printing of the 'Essay'. Indeed, it is hard to imagine how he could have introduced the idea without being forced to condemn it for the sake of his argument, unless he were to explain it in terms of his own prosodic system — which treatment would not have satisfied Bridges or Hopkins in any case.

Some years later Bridges wrote to Hopkins asking whether he should include some reference to Patmore's metrical theory in his new paper 'On Milton's Prosody'. Only Hopkins' reply, dated 1888, is preserved. He advised Bridges that

> ... the essay is, I believe, pretty nearly complete within its limits and is first rate work. I do not, so far as I remember, really think that Coventry Patmore's doctrines needed mentioning at any rate there: they are mostly of wider scope and would be introduced best into a paper on English versification as a whole or on versification simply. (20)

Bridges accordingly did not mention Patmore or his doctrine in any edition of the work.

It was seen earlier in this chapter that Patmore and Hopkins imagined the gulf between their views of prosody to be slighter than it actually was. This was also the case with Bridges and Patmore. Thus, Bridges would not have attempted to enlist Patmore's support for the 'new prosody' if he had believed that the differences between them were irreconcilable.

In 1883 he told Patmore in a letter that 'As far as I can see we agree in what we arrive at; but I should be impatient of your path' (21). There is, after all, an element of truth in this remark. It might well be applied to the prosodic innovations of all three poets: following divergent theoretical paths, they arrived at the common goal of greater rhythmic freedom for English verse.

Chapter Five: Notes

1. Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins, ed. Claude Colleer Abbott (London, 1956), p. 326.
2. Ibid., pp. 326-327.
3. Ibid., pp. 333-334.
4. The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, ed. Claude Colleer Abbott (London, 1935), p. 119.
5. Further Letters, p. 360.
6. Letters, p. 119.
7. Further Letters, pp. 352-353.
8. Ibid., p. 353 n.
9. Derek Patmore, 'Three Poets discuss New Verse Forms', The Month (1951), pp. 77-78.
10. Letters, p. 71.
11. Ibid., pp. 81-82.
12. Ibid., pp. 111-112.
13. Ibid., p. 122.
14. Ibid., pp. 122-123.
15. Further Letters, p. 335.
16. Ibid., p. 313.
17. The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon, ed. Claude Colleer Abbott (London, 1935), p. 40.
18. Letters, p. 269.
19. Derek Patmore, 'Three Poets', p. 72.
20. Letters, p. 269.
21. Derek Patmore, 'Three Poets', p. 71.

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