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THE USE OF PROSE
IN
ELIZABETHAN DRAMA.

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By

J. HUBERT JAGGER.

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a play of mixed interest one set of characters may tend to a tragic tone, in contrast with another group who are predominantly comic. The interest may be a mere connection of similarity in tone, or the characters in it may be so related to one another as to constitute a fully-developed plot. This term was necessary because the sets of characters are often bound separately in this way without the minor intrigue being developed into a separate plot, but the characters of one set have, especially in the earlier drama, a definite similarity in tone, which is carefully maintained and contrasted with the tone of another set.

There are two other terms which have been borrowed and adapted from modern theatrical language. These are:-

1. Necessary business, by which is meant matter essential to the development of the plot, but without important bearing on the characters of the principal persons of the play, and therefore without pronounced tone. Necessary business does not occur at prominent or crucial points in a play, but at points to which attention and interest are not specially directed.
2. Equivoke, which is a convenient term to indicate any device by which any double meaning is expressed, whether this is verbal or material. Verbal equivoke or equivocal expression includes such devices as ordinary double meanings in words or phrases, as well as

dramatic irony. Material equivoke includes such devices as a disguised character. Equivoke may be understood both by the persons of the drama and by the audience, as in the case of puns. It may be understood by the person chiefly concerned and the audience, as in the case of the double entendres in which only one of the meanings is understood by the person addressed. Or it may be understood by the audience only, as in the case of dramatic irony.

INTRODUCTION .

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

The purpose of this enquiry into the form of Elizabethan Drama is to investigate the origin of prose in combination with blank verse in English plays, and to describe the use of prose in combination with verse in mixed drama containing the two media till the closing of the theatres. A study of the accounts which have been written of Shakespeare's prose reveals at once how inadequate are any explanations that have been offered of his relations to his predecessors, with the possible exception of Lyly, in this branch of his art. While the general subject of dramatic development has been exhaustively dealt with, and while the general subject of the development of blank verse has been expounded with equal thoroughness, no comprehensive account of the development of prose as an **integral** part of the dramatic medium of the Elizabethan dramatists has been attempted hitherto. But the mere bulk of prose is a sufficient proof of its importance both in the earlier and in the later drama, and besides the bulk of the prose there are other reasons for undertaking this examination. The excellence of Shakespeare's prose, which has been compared favourably with his verse, and the subtlety with which he uses this medium in alternation with verse, are only outstanding examples. The other dramatists may claim attention in this respect also. Some of them expended as much care on their prose as on their verse. Again, when

we remember that Hamlet, who may fairly be regarded as the most eminent character in the most famous Elizabethan play, uses almost as much prose as verse, and that Flamineo, the most important character in Webster's White Devil, uses most of the prose in the play, and uses a great deal of prose; and when we consider that prose shows decided tendencies to become the medium of Elizabethan comedy, we have other strong reasons for examining it. Moreover this habitual mixture of media, of prose and verse, is a phenomenon unique in drama. One of the chief differences between the form of Elizabethan drama and modern English drama, classical drama, Spanish drama, German, Italian, and French drama, is this alteration of medium. English is the only language and literature whose genius allowed such a combination. And lastly, there is the external influence exerted by the Elizabethan drama. The chief formal influence exerted abroad was upon Germany, where the influence of the English plays caused the Germans to abandon the Knittelreim which they had hitherto employed, and to substitute for it prose or blank verse. *

In order to place in its proper position the obscure partner of verse, by whose brilliance its quieter merits have been hidden, it was necessary to make an enquiry into the construction of the drama; for the view has been taken that the prose is an essential of the drama. From this arose a study of the method in which verse

* See appendix II, p 357.

and prose were combined. If more had been attempted, the next and last step would have been, if the field had been untrodden, to have examined the natures of both verse and prose. But, as the accounts of the verse which already exist are beyond anything that could be said here, an endeavour has been made to complement them with a summary description of the style of the prose, with examples of its diction. This part is meant to be merely an illustration of the nature of the prose, and does not pretend to be as exhaustive as the earlier parts of the investigations, which deal with the origin of the prose and its use in combination and contrast with verse.

Although the general subject of prose in drama of mixed prose and verse has attracted comparatively little attention, parts of the subject have been dealt with more or less exhaustively. The work of Gascoigne and Lyly, as in the main prose dramatists, has been thoroughly examined. The nature of Shakespeare's prose and his use of prose have also been investigated, and there are a few ~~scattered~~ scattered remarks, mostly general and of little value, on his relation to his predecessors and successors in respect of prose styles and usages. The influence of Lyly upon Shakespeare has also been treated, but the influence of Lyly upon dramatic prose generally has been more strongly asserted than carefully traced. Owing to

this fact, the real nature and value of Lyly's dramatic influence in this direction has been, in some measure, wrongly viewed. The subject of metres in drama before the advent of prose and blank verse, which is of great importance for a proper understanding of the use of prose, has been investigated. There exist also theories of dramatic construction in which the use of prose in combination with blank verse is dealt with, exhaustive treatments of the contemporary critical theories, and even an attempt to extract the general ideas on drama that the playwrights themselves held. The dialects and broken English which are so characteristic of the comic parts of many Elizabethan dramas have been philologically treated, and in various textbooks there are accounts of the influences of foreign dramas, some of which have bearings more or less direct upon the subject of prose in the English drama.

Besides investigating the origin of the prose and describing its use and form, it will be necessary to ask whether and how far, on the whole, the dramatists were guided by fixed principles in their alternation of prose with blank verse. The results ought to be of

value as a contribution to our knowledge of the general course of the development of Elizabethan drama, especially in adjusting our views upon the greater dramatists, and upon the technique of the normal play. That such an adjustment is necessary is easily seen from an examination of the original and later editions and texts of the plays. The original texts are very various in their printing; sometimes prose is printed as verse, frequently verse is converted into prose form, and as frequently, especially in the later drama, the methods of printing make it doubtful in an immense number of passages whether the dramatists intended prose or verse. Post-Restoration, 18th century and 19th century editions exhibit curious changes of attitude to the media employed. In the latter half of the 17th century the bias in favour of rhymed verse was so strong that blank verse was often printed as prose in editions of the earlier dramatists.* In the 18th and 19th centuries critical enquiry revealed this mistake, but the editions of the 18th century and first half of the 19th century with their classical inclinations ran into another fault and often read blank verse into prose wherever they could possibly do so. If we can show that there was

~~See an article in Modern Philology, July 1911.~~

* An example is a Cure FOR A Cuckold, printed 1663. See Appendix 1.

a definite tradition regulating the employment of prose and verse, which the dramatists showed a general tendency to follow, wherever there is any doubt about a passage, such a tradition would supply evidence one way or the other.

The early texts are not of equal value. Some are more carelessly printed than others. But apart from this, there were several routes by which plays reached publication.* Some plays seem to have been printed from copies taken down from the actors' mouths during performance. The excellence of these depends largely upon the faithfulness of the speakers and the skill and the knowledge of the stenographer. Many of the texts, however, probably represent theatre copies. As a rule, it is only where the text is carefully edited that it is a perfectly reliable representation of the author's manuscript. If it were not for the general agreement of the arrangements of prose and verse textual questions might assume a serious importance in this matter. As it is, however, the general conclusions are so clear that we can safely pass over some difficulties which are undoubtedly due to the different methods of publication.

{ The order of publication of plays is a matter on which the argument greatly depends. The dates given in Professor Schelling's Elizabethan Drama, Vol. 2., have been adopted as the basis of argument, as the chronology of the minor drama of Elizabeth's reign, especially, is not in a satisfactory state, the various editors

* See an article on this subject in *Modern Philology*, July 1911.

frequently exhibiting the perfection of disagreement. Questions of disputed authorship have been omitted altogether, as the general argument is in no way connected with ^{them} such questions.

When we view the progress of the whole Elizabethan drama the question of form in its relation to content is seen to be one of great interest and complexity. Lyric stanzas, rough doggerel, regular couplet verse, blank verse and prose, jostle and succeed one another with bewildering rapidity. The existence of these media reveals and is parallel to corresponding differences in the nature of the dramatic content. The comedy of the doggerel, for example, is different from the comedy of the prose. It is impossible to lay down that one medium is best for all purposes, - or that one medium is best for all tragic purposes and another for all comic purposes, - and that the gradual and on the whole regular, change in medium that our drama exhibits is one of continuous growth and approximation to an ideal form, in which ^{might be} ~~to~~ ^{to} content whose ideal type has not varied. The stanzas of the miracles are undoubtedly the medium best suited to the purposes of the writers, just as the realistic prose of modern English drama could not ~~be~~ replaced by any other form of expression so nicely adjusted to the present scope and requirements of modern English drama. Therefore while the rise and progress of the English drama

as a whole may be accurately traced by a comparison of the various media employed by each succeeding species, because of the essential connexion of form and content, a change from one standard of expression to another is not in itself a sign of progress except in so far as it may be a better adjustment of the language to the particular kind of drama in force at the time. There is certainly progress and decay to be traced in the stanza of the early drama, in blank verse, and in prose. But the change from one form of expression to another as the staple medium is a sign of alteration in the content and spirit of the drama, rather than a progressive adaptation of English to one unvarying dramatic ideal. The successive modifications of the medium of dramatic expression were rendered necessary and possible by the development which took place in the kind and complexity of action and character, and by the introduction of greater variety in the tone of the plays.

A fully-developed Elizabethan play often sums up in its own form the history of its kind just as a mature organism sums up in its period of development, and contains in itself, the history of its species. The combination of blank verse, rhyme, and prose in some of the finest of the dramas is a consequence rendered possible by the previous existence of these forms, as well as being a result which is desirable because of the height ^{to which} to which the poetic content

has attained in such plays. To imagine that the course of formal ~~and~~ development could have been otherwise, unless the development of spirit and content had been otherwise too, would be as absurd as to suppose that the course of development of an organic species could be reversed irrespective of its environment. Prose and blank verse would have suited the purpose of the writer of a miracle play - even if the idea of such a combination could have occurred to him - no more than an exclusive use of lyric stanzas would have suited the expression of the ideas which are ~~entertained~~ contained in Macbeth and As You Like It.

The view to which the investigation led is, as briefly as possible, that the prose is principally native in origin, both as regards form and manner of use. In the way in which it was combined with blank verse there was a definite tradition, which grew up early; and continued to operate, though with diminished force in later years, till the end of the Elizabethan drama, the alternation of prose and verse being on the whole reasoned and intentional. It was not a recondite tradition; its foundations were what we should expect from a consideration of the nature of the difference between blank verse and prose. This statement must be qualified in various ways. There is a large number of exceptions in detail. It would be wrong to attempt to dogmatize on every pass-

age. And, again, allowance must be made for the personal differences of the various authors.

The usual view is quite different. The use of prose in drama is ascribed generally to the influence of Gascoigne and Lyly,* whose style was copied largely from foreign models. The manner in which prose was combined with verse is held, in most of the few places where it is referred to, to have been arbitrary and capricious, except in the case of Shakespeare, who is agreed to have used prose with a definite purpose and for special reasons. †

It is not to be disputed that the main medium of Elizabethan Drama is blank verse, both for comedy and tragedy; but the characteristic form of the majority of the plays is a mixture of prose and verse. Where we accept verse as the normal vehicle of expression it ought to be possible to assign a special reason for each appearance of prose. Any passage for which no special reason can be assigned must be regarded as outside any tradition governing the use of prose. ~~It would certainly be unwise to attempt to dogmatize about every use of prose.~~

* See the Works of John Lyly, Ed. R. W. Bond.: Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 5, pp. 14 and 15.: Ward. English Dramatic Literature, Vol. 1, pp. 252, 282, 485, 159, 269, 504.: Bond, Early plays from the Italian, Intro., pp. 17, 42, 51, 55, 57, 59, 60, 64.

That there was a gradual development in this branch of the dramatic art is only what might have been expected. To imagine that in all other dramatists but Shakespeare the use of prose and verse together was capricious, but in him reasoned and one of his subtlest dramatic methods, while, on the other hand, in all other directions he merely laid the stamp of sovereign power on the labours of predecessors who had gradually elaborated their practice to a point high above the earliest crudest efforts - to imagine that the use of prose and verse was the one exception to this law would be quite irrational. Sir Sidney Lee's remark * "Absolute originality of idea or form is rare Inventiveness in literature is a power of infinite gradations Shakespeare's work is an exemplification of this. Endless modes of preexisting thought and style wrought on his mind before his supreme power revealed itself." is as true of the use of prose as of anything else in drama. It used to be the fashion to regard Shakespeare as resembling the primitive man's view of nature, as pouring out his wealth and beauties in undesigned profusion. This earlier notion gave way before a deeper insight, and law and order were discovered in all parts of his creation, as in the world of the civilized man. His fellow dramatists before and after him, are now, taking their places by him in an ordered universe. In the use of

prose and verse they obeyed artistic laws, no doubt less ample in scope and less subtle in application than his, but still laws. Everywhere in them are to be seen proofs of design and orderly arrangement and elaborate development, in this as in all other respects, where before had been found nothing but accident.

In conclusion, a word of apology concerning the method of this investigation may be placed here. Where a definite theory about a complicated subject is promulgated a large number of facts are needed to evidence its truth: and, to avoid special pleading, in a logical examination exceptions should be carefully stated. Therefore the representative lists, since the wealth of material was so great, while not meant to be exhaustive - it would have been easy in many cases to have doubled and even trebled the number of references - have been constructed to include both the chief examples and a large number of minor examples of the passages which illustrated the various points in question.

In the third chapter, which deals somewhat cursorily with the style of the prose, and is not meant to be more than illustrative, detail has not been amplified so largely. Lastly, the subject of dramatic prose necessarily touches the ends of a vast number of other subjects. Where it does so the best available results have been accepted boldly and stated as concisely as

possible: and I would plead economy of space and necessity of proportion, where it seems, in such cases, that an outside subject is referred to by examples only, or with an apparent but not real indifference to its general importance and size.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

Chapter I.

The Origin of Prose in combination with Verse.

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The native play in its purest form contains a mixture of serious and comic elements, which had to be kept distinct.

2. The use of prose and verse is parallel to construction. P. 8.

3. The appearance and spreading of prose. P. 9.

Prose began to be used regularly about 1580. and as a means of contrast with verse about 1585.

4. Foreign influence on the use of prose. P. 15.

The influences which produced this contrast date back, however, to long before this time. The mixture was to some extent due to external influence: but the practice of combining prose and verse in drama is peculiar to English Literature. The plays of the foreign dramas tend to pure comedy or to pure tragedy in uniform media. But there are cases, especially Plautus, of authors who varied the metres of verse-plays according to the passing tone. The Latin religious plays show little sign of such a mixture, though they often contain prose among the verse for other reasons. The Humanist and University plays follow classical practice or critical theory. Italian Literature, though blank verse and prose are both

used, offers no example of the mixture of the two. Nor does French, except in the later Ballet. In fact, the mixture is a native product, though perhaps reinforced by the variations of metre in Plautus.

5. The metres of the earlier English Plays. P. 25.

There is some, but not much, adaptation to character and tone in the stanzas of the Miracle plays. Much could not be expected, as these plays were made for a different purpose. The Morality plays, however, show a growth in this direction; and a regular series of methods can be traced by which character-differences were marked, culminating in a mixture of regular rhymed metre and doggerel. This mixture was handed on to the early regular drama, and can be seen fully developed in *Cambyses*. If blank verse is substituted for regular rhyme and prose for the doggerel, the same arrangement is found in the ^{fully developed} ~~early regular~~ drama, e.g. in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. The contrast of prose and verse was, therefore, merely the last term of the series.

The transition from regular and doggerel/rhyme to blank verse and prose was rapidly made, and the number of anomalous plays is small. The anomalies consist, for the most part, in an imperfect substitution. The use of the media in a capricious way is rare in the early plays. The doggerel degenerated to a point at which it is sometimes scarcely distinguishable from the prose by which it was superseded; and it exercised much influence on the form of the

latter.

6. The influence of Lyly on the dramatic prose. P. 57.

Lyly used a prose in his plays which owed much in style to foreign models: the style of the earliest prose in mixed plays is native and simple. Until late he provided no example of a play in which the two media were combined. In fact, his achievement was an attempt to substitute prose for blank verse in the higher reaches of comedy. The amount of Euphuistic prose in early mixed plays is small, relatively to the total bulk; the Euphuisms are usually incorporated in an artificial manner in a prose that bears no stylistic relation to Lyly's. At a later time he exerted much influence of a different kind on the dramatic prose, through the effect he had on the speech of the upper classes. This will be dealt with later.

The use of a mixture of verse and prose is, therefore, essentially connected with the construction of the native English play.

Chapter 2.

The Manner in which the Prose is Used in Mixed Drama.

1. The Rational Basis underlying the use of the prose. P. 81.

The mixture of two media arose, and persisted, because it satisfied a dramatic need. Critical theory ignored it and shed its influence in other directions. But in many other matters critical theory was deferred to in the popular plays. Though there is nothing

in Renaissance criticism about the mixture, the relation of the two vehicles in combination has been discussed in modern times, but almost entirely with reference to Shakespeare. The use of the two media shows, not a neglect of form, but a strong sense of form: for it harmonises with the rise and fall of the tone. Each medium has certain excellences and certain defects. By the use of the two together the dramatists were able to cover a wider range than they could otherwise have done. Therefore this feature is a necessary condition of the excellence Elizabethan drama reached. Blank verse is for higher, prose for lower, tone. Blank verse is the main or normal medium. Certain uses of prose can be deduced from this - e.g., proclamations. Reasons can be given for the existence of plays entirely in one medium by the side of the others. These are largely due to the influence of critical theory, but some prose plays are due to the ousting of verse by prose in comedy, which tendency appeared about Shakespeare's time, but was not universal. Though blank verse was the main medium as a rule, in these and similar plays prose has taken its place. The tests by which the normal medium of a play can be found. In a certain number of plays the mixture of the two media seems to be capricious. Shakespeare and Webster use prose where verse breaks down, i.e. above as well as below prose. The relation of tones is determined for each play, and the point at which changes are made from one medium to the other

therefore varies from play to play.

Since blank verse is the normal medium in most plays, and prose is artistically related to it there, in these a special reason can be found for each good use of prose. In general, scene-tone and characters are combined to suit one another: hence verse is attached to elevated tone and elevated characters, prose to lower - with exceptions mentioned.

It seems from the general regularity and frequent subtlety, according to the above theory, that the combinations of prose and verse were intentional and made after reflection. This is confirmed by passages in the ~~the~~ works ^{of the dramatists} which refer to this subject.

2. Representative lists of plays in mixed prose and blank verse. P. 118.

- a. Plays which are quite consistent with the above theory. b. Plays which observe the conventional use, but contain irregularities. c. For the list of plays which are quite irregular see p.

3. The Elaboration of the various uses of prose. P. 124.

Besides prose for proclamations, letters, deeds, etc. the special reasons for its use, which are all connected with the rational basis, are madness, necessary business, farcical matter, the serious speech of humble characters, high comedy dialogue, realistic imitation and parody of the actual speech of the upper classes, the speech of "humour characters": a serious prose in the chronicle plays,

oratorical and other serious prose, elevated and poetical prose: to express anything unnatural, such as hypocrisy, disguises etc.: for sudden agitation and any violent passion. The use of prose becomes gradually more subtle. There were various methods of transition, sudden or gradual, according to need, from one medium to the other.

4. Spakespeare's use of prose. P. 164.

Kyd, Marlowe, Greene and the others all played their parts in this elaboration, which reached its height in Shakespeare. The general opinion that he alone had a rational basis for his use is wrong: he merely surpassed the others. His prose has been examined in various ways: these accounts summarised: correct conclusions have been arrived at in them, except as regards his relation to his predecessors: but there are omissions. He was the first to use high comedy prose in mixed drama. There is gradual development in the use of prose in his plays. His achievement in this direction summarised.

5. The use of prose after Shakespeare. P. 175.

On this little useful previous work exists, and it is mostly confined to the style of the prose. The general opinion is that, with exceptions, the dramatists after him were irregular in their use. The development of drama, and especially of blank verse, greatly

affected the use of prose. This did not increase in subtlety, but a high degree of consistency remained for a considerable time; then with the gradual deterioration of the other parts of the drama irregularity in the use of prose increased. A large number of authors continued the old uses when the contrast between the two media had become weak. Fletcher abandoned these now indistinct contrasts and used his irregular verse as the sole medium in many plays. He was followed by Massinger, and exerted much influence till the end of the drama. A list of the plays of this kind. Summary of the use of prose by Webster, Ford, Shirley, Brome, etc.

6. Various considerations. P. 199.

This convention of prose and verse acquired a great force. Sometimes it caused inconvenience where it was adhered to. Examples of its force. The decay of the convention illustrated: especially in the separation of tone and character-interest. This was not always bad, but easily passed into pure irregularity. The use of both media in the same speech. The tendency to slip into prose without any valid reason.

Chapter 3 . Style and Diction.

Style.

1. General, P. 219.

The scope of this chapter is limited to a description of some of

the features of style peculiar to the dramatic prose, and to providing examples of the contrasted styles, and of certain parts of the diction. Most external influences appeared faintly in the dramatic prose. The connexion between dramatic and nondramatic prose was loose. The nondramatic was quite unfit, by reason of its structure, for use in drama. The influence which ^{determined} the form of the dramatic prose was its use in the theatre. This caused a simple ^{ity} and clear ^{ness of} structure. Hence the excellence of the dramatic prose, which shared freshness and vividness of diction with other parts of the Elizabethan literature. Each style of prose that appeared was attached to some one use of the prose: The development of dramatic prose was largely a division into separate styles. There were different classes of dramatists, who had different purposes. Each of these elaborated one special style, though using the others also. All these styles were developments of the native original prose, though they differed in the end widely from one another. After about the time of Shakespeare's death new kinds ceased to be evolved. The dramatists are divided here, for the purpose of considering prose styles, into (1) the pre-Shakespeareans, in which ^{or} the prose had a strong realistic tendency: (2) Shakespeare: (3) The later realists—Middleton, Dekker, etc. (4) The scholarly dramatists—Jonson and Chapman, especially: (5) Beaumont and Fletcher, and the school which turned to imitate manners

2. The Pre-Shakespeareans and the later realistic School. P. 236.

The necessary limits of dramatic speech: it can never be an exact copy of ordinary speech. Examples and discussion of the early styles according to use: the speech of madness, humble characters, familiar conversation, a plain average style, the early farcical style, the early influence of Lyly on this; the development of the farcical style; the comic styles used to express individual character; the disappearance of the early verbal devices; the speech of 'humour' characters, plain and mannered, the professional argot (the dialect and foreign jargons are dealt with later). The tendency towards plainness, which was ever being frustrated. An example of such a frustration is found in Marston's diction. The style of the Chronicle History prose. All these styles were continued, with modifications, side by side with the new, till the end of the drama.

3. Shakespeare and the High Comedy Style, P. 268.

This is Shakespeare's main contribution to dramatic prose. Discussion of this style. The influence of Lyly on it, through the speech of the upper classes. The style of the letters in the drama (1) plain, (2) euphuistic, (3) 'court' style. The development of the high comedy style after Shakespeare: its increased use in the later drama. The realistic imitation of the speech of the court, and the parody of affected speech.

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The diction, especially of the farcical prose.

5. General. P. 303.

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6. The Diction of the Farcical prose. P. 317.

The use of curious diction in drama discussed. The principal devices in the comic diction. Some of these paralleled in other countries. Examples of similar diction from Aristophanes, Long comic words in the Elizabethan drama. The structure of these Latin rather than Greek, resembling Plautus' formations. The influence of Rabelais. An example of macaronic speech. The introduction of foreign words in their native form. The use of dialect and broken English. A list of jargon parts: illustrations of these: stammering:

the use of colloquialisms: gipsy slang and beggars' cant: 'Roaring' speech: professional jargon: These devices are connected with the expression of individual character. There are others of a different kind—besides the long comic words. Such are the use of rhyme, alliteration, antithesis, verbal mistakes of various kinds, puns and double meanings, the manufacture of a cognate object, repetition of the same word or phrase. The use of words borrowed from affected speech: the heaping of synonyms and equivalent phrases. The diction of the parody of affected speech.

1

The Origin of Prose in Combination with Verse.

v 1. The Construction of English Plays. P. 4.

The native play in its purest form contains a mixture of serious and comic elements, which had to be kept distinct.

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3. The appearance and spreading of prose. P. ~~11~~ 9.

Prose began to be used regularly about 1580, and as a means of contrast with verse about 1585.

4. Foreign influence on the Use of prose. P. 15.

The influences which produced this contrast date back, however, so long before this time. The mixture was to some extent due to external influence: but the practice of combining prose and verse in drama is peculiar to English Literature. The plays of the foreign dramas tend to pure comedy or to pure tragedy in uniform media. But there are cases, especially Plautus, of authors who varied the metres of verse plays according to the passing tone. The Latin religious plays show little sign of such a mixture, though they often contain prose among the verse for other reasons. The Humanist and University plays follow classical practice or critical theory. Italian Literature, though blank verse and prose are both used, offers no example of the mixture of the two. Nor does French, except in the later Ballet. In fact, the mixture is a native product, though perhaps reinforced by the variations of metre in Plautus.

5. The metres of the earlier English Plays. P. 25.

There is some, but not much, adaptation to character and tone in the stanzas of the Miracle plays. Much could not be expected, as these plays were made for a different purpose. The Morality plays, however, show a growth in this direction, and a regular series of methods can be traced by which character-differences were marked, culminating in a mixture of regular rhymed metre and doggerel. This mixture was handed on to the early regular drama, and can be seen fully developed in *Cambyzes*. If Blank verse is substituted for regular rhyme and prose for the doggerel, the same arrangement is found in the early regular drama, e.g. in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. The contrast of prose and verse was, therefore, merely the last term of the series.

6. The transition from regular and doggerel rhyme to blank verse and prose was rapidly made, and the number of anomalous plays is small. The anomalies consist, for the most part, in an imperfect substitution. The use of the media in a capricious way is rare in the early plays. The doggerel degenerated to a point at which it is sometimes scarcely distinguishable from the prose by which it was superseded; and it exercised much influence on the form of the latter.

6. The influence of Lyly on the dramatic prose. P. 57.

Lyly used a prose in his plays which owed much in style to foreign models: the style of the earliest prose in mixed plays is native

and simple. Until late he provided no example of a play in which the two media were combined. In fact, his achievement was an attempt to substitute prose for blank verse in the higher reaches of comedy. The amount of Euphuistic prose in early mixed plays is small, relatively to the total bulk; the Euphuisms are usually incorporated in an artificial manner in a prose that bears no stylistic relation to Lyly's. At a later time he exerted much influence of a different kind on the dramatic prose, through the effect he had on the speech of the upper classes. This will be dealt with later.

The use of a mixture of verse⁶ and prose is, therefore, essentially connected with the construction of the native English play.

THE ORIGIN OF PROSE IN COMBINATION
WITH VERSE.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF ENGLISH PLAYS²

The prose of Elizabethan drama bulks so large and is so closely connected with certain of its distinctive characteristics that it seems more natural to regard it as a sign of the very nature of the drama than as an intrusive accidental element. It is in the commonest type of play, the play of mixed interests, comic and serious, that it is generally found.

The construction of the plays of mixed interest and mixed medium merits some notice. This class of play, which is peculiarly English, though parallels are found in French popular plays* and in the contemporary Spanish drama², is by far the most numerous in ^{the} whole of the Elizabethan drama. Censured by Sir Philip Sidney³ as neither comedy nor tragedy, it ranges from a mainly tragic type through a type in which the two elements are of almost equal importance to a mainly farcical type. All these plays have been classed together as tragi-comedies. But there is another species to which the name of tragi-comedy is better applied. In the first kind distinct comic and tragic interests are combined and knit together into one plot, but the essence of the second type is that it provides a happy ending to a play which frequently seems to be tending to a tragic catastrophe. It is the first type which is peculiarly native, while the second genus was developed

*1, 2, 3 See notes on p. 5.

especially by Fletcher, and was due either to French influence or to a popular dislike to unhappy endings. Fletcher, in the well-known preface to his Faithful Shepherdess, says " A tragicomedy is not so-called in respect of mirth and killing, but in respect it wants deaths, which is enough to make it no tragedy, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy, which must be a representation of familiar people, with such kind of trouble as no life be questioned." The probability is that this kind of play was due to popular demand rather than the dramatists' reasoned choice: there exists one play (Sir John Suckling's Aglaura) for which two fifth acts were written. The first form of the play was a tragedy, but it was converted from this into a Fletcherian tragedy-comedy, it is said at the King's request.*⁴ The native type which, although it is found throughout the whole period, is more characteristic of the earlier stages of the drama than of the later, seeks to combine in one action a tragic and a comic interest. This feature of our drama is responsible both for the plays which are the chief glory of English literature and for the great amount of bad work which disfigures it. Success

* see Grierson The First Half of the Seventeenth Century p 55 ✓

2 see Saintsbury History of Criticism vol 2 p175 ✓

3 S Smith Elizabethan Critical Essays voll p199 ✓

4 The same phenomenon was seen after the Restoration in the Hon, James Howard's attempt to brighten the conclusion of Romeo and Juliet, which was played on alternate nights with the original play. See

in work of such a kind is difficult, because it not only presupposes in the dramatist a universal sympathy and both tragic and comic power but because it makes large demands upon his constructive ingenuity in joining two diverse elements into one action. On the other hand, it forced the dramatists to restrain their constructive proclivities within certain limits, and to confine themselves to broad and natural effects, as too complicated a plot led inevitably with a double action to obscurity. The simple type of play in which there is one straightforward action is favourable to excessive ingenuity in devising surprising situations, in order to avoid monotony of action; as is well seen in the case of the French drama of the 19th century.

In writing a play of the mixed kind a dramatist is faced with the problem of keeping clear and distinct the two actions, while joining them so that they may react upon one another. In Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, for example, the two elements are combined so that to subtract either would destroy the other, yet the two are conceived by the reader as perfectly distinct in plot and finely contrasted in tone. In a poor play of the same type the contrast and separation are usually equally distinct, but the action tends to fall apart into two plots which are entirely without connection. In many of the early plays of this type the underplot is merely the excuse for introducing a clown between the divisions of the main action without connecting him in any way with the plot, e.g. Green's Selimus and Greene

and Lodge's A Lookingglass for London and England. When the comic element develops a plot of its own the comic personages, especially if they are the traditional clowns, often come very little into contact with the main plot, though they may appear in dialogue with the main characters. Such construction is found in Mucedorus, 1588-1598, Loocrine, 1586, Fair Em, before 1590, and Heywood, A Maidenhead well Lost, 1633. Examples of other later "strapped together" plays out of a large number ^{are} The Mayor of Queenborough, The Birth of Merlin, The Thracian Wonder, A Cure for a Cuokold, and The Fancies. From such plays there is a regular gradation up to the plays which exhibit in full perfection the construction of a well-articulated plot combining the two interests. There are, of course, plays with more than two interests, such as A Midsummer Night's Dream, with its main plot and the secondary plots of the Fairies and the Athenian workmen.²

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1. In Selimus the characters of the two interests do not even appear together on the stage.
 2. Yarrington's Two Lamentable Tragedies is remarkable in showing the same method of plot-combination; two tragedies, however, being combined, instead of a tragic and a comic plot. The main tragedy treats the plot as a romantic Italian theme, while the other is a domestic play like Arden of Feversham. See p.

THE USE OF PROSE IS PARALLEL TO CONSTRUCTION

in distinguished^{ing} between the contrasted interests, the and main and the underplot, the medium employed plays a great part. As the characters of the underplot are frequently comic the medium they employ is usually prose*, and in many a play the course of the underplot and its interlocking with the main plot could easily be observed by examⁱⁿing the alternations of prose and verse. Prose is thus seen to be an essential part of the materials of the Elizabethan drama, intrinsically connected with the type of play most prevalent, and arising as a direct consequence from the nature of its construction. The appearance of the mixture of prose and verse in English drama and its absence from other dramas is therefore not an accident nor due to any carelessness with regard to medium. It would not seem to be due to the mere influence of Lyly or any other dramatist, but to be a special mark of the character of the English play in its most typical form. Moreover, when there are more than two interests, as in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the addition of rhyme often provides a third method of contrast. In fact, it may be said that the sense of form was so strong in the Elizabethans that ^{any alteration} ~~any alteration~~ of tone or interest tended to express itself in some ^{parallel} ~~parallel~~ alteration of medium. Prose, blank verse and rhymed verse were regular materials of

*See p. 104

See p. 104 in page 120

the artist, which he would choose according as he was working in the shadows, the half-lights or the high-lights. The essential connection of form and matter in the drama and the high instinct of form thus exhibited will ^{assume importance} ~~have to be remembered~~ when we come to deal with the details of prose use, and are called upon to explain the prose passages which it has been the habit of regarding as haphazard changes, or the mere results of a desire for variety for its own sake.

The form and the content are two elements in an established harmony of the Elizabethan drama. There is no intention here of placing form before matter. External form is certainly not the first consideration in the dramatist's mind. Nevertheless the external form is of great importance; and one of the most frequent causes of success or failure in drama is success or failure in the use of the appropriate medium of expression. No writer could produce a great drama without adequate conceptions, but no dramatic poet could exhibit his conceptions, however moving and true, indifferent to his form.

THE APPEARANCE AND SPREADING OF PROSE.

The following table of plays which appeared between 1580% ^{and} 1594, with plays before that date which contain prose, has been made to show the early growth of the prose. ~~The conjectured dates of production are extracted from the list of plays in Schelling, vol 2.~~

Total
length. *Prose.* Notes.

1565		The Contention bet ween Liberality and Prodigality.		53	Probably revised before printing.
1566	Gascoigne.	Supposes.		all.	
1569-70	"	Jocasta.		all.	
1573	"	Glass of Government.	2941*	2653.	no B.V.
1578.	Whetstone.	Promos & Cassandra.		27	no B.V.
1580	Lyly	Campaspe.		all	
1581	"	Sapho & Phao.		all	
1581	Peele	^{arraignment} Arraignment of Paris.		none	Rhyme & blank verse.
1582		The Rare Triumphs of Love and fortune.	1641	45	Rhyme, B.V. & doggerel.
1583	R. Wilson.	The Three LADIES of London.		6	14-ers.
1584	Lyly.	Calliopea.		All	
1585	R. Wilson.	The Tree Lords and Ladies of LONDON.	2467 H&EM	1085	B.V.
1586	W.D. LYLY.	Sndimion.		All	
Kyd	Spanish Tragedy		3110	136	1602 Ed.
			2783	77	Earlier Ed. N.D.
		Loocrine.	2088	268	
1587	Marlowe	Tamberlaine Pt. 1	2316	85	

	//	Total			
		Length	Prose.	Notes.	
1587	The life and Death of Jack Straw.	1001	828	151	
	Hughes, etc. Misfortunes of Arthur.		None		
1585-8	The Famous Victories of Henry 7.		Much.	Embedded metre.	
1588	Greene, Selimus.	1760	90		
	Marlowe. Dr. Faustus.	2276	856	1616	quarto.
	Kyd. Soliman and Perseda.	2108	421		
	The Troublesome Reiga	pt 1. 1772	190		
	of King John,	pt 2 1204	83		
	The Taming of a Shrew.	1725	369		
1588-9	Lyly, Love's Metamorphosis.		all		
1589	Peele, David and Bethsabe.		18		
	Greene, Alphonsus, King of Aragon.	2128	none		
	" Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay.	2269	570		
	Shakespeare. Love's Labour's Lost.	2789	1086	B.V., Rhyme, and Doggeral.	
	Greene and Lodge. A Looking Glass for London and England.	2630	1015		
	Lyly, Midas.		All.		
1587-90	LODGE, Wounds of Civil War,	1624	138		
1588-90	Shakespeare, Titus Andronicus.		42		

Total Prose. Notes.
Length.

1588-90	Shakespeare, Titus Andronicus.		42	
1588-91	The Wars of Cyrus King of Persia.	1739	13	
1589-90	Marlowe. The Jew of Malta.	2410	310	
1589-91	Shakespeare. Comedy of Errors.	1770	240	
1590	Fair Em.	1429	398	
	Greene. James iv,	2719	716	
	*(Lust's Dominion.)			
	Mary Sidney, Antonie.		None.	
	Peele. Old Wives' Tale.	964	674	
	Lyly. Mother Bombie.		All	
	The First Part of the Contention between the	1888	441	
	Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster.			
	Sir Thomas More.	2326	565	
1586-92	Arden of Feversham.	2402	247	
1590-1	Peele, Edward I.	2745	748	Much rhyme.
	Shakespeare, Midsummer Night's Dream.	2251	441	
1591	Peele, The Battle of Alcazar.		None.	
	Marlowe and			
	Nash. Dido, Queen of Carthage.	1741	None.	
	The True Tragedy of Richard III.	2119	1888	

Total
Length. Prose. Notes.

1592	Greene,	Orlando Furioso.	1605	238	
1590-2	Shakespeare,	Two GENTlemen of Verona.	2060	409	
"	"	1Henry IV VI	2688	6	
1592	Marlowe,	Tamberlaine, Pt. 11.	2330	51	
		A Knack to Know a Knave.	1927	233	Much doubtful metre.
"	"	Edward 11.		None.	
		Nobody and Somebody.			
	Nash,	Summer's Last Will and Testament.	2110	945	
		Thomas Lord Cromwebl,	1712	221 113	
1591-3	Shakespeare,	Romeo and Juliet.	3002	405	
	Lyly.	The Woman in the Moon.	1304	139	
Before 1593	R. Wilson.	The Pedlar's Prophecy.		None	All doggerel,
9 1592-4	Shakespeare,	2Henry VI	5075	574	
"	"	3Henry VI	2902	4	
1593-4	"	Richard 111	2107	3	
1590-6		Edward 111		None	
c 1594	R. Wilson.	The Cobbler's Prophecy,	1789 DN30	400	
1588-98		Mucedorus.	1562	455	
1594		The True Chronicle History of King Leir.	2664	158	

	Total	Length. Prose	Notes.
1594 Shakespeare. King John.		None.	
<i>The tragedy of</i> Caesar and Pompey.		None.	

From this time the place of prose was an assured one, and in the next ten years the use of prose became gradually fixed and traditional.

From the table it appears that prose began to be used regularly in drama about 1580, and it has been connected with the name of Lyly. The influence of Lyly on the later drama is well-known, and the very appearance of the early prose has been ascribed to his example, partly because he provided the first outstanding examples of prose drama, partly because of his influence on prose style, and partly because prose developed in drama of mixed medium contemporaneously, or almost contemporaneously, with the appearance of his plays.

Lyly's undoubted work is all in prose, with the exception of *The Woman in the Moon*; but pure prose dramas are rare after his time.

Moreover, in the plays of mixed medium we do not find (anticipating a little), in the great majority of cases, that prose and verse

are mixed indiscriminately. We find an orderly tradition, unlike anything in Gascoigne, and unlike anything in Lyly except a late play which appeared after the tradition itself had flourished for some years. The tradition consists of a definite relationship, which is steadily elaborated and developed, between the two media.

This tradition could only be ascribed to the example of pure prose plays, on the one hand, and pure verse plays, on the other hand, if the general tone of the two media in separation bore a strong resemblance to the tones of the two media when used in combination. But the tone of the prose in the early plays, as well as much of its style, is quite different from Lyly's. His prose tends to be exclusively of high comedy tone, while the prose of the early mixed plays ~~is~~ is generally low comedy prose. And, further, there is in previous drama a combination of vehicles which in relation ~~of~~ of tone is much more like the relation of prose and verse as it is seen in the plays of mixed medium than any pre-existing *relation* of prose and blank verse in separate plays. This combination is a mixture of different metres in the earlier verse plays which ~~re-~~ ~~s~~embles the use of prose and verse together.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE ON THE USE OF PROSE

The construction of plays by which comic and serious interests were combined dates back in origin far beyond the appearance of prose and blank verse, and any relation of media which differentiated the two ~~interests~~ interests may be presumed to have had some bearing on the way ² prose and verse were combined. Blank verse was in origin merely couplet verse deprived of rhyme, and similarly the vehicle with which ^{this} ~~it~~ was combined in the plays would seem either to have developed as prose when deprived of its rhyme or at any rate to have influenced the later prose. There is no prose in English

vernacular drama before 1500, except one passage in Medwall's Nature. The rhyme of the early plays was continued long after the appearance of Corbodus, blank verse being the exception till about 1584 so that, roughly speaking, blank verse and prose, whether used together or apart, appear almost simultaneously. This suggests that they were possibly the result of a common cause.

There is no combination of verse and prose in classical or early modern drama which resembles at all the combination in the English plays. Such a mixture is indeed as foreign to ^{the} nature of French and Italian literature, especially, as the mixture of comic and serious plots in the same play. Nor is there any mixture of metres which need be appealed to as the obvious cause of mixed metres in the early English plays. But, while this is so, there do exist instances of the mixing of metres which may have had some influence upon English practice. Virgil's hexameters become increasingly dactylic in rapid narrative. Aristophanes' comedies present a large variety of metres which are used in contrast with one another for the purpose of representing changes of tone, rapidity of action, and character (see e.g., Hippis, ll. 197-201). Of course, the choric metres contrast with the dialogue, but this was due to a special necessity; the same phenomenon is found in Seneca, and in the English plays on the Senecan model, which otherwise are largely very foreign to the plays of mixed interest.

The direct influence of the classical Latin comedy was somewhat

similar in this respect, and more potent. Both Terence and Plautus use metrical contrasts, but Plautus is more lavish in combinations of different metres to express contrasts and changes of tone;

Terence, while admitting such contrasts,¹ uses less verbal device than Plautus, relying rather on a familiar polished style of verse.*

In Plautus' *Trinummus*, to take an example, several metres are employed:

(1) Iambic senarii are the usual metre of narrative and calm dialogue

(2) Trochaic tetrameter catalectic is used when the matter is important or the speaker is excited. (3) Iambic senarii septenarii are a favourite metre when the tone is farcical. (4) Octonarii, both

trochaic and iambic, are used in scenes of high excitement, where great bustle and haste are intended, and follow and disappear with

the excitement. For example, in a soliloquy in *Ed. 1.1* the metre changes rapidly with change of feelings; and 1.300 provides a change

to the metre of calm dialogue after the soliloquy. In view of the acknowledged influence of Plautus on comedy, this mixture of metres

must be allowed some weight in investigating the origin of the mixture of metres in the English rhymed plays of the middle and

third quarter of the sixteenth century.

But if we follow the native plays back step by step we find

* see C. F. T. Brooke, *The Tudor Drama*, p. 148, for a summary of the influence of Terence, Plautus, and Seneca on the English Drama.

¹ see e.g. *Andria*, ll. 625-638

a gradual change of form between the latest rhymed plays and the early Miracles and Mysteries, and these in their turn are in close touch with the Latin sacred plays* Many of them are in stanzas closely resembling those of the Miracle plays, and it is clear that on the whole the form of the early Miracle plays is derived from these Latin plays, so that any adaptation of metre which may be found in the Miracle plays may probably be connected with them. A large number of the Latin plays, however, are wholly or partly in prose, with hymns interspersed. The prose, when it occurs in combination with verse, consists as a rule of short sermons and prayers and quotations from the Bible or the services of the Church. The absence of such prose from the vernacular plays is no doubt due partly to the fact that the native Miracle plays were usually several steps further removed from the dramatisation of portions of the Church service in which this drama originated, and partly to the way in which those who were acquainted with Latin and the Church service looked upon the vernacular. Latin prose was to them an embellishment of speech, and the particular prose employed in these plays had many associations for them, while vernacular prose was the mere common mode of intercourse among the humble. Hence the substitution of the vernacular for Latin led to the addition of the ornament of verse to all parts which might have been rendered

*see Du Meril, Froning and Wright.

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^{Latin} in ~~Latin~~ by prose. In the Latin plays there is no attempt at expressing character-contrasts or changes of tone by means of alternations of prose and verse, but these are simply a realistic method of introducing the Church service and such matter, or may be used sometimes for the mere sake of variety of form. Thus, in the *Mystère de l'Empereur Julian*¹ a prose sermon occurs in the middle of the verse, preached by one of the characters. An illustration, chosen at random, of the way in which the prose and verse were combined is provided by the commencement of *Mysterium Fatuarum Virginum*², which was probably composed in the twelfth century:-

Hoc est de Mulieribus.

Ubi est Christus meus Dominus et filius excelsus? Eamus videre sepulcrum.

Angelus sepulcri custos.

Quem quaeritis in sepulcro, O Christicolae, non est hic: surrexit sicut praedixerit. Ite nunciatis discipulis eius, quia praecedet vos in Galilaeam. Vere surrexit Dominus de sepulcro cum gloria. Alleluia.

Then the tone changes, and to express the general exultation a hymn is introduced:-

Sponsus
Sponsus.

Adest sponsus, qui est Christus;

Vigilate virgines!

¹ Du Meril, pp.

² Wright, pp.

Pro adventu eius gaudent;

Et gaudebunt homines. Etc.¹

There is no in the Latin sacred plays no arrangement of prose and verse which would cause us to apply to them rather than to the Miracle plays on which they had their immediate influence.

From the Humanist drama and the later Latin University plays we should expect rather a following of previous models than new developments, and this is actually the case. Though the Humanist plays influenced the popular stage, and the later Latin University plays received influence from both, as a rule they either found their models in the classical dramatists or were constructed in deference to the tradition of Renaissance critical theory. The tragedies were generally as Senecan in form as they were in spirit. Legge's *Richardus Tertius* is, as regards form, a good example, except that it dispenses with the chorus. Sometimes there is a variety of metres.

²
Of George Buchanan one editor remarks, "In tragoediis suis usus est Buchananus metrorum generibus septemdecim." He uses iambic senarii for dialogue, and anapaests for chorus, and altogether shows in the chorus the Greek tendency to reflect the tone and subject-matter in the form employed, no doubt being led to this by his

¹See also *Mysterium D. N. Jhesu Christi* in the same volume.

² Ruddiman, vol. 2 p. 7.

translations of Euripides' Medea and Alcestis.

The comedies were usually on the Plautine model. For instance, the metres in Macropeidius' Aluta, though not varied in a scene, vary from scene to scene, (e.g. Act 1, iambic trimeter, with chorus in iambic dimeter; Act 2, iambic tetrameter and trimeter : Act 3, iambic dimeter and others : ACT 5 , Scene 6, trochaic trimeter.) and are carefully adapted to the changes of tone. At a later period -this subject of metres in Latin plays may well be concluded here- the University Latin comedies showed a change in form. From about 1580 they began to forsake the model of Plautus, though Abram fraunce's Victoria shows adaptaion of metre, and to follow the Italian model (which they imitated in subject-matter also) in adhering to a uniform metre, or in being entirely in prose. Thus Hymenaeus (1579) is in uniform verse; and Wingfield's Pedantius (1580-1) is all prose. As a whole, this artificial and imitative drama gives no more adaptation of metre than Plautus, and at a later time shows development in form away from the popular stage to plays of unvarying metre or prose, in accordance with the traditional critical principles. This latter fact is rather notable, as in the content, in the mixing of serious with lighter interests, the University plays showed some inclination to follow popular practice.

To Italy English drama owed the examples of blank verse for

pure tragedy and prose for pure comedy, but Italian literature provided no models of the mingling of the two in the same play as they are found in the majority of English plays, nor any significant combinations of metre. From Trissino's *Sofonisba* (1515) the setting of tragedy was definitely towards blank verse. Prose was generally substituted for the verse of the Classical comedies, verse being only adopted in deference to ancient practice, and in the end prose triumphed completely.* Practically the only approach to adaptation of metre is found in the choruses of the tragedies, which are usually in lines of irregular length and rhymed (e.g. Tasso's *Aminta*, Rucellai's *La Rosmunda*, and Cinthio's *Otobecche*). The only other use of rhyme in the blank verse plays is found in the occasional couplets which occur at the ends of acts and scenes just as in the English plays. Some adaptation of metre is however found in Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido*.

France provided as little example of combination of metres as Italian, the whole tendency of French literature in drama as in other things being to uniformity of medium and simplicity and directness of action. Thus the French Miracle and Mystery plays are almost wholly in octosyllabic metre, in this respect

* see Bond, *Early Plays from the Italian*.

contrasting with the remarkable metrical variety of many of the English Miracle plays.* The sense of form is strong, but it runs always in the direction of regularity. In the Renaissance plays - to continue the story of French dramatic form in outline, as of Latin, down to a later period - the same tendencies are noticeable. The tragedies usually conform to a Senecan model; adhering to rhyme, with contrasted metres for choric use, until the time of Corneille and Racine. ↑

Comedy followed the mediaeval tradition as in England, and then turned to the Italian model, so that many pieces are in prose, though rhymed verse was retained for comedy longer than in Italy.² The Moralities show a little adaptation of metre sometimes, e.g., ⁱⁿ Moralite d'ung Empereur ~~WVWVWVWV~~ La Fille uses lyric trimeter in contrast with the tetrameter of the other characters (p. 151).

Ultimately prose became the usual medium of farcical dialogue in many plays. In Molière and other writers, this is combined with lyric verse for the ballet. This is a true adaptation and combination of media to express differences in tone; and is, indeed, the nearest approach in foreign literature to the English mixture of prose and blank verse, and corresponds somewhat to a mixture and contrast of actions as the English blank verse and prose did to a

* See Saintsbury, History of Prosody, Vol. 1. The Fifteenth Century Ch. 1 and the collection of Mysteries, Moralities and Farces in Fournier.

² See e.g. the plays in Viollet-le-Duc.

mixture of plots and interests: but the media show no special attachment to particular characters, the verse being inserted solely as the dramatists' accompaniment to the ballet.* And of course there is no connection with the Elizabethan drama in this case. .

In Spanish drama also there is no sign of any tendency to combine verse and prose. The later writers sometimes use prose for comedy, but often verse. Again, the earliest dramatists exhibit considerable variety of form, but the later comic writers largely accepted the convention of Lope de Vega which prescribed dramatic metres thus:— a stanza of ten octosyllabic verses for laments, ordinary octosyllabic verse for narrative and explanation, sonnets for pauses in the action, lyric metres for heroic passages, and quatrains for love passages. ²

The whole relation of the form of the English drama to foreign drama may be briefly summed thus. (The mixture of prose and verse is as peculiar to English drama as, (with the exception of Spanish drama, which did not enter into connection with English drama till the early seventeenth century, and scattered plays in other languages) the construction of English drama in mixing serious and * Molière's *La Princesse d'Elide* begins in verse, but changes at II .1. to prose. Molière explains in a note however that he had intended to write it all in verse, but that the haste of the king had not left him time, and this had compelled him to finish the play in prose. — 2 see Fitzmaurice-Kelly.

comic interests is peculiar to it. In combination of metres, also, the influence of foreign drama was probably confined to the example of the mixture of metres in Plautus. The use of blank verse for tragedy, and prose for comedy, in separate plays, is found in foreign literature, especially in Italian, and is consistent with critical opinion. But pure prose comedies are rare in Elizabethan literature, and in many cases the use of prose in them was merely due to the spreading of the comic medium over the whole play rather than to a definite adherence to critical theory. Moreover, the example of Plautus is too far removed from the English practice to have acted directly in producing a mixture of prose and verse; and unless we are to conclude that the mixture was due to the deliberate joining of the two media as used in separate plays we are driven to seek for some native form which contained something like the later combination of prose and verse, and which developed to a point at which it could directly influence the later plays. The English metrical rhymed plays of the mid-sixteenth century, which are the obvious resort, may have received an impulse from Plautus; more likely the native sense of form without external aid forced them into the shape in which they are found.

THE METRES OF THE EARLIER ENGLISH PLAYS.

The chaotic state of matters metrical in the drama of the first half of the sixteenth century makes it difficult to frame secure generalizations on this subject. There is no exhaustive treatment

from our special point of view;*but the use of metrical and stanzaic contrasts in pre-blank-verse drama, for purposes of characterization, and to indicate changes of dramatic tone, has been treated incidentally in general surveys of metre in several places. Miss L. T. Smith¹ mentions the use of different stanzas for characterization, and Mr Ramsay pointed out that Skelton's Magnificence forms an early example of the development of English dramatic technique in applying metrical distinctions both to the characterization of different personages and to contrast scenes of different tone.² He notes that these methods persisted almost to the perfected drama of the Elizabethan age, the mark of the moral plays and earlier interludes being, in this respect, the use of different rhyme-combinations to form stanzas with doggerel rhythm, ~~the comp~~ With the introduction into sixteenth-century drama of the regular rhythm, the complex stanzas, or rhyme-combinations, were gradually discarded, Regular metre now began to be used for the more dignified scenes and characters, and the contrasts which had been secured

*See Saintsbury, History of Prosody, Vol. I. The Fifteenth Century Ch. 11., & Sixteenth Century, Ch. 4, for the metres used; and for some references to their dramatic fitness.

¹ York Plays. Intro. pp. Ed. L.T. Smith.

² Magnificence, Ed. Ramsay, Intro. pp. xxxv, etc.

by contrasts of rhyme-scheme were maintained by assigning doggerel to clowns and humble characters. / This stage in development is well exemplified by Misogonus. / At a later period still - this is an account of the general development, but there was overlapping in every possible direction - the regular metres were gradually reduced to rhymed iambic pentameter, and this in its turn was gradually replaced by blank verse.

Professor Bond continues this history of dramatic forms*. After giving a similar relation of the metrical development he accounts for the persistence of doggerel in spite of the attention to regular metres and of classical influence. "We cannot dismiss this persistence as the result of mere ignorance, incompetence, or lack of examples," he says. "Regular metre was already found in drama, both rhymed and blank; and Gascoigne had shown the use of prose in drama. It persisted not merely because it was traditional and popular, but because also the dramatists perceived it to be better adapted to average comic uses - for dialogue as opposed to set speech, and for farcical matter - than more regular measures. ... Had ~~Supposes~~ been original, had the Latin use of verse been less authoritative, a successful and consistent comic prose would doubtless have arrived earlier. In default of such the doggerel survive

* Early plays from the Italian, pp.

the introduction of regular measures by a quarter of a century, and did so largely as a matter of reasoned choice, as a compromise." This passage represents the furthest point to which investigation has hitherto penetrated in this subject.*

The adaptation of form in harmony with changes in dramatic tone which the early plays exhibit is, however, deserving of a more searching examination, especially in the later stages of the Moralities. The English Miracle Plays are set in a form which appears to be finely suited to their purpose. They are highly lyrical, and calculated to excite religious emotions in such audiences as those to which they were presented; and, in consequence, the forms of the stanzas are complicated and numerous. But the variations, though following and exciting changes of feeling, are used only in the slightest manner to indicate differences of character in the speakers. No attempt at a closely imitative representation of the speech of actual life is found, and even the passages which are comic, such as the quarrels between Noah and his wife (e.g., in *The Waterleaders' and Drawers' Play of The Chester Pageant*) are stanzaic in form.

Between the typical Miracle Play and the typical Morality Play,

* See *Saintsbury, loc.cit.*, for the nature of the doggerel.

so far as types can be fixed for species containing such various individuals and sub-classes, a broad distinction as regards prosody may be drawn. The former are mostly in stanzas, in metres which are often quite regular, while the latter tend towards a continuous medium, the irregular popular doggerel. To this statement there are many exceptions, of course. Thus the Coventry Plays, especially, contain much irregular metre and are not so stanzaic as the York Plays, and the Towneley Plays contain the continuous octosyllabic couplet.* The exact nature of the doggerel need not delay us. It was much less regular than the usual metres of the early Miracle Plays on the one hand, and the new verse of which Tottel's Miscellany contains the first examples on the other hand. The Moralities begin with stanzas similar to those of the Miracle Plays, but soon acquire continuous doggerel, as, for example, it is seen in *Everyman* (c. 1480).

The early stanzas may be illustrated from the *Castle of Perseverance* (c. 1425), the metre of which is seen in the following passage (ll. 275-287):-

HUMANUM GENUS & Aftyr oure forme faderis kende,

* See *Saintsbury, History of Prosody, Vol. 1. The Fifteenth Century, Chs. 1 & 2 and Sixteenth Century, Ch. 4.*

bis nyth I was of my moder born.

Fro my moder I walke, I wende;

Ful feynt & ~~fwk~~ febyl , I fare you beforne;

I am nakyd of lim and lende

As mankynde is schapyn and schorn;

I not wedyr to gon ne to lende,

to helpe myself mydday nyn morn:

for schame I stande and I schende.

I was born bis nyth in bloody ble,

& nakyd I am , as ye may se.

A! LORD God in trinite!

whow mankende is unthende.

When the doggerel appears it is frequently combined by rhyme-schemes into contrasted stanzas, as in Magnificence. With the introduction into sixteenth century poetry of more exact prosodic methods a great change occurs. The 7-foot line, the Alexandrine, the pentameter, in couplets and quatrains especially, are all found. These metres were transferred to the early comedies and tragedies. When regular verse appeared it was too stiff to be used for every dramatic purpose, and it is not surprising, therefore, that rhyme continued to struggle with it, though with increasing feebleness, to the end of the Century. The date of Corboduc is 1561, of the first

purely prose drama 1566, From this time we find rhymed verse of various metres, prose and blank verse, all mingled in various ways and for various purposes.

This series of changes was a development in dramatic technique corresponding to and necessitated by the continuous development of the scope and needs of drama, and was naturally accompanied by a parallel development in the skill with which the various media were used. The tendency to indicate character-contrasts, and later, changes of tone in the scenes, by the prosodic contrasts available to each writer, steadily grows. The indications of this are very slight and tentative in the Miracle Plays, as has already been stated. On this point the editor of the York plays says (Introduction, p. 50) "Attention may be drawn to the manner in which the varied metre is adapted to the style of subject to be treated, or the personage speaking: for example, Deus and Jesus always speak in grave and dignified verse, while the long pompous mouth-filling lines, excessive in the alliterative stress, are put into the mouths of those who, like Herod, Pilate and Caiaphas, open a play and are meant to make an imposing impression."

As an illustration of these differences the following passages may be taken in contrast with one another:

(1) From the Skinners' Play in the York Cycle.

The Entry into Jerusalem upon the Ass.

JESUS. "To me takis tent and giffis gude hede,

My dere discipulis that ben here.

I shall you tell þat shalbe in dede.

My time to passe hense ,it drawith nere,

And by this skill,

Mannes sowle to sauefro sorowes sere,

That lost was ill."

(2) From Pt. 1. Sc. 1. of Mary Magdalene, (p. 60)

Herowdes. "IN þe wyld wanyng world pes all at onys!

no noise ,I warne you, for greueyng of me!

yff you do , I xal hourie off yower ^hedes, be Mahondes bones,

as I am trew kyng to Mahond so fre,

help,help,þat I had a sword!

fall don , ye faytours, flatt to þe ground!

Heve off your hodes and hattes, I commaund you alle:

stond bare hed ,ye beggars!we made you so bold?

I xal makeyou know your kyng ryall:

thus woll I be obeyyd thorow al the world,

and who-so wol nat he xal be had in hold:

and so to be cast in carys cold,

that ~~were~~ werkyn ony wondyr azens my magnificens."

Such rant and alliteration as *are* found in this passage *were* no doubt conventional, as the phrase "To out-Herod Herod" indicates. (Hamlet, 3.2.16.) Such pieces represent the utmost limit to which character-indications by means of form *are* carried in the Mystery and Miracle Plays. The same contrast is found between passages in juxtaposition.

In the Morality Plays, when doggerel appears in its characteristic form, two methods are used 1. Frequently the doggerel is written in lines of two, or even more than two, lengths. 2. The lines, whether of uniform or different lengths, are often combined into stanzas by different rhyme-schemes, further contrast being perforce absent. Thus in Wisdom or Christ, St. 39-47, are found stanzas by Anima of eight long lines rhymed ababbcbc, followed by stanzas by Lucifer of eight short lines rhymed aaabaaab, which themselves are followed by still another stanza in which Will and Understanding each speak.

The play, however, which is richest in this kind of contrast is Skelton's Magnificence. * In this play there are two lengths of doggerel line, and each of them has a corresponding half-line used

* See Mr Ramsay's edition, Intro., pp. lxlg lxxl, for a full discussion and analysis of the play according to metre.

separately. With various rhyme-schemes Skelton was able to make a large number of contrasts, which he used to indicate differences of character and tone. Thus he used couplet verse with his heaviest lines for characters which are neither striking virtues nor striking vices; e.g. Felicity and Liberty, Sc. 211.29 on.

FELICITE And from whence come ye, and it might be askyd?

Lyberte. To tell you, Syr, I dare not, lest I sholde be maskyd

In a payre of fatters or a payre of stockys.

FELICITE Here you not howe this gentleman mockys?

With these couplets the half-line monologue in couplet and rhyme-royal, found only in Sc. 14, to mark the fashionable frivolity of Courtly Abusion, may be contrasted. The first stanza runs:-

Courtly Abusion. What now? Let se

Who loketh on me

Well rounde aboute

How gay and how stoute

That I can were

Courtly my gere.

AS the doggerel grew looser, it became increasingly difficult to make a distinction, a distinction which would impress the audience, between different lengths of line. The contrasts were therefore reduced entirely to contrasts of rhyme-scheme. But, with the re-

introduction of regular/verse, contrasts in the metre were again possible. Before this tendency the principle of contrast in stanza and rhyme-scheme disappeared altogether; and there remained only the contrast between regular verse and doggerel. Thus the same principle of contrast is seen undergoing various phases up to the time of the appearance of regular verse in drama. The ~~same~~ principle survived this stage also, and passed on to the later drama, where it is responsible for the management of contrasts by means of prose and blank verse. The whole history of the drama, from its beginning to its height, shows indeed the strong instinct which the English had for securing harmony between the form and the content, by any prosodic means which were available to them.

The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom, a Morality Play which was performed between 1558 and 1579, illustrates the contrasts made between doggerel and regular metre; in *this* play the lighter abstractions use doggerel, while the serious characters use 14-ers, the method which was in greatest vogue about 1570. Act I, Sc. 2, supplies a good example:-

GOOD NURTURE. "I marvel where my schollard, Wit, is now of late become,
 I fear lest with ill company he happen for to run.
 For I Good Nurture commonly among all men am counted,
 But Wit by this his staying so I fear hath me renounced.
 Severity, his father, sure is grave and wise withal,

But yet his mother's pampering will bring his son to thrall." *

When this is contrasted with the next scene the difference is striking:-

IDLENESS "Ah sirrah, it is an old proverb and a true, I swear by the rood!

IT is an ill wind that blows no man to good.

When I had brought Wit into Wantonness' hampering,

Then I thought it was time for me to be tampering." (p.271)

The method of contrast by means of doggerel and regular metre was handed on to some of the early comedies and tragedies.

Misogonus, which is perhaps earlier than the Marriage of Wit and Wisdom, dating from about 1560, is an early example, the metres being used exactly as in the examples just quoted from that play. But in Misogonus anapaests sometimes occur. This metre shows a tendency to occupy a medial position between doggerel and regular iambic verse.

The use of the contrasts in this play is shown by the following short quotation (3.1. 120-125):-

CODRUS" Why an you'll not believe me I'll go fetch our Alison.
You shall see and she doth not tell you that my young master
hath a bro(ther).

PHILOGONUS There never was poor mariner amid the surging seas

Catching a glimpse of a port whereunto he should sail,

* Throughout this essay the spelling has been modernized where there was no special reason for retaining the old forms.

So much distract twixt hope of health and fear his life to lease
as I even now with hope do range and eke with fear do fail."

With the development of the early regular drama in rhymed verse the method of contrast by metre was refined to a point of considerable exactness. Thus in Preston's *Cambyses* (1570) is anticipated the relation which obtained later between prose and verse. As this play is an excellent example of the transition from Morality to regular drama, and is of consequent importance, in spite of the sneers which were aimed at it, in showing, by its contrast with the plays based on classical models, the tendencies of the native plays and the mixture of tragic and comic, it will be convenient to end the exposition of contrast in tone and character by examining it in some detail. The contrasts are developed in it as highly as in any play written in rhymed verse. "*Cambyses*, King of Persia" is described as a "Lamentable Tragedy, mixed full of Pleasant Mirth." The characters are serious persons; abstractions, such as Preparation and Execution, with *Ambidexter*, the Vice; and comic ruffians, notably *Huf*, *Ruf*, and *Snuf*. The prologue and all the tragic part of the play are in regular 14-ers. The epilogue consists of three rhyme-royal stanzas of regular verse. The rest of the play, that is to say the comic part, is in doggerel. *Cambyses'* first speech runs :-

My counsell grave andd sapient/with lords of legal train
 Attentive ears to me bend, and mark what shall be sain.
 So you likewise, my valiant knight, whose manly acts doth fly,
 By bruit of fame, that sounding trump doth pierce the azure sky.
 My sapient words /say perpend, and so your skill delate;—
 You know that Mars vanquished hath Cyrus that king of state;
 And I by due inheritance possess that princely crown,
 Ruling by sword of mighty force in place of great renown."

The doggerel continually tends towards an anapaestic rhythm, but generally falls short of it . The non-anapaestic manner is shown by (B, 1, verso) :-

Ambidexter A, ye slaves , I will be with you at the host.

A, ye knaves , I will teach ye how ye shall me deride:

Out of my sight: /can ye not abide.

Now, goodman pouchmouth, I am a slave with you:

Now have at ye again afresh even now....

The anapaestic tendency is as elsewhere most marked in the passages which have no strong comic bent, but the amount of this metre is small when compared with the bulk of the regular and doggerel rhythms. Its style is shown in the following example, (E. 4. verso) :-

PREPARATION. With speed /I am sent all things to prepare:

MY message to do as the king did declare.

His grace doth mean a banquet to make:

Meaning in this place repeat for to take.

Well the cloth shall be laid, and all things in readiness,

To court to return when done is my business.

To demonstrate how completely Cambyses shows the outcome of the long series of contrasts of which a summary has been given, the following table has been made. There are several rhyme - arrangements, but the great majority of the play is in couplet verse. As will be seen from the table the regular metre is allotted to elevated and serious characters with almost complete consistency, while the consistency with which the farcical and lowly characters employ doggerel or anapaests is equally great.

CHARACTERS	REGULAR IAMBIC METRE	DOGGEREL AND ANAPAESTS
SERIOUS CHARACTERS		
(a) PERSONS .		
Cambyses	250	20
Knight	14	0
Councillor	30	0
First Lord	63	6
Second Lord	17	2
Third Lord	3	0
Praxaspes	35	2
Smerdis	13	11

CHARACTERS,	REGULAR IAMBIC METRE,	DOGGEREL AND ANAPAESTS,
Young Child	2	2
Sisannes	53	9
Otian, son to Sisannes	22	0
Queen	45	0
Wife of Praxaspes	20	0
Lady	15	0
Waiting Maid	4	0
(b) Deities.		
Venus	12	0
Cupid	5	1
(c) ABSTRACTIONS.		
Shame	12	0
Small Ability	19	0
Commons' Complaint	21	0
PRoof	6	0
Trial	2	0
Execution	6	0
Attendance	4	5
Diligence	2	3
TOTALS.	675	65

CHARACTERS,

REGULAR IAMBIC

DOGGEREL AND

METRE,

ANAPAESTS,

FARCICAL CHARACTERS, CHARACTERS OF LOW LIFE, AND ABSTRACTIONS,
REPRESENTING LOW LIFE.

(a) PERSONS.

Ambidexter, the Vice	6	295
Huf	0	25
Ruf	0	32
Snuf	0	21
Meretrix	0	38
Hob , a countryman	0	20
Lob , "	0	26
Marian-may- 'be-good	7	16

(b) ~~PERSONS~~ ABSTRACTIONS.

Cruelty	0	EE 16
Murder	0	11
Preparation	0	19
Totals,	13	519
Totals for the play,	688	584

From the above table it is clear how closely , according to character, Preston was consistent in the employment of his metres. Even the apparent exceptions are sometimes significant .

Thus Sisamnes, the unjust judge, is notable, as he speaks to Ambidexter and soliloquizes in doggerel, but addresses the king in regular verse. The king's using a few lines of doggerel in his last speech, when he enters after having received his death wound, is also worthy of remark, and parallel to the later uses of prose for extreme agitation. The doggerel is also, as the prose in the later plays, generally collected into masses which alternate with scenes of regular verse. In both tone and character-indication the doggerel resembles the subsequent prose, the characters of one interest only abandoning their usual vehicle when they happen to appear in scenes which are strongly of the opposite tone; with trifling exceptions, the chief of which have been mentioned.

In no play is this feature better shown. But it appears in other plays, of which the following are some of the chief. In Patient

Grisil the method is found, but the serious characters use doggerel sometimes. But even here, where the use is tentative, as it is in

Misogonus, the partial application of the contrast is as a rule consistent in ~~not~~ ^{not} contradicting the relation between the two media.

The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom, the Morality mentioned above, is quite consistent. ^{this fairly consistent} Damon and Pithias, the doggerel being contrasted with more regular metre which tends to anapaestic (e.g. V. & 2. 180-206). This latter is most regular in the most elevated parts.

There are also some regular iambic speeches, e.g. Eubulus' speech on p. 103. Appius and Virginia ~~are almost consistent~~ and Horestes are almost consistent. ~~But~~ Horestes himself always uses 14-ers, but occasionally the regular metre tends to anapaestic, e.g., Haphazard's speech on p. 136. In Common Conditions the use is again practically consistent, but in quick dialogue between serious and comic characters on pp. 615, 616, 645, and 646 the distinction is abandoned. Lupton's All for Money is all in doggerel, except the most solemn and emphatic part of the play - Damnation's speeches near the end, which are in regular anapaests. In Gammer Gurton's Needle the speech of Dr Rat on p. 224 and several of the Bailey's speeches, e.g., p. 248, these two being the most dignified characters, are in regular 14-ers; the rest is in doggerel. Thersites is consistent, and shows the current tendency well, as it is a translation of Textor's Latin hexameters, ~~perhaps through an Italian prose translation~~. Instances are also found in Misogonus (see above), Prologue, and III.1.122-5; 270-7; ~~III~~ IV.1.67-70; 170-189; and Bugbears, III. ~~Act~~ 4.1-40. Doggerel of course continued much longer, Wilson's The Pedlar's Prophecy being all in that metre. And there are many later plays which contain doggerel introduced in short passages, almost always with a comic intention (see pp. 48) ~~xxx~~*

*The majority of these names and some of the references are taken from Prof. Bond's Early plays from the Italian, Intro. pp. 81-82.

The close similarity, in fact the identical similarity, between the contrast of doggerel and regular metre, as shown in Cambyses, and the contrast of prose and blank verse in later drama could be illustrated in a score of plays. For example, the following analysis of the distribution of prose and verse according to character in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay shows how consistently the interest of a character was indicated and followed in this manner by Greene:-

DRAMATIS PERSONAE,	BLANK VERSE,	PROSE,
1. PERSONAGES OF HIGH RANK,		
King Henry III	101	0
Emperor of Germany	55	2
King of Castile	33	4
Elinor, his daughter	34	0
Edward Prince of Wales ³	223	15
2. CHARACTERS OF ROMANTIC INTEREST,		
Lacy Earl of Lincoln	152	0
Margaret, the Keeper's daughter ¹	267	0
MINORS,		
Warren Earl of Sussex ²	36	28
Ermsby, a gentleman	15	14
Lambert	48	0
Serlsby	37	9

DRAMATIS PERSONAE,

BLANK VERSE,

PROSE,

First scholar	11	0
Second "	9	0
A Post	13	0
Keeper	25	0
Joan , a country wench	8	0
A Friend of Margaret 'S	0	2

(4) PERSONS OF THE CONJURING INTEREST.

Friar Bacon *3	367	24
Friar Bungay	67	4
Burden, A Doctor of Oxford	35	8
Mason "	22	2
Clement "	25	5
Jacques Vandermast	83	1
Spirit	7	0
Hostess of the Bell	14	1
Totals,	1682	110

(5) PERSONS OF THE COMIC INTEREST.

Ralph Simnel, the king's fool ⁴	0	99
Miles, Bacon's poor Scholar	0	160&57 short rhyming lines
Thomas, a clown	0	7
Richard	0	4

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.	BLANK VERSE.	PROSE.
A Constable	0	2
A Devil / ⁵	10	11
Totals,	10	283
Totals for the play.	1692	223 393

(There is also a prose letter).

The following remarks have to be made on this table. 1. Margaret, the fair maid of Fressingfield, is the chief romantic character, though of low rank. The tone always rises with her appearance; accordingly she uses blank verse throughout. 2. Warren is represented as a man of blunt, abrupt character; hence the comparatively large amount of prose in his part. Prince Edward speaks in verse except in familiar dialogue with Ralph, and under the influence of strong excitement, when he sees Lacy and Margaret in Bacon's magic glass. *3. Bacon is a man of elevated character; he uses verse, except when talking familiarly or angrily with his scholar Ralph Miles. (4) Ralph uses prose when personating the Prince, and betrays his real character to the others at once. 5. The Devil is the usual comic devil who carries off the Vice, here Miles; he uses heavy ranting verse for a soliloquy in which he exhibits his demonic character, but ordinarily adopts the language of the person with whom he is dealing ~~down~~,

In this play, therefore, the use of prose is developed to a point

47 If we lay

of considerable subtlety. ~~Lay~~ aside the refinements which belong to a later period than Cambyses, however, it shows the parallel in the use of doggerel and prose to be exact. *

The rapidity with which the practice of combining prose and blank verse developed is extreme; and the number of plays which are anomalous in respect of the mixture is small. Furthermore, in the plays where the anomaly exists, it consists, in every case, not in some contravention of the established relation of doggerel and regular verse, but in the incompleteness of the substitution of one medium for its predecessor. Regular verse, with rhyme and blank, are found opposed to a mixture of doggerel and prose; so that these plays are transitional rather than anomalous. The transition is found in The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality (1565, revised 1601), Promos and Cassandra (1578) - In the Address of the printer to the reader reference is made to the variety of verse used in this play: prose has a very small part in it; The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune (1582), The Three Ladies of London (1583), - no blank verse is found in this play; The Three Lords and Ladies of London (1585), The Life and Death of Jack Straw (1587), Soliman and Perseda (1588), Love's Labour's Lost (1589), Comedy of Errors (1589-91), A Knack to Know a Knave (1592), The Weakest Goeth to the Wall (1585-90?), The Troublesome Reign of John, King of England

(1588), The Two Gentlemen of Verona (1590-2), The Cobbler's Prophecy (before 1593). The doggerel was ~~continued~~ continued in isolated passages in later plays, just as regular rhymed verse persisted. It is found for example in The Tragedy of Hoffman, C. 41 verso.: Volpone, I. 1: A Trick to Catch the Old One, I. 1.: The Roaring Girl, e.g., pp. 162 & 197: The Devil is an Ass, ^{used by} The Vice: The Spanish Gipsy, III, 1. & III, 2.

The transition was rapidly made. The abandonment of doggerel proceeds synchronously with the adoption of prose, and the tentative efforts, small in number, contravene but rarely the definite relation of prose and verse which subsisted later. In the face of these conditions, and of the fact that prose and verse are used together from the beginning in as complete a manner as the doggerel and regular rhymed verse are combined, it is impossible to conclude that the relation of prose and blank verse was a new relation. It was the last phase of the continual adjustment of prevailing media which characterized all the drama of the sixteenth century.

The connection between the prose and the doggerel is, however, much closer than a mere similarity in relation to blank verse and regular rhymed verse. There are many similarities of style and verbal device in the doggerel and early prose; as, indeed, might be expected, since dramatic style depends directly and almost entirely on the function performed by the medium in question. Too much stress

need not be placed, therefore, on the fact that verbal mistakes and the use of dialectal peculiarities are very common in both the doggerel and the prose. These are absent from regular rhymed and blank verse, with one or two exceptions, and which implies a ^{significant} ~~significant~~ difference of function- from Lyly's prose. These similarities do, however, provide corroborative proof of the identity of function of doggerel and prose.

But the question of the origin of the general style of the early prose, so far as a general style existed, is not entirely settled by showing that the prose replaced the doggerel in plays of mixed interests. The doggerel in its late degenerate stages became less and less metrical. At the same time frequent omission of rhymes, and extreme licence in rhyming, by which assonance and other forms of incomplete rhyme were admitted with great freedom, and gradual increase in the length of the lines - all these produced a medium which was removed from prose in scarcely any particulars other than the occasionally perfect rhymes, and scattered patches of just perceptible metre. Between the doggerel, as it is seen in, for example, Everyman and Ralph Roister Doister, the difference is immense. Each successive degeneration brought the doggerel nearer to prose. Richard Edwards' Damon and Pithias, provides examples of all the irregularities in the doggerel. The following quotations, selected almost at random, show the chief of the approaches to prose.

The play was probably produced between 1564 and 1568, the first edition being dated 1571.

(1) Long lines, (F.2. recto)

Grim. 'Tis Musselden, ich waene, of fellowship let me haue another
spurt.

Ich can drinke as easly now, as if I sate in my shurte.

Jack Ey Cocke, and you shall haue it, but I will beginne and that
anone

Jebit avow mon companion

(2) rhyme - omission. ~~Elverse~~ (see D.4. recto) is found, and imperfect rhymes are very frequent, e.g., (D4 verso)

Damon. There is no surer nor greater pledge then the faith of a
gentleman.

Dionysius. It was wont to be, but otherwise now the world doth
stande.

(See also E. recto, things, frindes; Elverse, alone, home- but instances of rhyme -omission and imperfection occur on almost every page).

Such passages are quite common in other plays : rough long lines are seen in Misogonus (c. 1564) and Godly Queen Hester, e.g., pp. 267 & 371: for omission of rhymes and lines of irregular length see The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom.

After 1580, when prose had appeared, the process of doggerel degeneration went on. An excellent example of this is The Three Ladies

of London (c. 1584), which is written in 14-ers and doggerel. The doggerel has all the marks of degeneracy enumerated above, its most remarkable feature being, in fact its frequent merely apparent avoidance of prose, by the addition of the rhyme, which is itself by no means regular. The average metre is exemplified by (D. x3. recto):-

Simplicity. Why, to our vitaille; I know nothing else we have to do:

And mark if I cannot eat twenty times as much as you.

The lines frequently grow much longer, however, as in Gerontus' speech on D. 4. recto:-

Gerontus. I understand you, sir; but keep touch with me, and I'll bring you to great store,

Such as I perceive you came to this country for:

ASmusk, amber, sweet powder, fine odours, pleasant perfumes, and many such toys:

Wherein I perceive consisteth that country gentlewomen's joys.

Besides I have diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, smaradines, Opals, onacles, jacinths, agates, turquoises, and almost of all kind of precious stones,

And many no fit things to suck away money from such green-headed wantons.

The rhyme disappears occasionally, e.g., F. 2. recto:-

FRAUD. What says the rascal? But you know,

It standeth not with my credit to brawl:

But, good master Constable, for his slanderous report,

Pay him double, and in a greater matter command me you shall.

In the later plays the occasional pieces of doggerel which are found often in place of the prose are exactly of this nature. The following from *The Life and Death of Jack Straw* (B2, verso) is typical:-

JACK STRAW Ay, marry, Wat, this is another matter; methinks the world is changed of late,

Who would be a beggar and may be in this estate?

WAT TYLER We are here four captains just; Jack Straw, Wat Tyler,

Hob Carter and Tom Miller:

Search me all England, and find four such captains, and

by Cog's blood, I'll be hanged!

Nobs (aside) So you will be, nevertheless, I stand in great doubt.

Hob Carter. Captain Straw and Captain Tyler, I think I have brought

a company of Essex men for my train

That will never yield, but kill or else be slain.

The internal degeneration of the doggerel is, however, a commonplace. And the practice of omitting the rhymes here and there is found in nearly all the later plays in which doggerel is contained in large quantities. But in addition there occur passages

*e.g., Ralph Roister Doister, i. 365-375, 385-392, 518-520, 551. 177-183.

of some length/ of what appears to be rough metre without rhyme. These are found both in plays entirely in metre, and substituted for prose in plays of mixed medium. Sometimes a beginning of ordinary doggerel passes into this doubtful kind, e.g., The Three Ladies of London, E2verse:-

SIMONY Truste me thou art as craftie to haue an eye to the mayne
chaunce

As the Taylor that out of seuen yardes / stole one and a halfe
of durance.

He serued at that time the deuill in the likenesse of Saint Kath-
arine,

Such Taylors will thrive that out of a doublet and a payre of
hose / can steal their wife an Aporne;

The dublet sleeues three fingers were to short,

The Venecians came nothing neare the knee.

Examples of this doubtful medium are commonest in the transition plays. It is found, for ex^{am}ple, in The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom, ~~11.1. & 11.3.~~, Prometheus and Cassandra, 1040-1050; The Life and Death of Jack Straw, D3recto, E2verse and frequently; A Knack to Know a Knave, frequently; The Three Ladies of London, F2recto and verso; and Soliman and Perseda, in Basilius's speeches; and the prologue to Nobody and Somebody appears to be in the same medium. A Knack to Know a Knave, performed June 12th, 1592, but in its original form prob-

ably considerably earlier ~~in~~, provides examples of undoubted prose, regular blank verse, and the doubtful kind, in strongly contrasting forms; e.g. ³ Diverse:-

Knight. I tell you, neighbour, my great grandfather and all my predecessors have been held in good regard for their good housekeeping, and (God willing) their good name shall never take an exigent in me; for I will (God willing) keep such hospitality to my death as my state can afford, and I will rather sell my land to maintain good housekeeping, than keeping my land, make sale of my good name for housekeeping. But stay, who comes here?

The regular verse is seen in the following (B3recto):-

Bailiff. Methinks Revenge stands with an iron whip,

And cries, Repent or I will punish thee.

My heart is hardened, I cannot repent.

Ah, hark, methinks the Judge doth give my doom.

And I am damned to everburning fire

Soul, be thou safe, and body fly to hell.

Both the regular verse and the prose are greatly different from the other medium, of which the following speech, ~~taken at random,~~ is a sample:-

Honesty. I believe you well: for offenders never bewray their offences,

Till the law find them and punish them;

But you would fain tell how to know a knave;

Then thus ,the first man that you meet in the morning,

If he salute you,draw near him,

And smell to his hat and after smell to your own;

And,my cap to a noble,if his hat smell like yours he is a knave.

I think I spoke with you now!

§Speech of this kind is confined to characters of the Morality type,who are introduced into a romantic -historical plot like that of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. All these facts considered, it seems most natural to conclude that the authors or revisers are here imitatingthe doggerel of the Moralities in a blank verse, or are rewriting older doggerel passages without the rhyme. The vehicle is different from prose in four particulars. There ~~is~~ constantly recur faint suggestions of rhythm; the sense frequently ends or breaks with the line; the words at the ends of the line are always significant and substantive; the lines are fairly uniform in ~~the~~ length.

If the play is approached with the presupposition that it is all prose and blank verse of the ordinary kind such passages appear to be due to mere ~~c~~ carelessness on the part of author or printer. But,supposing that some belated effect of doggerel has occurred here,the phenomenon would have ~~received~~ a satisfactory explanation, connecting it and the prose with which it is mingled both in form

and in function. Soliman and Perseda is another play which contains the same medium. It is all printed as verse in the old Quartos, but modern editors have turned much of it into prose. Dr Boas, however, the latest editor, remarks (p. 162) "I have printed as prose a number of speeches which appear in the quartos in doggerel form. The speeches of Basilius, however, with their stilted vocabulary, I have retained in their original form, which is apparently intended to be irregularly metrical." There is little doubt that this is the true view, because rhyme appears in this vehicle occasionally; and Piston's speeches also contain suggestions of metre.

It seems most probable that this hybrid is the last term in the degeneration of the doggerel. If that is so, the progressive change of the doggerel from its characteristic form to a medium almost indistinguishable from prose has been shown. The influence of such a medium on prose must have been great in style. Even stopping short of the conclusion that the doggerel actually passed into the prose which it resembled so closely in function - for it is difficult to conceive the possibility of verse however rough actually passing into prose - it seems unnecessary to refer to the Lylyan plays, with their polished, artificial style, when we have at hand a native medium in mixed drama performing the functions of the early prose, containing similar dramatic devices, and degenerating to a point at which it is exceedingly hard to differentiate

it from prose. All arguments point to the prose as part of the last phase of the contrasts, deriving its functions from, and strongly influenced by, the doggerel which preceded it.

THE INFLUENCE OF LYLY ON DRAMATIC PROSE.

This native prose was able to incorporate from Lyly elements of style which saved it from becoming the mere vehicle of farce, and which gave it the distinction that later enabled it to be used for the highest efforts of comedy: as well as developing by its own energy into a medium which could be put to the other varied uses required of it. Lyly, however, cannot be regarded as the main inspiration of prose in mixed drama for other reasons besides those which are drawn from a consideration of the construction of the typical play and the traditional mixture of vehicles in harmony with the construction. The style of the earliest prose in mixed drama is plain and native, while Euphuism is largely an ornate foreign product. The bulk of the Euphuistic prose is small compared with the total amount of prose in mixed dramas of the time during which the early euphuistic influence persists (See pages 10, 79, 77). The temper of the dramatists was highly critical to euphuism, and frequently antagonistic to it, as is clear from the appearance of parody of euphuism by the side of sincere imitation of that style. The plays which contain euphuism contain also other strands of prose differing in style from euphuism.

The euphuisms are, as a rule, short passages attached artificially to prose which differs essentially from Lyly's. And the tone of the ordinary dramatic prose, and the purposes for which it was employed, are different from, indeed opposite to, the tone and ~~xxx~~ idealistic purpose for which Lyly employed his characteristic prose in drama.

The style of the early prose is plain and native, but the strand of prose which belongs to the comedies of Lyly and Gascoigne is to be traced mainly to Italian example and ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ inspiration. The influence of Italian prose style on the work of Gascoigne was considerable, and through him and Lyly had a great effect on English high comedy prose. But the mixture of prose and blank verse is due to the nature of the English play rather than to any external influence. Prose and blank verse are found in Italian comedy and tragedy respectively, but there are no examples of the mixture of the two in Italian literature, because the kind of play to which the mixture is suited did not flourish in that literature. It is necessary to examine the style of the strand of prose to which the plays of Gascoigne and Lyly belong, shortly, in order to separate from the whole bulk of the prose that which exhibits his influence.

Lyly, ~~as~~ has been generally agreed, owed a great debt to Gascoigne.

Gascoigne's dramatic work consists of *Supposes*, a prose play translated from the prose and verse versions of Ariosto's *I Suppositi*; *Jocasta*, a blank verse translation of Euripides' play of the same name; and *The Glass of Government*, an original prose play dating from only five or six years before Lyly began to produce. The plays abound in lengthy moral disquisitions, examples of which are excellently provided by Gnomatious in *Supposes*. Gascoigne is sometimes pleasant, but never farcical, the nearest approach to clownage being exemplified by such scenes as IV.5 of *The Glass of Government*, and *Supposes*, I.2.4. Some of the scenes are realistic and familiar, as I.2 and I.4 of *Supposes*, but elsewhere there are definite foreshadowings of Euphuism in certain points which were to become the main features of that style when developed and elaborated, and which, Professor Bond says, "may be traced back, perhaps, as far as Berners's translation of Guevara's ^S *Libro Aureo de Marco Aurelio*, 1534. This tendency is shown chiefly in abounding alliteration, pathetic soliloquies, and (in the translation of *I Suppositi*) in the insertion of mannered phrases and clauses not found in the Italian. There is an occasional antithetical structure, and once

* The best treatment of Gascoigne's prose is found in Professor Bond's *Early Plays from the Italian*. Here Gascoigne's style and its origins, his relation to Lyly, and his debt to Ariosto's use of prose in drama are all examined. There is also a list of anticipatory Euphuisms.

at least a simile from Natural History in Lyly's manner, and many proverbs not in Ariosto....Supposes as it stands is more modern in effect than its contemporary plays, a difference which is largely due to that between an utterly uninspired and inartistic verse (the doggerel) and a lively and natural prose."*

The work accomplished by Lyly in Drama is a commonplace; and the history of the rise, fall, submersion and reappearance of his fame

* The following passage from Ariosto's prose version of I Suppositi, when compared with Gascoigne's translation, will show the differences made by the latter, and the justice of the view that couples him with Lyly in style.

Supposes, l. 3 (Hazlitt's Edition, pp. 209 & 210) :-

DULIPPO. Hard hap had I when I first began this unfortunate enterprise: for I supposed the readiest medicine to my miserable affects had been to change name, clothes, and credit with my servant, and to place myself in Damon's service: thinking that as shivering cold by glowing fire, thirst by drink, hunger by pleasant repasts, and a thousand suchlike passions find remedy by their contraries, so my restless desire might find quiet by continual contemplation. But alas, I find only that love is unsatiable: for, as the fly playeth with the flame till at last she is the cause of her own decay, so the lover that thinketh with kissing and colling to con-

is too well-known to need mention. We may accept the view of Euphuism given in the exhaustive treatments of his prose, with its characteristic devices of antithesis and balance, strings of rhetorical questions, alliteration, and similes drawn from natural history

tent his unbridled appetite is commonly seen the only cause of his own consumption. Two years are now past since, under the colour of Damon's service, I have been a sworn servant to Cupid...

In Ariosto's prose version this passage runs:-

Tristo e infelice discorso fui il mio, che a' desiderii miei attissima salute riputai mutare col mio servo l'abito e'l nome, e farmi di questa cosa famiglia. Speravomi, come la fame per il cibo, per l'acqua la sete, il freddo per il fuoco, e mille altre simili passioni per appropriati rimedi si estinguano, così l'amorosa mia bianca, per il continuo vedere Polimnesta, e spesso ragionare con essa, ed a furtivi abbracciamenti quasi ogni notte ritrovarmele appresso, dovesse avere fine. Aime! Che di tutti gli umani affetti solo è amore insaziabile. Sono oggimai dui anni che sotto specie di famiglia di Damone ad amor servo....

and from classical sources real and fanciful, of the sources of his style; of its influence on Shakespeare, and on Greene and Lodge; and of its general though temporary influence on the polite speech of the time which are to be found in a score of works. * From the circumstance of its having received the second share of attention the nature of his dramatic prose has, however, been somewhat obscured. Starting from the style of Euphuus itself as the norm, Mr Bond ~~describes~~ describes his dramatic prose as the same in style as that of the non-dramatic work, with a much more sparing use of all the peculiar apparatus of Euphuism, this comparative rarity arising from the needs of drama. Seeing that the defect of Euphuism lay at least as much in the excess of the ornaments which distinguish it as in these ornaments ^{as} ~~considered~~ considered in themselves, this is as much as to say that the plainer prose of the dramas is superior to the other. Nevertheless, while the dramatic prose is plainer and more vigorous, in most parts the same quaintness of effect is seen, the characteristic features of Euphuism being all present. There is one new device - comic Latin quotation - which is absent from the nondramatic work, but is very frequent in some of the plays, and is also to be found

*The fullest account of these matters is found in Professor Bond's edition of Lyly's works. See also The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 3, ch. 16 & Vol. 5, ch. 6, for a bibliography of Lyly literature.

in other Elizabethan dramatic prose at all periods. The difference in style between the nondramatic and the dramatic prose is not a stationary difference. Each successive play shows a progressive modification of his Euphuistic style, and a development away from it. This modification is extremely regular; the peculiarities of Euphuism become fewer and fewer, and some of them practically disappear. *

The influence of Gascoigne's style was probably confined to Lyly, upon whom, however, Gascoigne's prose had evidently much effect, both in temper and style. Moreover, he provided the example of pure prose drama. There can be no doubt that Lyly, when he was writing his first play, must have considered the surrounding chaos of dramatic metres, regular and irregular, and must have compared them with the order and neatness of Gascoigne's work; and then, conscious of his own aptitude for prose, with the success of Euphuus before him, must have determined on producing court plays in ornamental prose.

² Gosson, in *The School of Abuse* (1599), refers to two prose plays which preceded Lyly's work, but it is not known what they were: perhaps he referred to Gascoigne's comedies.

* See the table made by Mr. C. G. Child and quoted by Professor Bond on p. 289 of Vol. 2.

All the time that the use of prose in combination with blank verse in the popular drama was undergoing its first developments Lyly maintained his production of prose comedies. In one instance (only) did he attempt the mingling of prose and verse, namely in *The Woman in the Moon*, probably produced in 1593. * In tone, allegorical character and classical theme, it maintains the temper of Lyly's earlier plays, while adopting the popular method of mixed media. The blank verse is skilful and polished, and of a later style than Marlowe's *Tamberlaine*. The prose in the play is also, from Lyly's point of view, also a remarkable feat. The following specimen may be contrasted with the average style of Lyly's prose, *as it appears in the quoted ~~as it appears in the quotation on p. 203-212~~ ^{on the next page.}* (*Woman in the Moon*, III.2.11. ~~lines~~ 203-212):-

GUNOPHILUS. Well, in then! Wert ~~it were~~ not a pretty jest to bury him quick? I warrant it would be a good while ere she would ^{sc}atch him out of his grave with her nails; and yet she might, too, for she hath digged such vaults in my face that ye might go from my chin to my eyebrows betwixt the skin and the flesh! Wonder not at it, good people! I can prove that ~~there~~ hath been two or three merchants with me to lay in wine. But that they do not stand so conveniently as they would wish (for indeed they are everyone too near my mouth,

* There is another play of mixed medium which may possibly be Lyly's - *The Maid's Metamorphosis*, - which was not produced till 1599, and therefore does not affect the argument here, whether Lyly's or not.

and i am a great drinker) I had had a quarter's rent beforehand...

Cunophilus is the only personage who uses prose regularly in the play, combining in himself Lyly's page with the popular clown. He is not, however, a very farcical person as a rule, and though prose is mingled with verse in the way which was becoming traditional the underplot is only slightly developed. But here we have the author leaving his own manner, and this fact, combined with the non-euphuistic style of the prose, shows how the author of Euphuus looked on the style and use of the prose of the popular drama.

The comparative plainness of the early dramatic prose, except in passages - to be dealt with shortly - where Lyly is being definitely imitated, can be seen at once by contrasting the style of Endimion (1585) which best represents his dramatic style with the earliest pieces of prose in popular drama. In this play, as in most of Lyly's, the English tendency to combine an elevated with a comic theme is observable. THE average manner is seen in the following extract (-III.4.): -

~~GERON~~ GERON. Eumenides, release ENDimion, ~~for all things~~ for all things (friendship excepted) are subject to Fortune; Love is but an eyeworm, which only tickleth the head with hopes and wishes: friendship the image of eternity, in which there is nothing ~~movable~~ ~~movable~~ movable, nothing mischievous. ~~AS much~~ AS much

difference is there between beauty and virtue, bodies and shadows, colours and life; so great odds is there between love and friendship.

Love is a chameleon, which draweth nothing into the mouth but air, and nourisheth nothing in the body but lungs: believe me, Eumenides, desire dies in the moment that beauty sickens, and beauty fadeth in the same instant that it flourisheth. When adversities flow, then love ebbs: but friendship standeth stiffly in sterms. Time draweth wrinkles in a fair face, but addeth fresh colours to a fast friend, which neither heat, nor cold, nor misery, nor place, nor destiny, can alter or diminish. Friendship, of all things most rare, and therefore most rare because most excellent, whose comfort in misery is always sweet, and whose counsels in prosperity are always fortunate. Vain love, that only coming near to friendship in name, would seem to be the same or better in nature.

The style of the earliest prose in mixed drama is quite different from this, commencing as a plain homogeneous medium, from which a farcical style soon develops. Not one of the passages cited below, which are the earliest passages of prose in mixed drama, shows any trace of the characteristics of Euphuism, though Lyly's example dates from 1580. All are plain, and indeed often rude in style. Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra ~~and The Three~~ (1578) and The Three Ladies of London, give as realistic imitations of proclamations

anywhere in the drama. Thus The Three Ladies of London (1583) F-1. rec-
to:--

JUDGE (Mercadorus repeating after him) Say: I, Mercadorus, do utter-
ly renounce before all the world my duty to my prince, my honour
to my parents, and my goodwill to my country. Furthermore, I protest
and swear to be true to this country during life, and thereupon I
forsake my Christian faith-

The second is an equally realistic attempt to render the ravings
of madness. (The Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, 1582) Bomelio,
the character who speaks this passage, is maddened by misfortune
and the loss of some books, and changes from his usual verse to prose.
(p. 225) :-

HERMIONE O, father, my dear father, hark.

Bomelio. Father, my dear father? Soul, give me my books. Let's have
no more tarrying; the day begins to be dark: it begins with tempests.
Thunder and lightning! Fire and brimstone! and all my books are
gone, and I cannot help myself nor my friends. What a pestilence!
Who comes there? *

*The style of the prose of The Contention between Liberality and
Prodigality (1565), whether original or due to a late reviser, shows
no Lylyan influence. The prose parts of The Famous Victories of
Henry V, which Mr Bond puts before Lyly, though it is usually ascribed
to 1585-88, sometimes seem to suggest Lyly, but the rough state in

The prose of *The Three Lords and Ladies of London*, which is the first mixed play with any considerable amount of prose, shows no trace of Lyly's style, except one doubtful simile (383). The Spanish Tragedy shows its influence both in prose and verse, (e.g. 111.5 and 111.6.452&56-60). *Loocrine* (1586) is the first play which shows the tendency to imitate and parody Lyly. From this time for several years his influence ^{ne} grew, and rapidly reached its height, to suffer a rapid decline again. When the high comedy prose was developed by Shakespeare a fresh but more remote influence from Lyly began.¹

The use of prose for high comedy did not develop as early as the other uses of prose in mixed drama; when it did appear the influence

¹ These remarks are confined to the features peculiar to Euphuism. There are others, e.g. alliteration, and puns, which are found in much literature of the time, doggerel, regular rhyme, blank verse and prose, which are sometimes claimed as Euphuistic, but are not so, though their use by Lyly is excessive. They occur before Lyly's time as well as after.

* Note continued from previous page.

which it has come down makes any reasoning from it too doubtful to be adduced as good evidence. It appears to be a rough copy of a play which combined prose and blank verse in the regular way.

(See p. 208.)

of Lyly on polite conversation ^{(was reflected at once in the high}
 comedy style, but rather in ~~the~~ way of refinement than in any
 definite imitation of the special devices of Euphuism. Lyly cer-
 tainly helped to save prose from becoming vulgarised, from degen-
 erating into a vehicle for only the farcical matter of the drama.
 But the later and general influence, which dates from about 1598,
 excepted, the influence of Lyly on style is strictly limited.*

The amount of the Euphuistic influence and prose of the first
 draught is small relatively to the total bulk of the prose of those
 years. The course of prose in mixed drama may be described as the
 rapid development of several manners from the original uniform plain
 style just illustrated by the extracts contrasted with Lyly's work.
 Between this style (to which must be added the farcical prose, however
 which was either original or developed immediately) and Shakespeare,
 in whom are found several distinct styles (definitely adapted to
 several uses, there is a steady development. In popular drama,
 where a need usually impresses its mark more immediately and evid-
 ently than in any other form of composition that does not appeal
 directly to a popular audience, the manner in which the prose *was*
 used modified the style quickly, and it was only where Lyly's style

* For ~~an~~ ^{the remainder of the} account of Lyly's influence see ~~also~~ ^{pp.} 250-254 and 267-271, espec-
 ially

satisfied some dramatic need that it appeared successfully. The early influence, which ran in the three directions of slavish imitation in considerable passages by Greene, Lodge and Nash; scattered imitations inserted in a prose not otherwise related to him; and parody in isolated passages - this influence can be definitely stated, and its amount definitely limited.

The two plays which contain in the dialogue large bodies of Euphuistic imitation in the early and narrower sense are Greene's Orlando Furioso (1592) and Nash's Summer's Last Will and Testament (1592). Both these, however, contain other styles of prose, which strongly contrast with Lyly's. Orlando Furioso may be taken as an example. In this play there is (1) comic parody of Euphuism, 326-375; (2) imitation of Euphuism, without any special farcical intention: 674-680; (3) plain ordinary prose, e.g. ~~822~~ 750-760, & 1199-1229; (4) ordinary clown prose, e.g. 902-934, 965-982. The following quotations illustrate the difference of the styles.

(1) Euphuistic parody, ll. 326-339

Orgalio (soliloquizes) I am sent on an embassage to the right mighty and magnificent, alias the right proud and pontifical, the county Sacripant. For Marsilius and Orlando, knowing him to be as full of prowess as policy, and fearing lest in leaning to the other faction he might greatly prejudice them, they seek first to hold the candle before the devil: and knowing him to be a Thrasonical madcap, they

have sent me ,a Gnathonical oompanion, to give him a lettuce fit for his lips. Now, Sir, knowing his astrononical humours, as one that gazeth so high at the stars as he never looketh in the pavements in the streets - But whist ,Lupus est in fabula.

(2) Euphuistic imitation, ll. 671-680:-

ORGALIO. By my troth, my lord, I think Angelica is a woman.

ORLANDO What is that?

ORGALIO Therefore inconstant, mutable, having their loves hanging in their eyelids; that, as they are got with a look , they are lost again with a wink...

(3) Plain ordinary prose, ll. 992-1001:-

ORGALIO Look , my lord , here's one killed.

ORLANDO Who killed him?

ORGALIO You, my lord, I think.

ORLANDO I? No, no, I see who killed him. Come hither, gentle sir, whose prowess hath performed such an act: think not the courteous Palatine will hinder that thine honour hath achieved. Orgalio, fetch me a sword, that presently this squire may be dubbed a knight.

(4) Ordinary clown prose, ll. 902-909:-

Enter two clowns.

Tom. Sirrah Ralph, an thou'lt go with me I'll let thee see the bravest man that ever thou sawest.

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Ralph. Sirrah Tom, I'll believe ^{it} was he that was at our town on Sunday. I'll tell thee what he did, sirrah. He came to our house when all our folk were gone to church, and there was nobody at home but I, and he comes in and bade me fetch him some drink. Now, I went and fetched him some. And ere I came again, by my troth, he ran away with the roast meat, spit and all, and so we had nothing but porridge to dinner.

The amount of close Euphuistic imitation in passages of some length such as is seen in these two plays, is comparatively rare. It is found in no other play except The Wit of a Woman (1604).

Shakespeare's early plays, especially Love's Labour's Lost, contain passages which approximate to these, and Love's Labour's Lost is earlier than these two. But most of the Euphuistic passages, both in Shakespeare's and other plays, are isolated scraps tacked to styles which are as different from Lyly's as the contrasted style in Orlando Furioso. The following passages from Greene's James IV exhibits the method in which these pieces were introduced. The average style of Andrew, the character from whose part the pieces are selected, is represented by IV.iii.91-102:-

ANDREW Co, and the rot consume thee!- ^{what} ~~Oh~~ a trim world is this! My master lives by cozening the king; I by flattering him; Slipper, my fellow, by stealing; and I by lying. Is this not a wily accord, gentlemen? This last night our jolly horsekeeper, being well steeped

in liquor, confessed to me the stealing of my master's writings, and his great reward. Now dare I not bewray him, lest he discover my knavery. But thus have I wrought. I understand that he will pass this way to provide him necessaries. But if I and my fellows fail not we will teach him such a lesson as shall cost him a chief place on penniles⁶ bench for his labour. But yonder he comes.

Into this style is inserted the following passage, (IV.V.):—

ANDREW (to the king of Scotland in the presence of Ateukin, his master) Mighty and magnificent potentate, give credence to mine honourable/good lord, for I heard the midwife swear at his nativity that the fairies had given him the property of the Thracian stone: for who toucheth it is exempted from grief, and he that heareth my master's counsel is already possessed of happiness. Nay, which is more miraculous, as the nobleman in his infancy lay in his cradle, a swarm of bees laid honey on his lips in token of his eloquence, for melle dulcor fluit oratio.*...

The whole dramatic literature of the time contains scraps which came from Lyly or were imitations of him, inserted into both prose and verse of styles which in general characteristics had no other

* For a full list of Shakespeare's Euphuisms see W.L. Rushton, Shakespeare's Euphuism. The book, however, errs in ascribing to Lyly every similarity of phrase; many of ^{these} which are accidental or derived

relation to his work.

That the style of Euphuism was foreign to the temper of the drama is not more clearly proved by the appearance of other styles in the same play with it, the short duration of its first and direct influence, and the fact that the great bulk of Euphuistic imitation consists of scraps of it inserted into ~~pure~~ matter which owed little or nothing to it in style, than by the existence of parodies of it, which appeared as soon as the genuine imitations, and disappeared with them. Parody implies a definite difference of temper, and a kind of hostility, even when it is employed as a useful comic device.

The whole tone of Lyly's plays was different from the prose parts of the popular plays. His dramas have an idealistic tendency always. They are court plays, portraying conditions far removed from ordinary life, and the medium the characters employ is a highly unnatural prose, suited to the tone of the plays. It is true that there are different levels of tone in Lyly's plays somewhat similar to those which we find in the plays of mixed prose and verse, but even in the more comic parts the characters are unnatural and their speeches highly mannered. (But the purpose for which prose was

from the common speech of the time.

introduced in the mixed drama was ~~the opposite~~ of this. It was a realistic impulse which led to comic scenes and the speech of humble characters being rendered in prose in contrast to the blank verse. We cannot ascribe, therefore, the use of this realistic medium to Lyly's idealistic example. Lyly was remarkable, not for using prose in drama so much as for attempting to write entire dramas in prose, for extending the province of prose and raising its style and making this medium ^{perform} what would have been in other authors the duty of verse.

The mixture of prose and verse was due to the construction of the typical Elizabethan play with its mixture of serious and comic, the strong native sense of form harmonizing the alternations of medium with the changes of tone in the play. Various influences helped to bring about this pronounced feature of the drama; notably the mixture of regular verse and doggerel which was common before the plays of mixed prose and blank verse came into vogue, and the example of Italy in blank verse for tragedy and prose for comedy. Perhaps some critical opinion of the writers reinforced the evident natural fitness of each medium for the particular purposes to which it was applied; though learned opinion in general was as much against the mixture of media as it was against the mixture of tragic and comic.

The Manner in which the Prose is Used in Mixed Drama.

1. The Rational Basis underlying the use of the prose. P. 81.

The mixture of two media arose, and persisted, because it satisfied a dramatic need. Critical theory ignored it and shed its influence in other directions. But, in many other matters, critical theory was deferred to in the popular plays. Though there is nothing in Renaissance criticism about the mixture, the relation of the two vehicles in combination has been discussed in modern times, but almost entirely with reference to Shakespeare. The use of the two media shows, not a neglect of form but a strong ~~SE FORM~~ sense of form: for it harmonises with the rise and fall of the tone. Each medium has certain excellences and certain defects. By the use of the two together the dramatists were able to cover a wider range than they could otherwise have done. Therefore this feature is a necessary condition of the excellence Elizabethan drama reached. Blank verse is for higher, prose for lower, tone. Blank verse is the main or normal medium. Certain uses of prose can be ~~deduced~~ deduced from this- e.g. proclamations. Reasons can be given for the existence of plays entirely in one medium by the side of the others. These are largely due to the influence of critical theory, but some prose plays are due to the gradual eusting of verse by

prose in comedy, which tendency appeared about Shakespeare's time, but was not universal. Though blank verse was the main medium as a rule, in these and similar plays prose has taken its place. The tests by which the normal medium of a play can be found. In a certain number of plays the mixture of the two media seems to be capricious. Shakespeare and Webster use prose where verse breaks down, i.e. above as well as below prose. The relation of tones is determined for each play, and the point at which changes are made from one medium to the other therefore varies from play to play.

Since blank verse is the normal medium in most plays, and prose is artistically related to it there, in these a special reason can be found for each good use of prose. In general scene-tone and characters are combined to suit one another: hence verse is attached to elevated tone and elevated characters, prose to lower - with exceptions mentioned.

It seems from the general regularity and frequent subtlety, according to the above theory, that the combinations of prose and verse were intentional and made after reflection. This is confirmed by passages in ~~the~~ ^{of the dramatists} works, which refer to this subject.

2. Representative lists of plays in mixed prose and blank verse. P. 118.

a. Plays which are quite consistent with the above theory. b. Plays which observe the conventional use, but contain irregularities.

c. For the list of plays which are quite irregular see p.

3. The Elaboration of the various uses of prose. P. 124.

Besides prose for proclamations, letters, deeds, etc. the special reasons for its use, which are all connected with the rational basis, are madness, necessary business, farcical matter, the serious speech of humble characters, high comedy dialogue, realistic imitation and parody of the actual speech of the upper classes, the speech of "humour characters": a serious prose in the chronicle plays, oratorical and other serious prose, elevated and poetical prose: to express anything unnatural, such as hypocrisy, disguises, etc.: for sudden agitation and any violent passion. The use of prose becomes gradually more subtle. There were various methods of transition, sudden or gradual, according to need, from one medium to the other.

4. Shakespeare's use of prose. P. 164.

Kyd, Marlowe, Greene and the others all played their parts in this elaboration, which reached its height in Shakespeare. The general opinion that he alone had a rational basis for his use is wrong: he merely surpassed the others. His prose has been examined in various ways: these accounts summarised: correct conclusions have been arrived at in them, except as regards his relation to his predecessors: but these are omissions. He was the first to use

high comedy prose in mixed drama. There is a gradual development in the use of prose in his plays. His achievement in this direction summarised.

5. The use of prose after Shakespeare. P. 175.

On this little useful previous work exists, and it is mostly confined to the style of the prose. The general opinion is that, with exceptions, the dramatists after him were irregular in their use. The development of drama, and especially of blank verse, greatly affected the use of prose. This did not increase in subtlety, but a high degree of consistency remained for a considerable time; then with the gradual deterioration of the other parts of the drama irregularity in the use of prose increased. A large number of authors continued the old uses when the contrast between the two media had become weak. Fletcher abandoned these now indistinct contrasts, and used his irregular verse as the sole medium in many plays. He was followed by Massinger, and exerted much influence till the end of the drama. A list of the plays of this kind. Summary of the use of prose by Webster, Ford, Shirley, Brome, etc.

6. Various considerations. P. 199.

This convention of prose and verse acquired a great force. Sometimes it caused inconvenience where it was adhered to. Examples of its force. The decay of the convention illustrated: especially in the separation of tone and character interest. This was not

always bad, but easily passed into pure irregularity. The use of both media in the same speech. The tendency to slip into prose without any valid reason.

THE MANNER IN WHICH THE PROSE IS USED.

THE RATIONAL BASIS UNDERLYING THE USE OF THE PROSE.

The growth of a convention in the use of prose from its beginning till the time when it reached its fullest and subtlest employment in conjunction with blank verse, and its progress till the closing of the theatres has now to be traced. The tradition of the manner in which doggerel and regular verse were combined, that arose among the shifting conditions of drama before 1570, was handed down to the mixture of prose and verse that succeeded. The mixture of doggerel and regular verse arose because it satisfied a dramatic need: and the existence of the mixed prose and verse in drama is to be explained by reference to a similar need. The explanation of the two mixtures on general aesthetic grounds is one and the same, and it is the difference between them that is to be explained by the particular literary conditions.

The theory of the subject is perfectly simple, and yet indispensable for explaining the uses of prose. About the time of Lyly it began to be perceived more clearly than before by dramatists that drama was neither, on the one hand, a mere opportunity for farce, nor, on the other hand, a mere exhibition of ideal passions and figures. The simple religious and moral aims of the Miracle and Morality Plays had already succumbed; and the dramatist was drawing nearer

to the representation of actual life. At this point in the development there appeared together, as in ~~all~~ other kinds of literature, the opposite growths of the representation towards idealism and realism, each of which tended, when given free play, to oust the other and expand undisturbed. It is a conspicuous token of the excellence of our early Regular Drama that it succeeded so often in combining both the tendencies, not merely in its content, but in its external form. In general, the prose represents the realistic and verse the idealistic tendency. As a rule the regular dramas show both tendencies, and are elevated or the reverse according as the bulk of the prose surmounts or sinks below a certain level.

Renaissance criticism had little or nothing to say about the mixture of prose and verse. The learned tradition identified dramatic art with obedience to principles logically deduced, or supposed to be logically deduced from Aristotle's Poetics; and there is a considerable number of English plays, generally of minor interest, which conform to these principles. But the main body, consisting of plays which combine tragic and comic, blank verse and prose, do not conform to them. These plays had no defenders, and few opponents who troubled to pronounce at length critical strictures upon them. Sir Philip Sidney censures the contemporary English plays as neither true tragedies nor true comedies, but a mixture; he holds

that they outrage the grave and weighty character of tragedy, its elevated style and the dignity of the personages, by mingling kings and clowns.*

* An Apology for Poetry, p. 199. (Elizabethan Critical Essays ed. G. Gregory Smith.) "But besides these gross absurdities, how all their Plays be neither right Tragedies, nor right Comedies; mingling Kings and Clowns, not because the matter so carrieth it, but thrust in Clowns by head and shoulders, to play a part in majestic matters, with neither decency nor discretion: So as neither the admiration and commiseration, nor the right sportfulness, is by their mungrel Trageⁱ~~y~~-comedy obtained. I know Apuleius did somewhat so, but that is a thing recounted with space of time, not represented in one moment: and I know the Ancients have one or two examples of Trageⁱ~~y~~-comedies, as Plautus hath Amphitric. But, if we mark them well, we shall find, that they never, or very daintily match Horn-pipes and Funerals. SO falleth it out that, having ~~not~~ indeed no right Comedy, in that comical part of our Tragedy we have nothing but scurrility, unworthy of any chaste ears, or some extreme show of doltishness, indeed fit to lift up a loud laughter, and nothing else: where ~~the~~^{the} whole tract of a Comedy should be full of delight, as the Tragedy should be still maintained in a well raised admiration.

Cascoigne, Notes of Instruction, p. 32, says "To mingle merry jests

But if we consider the two strands in these mixed plays separately we find that they conform to and indeed illustrate current critical theory in several ways. It is as ~~if~~^{if} the dramatists had been obliged to conform to popular taste, which was the cause of the introduction of the interludes of comic interest, and had at the same time, while admitting this cardinal violation of theoretical principles, endeavoured to palliate their offence by subservience in certain particulars. In the first place the personages of the tragic or serious parts of the plays are generally of high rank; and conversely, the comic characters are nearly always of humble station. The violations of this canon are few. It is within these separate circles that the various types of character are generally evolved.*

Now the English drama goes as far as any drama, the mixture of in a serious matter is an indecorum", with evident reference to the popular plays.

* Spingarn, *Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, quotes several passages from critical authorities on this cardinal principle of dramatic theory at that time (e.g. Geraldine Cinthio, p.62).

comic and tragic being once admitted, in its adherence to decorum in style, by means of this mixture of verse and prose with which we are dealing. In gravity and weight, so far as these can be emphasized by metre, conceptions, and diction, it is inferior to no tragic drama: and on the other hand, the language of its comedy is as humble and colloquial as the strictest of critics would demand. Though placed in juxtaposition, Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.

Another point which illustrates conformity to critical theory is found in the immense amount of comic prose written in dialect or broken English. The subject matter of ^{the} comic was generally held to be a slight evil which was neither sad nor destructive, and which we perceive in others but do not believe to be in ourselves.¹ Perhaps the appropriateness of jargon of all kinds as a cause of the ludicrous is not sufficient to account entirely for its appearance and profusion in the drama, but it is at least interesting to notice in view of its amount how completely its use conforms to the current learned notion of the causes of laughter.²

¹ Spingarn quotes Trissino and Robertelli on this point.

² But Sir Philip Sidney objects to it (p200) "And the great fault even in that point of laughter, and forbidden plainly by Aristotle, ~~is that~~ ^{is that} they stir laughter in sinful things, which are rather ~~execrable~~ execrable than ridiculous: or in miserable, which are rather to

As regards the appropriateness of versate tragedy and prose to comedy there was a definite opinion. Castelvetro saw an indecorum in the use of prose for tragedy, and Paolo Beni, who championed prose for tragedy as well as comedy, was almost alone in the first part of his opinion.² The general notion was that tragedy ought to³ be written in verse, and that it was doubtful whether comedy might be best written in prose or verse. There is no explicit dictum concerning⁷ the mixture of prose and verse in the same play.

Though there is little or nothing in Renaissance criticism concerning the relation of prose and verse ~~and~~ in combination, in modern times the differences between blank verse and prose have been fully discussed; and, with reference to Shakespeare principally, the relation of the two when they are used together in a drama for pur-

1. p23 of Poetica; see in Saintsbury, History of Criticism, vol 2, p85.

2. see ibid. p107.

3. see ibid. p217.

be pitied than scorned. For what is it to make folks gape at a wretched beggar or a beggarly clown ? or, against law of hospitality, to jest at strangers, because they speak not English so well as we do?

poses of contrast has been treated also. The mixture of blank verse and prose which distinguishes the form of so many English dramas from the drama of other countries is closely connected with the mixture of tragic and comic matter which had been always a salient characteristic of English dramas. Our drama has been praised¹ as copying nature in the combination of the two elements in one action, as in real life the sublime and common, ^ttragic and comic, so often stand in close juxta-position. The combination of the two elements is found in the earliest English dramas and continued to mark our plays down to the closing of the theatres. The whole tone of many of our plays exhibits a continuous and deliberate rise and fall. To enhance the dramatic effect, to harmonize with this undulation of tone, the dramatists instinctively sought for every variety of form, of style and diction. Confined within the range of one medium, whether prose or verse, they could not have combined so many degrees of tone, and the charm and richness of our plays is largely due to the range of media which enabled the authors to pass from such heights to such depths of feeling and character. This is easily seen by comparing the plays of comparatively prosaic blank verse

1 The mixture of tragic and comic, which always existed in the national drama of England was but the necessary consequence of that peculiarly national culture of mind which predominated undisturbed

of Ben Jonson with those of Shakespeare. In the plays of mixed medium which the former has provided us with we miss the charm and variety of Shakespeare just because the range of form which Ben Jonson had command of is so much narrower. NO doubt the range of form needs great skill in the management, but it seems likely that the difficulties of such a wide range were responsible for the existence of so much bad dramatic work side by side with the most magni-

in the course of the development of English poetry. In real life the sublime and common, tragic and comic, often stand close together.The combination of the two dramatic elements harmonized with the form and composition of the earlier English dramas...I do not merely allude to the exchange of prose and poetry...but also to the continual change of the whole tone, of the style and character of the diction, which keeps pace with the course of the action, the coming and going of the various personages, and with the changes of situation. Both necessarily enhance the dramatic effect, provided only that the change be not accidental but such as we find it in Shakespeare, arising always with intrinsic necessity from the subject and from the development of the action....(pp.103&104)...

In Shakespeare we find side by side the great and small (in language as in everything else), the sublime and low, the highest poetical flights by the side of the ordinary phraseology of everyday life... (p.331)Ulrici, Shakespeare's Dramatic Art, trans.

ficent creations of the Elizabethan age. But these latter, the best-known examples of the Elizabethan drama, are written in the mixture of verse and prose, and as a rule the plays which are wholly in verse or wholly in prose fall outside the class in which the masterpieces are to be included.*

There are, of course, many kinds of dialogue which go equally well in either medium.¹ All necessary business and merely conventional, comparatively toneless speech can be rendered in verse or prose indifferently. The verse will add in dignity what it loses in rapidity, will gain in grace what it loses in realism and concentration. As a rule the Elizabethan dramatist used verse for such matter because verse was the normal medium. When the soul of the speaker is elevated, serious and calm, or in solitary contemplation, the even flow of verse is its natural accompaniment. Shakespeare confined verse, in his mature period, to securing such effects. But he either instinctively or deliberately turned to prose for rendering such effects as would lose more by being expressed in verse. All specially realistic phases, and comic thought, with its uneven rapidity, correspond to prose more than to verse. Intimate conversation, and quick interchange of ideas, and speech which expresses

¹ See Seccombe and Allen, The Age of Shakespeare, pp. 117-122.

* See p. 229.

thought which is too tense for the diffuseness of verse, or too full of involved tormented changes of feeling for the evenness of its flow, he couches in prose. If he had an explicit theory of the relation of prose and verse, such a sketch appears to express it in outline. The whole theory of the relative fitness of the two media can be deduced from the difference between them as it is expressed by Professor Saintsbury* : "As the essence of verse-metre is its identityand recurrence, so the essence of prose-rhythm lies in variety and divergence." Shakespeare, taken as the ideal Elizabethan dramatist, covers the complete range of human feelings, and represents each in its appropriate rhythm: and there are neutral parts in his plays where the main medium by its simplicity and yet variety approaches so closely to prose that it can scarcely be said to differ from it in unanalysed effect, while the extremes of each kind constitute a divergence as wide as that between the opposite poles of feeling, and these extremes both of medium and tone are separated from each other by infinite degrees.

Dryden's theory and practice afford an excellent comment on the way a dramatist regarded the use of the various media. On the reopening of the theatres he produced chiefly prose comedies. Then he turned gradually to tragedy written in rhyme. His Indian Em-

*History of Prose Rhythm, p. 450.

Emperor, 1665, was wholly in rhyme, and between 1669 and 1675 all his plays were written in rhyme: Then he abandoned it for blank verse, and from 1678 all his plays were written in this vehicle. In his discussion on the respective merits of rhymed and blank verse he remarks, accounting for the use of blank verse by the Elizabethans;*

"Says Aristotle, 'tis best to write tragedy in that kind of verse which is nearest prose: this ... with us is blank verse..." But, expressing his own opinion he says, "Blank verse is at best but a poetic prose, a sermo pedestris: and as such most fit for comedies, where I acknowledge rhyme to be improper." and "'I deny not but that to imitate nature in that perfection they (the Elizabethans) did in prose (in which he would apparently include here [↑] sermo pedestris_↑) is a greater commendation than to write in verse exactly." We find here that Dryden, at first omitting to consider the difficulties of rhymed verse which finally led him back to blank verse, held that rhymed verse was the most elevated metre, that blank verse ranked next, and that below this came prose. The standard Elizabethan writers observed the same order of relation between prose and verse, but they substituted blank verse for the rhyme, and gave over to prose a large province which Dryden would have allotted

* Essay of Dramatic Poesy, Ed. D. Nichol Smith, pp. 63, 68, 271.

to blank verse. True they used rhyme in many pastorals, and in passages in the midst of blank verse for various reasons, but their general rule is clear. The Early Elizabethans, wanting prose, observed to some extent a similar dramatic relation of tone between regular metres for elevated scenes on the one hand, and irregular metre for scenes of lower tone on the other hand.

The theory implicit in the work of the dramatists who conformed to the usual practice can be stated with certainty. It was that prose and verse will suit with equal excellence and equal defect necessary or conventional speech. (Prose will give verisimilitude and rapidity; while verse will add dignity, but is slower to express thought. Rhymed verse may be used to give rapidity, however, and is well suited for particular comic effects. Blank verse is more dignified than rhymed verse; equally selective; better adapted to render the sense because it does not compel the author to alter his thought occasionally for the sake of the rhyme; and it is less distracting to the ear by its absence of rhyme. Hence exaltation of feeling, or speech indicating exalted character or station, should be expressed in blank verse, while speech which flows from foolish or ridiculous character, or from lowly station, should be couched in prose.

Because there is less flexibility, and frequently less concent-

ation, in verse-dialogue than in prose, speech which expresses concentrated thought or tense action of mind would tend, in the hands of a master, to be rendered by prose; and speech which represents exceptionally quick turns of thought, or disconnected thought, would be in prose. Hence the speech of madmen, for example, and of characters who are undergoing great excitement, would also be in prose; although the other may be their usual medium.

Further, if one medium is regarded as the main medium, that is to say, as the medium best suited on the whole to dialogue neutral in tone, whether for gain of dignity or for verisimilitude, the other vehicle will tend to be used for representing whatever is not natural speech, if not elevated in tone. In the blank verse drama all letters and speeches which are formal copies of reading, such as proclamations, and even the announcements of messengers, will tend, from a realistic impulse, towards prose: and the speech of very precise persons is sometimes prose. The use of prose for proclamations, indictments, deeds, etc., is one of the first and most natural uses, and it lasts throughout the drama. The following is a representative selection of references to such passages:—Contention between Liberality and Prodigality, F3r&v., Promos and Cassandra, Pt. ii, H4v &lr; Tamburlaine, Pt. 2, 111&1: The Troublesome Reign of King John, Pt. 1, Sc. 1&4, Pt. 2 Sc. 3: The First Part of the Contention, pp. 4&5: Thomas, Lord Cromwell, F3r: Jack Straw, F1r; Richard, Duke of York,

p.62:Othello, 2, 2:Lear, 5, 3, 110-115:Winter's Tale, 3, 2:Sejanus, 5, 10:
 The Tragedy of Byron, 5, 1: Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, 3, 1: Antonio
 and Mellida, 5: Sir Thomas Wyatt, pp.98&121: The Phoenix, 2, 2: Michael-
 mas Term, 1, 1: A Trick to Catch the Old One, 4, 4: The Old Law, 1, 1&
 5, 1: The Game at Chess, 3&, 1, p. 385: Edward 4, /t. 2, 1, 4: Fair Maid of
 the West, PT. 1pp. 52&66: If You Know not ME, You Know Nobody, p. 12:
 Fortune by Land and Sea, p. 51: The Triumph of Love, p. 330: Bonduca,
 2, 2: The Noble Gentleman, 5, 1, p. 234: Love's Cure, 5, 3, p. 228: The Reneg-
 ado, 4, 2, p. 201&202: The Weakest goeth to the Wall, 4, 3: The Duchess
 of Malfi, 3, 3: The Wedding, 3, 2, p. 405: The Devil's Charter, C4r: Hoffman,
 # C4r: The Queen, 11. 2340-2350: The Jews' Tragedy, 560-5&1974-6: The
 Queen and Concubine, 3, 7, p. 59.

There are a few exceptions to the practice of rendering such ~~matter~~
 matter in prose. Chapman has a proclamation in verse in The Trag-
 edy of Byron, 5, 1, as well as a prose proclamation in the same scene.

Closely allied with this use and developing from it, though not
 so pronounced, is the tendency to put the announcements of mess-
 engers into prose. This usage is seen in -to mention a few examples-
 The Troublesome Reign of King John, Pt. 2, Sc. 2, 3&7: Tamburlaine, Pt.
 2, 5, 3: The True Tragedy of Richard 3, p. 53: The First Part of the
 Contention, p. 9: Richard, Duke of York, pp. 46, 55, & 56: The Gamester, 2, 2,
 p. 210: The Doubtful Heir, 5, 1, p. 355: The Valiant Welshman, C3v: The Queen
 11. 558-561: The Jews' Tragedy, 11. 528-30, 769-771: The Lost Lady, 5, 1,

p.606. Though this usage persists throughout the drama, it is not consistently employed. Thus Shakespeare, in King John, converts the prose of the Troublesome Reign in Chattillon's opening speech into blank verse, and similarly in The Valiant Welshman, C3r, there is an announcement in blank verse, following a similar one in prose.

Another use of prose which is so obviously natural that it cannot be said to be connected with the conventions of prose use which will be traced shortly (it occurs in other dramas which do not mix prose and verse for any other purpose; for example, in the contemporary verse plays of the Spanish drama) is the use of prose for letters.

Practically all the very large number of letters which are found in the Elizabethan drama are in prose. Before the appearance of prose they were couched in the main medium of the play (as in Ralph Roister Doister) : even later they are occasionally found in rhyme or blank verse. In Thomas Lord Cromwell, C1r, Titus Andronicus, 2, 3, 268-276 : Rape of Lucrece, 4, 6 : The Triumph of Love, p. 328 : Mad Lover, 5, 1, p. 71 : Maid in the Mill, 1, 3 : A Very Woman, 5, 2, p. 330 : When you see me you know me, 1, 2, R&V : The Heir, 2, pp. 580-1 : there occur letters in blank verse. Letters in rhyme are found in The Fair Maid of the Exchange, 1, p. 42 (but there are four ~~others~~ others in prose in this play) : A New Way to Pay Old Debts, 4, 3, p. 579 : The Great Duke of Florence, 4, 1, p. 493 & 5, 2, p. 512 : The Lovesick

Court, 2, 1, p. 106: In The Changeling, 4, 1, a blank verse scene, quotations read from a book are contrasted with the medium of the scene by being put into prose. But the vast majority of the letters are in prose.

Blank verse is the normal medium of Elizabethan Drama in mixed plays. It is only rarely and owing to special circumstances that the prose exceeds the verse in bulk in a play, and becomes the ~~normal~~ ^{normal} medium. There are such plays, however. To see why this phenomenon occurs it is necessary to examine the classes into which ~~the~~ the plays fall when grouped according to construction.

If the mature drama is regarded purely with respect to construction in its broadest aspect, two types of play can be discerned. There is first the play in which the tone is fairly uniform throughout, the type which allies itself with contemporary critical theory. This type is, if serious, frequently modelled on Senecan lines, as this is seen in Seneca's Ten Tragedies, 1581. it is entirely in ~~verse~~ verse, often rhymed pentameter, and frequently with short-line choruses. If the play is comedy, the medium may be either verse or prose. Even the most original of these plays retain uniformity of tone and medium. The following is a representative list of verse plays of this kind: * Corboduac, The Arraignment of Paris, The Misfort-

* ~~where dates are mentioned in the text they are taken from Schelling~~
Elizabethan Drama, 1558-1642.

tunes of Arthur, Alphonsus King of Arragon, Antony, Cornelia, Cleopatra, Caesar and Pompey, The Virtuous Octavia, Alaham, Mustapha, Philotas, the Queen's Arcadia, Sir William Alexander's Monarchic Tragedies, Hymen's Triumph, Nero, The Shepherds' Holiday, ^{and} Amyntas,

Such plays as these*, which include many of the University plays, of the Latin plays, and, on the whole, the Pastorals, are an artificial element in English drama, and had little place on the stage. But the influence of the kind on the acted plays was considerable.¹

*For a full treatment of some of them see The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 5, Ch. 12.

¹ Ben Jonson, referring to the classical tradition and the writers of the plays which hold to these rules, said: Induction to Every Man Out of His Humour: "I see not then but we should enjoy the same Licentia or free power to illustrate and heighten our inventions as (the Ancients) did; and not be tied to those strict and regular forms which the niceness of a few (who are nothing but Form) would thrust upon us." And again in the Introduction to Sejanus, which approaches this type of play, he says: "If it be objected that what I publish is no true poem in the strict laws of time, I confess it: as also in the want of a proper chorus: whose habits and words are such and so difficult, as not any, since the ancients, no, not they who have most presently affected laws, have yet come in the way of.

Next to them, and approximating to their type, stands a second class, in which the tone, while more real and therefore more various, is still carefully kept very uniform. These plays are also in one medium. Examples of this class are:- Richard, Duke of York, The Battle of Alcazar, 1 Henry 6, Dido \ Queen of Carthage, Edward 3, 2 Henry 6, Richard 2, Richard 3, King John, Sejanus, The Alchemist, and Catiline.

These two classes of plays are outside our consideration altogether as the impulse which led to the use of prose is not seen in them at all.

On the other side there are two classes of plays which, being entirely in prose, cannot show the operation of any convention in mixing prose and verse. The first of these two classes consists of plays Nor is it needful, or almost possible in these our times, and to such auditors as commonly things are presented, to observe the old state and splendour of dramatic poems, with preservation of any popular delight.... In the meantime, if in truth of argument, dignity of persons, gravity and height of elocution, fulness and frequency of sentence, I have discharged the other offices of a tragic writer, let not the absence of these forms be imputed to me...."

in which prose is used for comedy in obedience to critical opinion. Such are :-Supposes, Jocasta, The Glass of Government, Campaspe, Sapho and Phao, Callathea, Endimion, Love's Metamorphosis, and Midas. It is the example of these prose plays which has been held accountable for the appearance of prose in comedy in plays of mixed medium.

Secondly, there is another later class of prose plays in which the absence of verse is due to the influence of a prose tradition which has gradually become so strong as to oust verse entirely. Examples of this class are:- The Silent Woman, Bartholomew Fair, The Wit of a Woman, Two Wise Men and all the Rest Fools, Aristippus, The Parson's Wedding, and The London Chaunticleers.*

The first class of prose plays only enter the argument in certain directions, namely, as regards points of style and the influence which their style may have exerted upon the the style of the prose in the mixed plays. The second class are extreme examples of a tendency in the class of plays to which this enquiry is devoted,

*There are, of course prose translations, such as The Birth of Hercules, and Lady Lumley's Iphigeneia, which being manifestly school exercises are not dealt with here. For the spreading of the comic prose in the later years of the drama see pp. ^{100, 101, 153, and 185} Wingfield's Pedantius is an example of a Latin prose comedy,

to plays of mixed interest, and mixed medium.

It was about the time of The middle of Shakespeare's production that there appeared the tendency in the prose of the mixed plays to spread over the province of blank verse in comedy which accounts for the existence of the purely prose comedies of the later class. These comedies are only the furthest examples of a larger class where prose supplanted verse, and became the normal medium, although ~~although~~ the latter maintained some hold there still. In these plays the usual position is reversed and every use of blank verse might be explained as arising from a special need. Much Ado About Nothing is essentially a prose comedy, as is proved by the fact that the Don John passages are mostly in prose, as also are many of Don Pedro's speeches. The Church scenes are in verse to add dignity, and Leonato and Antonio express their grief and anger in verse; but the verse, which is small in amount, is only used for such special reasons. Similarly, The Merry Wives of Windsor is a prose play, verse being only used in the few romantic passages: and, though in a less degree, the same is true of As You Like It, where, though the amount of verse is considerable, a special reason can always be found for its employment.

The best test, however, which discovers the normal medium of a play is the rendering of matter which is neutral in tone, and of necessary business. As a rule this is couched in blank verse. But in the

plays of Shakespeare just mentioned it is rendered by prose. After Shakespeare a number of plays of mixed medium occurs in which the neutral matter is also in prose, and in which a convention of the use of blank verse in relation to prose is operating with exactness. The chief of these are A Match At Midnight, A Challenge for Beauty, Every Woman in her Humour, May Day, Monsieur D'Olive, The Ball, Westward Ho!, Northward Ho!, Blurt Master Constable, The Phoenix, Michaelmas Term, Anything for a Quiet Life, The Witty Fair One, The Wedding, The Bird In a Cage, The Fleire, The Hog Hath Lost His Pearl, Lady Alimony, The Court Beggars, The Queen and Concubine, The Sparagus Garden, A Mad Couple Well Matcht, and The Jovial Crew. Prose is the normal medium also in a number of plays in which the alternation of verse with it is more arbitrary, the chief of which are Every Man in His Humour, Every Man out of His Humour, Cynthia's Revels, The Poetaster, The Puritan, The Family of Love, The A Trick to Catch the Old One, Mad World My Masters, Your Five Gallants, Greene's Tu ^{quo} ~~que~~ que, The City Wit, Covent Garden Weeded, and The Northern Lass. Some authors show a disposition to adopt prose as the normal medium of comedy in place of verse. Shakespeare has a definite tendency in this direction; Jonson did so in the plays mentioned; and Dekker seems to prefer prose for verse often, using verse in some plays for passages of extreme sentiment only. But both these latter authors are inconsistent with regard to neutral matter in many plays.

couching it sometimes in verse and sometimes in prose. Dekker often adopts as his normal medium the vehicle suited to the scene as a whole, changing from verse to prose as the norm several times in a play, but observing consistency within the limits of each scene. The adoption of prose by Jonson is striking, because he uses it in this way in plays which contain no farcical matter. It may perhaps be explained by a natural tendency in him towards prose: for his blank verse has not the poetic quality of some of the other dramatists', and Drummond states that he wrote out all his verse as prose first and then converted it.* Middleton exhibits considerable variety in his use of prose: sometimes he adheres with fair regularity to distinct usages, and again at other times the dialogue slips easily from verse into prose and back again. But in his comedies he uses more prose than verse. In Brome's comedies the normal medium is usually prose.

Besides all these classes, there is another which consists of a number of plays in which the employment of prose and verse appears to be purely capricious. It is sometimes possible to find a reason for a particular passage being in one medium rather than the other, but the general employment of the two vehicles appears to be arbitrary in these plays. The following is a list of the chief

* Conversations, No. 15.

of them:- The Taming of a Shrew, Sir Thomas More, The Pilgrimage to Parnassus, The Return from Parnassus, The Death of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, ^{is} ~~H~~ ~~is~~ ~~tr~~ ~~ic~~ ~~om~~ ~~ast~~ ~~ix~~, Arden of Feversham, The Puritan, An Humorous Day's Mirth, All Fools, The Gentleman Usher, The Widow's Tears, (in fact Chapman is capricious in his comedies as a rule) Revenge for Honour, If This Be Not Good The Devil Is In It, The Woman-hater, The Knight of the Burning Pestle, Wit at Several Weapons, The Scornful Lady, A King and NO King, The Honest Man's Fortune, * The Devil's Law Case, (The Play varies: sometimes a traditional use is evident) The Damselle, The City Wit, The Northern Lass, Captain \ Thomas Stukeley, The Hollander, Wit in a Constable,

Blank verse, therefore, was deliberately preferred by the dramatists as a whole as the normal medium of the native or mixed plays, and was used for elevated characters and tone,¹ while prose was used in contrast with it to lower the tone or add a definitely comic effect. The uses of prose in the plays where prose is employed deliberately mostly conform to this rule, except those which are merely copies of formal matters, such as proclamations, letters, and set orations rendered realistically. But, since speech of any kind is incapable of expressing adequately the highest efforts of thought,

* ~~See p. 138 in~~ ~~the~~ ~~dramatists~~
See p. 138 in ^{the} influence of Fletcher.

¹ There is one special use of blank verse for comic purposes which

the dramatists sometimes despair of using the medium usually employed in the circumstances and seek refuge in its opposite.*

For many a play, especially for earlier plays, it would be sufficient to say that farcical ^{characters} use prose and serious characters use ought not to be omitted. In a good many places in later plays a passage of burlesque blank verse is contrasted with the comic prose and there are several characters, whose main mark is bombast, who speak in exaggerated and comic rant throughout. Examples are:

Satiromastix e.g. p197, Eastward Ho! p458 (Quicksilver, the clown)

In the comedy Northward Ho! which is nearly all prose, Bellamint, being poetically inclined, composes a few passages of a ranting blank verse tragedy, whose style is very similar to the style of the specimens of declamation the players gave to Hamlet. In The Woman Hater, Lazarillo occasionally uses it e.g. 2.1. p91;—

Duke. What time of the day do you hold it to be?

Lazarillo. About the time that mortals whet their knives

On thresholds, on their shoe-soles, and on stairs:

Now bread is grating, and the testy cook

Hath much to do. Now, now, the Table's all.

Duke. 'Tis almost dinnertime?

In the Knight of the Burning Pestle, the Fletcherian verse is found

* see p. 156.

verse. But the employment of prose by Shakespeare is one of the subtlest parts of his technique, and there is a steady growth between the crudest efforts and the manifestation of the tradition seen in his works. The formulation sufficient for these rough attempts is quite incapable of expressing the relation of prose and verse in its higher forms. It is only possible to express the relation adequately in such a refined formula as is almost a valueless truism. The relation of blank verse to prose is that of higher elevation of tone to lower. This difference of level persists, however far the differentiation of the kinds of prose has proceeded, and however far the tradition of prose use has been elaborated.

~~Now~~ The tradition, formulated thus, was not employed in naked con-
 as well as prose; but the burlesque of the rant of the older plays is all in regular verse, e.g. 3.1. pp. 197-8. In Love's Cure, at 1.2. p. 170, Bobadill, the clown, uses intentionally comic blank verse; and burlesque blank verse is found also in The Lover's Melancholy, e.g. 4.2, pp. 84-5; The Lady's Trial, by Fustelli, Fulgoro, and Guzman, e.g. 2, 1, p. 277; and by Benatzi, Benatzi is like Pistol, whose speech, indeed, belongs to the same class. In this play many of the rhetorical devices usually peculiar to the farcical prose, such as a lisp, gipsy slang, mistakes in words, scraps of Spanish and Dutch, appear in the ^{ur}burlesque blank verse): The Devil's Charter, F2r: Covent Garden Weeded, p. 56; Hey for Honesty, e.g. 3, 1: The Watch at Midnight, p. 17.

sistency. According to it, in a ~~xxxxxxx~~ pure tragedy the most impassioned passages should be in blank verse, and the personages most elevated in character and rank should use the same metre, the less impassioned and elevated prose; while in a farce the characters and passages which though humorous are not ~~at~~ at the extremest point of farce should use blank verse, the prose being reserved for the most farcical. But the prose and verse are not used in each play only in reference to that play. Rather, as a rule, are passages and characters which are elevated to a certain degree attached to blank verse; and, correspondingly, passages and characters of a lower tone than this are attached to prose. In such a relation, it is naturally plays of the middle sort, where are combined both serious and comic interests, which fulfil the formula most completely; because it was to them that the formula was most easily applied.

There is another reason why it was impossible for a dramatist to apply the ideal formula in an absolute way. The speeches of necessary business discussed above are, for practical purposes, neutral in tone. These speeches are not, however, neutral in theory. Every speech of every character should express to some extent the nature of the speaker as well as advance the action of the play; and every indication of character and advancement of plot must, in a kind which is compelled to be so economical of words as the drama, be in the direction of either tragic or comic interest. But all speeches

which fall below a certain level of significance, of which in most plays there are a considerable number, must be regarded as practically neutral in tone, when there is a question as to which of the two vehicles they are to be rendered in. These passages are usually put into verse.

This being so, we arrive at the ordinary position that blank verse is to be regarded as the rule and prose the exception. From this position arises the commonplace that it ought to be possible to assign a special reason for every passage or scene of prose that is intentionally inserted. To this we may add that most of the special reasons must be such as can be brought into conformity with

our ideal formula that the difference between verse and prose ~~prose~~ corresponds to a difference in tone. Prose ^{passages} for which no special reason can be given (with exceptions which will be enumerated) — which are not in conformity with the ideal formula — must be taken to be failures or irregularities; or, as attempts to step above the limits of blank verse, as confessions of the inability of their author to express these parts of his elevated thought in blank verse. The cases of carelessness or failure to apply the formula & consistently are rarer than might be supposed: for the use of blank verse became so natural to the dramatists of that age that the effort required to write in dramatic prose matter which according to practice should have been in verse was probably greater than

the difficulty of rendering such matter in verse.

The growth of the tradition of mixing prose and verse may, therefore, be explained not merely as a growth in the consistency with which the ideal formula was applied, but also as a development of the special reasons for the use of prose. In fact, though both views are equally correct, the second is that which appeals more to the investigator. This is due to the fact that during the time the tradition was being elaborated the drama was developing in every direction. The few simple kinds of plays which existed when the tradition began speedily split up into a large number, and at the same time the complexity of each kind increased enormously. Obviously the the difficulty of fulfilling such a tradition as this in the later and more complex plays must have been much greater than in the earlier simpler kinds. But the alternation of prose and verse follows the change of tone as faithfully in the middle as in the earlier plays, which necessarily implies a great increase in the delicacy with which verse and prose contrasts were used.

The alternation of prose and verse in harmony with changes of tone may be illustrated without special reference to individual character* by the following analysis of James IV. This is a comedy with a romantic interest, although it has the title of a chronicle history

*For which see p. 44.

Tone: - Analysis of James ~~IV~~ IV.

Scene,	Tone,	Total Length,	Prose,	Verse,
XXXXXXXX Prologue,	Fantastic and Comic,	111	111 ^{///}	0 0
Act 1, Sc. 1,	Romantic and pseudo-historic,	283	0	283
" 2.	Comic,	119	99	20 *
" 3.	A Historic Fantasy between the acts,	144	0	144
Act 2, Sc. 1,	^{Ro} R omantic and comic,	206	50	156
" 2.	Pseudo-historic and romantic,	234	0	234
Act 3, Sc. 1,	Comic and necessary business,	55	45	10
" 2.	Comic, changing to historic,	141	102 ¹⁰²	39
" 3.	Romantic, and fantastic at end,	146	0	146
Act 4, Sc. 1.	Necessary business,	7	0	7
" 2.	Romantic,	62	0	62
" 3.	Comic,	123	123	0
" 4.	Romantic and a little comic,	135	10	125
" 5.	Romantic and pseudo-historic,	110	10	100
Act 5, Sc. 1.	Romantic and pseudo-historic,	103	0	103
" 2.	"	40	0	40
" 3.	"	45	0	45
" 4.	"	110	0	110
" 5.	"	81	0	81
" 6.	" , and a little comic,	242	13	229
		Totals, 1497	563	1934

The manner in which distinctions of tone and distinctions of vehicle coincides needs no emphasis. The analysis illustrates also now the tone rises and falls with almost rhythmic regularity; and now ~~the~~ the media are confined in separate masses. The exceptions ^{to} to this latter feature follow the changes of tone; for example the passage of verse marked in the comic scene, Act 1 Sc. 2 are a soliloquy by Ateukin, in which he reveals his ambitious mind, and are expressly contrasted in tone with the rest of the scene.

Generally, characters and scene-tone must be combined to suit one another. But if characters are maintained in one tone throughout an entire play in which the prose and verse are consistently used, there can be but small connexion between the serious and comic interests, unless the author is willing to mix the two vehicles where he joins the interests. In some plays the two strands are very distinct from one another.* Those plays in which the two strands are woven closely together naturally demand much greater constructive skill from the dramatist. In such cases the most comic characters ^{but} are generally kept in the scenes of most comic tone, the intermediate characters appearing in scenes of both tones (as in Twelfth Night) thus joining the two interests. Of course there is no absolute necessity for most characters to remain always on the same plane, and therefore there is frequently no inconsistency in a serious

*See p. 7 for a list of such plays, and p. 159 m.

character using verse, as Bacon does in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay when he is speaking to his servant Miles: and sometimes prose characters adopt verse for special reasons.*

Whether the Elizabethan dramatists were as a rule reflective

* Besides the normal contrasts of prose and verse there are to be found, especially in the later drama, contrasts of rhymed verse with blank verse and prose for such special purposes as distinguishing a play inserted in the main play from the principal action. These contrasts of rhyme are quite apart from the use of rhyme for lyrical effect, marking the ends of scenes and so forth, which uses, especially the former, are to be found throughout the drama. Some of these ^m~~contrasts~~ are due to imitation of earlier styles of play, as is the case with the inserted play in Hamlet, which is a copy of the older type of tragedy. But the inset play in Shirley's A Bird in a Cage, which is not a copy of an older type, is in couplet also, and this was the rule. In the specimen given from the play about Dido by the player to Hamlet the metre is ranting blank verse, and so are the passages of a tragedy put into Westward Ho! by Dekker. The play inserted in the Spanish Tragedy is in blank verse and shows no contrast with the main action; and the passages from comedies in The Mayor of Queenborough and the Spanish Gipsy are mosly ^t in prose.

Brome, in The Lovesick Court 11.1.p.106, has a letter in rhymed verse

artists is a question which has been long disputed. The dispute^{te}, which has usually had reference to Shakespeare only, has considerable bearings on the way in which they combined verse and prose. For long it was the fashion to think of Shakespeare as a mere warbler of native woodnotes, whose conceptions ran without premeditation into the form which some presiding genius of harmony designed for them. But it has on the whole been agreed that he was a reflective artist, and that Ben Jonson was still more so and Chapman equally so, but that the rest of the popular dramatists, especially in the earlier period, were not reflective. The later dramatists, especially Ford and Shirley, had evidently studied the earlier; and undoubtedly there were great differences among the various authors in respect of critical reflection. Perhaps the general agreement, in spite of the existence of the plays where the use of prose is apparently capricious, of the uses of prose which are to be given with the aesthetic to mark contrast with the blank verse and prose, but this is the only instance.

Special types of character, such as the Witches in Macbeth and the Fairies in Midsummer Night's Dream use rhymed verse. It was also employed largely in pastoral, e.g. in Beaumont and Fletcher's Faithful Shepherdess, and to mark special moods, such as the sudden jocular moods of The Bastard in Richard II.

*See Churton Collins, Studies in Shakespeare, p. 180on. But no

clear decision is arrived at

the plays in which the prose appears to be capriciously employed belong mostly to the period of decadence.

The tenour of a few of the principal passages which bear more or less directly on our subject will show unmistakeably the ideas and aims which were in vogue.

The connexions between matter and form are most frequently referred to. The poet's anxiety to suit his style to his subject when this climbs and soars is a not uncommon topic. For example, the author of ~~The Tragedy of~~ Caesar and Pompey (perhaps Chapman), a play which is all blank verse except one ~~scene~~ scene of familiar conversation (V.1.) and a farcical passage (in II.1.), in his preface commends his play for "the hasty prose the style avoids". Marston in the Prologue to his tragedy of Antonio's Revenge exclaims

O that our power

Could lackey or keep wing with our desires,

That with unused peize of style and sense

We might weigh massy in judicious scale.

Credit for suiting the style to the subject when this is not elevated is claimed in the Prologue to Beaumont and Fletcher's The Chances which contains, they say,

Familiar dialogue, fashioned to the weight

Of such as speak it.

The decorum of suiting the style so that it shall be in keeping with the character who uses it is enforced in other places also, and dramatists who forget this necessity are inveighed against. The early writer Edwards, in his Prologue to Damon and Pithias, says that it is the playwright's duty to

frame each person so

That by his common talk you may his nature know.

And Webster insists upon the necessary connexion of matter and form, and the indecorum of any inconsistency between them, in his preface to The Devil's Law Case, where he says, "A great part of the grace of this, I confess, lay in action: yet no action can ever be gracious where the decency of the language, (and ingenious structure of the sense) arrive not to make up a perfect harmony." In a lighter vein there are several references to the same subject. The deliberate choice of medium is mentioned in Webster and Rowley's Thracian Wonder 2.4.p.156: "Nay, then, have at you in prose if metre be no meet-er for you"; and the unsuitability of blank verse (in this case the blank verse referred to was intentionally bombastic) to familiar scenes is indicated in a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's The Honest Man's Fortune, Act III, p.242:--

Dubois

(I)

With this hand, only aided by this brain,

Without an Orpheus' Harp, redeemed from Hell's

Three-headed porter our Eurydice.

Longaville. Nay, prithee speak sense; this is like the stale bragga
in the play.

Dubois. . . Then in plain prose thus; and with as little action as thou
canst desire: g The three-headed porter were three inexorable
catchpoles, from whom, without the help of Orpheus' Harp, bait or
bribe (for these two strings make the music that mollifies the fiercest
Furies) I redeemed our Eurydice, I mean our old master Montague.

The suitability of prose to the familiar conversation of friends
and its contrast with verse are mentioned in Sir Giles Goosecap,
(B3v to B4v), a piece in which the devices of construction are
unusually obvious. Two elevated characters, Clarence and Momford,
who are friends, have been conducting in the presence of some
musicians a formal conversation, which is rendered by blank verse.
As soon as the musicians depart, Momford, wishing to speak on an
important matter to Clarence, says "Hence with this book: and now,
Monsieur Clarence, methinks plain and prose friendship would do
excellent well betwixt us", and the medium changes to prose.

The deliberate choice of metres, with mention of the fact, is seen
in a passage in Heywood's Love's Mistress. This play contains a
good deal of rhyme as well as blank verse and prose. On page 115

the clown, the traditionally prose character, says "Oh, poetry, I find that I am poisoned by thee too: for methinks I could say my prayers in blank verse; nay, let me see, I think I could rhyme for a need.." and then he rhymes. The use of verse in contrast with prose to express passionate feeling is referred to in Shirley's Love Tricks, 3, 5, p. 48. But perhaps the clearest passage of all is one in As You Like It, 4.1, 30, Rosalind has been exercising her wit - in prose of course - at the expense of Jaques, who has just explained something of the nature of his melancholy, when the romantic Orlando enters and exclaims to Rosalind in her rôle of lover by proxy "Good day and happiness, dear Rosalind!" at which Jaques remarks "Nay, then, God buy you, as you talk blank verse," and goes out. This passage should dispose of any doubts in Shakespeare's case as to whether he used prose and verse with explicit intention or not. Orlando's romantic character makes him the traditional blank verse person in such a comedy, and it is the introduction of this tone into the conversation that Jaques objects to. Orlando and Rosalind continue the conversation in prose. It appears that the line was accidentally regular iambic pentameter, and that Shakespeare noticed the fact as he wrote it. To conclude from this set of instances alone that there was a ~~not~~ body of definite conventions in Shakespeare's mind and in the minds of the other dramatists, ~~would be certainly as unwise~~

concerning the relations of blank verse and prose and their fitness for certain characters and tones, would be going beyond the facts; nor could we argue from them alone that every passage of prose whose use can be explained rationally was explicitly motivated. But the evidence of these instances when combined with that of the general consistency in the uses of prose which are to be adduced provides a high degree of probability that a knowledge of the general relations of verse and prose was in the air, and that the detailed practice which appears in the drama arose from this source.*

The number of plays which show an absolutely consistent use of prose is large; and, with the number which show a use that is consistent in nearly every particular detail, and quite consistent in every important feature, with the general basis^s laid down, they form the great majority of the dramas, and include practically all the chief plays. The list of plays that follows, which is not meant to be complete but representative, includes examples of all the chief kinds, tragedy, history, farce, comedy of intrigue, romantic comedy, domestic comedy, comedy of manners, and tragi-comedy. The highest efforts of genius exhibit the subtleties of construction as well

*There is not wanting evidence, even, that the tradition of prose use became so strong as to leave its mark even where it was unsuitable; see p.

as the heights of poetry, but ~~the~~ the broad outlines and main features can often be seen as well, if not better, in plays from which subtlety and poetic beauty are absent. In general, however, it is true that the plays of highest rank in other ways show construction of the highest type, the most consistent uses of prose, and the most elaborate subtlety in its employment to denote character and changes of tone. But this is not always so; sometimes, not infrequently, the most poetical types are not the most intricate in construction, and therefore the instances which illustrate the various uses of prose are often drawn from comparatively obscure plays.

The following plays exhibit the conventional use of prose in accordance with the theory outlined above in considerable detail, and with high consistency, in its two phases of alteration of medium to indicate differences of rank and character, and alteration of medium to indicate contrasted tones. They also as a rule exhibit alternation of masses of prose and verse with fair regularity to indicate an almost rhythmic corresponding rise and fall of tone, passages and scenes of prose being inserted between passages and scenes, or groups of scenes of verse. Rarely is the prose or verse confined to one part of the play, as it is in Jonson's *Poetaster*, which consists of prose throughout most of the first four acts, but changes to verse in the middle of Act 4, Sc. 3 and continues in this

medium throughout ~~maxx~~ of the remainder of the play.

Plays which observe a conventional use of prose and verse:-Lochrine, Jack Straw, Tamberlaine, Solimus, A Looking Glass for London and England, Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, The Troublesome Reign of John, Pts. 1&2, Love's Labour's Lost, Fair Em, The Wounds of Civil War, The Pinner of Wakefield, Old Wives' Tale, James IV, ~~Sir Thomas More~~, The Comedy of Errors, Dr Faustus, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Lust's Dominion, Thomas Lord Cromwell, Nobody and Somebody, Summer's Last Will and Testament, The Woman in the Moon, The True Chronicle History of King Leir, Orlando Furioso, The Merchant of Venice, The four Prentices of London, John a Kent and John a Cumber, A Knack to Know An Honest Man, Mucedorus, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet, The Wisdom of Dr. Dodypoll, The Brazen Age, The Valiant Welshman, Wily Beguiled, 1 Henry 4, Look About You, The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green, Bussy D'Ambois, 2 Henry 4, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado About Nothing, Patient Grissil, The Shoemakers' Holiday, The Thracian Wonder, Englishmen for My Money, The Maid's Metamorphosis, Henry 5, As You Like It, Grim the Collier of Croydon, The Weakest goeth to the Wall, Jack Drum's Entertainment, The Merry Devil of Edmonton, Julius Caesar, Twelfth Night, All's Well that Ends Well, Troilus and Cressida, May Day, The Birth of Merlin, Hamlet, Hoffman, The London Prodigal, A Woman Killed With Kindness, Measure for Measure, The Dutch

Courtesan, The Honest Whore Pt. 1, Othello, The Lovesick King, If You Know not Me YOU Know Nobody, The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, Macbeth, The Devil's Charter, Claudius Tiberius Nero, Cymbeline, Pericles, Henry 8, The Conspiracy of Byron, The Tragedy of Byron, The Phoenix, The Turk, Humour out of Breath, The Tempest, The Winter's Tale, Coriolanus, Antony and Cleopatra, Women beware Women, A Fair Quarrel, A Cure for a Cuckold, The Brothers, The Maid's Revenge, The City Nightcap, Albovine, The Cruel Brother, The Just Italian, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, The Witch, The Changeling, A Maidenhead Well Lost, Love's Mistress, The Lover's Melancholy, Love's Sacrifice, Perkin warbeck, The Fancies, Love's Cruelty, The Humorous Courtier, The Young Admiral, The Opportunity, The Queen's Exchange, The Queen and Concubine, The Sparagus Garden, Hey for Honesty, Aglaura, Argalus and Parthenia, The Jew of Malta, The Jews' Tragedy, Honoria and Mammon, St. Patrick for Ireland, A Challenge for Beauty, The Queen.

This list contains plays of all times between 1586 and the closing of the theatres, and indicates that the convention was in full force from about 1588. This convention is as clear in the obscure plays as in the best known, in The Wisdom of Dr. Dodypoll as in Macbeth.

A large number of plays contain the same conventional use of prose as a whole, but depart from it in some particular: either in some carelessness of detail, or in emphasizing the tone of a scene

by the use of a medium to which some of the characters appearing in that scene are opposed in general. The chief examples of such plays are:- The Spanish Tragedy, Alphonsus ^hEm_Aperor of Germany, A Knack to Know a Knave, The Two Angry Women of Abington, The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, The Trial of Chivalry, A Warning for Fair Women, Sir John Oldcastle, ~~All Points~~, The Atheist's Tragedy, When You See Me You Know Me, Antonio and Mellida, Lingua, King Lear, Timon of Athens, The Old Law, The Rape of Lucrece, The Triumph of Love, The Coxcomb, The Roaring Girl, The Dumb Knight, Sicelides, Amends for Ladies, A Chaste Maid in Cheapside, The Widow, The Royal King and the Loyal Subject, Love Tricks, The Spanish Gipsy, The Fair Maid of the Inn, Love's Cure, Appius and Virginia, The Lovesick Court, The Court Beggar, The Late Lancashire Witches, The Bird in a Cage, A New Wonder, A Mad Couple Well Matched, The Lost Lady, The Rebellion, The C Cutter of Coleman Street.

The following plays belong to the same class, but are more irregular:- The First Part of the Contention, The Case is Altered, The Iron Age, Two Lamentable Tragedies, Every Woman in her Humour, What You Will, The Malcontent, How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad, The Fair Maid of the Exchange, The Wise Woman of Hogsdon, If You Know not Me You Know Nobody, Pt. 2, Monsieur D'Olive, Michaelmas Term,

Sir Thomas Wyatt, Your Five Gallants, Fortune by Land and Sea, The Triumph of Honour, Philaster, The Maid's Tragedy, Cupid's Revenge, The Fair Maid of Bristow, Greene's Tu Quoque, The Insatiate Countess, The Two Noble Kinsmen, The White Devil, The Revenger's Tragedy, A Woman is a weathercock, Albumazar, The Hog hath Lost His Pearl, Match Me in London, Thierry and Theodoret, The Knight of Malta, The Fatal Dowry, The Duchess of Malfi, The Heir, The Witch of Edmonton, The Maid in the Mill, The Wedding, The Witty Fair One, The Grateful Servant, Changes, The Arcadia, The Gamester, The Example, The Lady of Pleasure, Lady Alimony, The Hollander, The Jealous Lovers, The Muses' Looking Glass, The Floating Island, The English Moor, The Antiquary, The Lady's Trial, The Constant Maid, Messalina, The Doubtful Heir, The Imposture, The Cardinal, The Sisters, The Jovial Crew.

In some of the plays of the last list the irregularities are due to the text being in a rough state. In no case is there a merely indiscriminate mixture of prose and verse. Frequently the irregularities are caused by an imperfect application of the relations of the two media. For example, in Lady Alimony the media are attached consistently to the various characters, but the tone changes are disregarded in the choice of medium; while the opposite phenomenon is found in The Antiquary. Again, the use of prose may be only partial, but where it appears it will be for definitely understood reasons.

ons, which are the same as those found in the plays where the relation is seen working in full force. Other plays, again, approach to ^{an} the arbitrary use (see p. 102). The degeneration which overtook the drama in its later years is observable in the chaotic and unmotivated changes from verse to prose that become increasingly common in the later plays; and the influence of Fletcher's blank verse, which could without disadvantage be substituted for most of the prose, is responsible for the disappearance of the latter from many plays of the later period. #1

THE ELABORATION OF THE VARIOUS USES OF PROSE.

The tradition of prose-use which appeared in force about 1588 and was firmly established by 1595, though not in its most elaborate subtlety, was a growth. One use of prose ^{after another} ~~in accordance~~ appeared in accordance with the general distinction of the use of blank verse for elevated tone and characters.

The first piece of prose in drama occurs in Henry Medwall's *Nature*, which was written between 1486 and 1500. # Medwall was in advance of his time in his mastery over dramatic means and weapons in this as in several ways. The piece of prose is quite distinct from the

*see p.
1 See p. 190.

See Gayley, *Representative English Comedies*, p. lx of Introduction.

rest of the play. It is introduced for the sake of giving extraordinary emphasis at a very striking point in the action. The stage direction marks the importance which the author attached to the piece. Pride is to speak in the ear of Sensuality "so that all may hear". Except this speech the whole of the play is in rhyme, and the contrast between this speech and the rest stands forth without any possibility of escaping unnoticed.

Pryde. Ye, for God, are ye not Sensualyte?

Sensualyte. Yes surely.

Pryde. Ye, suche a gentleman ye seme to be.

Sensualyte. You^{re} pore seruant at all houris.

Then Pryde speaketh to Sensualyte in vses are that all may here.

Pryde. Syr, I vnderstond that this gentyman is borne to great fortunes and intendeth to inhabit herein the contray. And I am a gentyman. It alway hath be brought vp wyth great estatys and affeed wyth them and yf I myght be in lyke fauour wyth this gentyman I wold be glad ^{ere} these of and do you a pleasure.

The intention of the piece, it must be repeated, was dramatic emphasis. The author does not show any intention to indicate character or tone-contrast by it. Its importance is not great; separated as it was by 70 or '80 years from the beginnings of the tradition it stands apart as a remarkable fact, a sign of the inventive genius

and resource of Medwall. It cannot be said to have exerted any influence upon later dramatic prose.

The next prose is found in Bale's *Mystery God's Promises*, written in 1538. At the end of each act there is a Latin prose anthem, the remainder of the play being in doggerel:—e.g. Act 2 "Then in a great voice he (Noah) begins an antiphon 'O oriens splendor', falling on his knees while the chorus follows with instruments. . . . Or else in the same it may thus be sung in English 'O most orient clearness and light shining of the sempiternal brightness. O clear sun of justice and heavenly righteousness, come hither and illuminate the prisoner sitting in the dark prison and shadow of Eternal Death'". This prose was sung while the doggerel was spoken. Like the piece in *Medwall* it was in no way connected with the tradition which grew up later, but with the practice of the Latin plays.

The *Contention between Liberality and Prodigality* probably contains the next pieces of prose. This play was printed in 1600 in its extant form, and some of it was certainly written about then. But most of the play appears to be in the style current about 1565. It cannot be asserted dogmatically that the prose belongs to the original form, but inasmuch as some of this prose is an example of attempted realism in a direction only mediately connected with the tradition, and as this use developed early and continued through-

out the drama there is no improbability in this part having been composed in 1565. This prose is used to imitate the voice of a judge and of a crier when summoning a prisoner to the bar, and for the proclamation of the indictment and sentence. There is no attempt to indicate a change of tone or individual character, but it is merely a realistic effort. The other passages of prose cannot be dogmatized from, as they are quite possibly a later version or insertion. The rest of the play is in very rough doggerel and regular rhyme, with a little regular blank verse- probably also a later insertion.

The piece in question runs (F3r&v):-

Judge. Call forth the prisoner.

Clerk. Make an Oyes, Crier.

Crier. Oyes, oyes, oyes.

Clerk. Sheriff of Middlesex.

Crier. Sheriff, etc.

Clerk. Bring forth the prisoner.

Crier. Bring etc.

Clerk. Prodigality.

Crier. Prodigality.

Clerk. Pain of the peril shall fall thereon.

Crier. Pain etc.

Sheriff. Here, sir.

Clerk. Prodigality, hold up thy hand. Thou art indicted here by

the name of Prodigality, for that thou etc.

Passing to the next use of prose we reach the anonymous Rare Triumphs of Love and Fortune, which was performed 1581/2, and published in 1589. It is not possible to say whether its published form was the same as its form at first production. The majority of the piece is of the style characteristic of the plays written about 1580, so far as that can be determined, but in the respect most important to us there are striking innovations. Besides 14-ers, Alexandrines^{nes}, rhymed pentameters, blank verse, short blank lines in irregular metre among long irregular rhyming lines, it contains 41 lines of prose. With this extraordinary medley of metres in view, we may conclude that the prose was probably contained in the original play. The piece is earlier than the time when prose was regularly used for comic parts, for the clown Lentulo uses doggerel in the old style. There are combined in the play comedy of real character and interludes where abstractions appear. It is thus a transition play both in content and form.

The 41 lines of prose are all spoken by a character named Bomelio. Bomelio does not appear in Act 1 and 2. In Act 3 he enters using Alexandrines and 14-ers, upbraiding Fortune, and explaining that he has been driven to live in a hermit's cell in poverty in spite of his services to his country. His character is distinguished

by the changes of mood it undergoes, and with these changes his vehicle of expression changes, as is seen from the following extracts.

Page 185 shows the complaints:-

Now weary lay thee down, thy fortune to fulfil:

Go yield thee captive to thy care, to save thy life or spill.

The pleasures of the field, the prospect of delight,

The blooming trees, the chirping birds, are grievous in thy sight.

The hollow craggy rock, the shrieking owl to see,

To hear the noise of serpent's hiss, that is thy harmony.

In Act 4 he determines to earn his living as a physician, disguises himself as a foreigner and uses foreign jargon, sometimes bad English, sometimes bad English, sometimes bad French, and sometimes bad Italian: and the metre now becomes doggerel:-

(p. 200) Bien venu, chi dine ve mi nou intendite signeur no.

(aside) I have a piece of work in hand now that all the world
must not know.

(p. 201) Monsieur, par ma foy, am one have the grand knowledge in the
science of fishick;

Can make dem hole have been all life sick;

Can make seco see, and te dumb speak;

Can make te lame go, and be ne'er so weak.

At the end of this act Bomelio loses some of his property, and this

misfortune, added to his previous griefs, sends him mad and he raves in prose (see p. 67.).

But in Act V he is cured during sleep and returns to sanity with fairly regular rhymed pentameters, Thus :-

What have I heard? What is that they say?

Amazed quite! Confounded every way!

My son Hermione, I know that is the same!

And that's my prince: now comes grief and shame.

In this play, therefore, prose is considered ^{appropriate} to madness only, the clown using doggerel, and the jargon parts being also in rough verse. A few years later all these parts would have been prose. The tradition of prose for relations of tone is, if this play can be taken as representative, later than the use of it to express the utterances of madness. The character of Bomelio is significant not merely because it shows the early date at which prose was used in drama in a naturalistic way to exhibit the speech of frenzy - the use of short detached sentences in this and other plays for this purpose indicates the realistic intention of the authors - but because ^{it} ~~no~~ shows very well the minute attention which was being paid to form in drama even when the doggerel was still in force. The changes of vehicle, all for dramatic purposes, are indubitable evidence that the dramatists had a definite meaning even in their choice of medium for details.

The use of prose to express real or simulated madness is also found in Tamburlaine, Pt. 1, 5, 2; Orlando Furioso, frequently between 11.844&1231; Hamlet, ~~King Lear~~, who uses blank verse when appearing naturally; King Lear; Antonio's Revenge, 2, 4; The Honest Whore, Pt. 1, (Bellafant, who uses blank verse in ordinary speech, e.g. p. 78, but prose when simulating madness): The Witch of Edmonton, 4, 1: The Phoenix, 4, 1 (Tangle): The Changeling, 3, 4&5; The Wisdom of Dr. Dodypoll, 2 onwards: The Duchess of Malfi, 4, 2, pp. 239-241: The Rape of Lucrece, Lucius Junius Brutus: Claudius Tiberius Nero, D2v: The Jews' Tragedy, 11.2687-2697, etc. Several of these characters use ~~prose~~ blank verse during their periods of sanity.

Romantic alienation is, however, usually expressed in verse, as is the case with Ophelia in Hamlet. Other instances are found in the Two Noble Kinsmen (The Jailor's daughter); A New Way to Pay Old Debts 5, 1, p. 599: A Very Woman, 2, 3, pp. 268-9: The Lover's Melancholy, Melander: ~~Scenelia~~ the White Devil, 5, 1 (Cornelia): and Hoffman, (Lucibella). But madness is expressed by blank verse without this reason in The Thracian Wonder, 2, 2: The White Devil, 5, 1, p. 115-Brachiano: The Atheist's Tragedy, 5, 1: and The Rebellion, 4, 1, p. 58.

After 1585 the number of extant pieces grows rapidly, and with them the use of prose develops. Hitherto doggerel had remained the main vehicle of comic matter, but now we come to the time of The Spanish Tragedy and Tamburlaine, in which, with the arrival of blank verse,

there appear distinct foreshadowings of the tradition of prose in mixed drama. The prose of the inferior plays *The Three Lords and Ladies of London*, *Lochrine*, *Jack Straw* and *Selimus* is mostly used for comic matter, though in *The Three Lords and Ladies* it is used almost indiscriminately. In *Lochrine* and *Selimus*, two strapped together plays, the prose, which is of the boisterous comic style that was followed before Shakespeare, is used methodically to mark off the inferior from the main action. In *Jack Straw* there is evident a tendency to make humble characters use prose even when not specially comic.

The Spanish Tragedy presents interesting examples of uses of prose which are different from, indeed opposed to, the traditions, though followed up in the later plays. The only places in this drama where prose appears in any quantity larger than a line or two are Sc. 5, which is a single speech by a boy, a word combat between Pedringano and the executioner, (Sc. 6), and the famous scene (12) in which is given Hieronimo's most violent expression of grief at the loss of his son. All these passages are notable places, chief points in the play. The first is remarkable as revealing to the audience the fate that will overtake Pedringano. The second is a scene of grim dramatic irony, where the tragic interest is rendered tense by the contrast between Pedringano's confidence or pretended con-

confidence that he will be reprieved, and the fatal termination that the spectators know the scene will have for him. None of this prose, except the boy's speech, is used to express character. Pedringano and Hieronimo and a deputy who appears in the hanging scene usually employ blank verse. Hieronimo and the Deputy change to blank verse the moment the phase of dramatic irony passes. Pedringano himself does not begin to use prose till the time for his death has arrived.

The prose speech by the ~~boy~~ page may be explained as due to Lyly's influence. The character of the boy is similar to that of Lyly's pages, and while the style is not essentially euphuistic, it might pass as a fair sample of Lyly's prose in its less characteristic phases.

The special reason for the third passage is the extreme tragic interest, where the author feels the need of all available dramatic aids, and discards the usual medium of tragedy to heighten the effect or because he despairs of using blank verse adequately, Hieronimo's condition of mind being so abnormal as to require speech as violent as the ravings of a madman, though without the incoherence usually associated with insanity. But it is generally accepted that this third passage of prose is contained in ^{the} additions which were made to the play by ^{Ben Jonson} ~~a later author~~, and therefore no stress need be laid here on the fact that it is in prose. At the time when it is supposed to have been added such moments of discarding verse

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~~almost~~ as inadequate had become a regular part of the practice of the ^{some of} dramatists. The original skill of the author is shown in this passage in the magnificence of the images, not in the choice of the medium.

Kyd, therefore, in this play uses prose where the level of interest rises rather than falls. There is small evidence - none, except in the case of the prose of the hangman's speeches - that he showed any disposition to regard prose as a means of indicating lowered tone.

Soliman and Perseda, however, whether the comic parts are meant to be metrical or not (see p. 56.) is constructed in the old way of contrasted interests and media. If the author's intention was prose this play is an early example of its being used throughout an entire drama as a means of indicating lowered tone.

Marlowe's plays show a more sparing use of prose than most of his contemporaries', although there is a considerable amount of it in Faustus. The passages in the two parts of Tamburlaine, perfectly plain in style, are notable for their manner of employment. In part I it is used as a means of marked contrast with the blank verse. The first place at which it appears is Act 4, Scene 4, which depicts the banquet at which Bajazet is present imprisoned in a cage. In the first speech of the scene Tamburlaine expresses his satisfaction at the conquest of Damascus, and his still vaulting ambition, in

blank verse. Bajazet² speaks in prose, and immediately the subject becomes the baiting of the prisoner by his captors. These two subjects continue through the scene. The characters employ blank verse when they rise to heights of passion: when mocking Bajazet, with one or two exceptional speeches, they speak in prose; Bajazet generally replying in the tone and medium in which he is addressed. In Act 5 Scene 2 Tamburlaine descends to prose for a few lines to address some attendants, after one of the most beautiful speeches in Marlowe's works. A third passage of prose occurs in the same scene, where Zabrina, wife of Bajazet, discovers the remains of her dead husband. From the horror of the discovery she either falls into an extasy of grief or loses her reason; and as she does so her speech changes and her ravings are rendered in prose.

In Tamburlaine Pt. 1, therefore, prose is the language of necessary business, of a lowering of interest where less serious feeling is contrasted with passion, and of madness. In Tamburlaine Pt. 2 there are several passages of prose, which occur where the tone, never comic, drops below a certain level (3, 4; 4, 1): 5, 3 contains a messenger's announcement in prose. In Faustus, the comic scenes, Faustus' articles of contract with Mephistophilis, the speeches of the Seven Deadly Sins, and Faustus' familiar conversation with his scholars, even at moments of highest feeling, are all couched in prose. And,

although the comic scene at the angering of the Pope is in blank verse, and the 1604 and 1616 quartos differ sometimes in the arrangement of prose and blank verse in some details, in general Dr. Faustus is in line with the tradition, especially with regard to comic prose; and the consistency with which the characters employ their usual vehicles is little interfered with. Edward 2 is without prose except for a letter. In The Jew of Malta, which was not published till 1633, the prose has become the property of the villains of lower rank, such as Ithamore and Pilia-Borsa. Barabas speaks usually in the medium of the company in which he finds himself, using verse or prose indifferently. The style of the prose, however, very strongly suggests a time later than Marlowe's, and the play was probably revised after his death.*

We find, therefore, Marlowe to be, on the whole, a strong adherent to the practice of indicating changes of tone by changes of medium, though comparatively sparing in his use of prose, if his plays exist in their original form.¹

*See Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 5, p. 145.

¹There is, however, an uncertainty with regard to Marlowe's plays of which mention must be made. The Printer's Address of the 1592 edition of Tamburlaine sets forth "I have (purposely) omitted and left out certain fond and frivolous gestures, digressing, and (in my poor opinion) far unmeet for the matter, which I thought might seem

The comparatively rapid growth of the practice of combining prose and verse - The earliest extant plays which show it in full or partial operation are the The Spanish Tragedy, Locrine and Tamburlaine, and it is in complete though crude operation from that time - ~~it is surprising unless~~ would be surprising if we could not regard it as a method borrowed from the earlier plays of mixed doggerel and regular rhythm combined in a similar way. Otherwise we should expect to find many attempts and failures to apply the medium of more tedious unto the wise than any way else to be regarded, though haply they have been of some conceited fondlings greatly gaped at, what times they were shewed upon the stage in their graced deformities: nevertheless, now to be mixtured in print with matter of such worth, it would prove a great disgrace to so honourable and stately a history..." This statement, when taken into consideration with the marked discrepancies between the 1604 and 1606 quartos of Dr. Faustus, can leave little doubt that comic passages are meant. These, in general, are in prose in Faustus; and this suggestion opens to us a view of Marlowe as constructing his plays more in accordance with the tradition of mixed plays than the present form shows. (See also The Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol. 5, pp. 144 & 145). If the suspicion engendered by the Printer's address is a true one there is very fair ground for re-

prose properly, before the tradition was established even in a crude form. But as seen already, the anomalies that occur owing to the use of prose in an irrational way are rare, most of the anomalies being due to the imperfect substitution of prose for doggerel.

The tradition in its simple form was not originally subtle or difficult to apply, and this no doubt helps somewhat to account for its quick elaboration. But, when all is said, The need of explain-

garding Tamburlaine in its original form as one of the earliest plays to show the full use of prose. Marlowe does not contradict the later tradition; he foreshadows it in several ways in the extant drama, in tone at any rate. In the play as it stands now there is no character who is not on the heroic level, Marlowe's Muse vaunting her heavenly style in the pomp of proud audacious deeds throughout. Before "the fond and frivolous gestures" were omitted entirely comic characters, such as are found in Faustus, may have existed. But quite probably, even if there were regular comic interludes and characters in Tamburlaine Pt. 1 Marlowe may have been at one with his printer in wishing them not there. The force of convention and the evil practices of the extemporising clown would account for their insertion against his will. (See pp. 199 and 202.).

ing this rapidity by reference to a set of precedent similar conditions remains evident.

From this time the practice is maintained in a large number of plays. It will be sufficient, therefore, to refer merely to points of significant elaboration, and to show how the simple formula was developed and subtilized in various ways, approximating to the ~~the~~ completest form gradually, the special reasons for the use of prose being multiplied; while at the same time the almost uniform prose of the earliest attempts split into several styles suited for its various purposes.

At the beginning of the use of metrical contrasts these were almost the sole means that an author had for indicating variations of character, mood, and tone by the form of the dialogue. Frequently also in the early plays the sentiments expressed were not adjusted in such a way as to indicate individuality in the personages of the drama, so that when the contrast of prose and verse arrived it was often the only device that the dramatist possessed for this purpose. But, as the tradition grew and as the drama developed, there appeared side by side a greater skill in differentiating characters by the matter of their speeches, and a greater power to vary the form of the verse or prose according to the nature of the character into whose mouth it was put. The practice of varying the medium according to tone and character thus tended to pass from the position

of main importance into *a* mere secondary aid. Shakespeare and his greater contemporaries and successors can indicate differences of this sort by subtler methods, both in the matter expressed and in the form of the speeches; nevertheless using these subtler methods within the scope of the tradition, while maintaining its consistency, till they pass into the chief place as manifestations of the dramatists' skill. In Shakespeare it is possible to find *as* much difference in the form of the speech of two prose characters (e.g., Hamlet's and Bottom's prose) as between the blank verse and any of the prose in its notable phases. The method of characterization and tone-indication by mere contrast of medium, even when the sentiments are well distinguished, was much too crude for the necessities of the higher reaches of Elizabethan drama. In these the method is varied in every possible way, the dramatist laying on with a sweeping hand the masses of light and shade, within these masses differentiating finer shades, delineating the details, frequently contradicting in small measure the too insistent regularity of his broad contrasts, placing together in subtle alternation such masses as will throw one another into relief, and subordinating by careful gradations those portions he does not wish to emphasize.

Almost simultaneously with the appearance of the tradition in its full though crude form the distinction of medium is adopted

as a matter of course. Out of 61 plays which appeared after The Spanish Tragedy and before 1596 only nine have no prose and all but eleven of the others have more than 100 lines of prose. From almost the beginning plays which do not exhibit the tradition in some form may be regarded as exceptional; and it is even possible to surmise the nature of a play from the amount of prose in it.

Farcical prose, which is found first in any quantity in *Lochrine*, *Selimus*, and *Dr Faustus* rapidly assumed a characteristic form which can easily be recognised from the wealth of rhetorical devices which it contains. In and after Shakespeare it was sublimated, the fun being no longer derived from horseplay and crude verbal wit but from the humours of situation and character and from delicate wit, though sometimes the earlier devices are found. These characteristics, especially humour of situation, continued with it down to the end of the drama, though the earlier kind never wholly disappeared. As this kind of prose is so common a full list of references would become a list of Elizabethan clowns. The following is, however, a short selection. *Jack Straw* (e.g. *Tom Miller*); *Lochrine* (*Strumbo*); *Dr Faustus* (*Wagner*); *Selimus* (*Sullithrumbly* etc.); *Friar Bacon* and *Friar Bungay* (*Miles*); *Love's Labour's Lost* (several); *A Looking Glass for London and England* (*Adam*); *Fair Em* (*Trotter*); *James* (*Slipper*); *Old Wives' Tale* (*Hmanebango*, *Corebus* etc.); *Orlando Furioso* (*Orgalio*); *Mucedorus* (much); *Grim the Collier of Croydon* (much);

The Downfall of Richard Earl of Huntingdon(Much); Look about you (Skink); John a Kent and John a Cumber(Turnop etc.); A Midsummer Night's Dream(Bottom, etc.); The Merchant of Venice(Launcelot); Henry 4 (Falstaff etc.); Henry 5(Pistol etc.); Twelfth Night(The Clown etc.); As You Like It(Touchstone etc.); Macbeth(The Porter); Antony and Cleopatra(The Clown); Troilus and Cressida (Thersites and Pandarus); The Tempest (Trinculo/etc.); The Winter's Tale(The Clown and Autolycus); Wily Beguiled(Churms);Englishmen for my Money (Frisco); The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green(Swash etc.); The Birth of Merlin(The Clown); The Famous Victories of Henry5 (John Cotter etc.); Thomas Lord Cromwell(Hodge); The Shoemakers' Holiday(Simon Eyre and His Crew); Patient Crissil(Babulo);Blurt, Master Constable (Blurt);Women Beware Women(a stupid heir and his servant);The Dutch Courtesan(Mulligrub and Cocledemoy);Edward 4 Pt.1 (Hobs);The Fair Maid of the West(Clem);Fortune by Land and Sea(The Clown);The English Traveller(The Clown);The Knight of the Burning PestleXRalph-burlesque of this kind of prose);The Maid in the Mill(Bustofa); Love's Cure(Bobadill);The Weakest goeth to the Wall(Barnaby Bunch); The Thracian Wonder(Tityrus);The Brothers(Luys);The Arcadia(Much); The Example~~(Much)~~(Dormant and Oldrat);St. Patrick for Ireland (Rodomant);A Maidenhead Well Lost(The Clown);When You See ME You Know ME(Will Somers);Love's Mistress(The Clown);Messalina(Much) Covent Garden Weeded(much);The Queen's Exchange(much);The Lovesick

King (e.g. 11.435 on); The Floating Island (much); Aristippus (much).

The prose of these clowns shades off, of course, into the other kinds of prose, particularly into the humour prose of Jonson and his imitators. It is also closely connected in style with the jargon and dialect which was so common, and which may be regarded as one of its varieties, and with the prose which is used to mark the characters of humble rank. Some of this last prose is not pronouncedly farcical, but the natural tendency was to attach a farcical tone to humble characters exclusively, and frequently a character uses prose which is intermediate between the regular clown prose and the natural speech of rustic life. (See pp. 249-262 for examples and discussion of the farcical prose). One might be almost safe in saying that nearly all the plays contain some passages of farcical prose. The above list, however, is confined to plays in which outstanding characters of this kind appear.

Realistic imitation of the non-farcical speech of humble characters is rare in the early plays, and though the use of this kind was extended further in the later drama, it was never very common.

Sometimes, however, a humble character is not pronouncedly comic, and there are many (such as Hobs in Edward 4 Pt. 1, Act 3, Sc. 2) who at one time are farcical and at another speak naturally and in even tone. Most of the dialect parts, are of course, farcical; and the

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association between humble station and clownage became so strong that a dramatist was often compelled to distort the peasant into a clown to satisfy both the demands of his audience and current dramatic theory, (e.g., Cymbeline 5, 4, The gaolers: Julius Caesar, 1, 1, The citizens: The Watch Scenes which were so common nearly all contain farcical matter.) It is difficult to find in early drama lengthy passages which represent normal low life conversation without some farcical attempt, but the style of this can in many cases be separated from the farcical passages with which it is combined. The following is a representative list (See p. 138 for an example):—Sir Thomas More, Doll Williamson: The Tempest, 1, 1: Coriolanus, The Citizens, and Servants ~~and~~ ~~and~~: Patient Grissil 4, 1: 2 Henry 6, Jack Cade and the rebels: The Scene between the waiting woman and the doctor in Macbeth might be explained in this way: Antony and Cleopatra, 2, 7, 1-18 & 28-29: Richard 2, The Keeper; Henry V, 4, 1, 90-240: Pericles, The fishermen, 2, 2 & 2, 2, 1, 12-125; 3, 1, 42-55: The Mayor of Queenborough, 1, 1: A Warning for Fair Women, 11. 1516 on: Nobody and Somebody, frequently: Thomas Lord Cromwell, here and there: No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's, 4, 2, 10 on: A Fair Quarrel, 1, 1: The Changeling, Jasperino and Lollio: A Woman Killed with Kindness, Servants, throughout: If You Know not Me You Know Nobody, p. 19: The Four Prentices of London, p. 474, Philaster, pp. 118 & 125: The Coxcomb, Servants, as a rule: The Maid's Tragedy, 5, p. 64: A King and No King, pp. 172 & 173: Appius and Virginia, 3, 2: The Atheist's

Tragedy, 2, 1, pp. 36-38: 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, 1, 2, pp. 133-4: The Cardinal, 3, 2, pp. 306-309: Claudius Tiberius Nero, B4r: The Witches of Lancashire, 2, 1, p. 194: A Larum for London, D\2r&D3r: The Rebellion, e.g. 1, 1, p. 27: The Lovesick Court, 1, 1, p. 95: The Queen's Exchange, 2, 3, p. 489on, etc.:

The manner in which prose of this kind is introduced in contrast with blank verse and combined speech for speech with it, to emphasize difference of rank, is very striking. Thus in Edward 4, Pt. 1, 4, 3, p. 66 Jane Shore uses prose when the King first meets her and converses with her, in such a manner as to draw attention to her inferiority in rank to him; but throughout all the rest of the play and the second part she employs blank verse. And in Love's Sacrifice D'Avolos, the Duke's secretary, a very serious person, uses prose throughout ^{the} ~~his~~ play, thus marking the contrast between himself and the persons of high rank with whom he deals. When he speaks to his superiors in station he uses ^s prose which is plain and formal in style, but when he speaks to his equals or inferiors his words take on a different appearance, becoming what is distinguished in this ^{essay} ~~paper~~ as "Court Prose" (See pp. ^{150 and} 278). An example of the way the two media are contrasted is found in The Changeling, 1, 2, where Lollio, the servant, is in conversation with his master Alibius:-
Alibius. Lollio, I must trust thee with a secret,

But thou must keep it.

Lollio. I was ever close to a secret, Sir.

Alib. The diligence that I have found in thee,

The care and industry already past

Assure me of thy good continuance.

Lollio, I have a wife.

Lol. Fie, sir, 'tis too late to keep her secret: she's known to be married all the town and country ~~was~~ over.

Alib. Thou goest too fast, my Lollio; that knowledge,

I allow no man can be barred it....

~~Alib~~ Lol. Well, sir, let us handle that between you and I.

Alib. 'Tis that I go about, man; Lollio,

My wife is young.

Lol. So much the worse to be kept secret, sir.

Alib. Why now thou meetst the substance of the point:

I am old, Lollio.

Lol. No, sir, 'tis I am old Lollio.

Alib. Yet why may not these concord and sympathize?

Old trees^s and young plants often grow together,

Well enough agreeing.

Lol. Ay, sir, but the old trees raise themselves higher and broader than the young plants... (The whole scene is in this manner).

Strongly contrasted in ~~the~~ style with the farcical prose and the speech of humble characters is the prose that is used, without spec-

ial reference to rank and character, for familiar conversatio where
the tone is even and quiet. This prose occurs in many plays, and is
remarkable for its realistic excellence. All through the drama it
is ⁿcontinued, showing little stylistic influence beyond the changes
in actual speech. Both the chief prose dramatists, Gascoigne and
Lyly, and especially Gascoigne, show ⁿpassages of plain conversational
prose, contrasted with their usual style, and similar to those found
in mixed drama. Such passages as are found in Suppose ^s1, 2 & 4 and
Endimio ⁿ4, 2, 73-85 differ greatly from the mannered prose which
constitutes the larger part of the work of these dramatists. Re-
presentative passages of familiar convergation in pro ^s are found
in mixed drama at:--David and Bethsabe, 526 533: Fair Em, Elr: Arden
of Feversham, 2, 60-69: Tamburlaine, Pt. 2, 4, 1: Edward 1, Sc. 2: Faustus
5, 4 (the converstaio ⁿ between Faustus and ⁿ the scholars): The Trouble-
some Reign of King John, Pt. 2, E2r: A Looking Glass for London and
England, 1, 3, parts; 2, 2, parts: The Three Lords and Ladies, pp. 260-12,
276, 277, 296-8, 310, etc.: James 4, 3, 2, 1-24: The Old Wives' Tale, frequent
e.g. 725-739: A Knack to Know A Knave, pp. 390-1: The First Part of
The Contention ⁿ, p. 20: The Taming of a Shrew, e.g. pp. 184 & 189: Sir Thomas
More, pp. 17, 18, 90, & 91: Thomas lord Cromwell, F4r & B3v: The True Tragedy
of Richard 3, pp. 17, 28, 40 etc.: The True Chronicle History of King Leir
D3r & v: A Warning for Fair Women, ll. 683 on: The Birth of Merlin, Flv:
Coriolanus, 1, 3, (the conversation between Volumnia and Virgilia) &

4, 3: Cymbeline, often: Lear, 1, 1, 9: A Winter's Tale, 1, 1, 42 & 5 2, 10-20:
 The Merchant of Venice, 1, 2, ~~1, 2, 30-34~~ Macbeth, 4, 2, 30-64 (the con-
 versation between Lady Macduff and her son): Eastward Ho! much it
 is frequent in Chapman's comedies: Bussy D'Ambois, Acts 1 & 3: The Trag-
 edy of Byron, Act 2: Caesar and Pompey, 5, 1: Alphonse Emperor of Germany,
 several passages: Match Me in Londonⁿ, 3, p. 76: The Witch of Edmonton,
 1, 2, etc.: Sir Giles Goosecap, B3v to B4v: The Phoenix, 1, 5: A Fair Quarrel,
 4, 1: The Changeling, 1, 1 p. 215: Women Beware Women, p. 553: The Fair
 Maid of the Exchange, 4, 1, p. 61, etc.: If You Know not Me You Know Nobody
 p. 33: The Four Prentices of London, 1, 1: The Two Noble Kinsmen, 4, 3:
 The Honest^s Man's Fortune, Acts 1, 2, & 3: Women Pleased, 2, 5, p. 255:
 The Fatal Dowry, 2, 2, pp. 385-90: The White Devil, 1, 2, p. 18: The Atheist^s
 Tragedy, 1, 4, & 3, 2, pp. 88-89: Love's Sacrifice, 3, 2, p. 441: The Maid's
 Revenge, 3, 3, etc.: The Traitor, 3, 1: Love's Cruelty, 3, 1, etc.: The Devil's
 Charter, K3v: A Challenge for Beauty, 1, 1 p. 340: The Lancashire Witch-
 es, 1, 1, p. 172: The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, A2, and many others:
 Amends for Ladies, 3, 2: Albumazar, 2, ~~3~~ 1 & 4: The Hog hath Lost His
 Pearl, 1, 1, p. 429 on: The Heir, 2, p. 535 etc.: The City^t Nightcap, 1, p. 112 on:
 The Antiquary, 1, 1, p. 434: The Queen and Concubine, 4, 3 p. 87: (see p. 239).

As soon as any comic intⁿestioⁿs is involved the prose passes from
 the easy manner, and invariably in the early drama there appear
 some or all of the characteristics of farcical prose. In the later

drama, however, this prose is perhaps better connected with the speech of the high comedy characters, which owes its form to an attempt to reproduce the speech of the aristocracy, which in its turn was so greatly influenced by Lyly's Eupues and his plays. Shakespeare was the first writer to develop ^{the high comedy} ~~his~~ prose in mixed drama, and it is seen to perfection in the wit combats of Benedick and Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing, and in the speech of Rosalind and Celia in As You Like It. ^(see p. 137) It is found also, for example, in Parasitaster, everywhere, and frequently in The Dutch Courtesan; and it constitutes most of the prose in Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, and has a close connection with the style of Fletcher's blank verse. In the latest years of the drama it tended to overrun other styles altogether in some authors. In The Rebellion ~~(1639)~~ (1639) the speech of the humble characters is usually high comedy prose, e.g. 2, p. 35 and 5, 1, p. 80, and the same feature is seen in Lady Alimony, e.g. 3, 1, 3, 5, and 5; 2. Other passages of this same prose are found, to select examples, in The Devil's Law Case, 2, 1, 33: 'Tis Pity She's A Whore, 2, 2, p. 159: The Witty Fair One, 1, 3: The Wit of a Woman, throughout: A Woman is a Weathercock, often: Green's Tu Quoque, often: Albumazar, 2, 1: The Hog hath Lost his Pearl, often: The London Chaunticleers, nearly all: The Lost Lady, often: The City Nightcap, often: The Antiquary: The Parson's Wedding: and Humour out of Breath (see p. 275).

Similar in purpose to the witty comic speech of elevated characters which was a dramatic development of actual speech, was a prose in which the comic intention was sometimes weaker, but the attempt to copy court speech more marked. The clear endeavour to produce a realistic imitation of the speech of the court for its own sake is seen in Sir Giles Goosecap, e.g. Clr, Dlr, & D2r: Patient Grissil, Farnese: Blurt Master Constable 1, 1: Cupid's Revenge, 3, 1, p. 258: The Atheist's Tragedy, 1, 2, D'Amville: Love's Sacrifice, 1, 1, p. ~~388~~ 388, etc.: The Bird in a Cage, 4, 1: The Guesen, Muretto, e.g. ll. 1300-5: Aglaura, 1, 1, p. 190-1: The Return from Parnassus, Pt. 1, ll. 290-310, (see p. 278).

Some of the later farcical prose takes the form of parody of the speech of the court, to indicate affected character. The outstanding example of this is Osric in Hamlet; and in Twelfth Night Malvolio's speech hovers round it. It is found also in A Match at Midnight, 5, 1, p. 97: What You Will, 2~~2~~ 2, 1, p. 238: The Roaring Girl, 1, 1: The Fair Maid of the Exchange, pp. 13&15: The Fatal Dowry, 4, 1, p. 425: The Fancies, Chaste and Noble, 1, 2, p. 144: Love Tricks, ~~3~~ 3, 5: The Maid's Revenge, 3, 2, p. 142: and Match Me in London, p. 168 (see pp. 278-281).

Yet another variety of the comic prose, though it can scarcely be said to be a separate variety in style, as it shows affinity first to one kind and again to another, and is usually quite unlike the

old clown prose, is the speech of the "humour" characters. Easy to recognize, it is impossible to characterize generally, as it indicates in each case some individual peculiarity. In Jonson himself it is often plain in style, but in the humour characters which follow it not seldom takes the form of almost incomprehensible professional jargon. Besides the prose of this kind found in Jonson's dramas, notably in *Every Man in His Humour*, and *Every Man out of His Humour*, prose of special style to indicate overmastering passions or outstanding peculiarities is found in, to select once more, *A New Wonder*, (*Sir Godfrey Speedwell*): *The Phoenix (Tangle)*: *No Wit, No Help Like A Woman's (Weatherwise)*: *A Fair Quarrel (A surgeon)*: *The Wisdom of Dr. Dodypoll (A Doctor)*: *Monsieur Thomas*, 3, 1p. 129: *The Emperor of the East*, 4, 4, pp. 317-319 (a physician): *The Atheist's Tragedy (a Puritan)*: *Love's Sacrifice, Mauruccio*: *The Maid's Revenge, Montenegro, Spiza and Sharkino*: *Changes, Sir Gervase Simple*: *The Queen, Pyrite*: *The Turk (Bordello)*: *The New Academy (Nehemiah)*: *The City Wit (Sarpego)*: *The Court Beggars (several characters)*: *A Mad Couple Well Matched (Saveall)*: *The Cutter of Coleman Street (Puritans)*: *The City Madam (Stargazer)*. The pedant of the older plays is continued in *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad (Aminadab)*: *Love's Labour's Lost (Holofernes)*: and *The Queen of Corinth*, 3, 1, p. 37. Middleton especially affects medical jargon and lawyers' argot (See p. 338). In

Perkin Warbeck There are three characters each of whom affects court speech but at the same time introduces metaphors drawn from his own trade. For example, the Tailor says, "The new suit of preferment" and "the pressing iron of reproach". The prevalence of this kind of prose is noticed by Tourneur in The Revenger's Tragedy, 4, 2, p. 107, where Vindici remarks, "There are old men at the present that are so poisoned with the affectation of law-words (having had many suits canvassed) that their common talk is nothing but Barbary Latin" - in which he exactly describes Middleton's character of Tangle in The Phoenix, which appeared about the same time. Brome, especially, employed "humour-prose", as befitted Jonson's follower. And the demand for this kind of speech ~~was so strong~~ and character was so strong, and the impossibility of using verse with it so clear, that even Massinger, who deliberately eschewed prose wherever possible, was compelled to use it for the physician in The Emperor of the East and the astrologer in The City Madam; these Two Characters employ the only prose in Massinger's undoubted work, even the countryman in The Emperor of the East, 4, 2, pp. 310 & 311, speaking country dialect in blank verse, a very rare phenomenon.

~~In his later drama, he occasionally passes to prose~~

About 1590 there appear the first distinct traces of a tendency to employ prose in places to which the blank verse seems more naturally suited. In the Chronicle Histories, no doubt to express

formal matters and procedure, a plain and straightforward style ~~occurs~~ occurs, which is not used to indicate character, and is not different in tone from much of the blank verse. In consequence of the appearance of this prose many of the chronicle histories present an arrangement of prose and verse which is at first sight less reasoned and motivated than in the other kinds. But apart from this feature these plays are often quite regular and consistent; and its use seems sometimes to have been due to the same impulse which caused the neutral tones and necessary business of a play to be couched in prose, sometimes, instead of verse.

This use of prose is seen in a large part of The Famous Victories of Henry 5, The True Chronicle History of King Lear, D3v: The True Tragedy of Richard 3, often, e.g., p. 26: The First Part of the Contention, often, e.g., Sc. 6: The Troublesome Reign of King John, often, e.g., Pt. 1, Elv: Edward 1, Sc. 1, 147-186, Sc. 10, 120-160, 270 to the end, etc.: When You See Me You Know Me, frequently, e.g., F4r&v: Sir Thomas Wyatt, p. 99: Edward 4 Pt. 1, 1, 1. It is notable, however, that Shakespeare perceived that blank verse was more suitable for the uses to which this prose was put; in his historical plays he does not use it much, and indeed, where he found it in an earlier play which he was using he usually turned it into blank verse, as in the first scene of King John. But it is found in King Lear ~~and Coriolanus 1, 1, and Coriolanus 2, 2.~~

In later drama, also, there are found occasionally passages of prose of a serious nature not connected with the Chronicle History. Some of these passages are confessedly ~~oratorical~~ oratorical, as Brutus' speech to the citizens in Julius Caesar. Sometimes there is no apparent reason why they should not be verse, and in such cases they must be regarded as violations of any rational relation between blank verse and prose: and, of course, many oratorical passages are in verse. Examples of these kinds of prose are found in Volpone, 2, 1: The Tragedy of Philip Chabot (an advocate's speech); The Malcontent, 1, 6: The Roaring Girl, p. 154: Sir Giles Goosecap, 1, 1r: Blurt, Master Constable, 5, 1: The Family of Love, 4, 2, p. 170: Anything for a quiet Life, p. 472: The Fair Maid of the West, p. 25: The Royal King and the Loyal Subject, pp. 20 & 23: A King and No King, much, especially Mardonius: The White Devil, some of Flamineo's speeches: The Duchess of Malfi, some of Bosola's speeches: The Atheist's Tragedy, 3, 3, p. 95; 4, 3, p. 118: The Lover's Melancholy, 2, 1, etc.: 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, 1, p. 200: 3, pp. 207 & 208: ~~How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad~~, The Bird in a Cage, 2, 1, p. 404: When You See Me You Know Me, F4r & v: The Rebellion, 1, 1, p. 20: 2, pp. 42 & 44: The Queen and Concubine, 2, 3, p. 28: How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad, D4v: Cymbeline, 5, 4.

The last-mentioned development of prose, to convey serious thought, passes into the final reach of the medium, where it is used to ex-

press elevated and even poetical thoughts and feelings. The best-known and earliest example of this kind is Hamlet's ecstatic outburst at X, 2, 2, 304-324: It is found also in Blurt, Master Constable, p. 230: The Phoenix, 1, 1, p. 317: The Family of Love, 4, 2, p. 172: The Malcontent, 1, 6 (An imitation of the similar kind of passage in Hamlet A Match at Midnight, 5, 1, p. 97: The Atheist's Tragedy, 4, 3, p. 106: Love's Sacrifice, 2, 2, p. 413: Love's Cruelty, 2, 2, p. 213: The Arcadia, Musidorus, often, e.g. p. 200 (see pp. 283-286 for examples of these kinds of prose).

The use of prose in some plays to convey necessary information and neutral matter has already been discussed (see p. 100 and 101). There are, however, other plays, where such matter is rendered in verse, in which particular passages of this nature are placed in prose for the special purpose of contrasting their neutrality with pressing/comic or tragic interest in the context. Such passages are found in Twelfth Night, 1, 4, 1-10: Coriolanus, 2, 1, 108-176: The Maid's Revenge, 3, 1, p. 135: The Devil's Charter, 13r: The Iron Age, p. 284: The Jews' Tragedy, ll. 435-442, etc.

A gradual progression can be traced between the earliest, and most native and colloquial, uses of prose, and the elevated and poetical uses to which it is put in the passages just mentioned, and in the relations of blank verse to prose in these places. One of the

two media is chosen in each case because of its superior fitness to the subject-matter and feeling expressed. But when the feeling and thought pass, in some way above the power of expression which an author possesses he is inclined to fly to contrasts of medium as an additional means, catching at any aid to suggesting ideas he can grasp. There exist passages in Elizabethan drama whose content both blank verse and prose fail to express without serious loss. When blank verse is the prevailing medium the dramatist seeks relief by putting these passages into prose. It may be that some of the elevated and poetical passages can be explained in this way; certainly the passages of prose which express the utterances of madness are to be ranked in this category. The tendency of Kyd in the Spanish Tragedy towards prose for such reasons has been noticed already (pp. 132 *on*). This is the cause of Othello's frenzied speeches in prose at Act 4, 36-46 and 190-220. Similarly and with similar realism, the Duke, in Antonio and Mellida, Act 3, stuttering with rage changes from verse to prose for a speech. In Antonio's Revenge, 2, 3, Antonio says, at the moment of intense passion,

I will not swell like a tragedian

In forced passion of affected strains.

If I had present power of aught but pitying you, I would be as ready to redress your wrongs as to pursue your love, Throngs of

thoughts crowd for their passage: somewhat will I do.

Reach me thy hand: think this is honour's bent,

To live unslaved, to die innocent.

Sudden agitation is expressed by a change to prose in Blurt Master Constable, p.231: Flamineo's bitter sarcasm is put into prose in The White Devil, and Bosola uses prose for a similar reason in The Duchess of Malfi: Cornelia in The White Devil uses prose at a moment of excessive grief, 4,5: Ferdinand speaks ironically to his victims in prose just before his own death in The Duchess of Malfi, Act 5. In The Maid's Revenge grief is indicated by the same contrast of medium at 3,4,p.174, and agony at 5,3,p.183-4: in The Camester anger takes the form of prose at 2,2,p.215. IN The DEVIL's Charter agony is expressed in the same way at H2r, 11r, and the death of Alexander, and intense feeling at M1v and M2v. It is significant that in Kyd, Shakespeare and Webster, three writers who for command over blank verse and power to depict the most violent passions are equally pre-eminent, the most striking examples of the despairing abandonment should be found.

Speech which is forced or unnatural is also frequently, though not always, expressed in prose. Characters who have adopted disguises are found to relinquish the blank verse they use in their proper persons and to betray their unusual and constrained

situation by their prose, or to make a further contrast by this change of speech. A good example of this is seen in *The Changeling*, 3, 3, where Antonio and Francisco, two gentlemen who pretend to have lost their wits, change several times backwards and forwards from one medium to the other, according as they speak naturally or in disguise. Other instances are *The Spanish Gipsy*, 2, 1: *Edward* 4 pt. 1, 3, 1: *The Bird in a Cage*, Philenzo: *When You See ME You Know Me*, *E4r&v*: *The Rebellion*, 1, 1, p. 27 onwards: *Henry* 5, *Henry among the soldiers*, 4, 1. Greater subtlety is found in Shakespeare in ~~this~~ this direction than in any other author. The hypocrites Edmund in *Lear* and Iago in *Othello* usually employ prose, though Iago is not as consistent as Edmund: *Lady Macbeth* uses prose in the sleep-walking scene: *Coriolanus* ~~uses~~ speaks prose to the citizens, 2, 3, 70-118. Hamlet warns his friends that they are not to be surprised if they see him put "an antic disposition on", 2, 1, 170, and after this changes to prose, except in soliloqu^{ies}, which provides an explanation why he employs prose in the elevated passage, already mentioned, which was spoken in the presence of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Whenever he reassumes his natural self, when goaded into frenzy at the ~~death~~ funeral of Ophelia and at his own death, when the need for disguise is gone, he uses verse again, his familiar prose conversations with Horatio being quite in accordance with usage.

In their management of blank verse the earlier dramatists soon found that certain devices were necessary to avoid monotony, and to give the semblance of real speech to a medium necessarily so far removed from it as blank verse. Apart from the internal variations and the frequent avoidance of pause at the ends of the lines, a liberal extensionⁿ of the scope of the verse was secured, as is well-known, by making the end of a speech coincide with a point in the line; the next speech beginning, perhaps with the omission or addition of a syllable, at the point in the verse where the preceding speech had terminated. For rapid dialogue in short speeches, where they wished to retain verse, they used parts of lines, which as a rule but not always added as complete pentameters; with, at a later period, a plentiful use of extra syllables here also. This custom was continued to the end of the drama, and is seen in constant and licentious operation in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher. The device enabled the dramatists to maintain with consistency the relation between the two media in an immense number of passages where they would have otherwise have been compelled to resort^r to prose, and it had probably the effect of restricting the use of prose within narrower bounds than would have obtained but for it.

In constructing his play a skilful author would necessarily wish

that at some places the contrasts should be sharp and clear, while at other points he would desire a gradual transition from one medium to the other. The inability in early authors to make gradual transitions produced the harsh rough-hewn effect that is characteristic ^{ic of} ~~is~~ the formal structure of many of these plays.

The methods by which the manner of transition could be varied at will were soon elaborated; they differ according to circumstances, but need no lengthy examination. The devices used to give flexibility to the prose and for rapid dialogue were adapted for the purpose of making gradual transitions, or to mix the two media in a natural way. By their help passages could be constructed which ^{do} ~~cannot~~ give the impression of being one medium more than the other until carefully scrutinized, whether entirely in verse, or entirely in prose, or in a mixture of the two.

An example of a transition made by short lines is found in The Spanish Tragedy, 3, 6, lines 1-40 are verse, at which point the transition to prose is made thus:-

HIERONIMO Peace, impudent, for thou shalt find it so:

For blood with blood shall, while I sit as judge,

Be satisfied, and the law discharged.

And though myself cannot receive the like,

Yet will I see that others have their right.

Despatch: the fault's approv'd and confessed,

And by our law he is condemned to die.

HANGMAN Come on, sir, are you ready?

PEDRINGANO To do what, my fine officious knave?

HANGMAN To go to this gear.

PED. O, sir, you are too forward: thou wouldst fain furnish me with a halter, to disfurnish me of my habit. So I should go out of this gear, my raiment, into that gear, the rope. But, Hangman, now I spy your knavery, I'll not change without boot; that's flat.

This is a simple example. A good instance of a more complicated transition is contained in the following passage from Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. Lines 518 to 610 constitute a scene, the tone of which changes about lines ~~521~~ 531 to 561. Previous to line 551 the tone is comic; later it is more serious. In accordance with the alteration the medium changes from prose to blank verse. The transition is accomplished thus, short prose lines being mixed with short verse lines, while each character adheres consistently to his own medium:-

WARREN Why, Ned, I think the devil be in my sheath; I cannot get out my dagger.

ERMSBY Nor I mine. 'Sweons, Ned, I think I am bewitched.

MILES A company of scabs. The proudest of you all draw his weapon if he can. (Aside) See how boldly I speak now my master

is by.

PRINCE EDWARD I strive in vain; but if my sword be shut,

A And conjured fast by magic in my sheath,

Villain, here's my fist. (Strikes him a box on the ear.)

MILES On, I beseech you, conjure his hands too, that he may not
lift his arms to his head, for he is light-fingered.

RALPH Ned, strike him, I warrant thee by mine honour.

BACON What means the English prince to wrong my man?

Pr. EDWARD To whom speak'st thou?

BACON To thee.

PR. EDWARD Who art thou?

BACON Could you not judge when all your swords grew fast,...

(The scene continues in full blank verse lines.)

Naturally, considerable care had to be exercised by an author who wished to maintain in exact detail the relation of the two media, lest he should violate character-consistency. In early drama the playwrights were usually very careful in this respect, even where, as in the example just quoted, ~~the~~ short lines of blank verse are mixed with short lines of the other medium. Act I, Sc. 1, 29-42 of the same play shows a character maintaining his medium in short lines of verse alternating with prose speeches through a considerable passage (See also p. 45). In later drama, where character-interest had grown weaker than tone, there is much carelessness in this respect, but even here the media are often alternated speech by speech.

The general conclusions that have been arrived at concerning the uses of prose have now been stated. The typical form of a sixteenth century drama was a complex one, corresponding to the complexity of action, which tended to be a combination of two media, one suited to the serious interests and one to the lighter interests of the play. The connection between tone and form was very intimate; and the contrasts were made by any means in the dramatists' reach, and culminated in the combination of prose and verse. After some tentative efforts the ultimate type emerged and rapidly triumphed, its growth being rapider than the growth of an entirely new form because it was a substitution of new vehicles of expression in an old relation. Prose represents the realistic and verse the idealistic tendencies that are combined in most plays, but verse is the main or normal medium, prose being used for special reasons. More generally, the contrast of prose and verse expresses the contrast of tones, verse being the mark of elevation and prose of lower tone. In practice this formula could not be applied with combined ~~absolute~~ exactness and flexibility. At first it was applied crudely, but as skill grew alternations of medium followed variations of tone with greater ease, the reasons for using prose were progressively multiplied and subtilized, and on the whole the drama exhibited the phenomenon of a mixture of prose and verse being used to produce

1. There are several condensed accounts, from different points of view, of the prose of the principal authors. The chief of these are to be found on pp 164-199, (on the use of the prose): pp 288-303, (on the style). But many more passages are scattered throughout the text, as a reference to the index will show.

certain definite effects. Inconsistencies of all sorts do occur, but are comparatively rare. Most of the plays ~~use~~ ^{contain} verse and prose ~~used~~ in the conventional manner, a minority are in verse alone or in prose alone; a very few employ verse and prose at random.

Prose is used for proclamations, often for the announcements of messengers, for letters, for passages read aloud, and sometimes for oratory. It is used for conversation of even and familiar tone, sometimes for necessary business, later for high comedy and humour comedy. Comic and humble characters use it. It is employed also sometimes for formal utterances in history plays, and even for serious speech in later plays; though this last use cannot be connected with the others. For speech for which blank verse is unsuited by reason of its relative evenness rather than its elevation, such as agitation, anger, madness, and any ecstasy, prose is sometimes used. It is used also to express the unnatural, such as the speech of a disguised character, irony and hypocrisy.

SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF PROSE.¹

On the development of prose use in mixed drama before Shakespeare there exist a few scattered references in modern critics. The part which Greene played in the development of dramatic prose is clearly of importance, his large practice in prose enabling him to develop this branch of his art.* The prose dialogue of Kyd, Greene and

* Ward, English Dramatic Literature, Vol. 1 p. 108.

¹ See opposite.

Peele, and of such plays as *Lochrine* and *Selimus* forms, the starting-point, together with Lyly's style, from which Shakespeare developed his own methods of prose use, but they cannot for a moment compare with him in style.¹ Their mixture of blank verse and prose supplied the formal materials for his art.² The alternations in these forms began to follow the changes from tragic to comic, the scenes of elevated tone being rendered in blank verse, while prose was reserved for the comic parts, and the scenes of every day life, and for characters of low birth and servants.³ The general opinion, however, is that the changes of medium were rather arbitrary than governed by any rational dramatic principle,⁴ except in their broadest and most obvious outlines. The fact that prose was frequently employed in farcical scenes is obvious on the most cursory in-

1. Churton Collins, *Studies in Shakespeare, Shakespeare as a Prose writer.*² Ward, Vol. 1 p. 485.

3. Ulrich, *Shakespeare's Dramatic Art*, trans. 1876, p. 104.

4 e.g. Delius, *Die Prosa in Shakespeare's Dramen*:—"Shakespeare's dramatische Vorgänger, Zeitgenossen, und Nachfolger in der Unterscheidung und Vertheilung von Vers und Prosa in ihren Schauspielen, wenn überhaupt eine Norm, jedenfalls nicht die Shakespeare'sche Norm angelegt und durchgeführt, und stehen deshalb ausserhalb des Kreises unserer gegenwärtigen Betrachtung."

spection.

The prose of Shakespeare's plays has received exhaustive treatment, though it has not been realised that he was utilising and perfecting an already rational practice. Indeed the tendency has been to suppose that if he was guided by a fixed principle in using prose both his predecessors and successors must be contrasted with him in this respect. It is one of the consequences of taking Shakespeare's prose in isolation that it has not been decided with absolute ~~certainty~~^{certainty} whether even he was guided by a fixed principle in his changes from one medium to the other.¹ The amount of the prose in each play was determined by Fleay.² Delius examined the prose in each play,³ and from his enquiry there appeared the various special reasons for the use of prose which Shakespeare entertained, and the fact that he owed a debt of style to Lyly, especially in the high comedy prose. Several different styles were also shown to exist

1. Ch. Collins, *Studies in Shakespeare*, pp. 103-4, says that it is impossible to dogmatize on this point, although Shakespeare was a reflective artist. Ulrici p. 104, without definitely stating that Shakespeare had an explicit principle, says that the use of prose in his plays arises always with intrinsic necessity from the subject and from the development of the action.

2. *Shakespeare Manual*, p. 135.

3. *Die Prosa in Shakespeare's Dramen*.

in Shakespeare's prose. Since then these results have been elaborated by Dr. Abbot,¹ and Messrs Seccombe and Allen in textbooks,² by Professor Ward in his History of Dramatic Literature,³ and by Churton Collins in his article on Shakespeare's prose, and have become a commonplace.

The chief defect of these accounts is that they fail to distinguish perfectly between the reasons for the use of prose and the different styles of the prose. The results, although the various accounts are often at variance, e.g. Professor Ward's ~~four~~ three kinds of prose and Ch. Collins' five kinds, cannot be made to agree, may be briefly summarized as follows. In his plays there are several styles of prose. First, there is the Euphuistic style; that is to say, a style which has clear reminiscence of Lyly, whether employed seriously or in parody. This style is frequent, for example in Love's Labour's Lost and 1Henry4. Second, there is colloquial prose, which is a copy of the conversation of actual life. This prose is of two varieties, the prose which imitates the conversation of the court, which was much affected by Lyly's, and the realistic copy of ordinary speech. The first of these varieties, the high comedy prose, is found in abundance in Much Ado About

¹Shakespearean Grammar, p.429(2nd edition).
²The Age of Shakespeare, pp.117-122.
³Vol.1, p.504.

Nothing and As You Like It. It is rhythmic ,polished,witty. The other variety covers a wider range,from the conversation of the clowns and humble characters who are treated farcicaly to the plainer and even more realistic prose of the necessary business of the dramas. The jargon prose of such characters as Fluellen and Dr. Caius Shakespeare found in abundance in his predecessors. Fourthly ,there is professedly rhetorical prose,which is best exemplified by Brutus' speech to the citizens at Caesar's funeral,and which is naturally rare,such matter being usually couched in blank verse. Last,and even rarer, is the elevated prose. It would be possible to multiply almost indefinitely instances of the first three kinds of prose,but enough has been said above to suggest the nature of each kind. In addition,there is the prose of the letters and documents*.

Delius,after pointing out the reasons why Shakespeare's prose had been comparatively neglected,-considering the attention paid to his verse- and after mentioning three distinct styles of prose in Shakespeare's plays,deals with the conditions under which prose appears. The clowns and people of humble station employ prose only, unless they use some doggerel in its place,this being commonest in the early plays. The humorous characters of higher rank employ

*This account is mostly extracted from Ch. Collins' paper.

both prose and verse, prose being used only when they are in the comic vein. The conditions under which these characters use prose are therefore comparatively few, and, as in the first case, the prose is used to form a contrast with the blank verse. Delius classes together all the serious prose; and, although it varies greatly in style, the formality of this prose may be contrasted with the vivacity of the second type. This prose is employed without reference to the character who speaks it, to convey information to the spectators or whenever the dramatist wishes to adopt a more ceremonial tone.

The accounts in Abbot's Shakespearean Grammar and Messrs Seccombe and Allen's Age of Shakespeare are constructed on the view that prose was used by Shakespeare whenever he wished to lower the dramatic pitch, in contrast with his normal medium, blank verse. The adoption of this attitude leads to the attempt to explain by a definite special reason each use of prose. The advantage of this way of attack is that it shows the rational principle underlying the prose, when all the special reasons are arranged in groups, but on the other hand it fails to explain the rhetorical and elevated prose. We find by applying this method that all relatively comic matter, that is to say, all comic matter in serious plays, and all farcical matter in comedies, is couched in prose. Familiar conversation is often rendered in prose for the same reason. Similarly,

necessary business is often in prose.* A naturalistic tendency governs the prose of the proclamations and letters of the plays. On the other hand, the ~~uneven~~ movement of verse is unsuited to the expression of thought which is markedly irregular, such as that of a madman, or where the thoughts and feelings expressed are very involved, tense (e.g. Hamlet's conversation with Ophelia, Act 3, Sc. 1 and Othello, 4, 1, 120-220), or simulated.

Shakespeare was not merely the beginner of the high comedy prose: he extended its use so far that in some plays it deposes blank verse and becomes the normal medium. The Merry Wives of Windsor and Much Ado About Nothing, in which blank verse only appears where the tone turns in a marked degree to pathos or romantic elevation, ^{as already said,} are essentially prose plays. (See p. 100).

Naturally, Shakespeare's plays exhibit a progressive development in respect of prose as they do in all department of his art.¹ The proportion of prose to verse rises gradually and with fair regularity to its maximum in the plays where it has displaced blank verse. It then falls, owing to a change in the nature of the plays, but maintains a considerable position throughout the remainder of his dramas. When he first uses prose he confines it, as a rule, to the comic scenes. But as his powers matured he found more and more

* Instances of all these uses are found in the preceding lists.
 See Ch. Collins, p. ~~199~~ 199, Seccombe and Allen, §§ 5-7, and Fleay.

and subtler reasons for alternating prose with verse. Up to the time of the essentially prose plays, he was, roughly speaking, consistent in maintaining the medium of a character throughout a play e.g. in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. But in his later period he adopted a much freer use of prose, suiting it to subtle changes of tone and mood and disregarding mechanical character-consistency. But, in spite of some expressions of opinion to the contrary, he does not show any tendency to vary his medium without adequate motives, but rather towards a continually increasing subtlety of motive.

To these accounts of Shakespeare's prose there is little to add as regards his prose when dealt with in isolation. But really nothing has been done to show his relation to his predecessors in respect of the way he employed prose as a foil for his verse. The tendency, as has been said, has been to suppose that he alone had a definite purpose in view in each use of prose, whether this purpose was explicitly understood by himself or not. But, as in other branches of his art, Shakespeare was not so much a beginner as the perfect and highest term in a long series. He took a use which existed before him and improved it immeasurably. The following propositions show his relation to his predecessors.

1. He did not invent the main methods of combining prose and verse, which were part of the legacy handed down to him by his predecessors

2. He greatly extended the use of prose. Love's Labour's Lost contains 1086 lines of prose out of 2789, and though this is above the average the prose shows no sign of diminution throughout his work as a whole. The great romantic comedies contain the largest amounts, and in some of them prose has become the normal medium. The Winter's Tale, one of his latest plays, contains 844 lines of prose out of 2750. To take an example, familiar conversation in prose is much easier to find in his plays than in the plays of the dramatists who went before him. He first employed high comedy prose in mixed drama; and elevated poetical prose is not seen in drama before him.

3. The style of his prose is superior to any that had been known before. This appears in his extension of prose for higher uses requiring more elevated and poetic styles. It is seen in the increased naturalness of his prose, in his gradual relinquishing of mechanical comic devices of style, in the realism of the prose of his humble characters, and in the ease and vivacity of the familiar conversations not less than of the high comedy prose. Like some of his predecessors he parodied Lyly in early plays, or imitated him for comic effect, and later in his high comedy prose he received a second, more wholesome but less direct, influence from the same source. And, lastly, he surpassed the best of his forerunners in

the skill with which he combined and contrasted several styles in the same play, especially in *As You Like It*, *Henry 5*, and *Hamlet* (See p. 289).

4. At the same time Shakespeare subtilized the employment of prose immensely. In this department he is supreme throughout the drama. Naturally, he did not reach perfection at once. In *Midsummer Night's Dream*, for instance, there is no superiority in the way in which prose is combined with verse over such a play as *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. But to examine the maturest creations of his genius is to find prose being used with the finest and most delicate skill. In only one play is there any manifest contradiction of its own standard of verse and prose.* The consistency with which a character employs one medium is, however, continually set aside by him for the special reasons mentioned above, while in the earlier dramatists there is as evident reluctance to change a character's medium. Shakespeare's general superiority in the drawing of individual

*The *Taming of the Shrew*. The *Taming of A Shrew* also disregards the traditional use of verse and prose. Messrs Seccombe and Allen consider that in his later plays he has grown careless in his employment of prose; but this does not appear to be so, unless in *Measure for Measure*, 1, 1, 152-280: and 3, 2, 230-240: and 4, 4.

character and his power to vary the moods of a character without destroying its verisimilitude and consistency explain these variations. Thus in Romeo and Juliet, 2, 4, the dialogue between Romeo and the nurse is in prose until Juliet is mentioned, when Romeo rises at once to verse; and in Hamlet, 3, 1, Hamlet speaks to Ophelia in verse until his half-formed suspicion that she is acting as a decoy, or is being used as a decoy, is re-aroused, when he changes to angry iron-^{ic} ~~ic~~ prose. The subtlety of the prose-use which accompanies Iago's malicious irony and hypocrisy ^{was} ~~is~~ similarly unknown before Shakespeare, and in the swift alternations he makes, especially in Othello and Hamlet, he is equally preëminent.

On the other hand, he abandoned the use of prose for messengers' announcements, and largely renounced the Chronicle History prose.

From the way in which Shakespeare raised and refined the traditional use of prose some inkling of his attitude - his conscious attitude - to prose may be gained. No doubt, the tradition was in origin more or less naive and unconscious. The same phenomenon was surely exhibited here as is ~~sometimes~~ general in artistic production. The main principles were learnt by him from his predecessors and were known by him explicitly, and when he had mastered their usages thoroughly the intensiⁿty of his genius and his intuitive perception of the fitness of each use led him to higher uses. There

is no need to argue that because he understood the general practice every application and extension of his art was definitely and explicitly motivated. His advances would be as instinctive as the first gropings of his predecessors. But even to his nearer predecessors any measure of reflection must have quickly showed the main principles, which could scarcely, being as simple as they are, have remained long obscure to such men as these dramatists were. Like him they were consciously applying and intuitively elaborating, though with infinitely less scope than he exercised, a method which, while instinctive in its first stages, soon passed into the light of common consciousness.

THE USE OF PROSE AFTER SHAKESPEARE.

Beyond short and scattered references in textbooks and general histories of the drama there are no accounts of the prose of the dramatists contemporary with Shakespeare or of his successors. These references are also almost wholly confined to the style of the prose of these authors. Professor Churton Collins made the statement that the employment of verse and prose is with his followers purely arbitrary, and appears to have been introduced simply to vary the dialogue, or to save the trouble of yoking thought to metre.* This is certainly not so, as the preceding examples show, in the great majority of cases: nor would the variety thus obtained

* p. 204, of the essay already referred to.

have been anything but chaos. He adds that essentially poetic con-
 ceptions are often clothed by them in prose, and that their prose
 is commonly nothing but loose blank verse; neither of which state-
 ments is correct. The same critic remarks that Jonson is the only
 dramatist who could for an instant stand comparison with Shakespeare
 as a prose writer, and that Jonson's best is far inferior to Shake-
 speare's best. The latter part of this opinion is as true of the
 other dramatists as of Ben Jonson, but he is by no means preëminent
 among them in the way he combines prose with verse. Jonson's most
 ambitious prose is cast in a Latin mould, and even his colloquial
 prose dialogue is seldom free from stiffness and pedantry. Pro-
 fessor Dixon notes that in several plays "Dekker followed Shakespeare
 in the mingling of prose and verse. Where prose serves his purpose,
 as in the humorous scenes of ordinary life, he employs it freely, ex-
 changing it for verse where a deeper key of feeling, a higher pitch
 of passion or sentiment ^{is} reached, passing into rhymed verse in ten-
 der or pathetic passages." * The influence of Lyly is seen in some
 of Dekker's dramatic prose, and his comic characters use a speech
 full of repetitions and heapings of synonyms¹ (e.g. *The Shoemakers'*
Holiday, p. 62, and *Westward Ho!*, p. 322.). Of course, Dekker's practice

* *Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. 6, p. 52. The remarks
 which follow are a synthesis of scattered sentences and even phrases
 from various sources, especially Ch. Collins and *The Cambridge History*.

¹ See Hunt's *Dekker*.

in pamphleteering helped him, as it had helped Greene in this branch of his art. The prose of Middleton is easy, light, rapid and witty; rarely pedantic. In Rowley's plays the printing does not properly distinguish the prose from the verse; but his comic prose is of the old stock pattern, in him too often cold and laboured.)

Dryden's well-known remarks upon Beaumont and Fletcher* point to a new development in the English drama. He says "They understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better than Shakespeare and that in them the English language perhaps arrived at its highest perfection. Allowing for the difference in point of view between Dryden's age and ours we may interpret this opinion as explaining that a new and more natural high comedy prose and verse had appeared. Their style was simpler, purer, and more familiar than any had been before, both in blank verse and in prose. Moreover in their hands the relation of blank verse to prose underwent a great alteration. Owing to changes in the temper of the nation which need not be particularised here we find in them a comparative neglect of character-interest and of the principle of artistic unity. They aimed rather at a lively and interesting succession of isolated scenes, treated freely and bound loosely together, with a new style

* Essay of Dramatic Poesy, pp. 52 and 53.

of wit in conversation. This change in dramatic purpose reacted immediately upon the form of their compositions. The blank verse became free, light and irregular, and spontaneous in appearance. As Mr Macaulay says,* The quick and lively movement of this verse, "with its easy assumption of the ordinary speech of gentlemen, developed a metre which could supply the place of prose in the lightest interchange of fashionable repartee..... Hence Fletcher was able to dispense entirely with prose in his later work." But in the passages which those who distinguish among Beaumont's, Fletcher's, and Massinger's work assign to Beaumont there is a free use of prose for the language of ordinary conversation, and indeed a distinct following of the older usages of verse and prose.

Professor Churton Collins held that Massinger wrote Rhythmic prose; and he considered this to be the cause of Massinger's editors having printed it as blank verse. But Massinger followed Fletcher in his adoption of the new freer style of blank verse; and even his comic characters use this medium, with the exceptions of the quack doctor in *The Emperor of the East* and ~~the~~ the astronomer in *The City Madam*. Professor Koepfel suggests that Massinger would ^{if he could,} have put even the jargon of these characters into metrical form. ¹

* *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. 6 p. 117.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

Tourneur Ch. Collins linked with Massinger. In his case, however, his known heedlessness of the formal requirements fo drama must be taken into account in any remarks on his prose. In Webster's plays there is some notable prose, because he has not only selected this medium for some of his chief creations but has also rendered in it some of his ~~chief~~ most daring imaginative flights. There exist no specific references to the prose of Chapman, marston, Heywood, Ford, or Shirley among the greater dramatists, nor to any general lines of development that the use or style of dramatic prose took after Shakespeare, beyond those already cited. (The gradual degeneration which overtook all parts of dramatic technique and matter may, however, be held to include as ^{affected} much reference to the prose as to the blank verse, in the lesser and later writers. ^{much} Among these latter the style of Day's Humour out of Breath is noted as remarkable for neatness and compactness, and the prose of Cooke's Greene's Tu Quoque ~~general excellence~~ and the prose part of Taylor's The Hog hath Lost his Pearl for general excellence. (Brome, again, is commended for the natural directness of his English in prose as well as in verse, and Randolph for his racy vivacity, and the strong contrast between his verse and prose.)

In a drama written in two vehicles the degree of difference between the two kinds bears a strong relation to the form of the composition

as a whole. Not merely, therefore, has the development of blank verse a bearing on the development of prose along with it, but particular authors possess very different powers of marking distinctly the contrasts between the two. Churton Collins is of opinion that Shakespeare's successors as a whole failed in this respect, and that Shakespeare is the only author (he makes no reference, however, to the early dramatists here) whose prose is so clearly distinguished from his verse that there is never any real doubt as to which medium he is employing. Ulrici,* writing in praise of Shakespeare, says: "No one handles blank verse with greater skill: no one is more capable of raising it to the height of the most high-sounding lyrical rhythms and of again lowering it to the plains of prose: no one knows better how to make use of the changes between metrical and non-metrical language for enlivening the representation. Here also the variety of forms - which sometimes pass gently into one another, sometimes contrast sharply, ~~with~~ correspond with the change, elasticity and many-sidedness of historical life."

The history of dramatic blank verse development is a twice-told tale.¹ A cento of quotations from the two authorities will suffice

*Shakespeare's Dramatic Art, p. 332.

¹Saintsbury, History of Prosody, Vol. 2, Book 5, Ch. 1 & 2, & Book 6, Ch. 3: and Schipper, History of English Versification, Ch. 12.

to show the general position taken here, and, with regard to the various authors, the blank verse of each, when it is compared with the prose in any way, is described by reference to the same places. Blank verse begins its development with the metrical and rhythmic characteristics of the heroic couplet of its own time, but soon develops in accordance with laws of its own. In Corboduc and *The Misfortunes of Arthur* it is in this early condition. Peele, Marlowe and Greene have made a great advance, but still the lines are constructed to ^{pause} ~~stop~~ at the end: they are moulded individually, not collectively. In movement each is distinct, though the sense is not always broken by a change of direction at the end of the line. The welding of the lines together was achieved by Shakespeare in his mature verse. Again, he varied the internal structure of each verse in infinite ways by manipulation of the pause, and the use of extra syllables and *trisyllabic* feet. Though he preserved the iambic decasyllable norm inviolably it is perfectly varied and deprived of its original monotony. Now, blank verse is the verse which is nearest to prose, by reason of its rhymelessness. In Shakespeare it retains its original metrical character entirely, with all the poetry that his methods added. But in the hands of inferior practitioners the dangerous beauties of irregularity with which he adorned it became each a means of approximating the medium to prose. Even Shakespeare rather abused his own liberties in his last stage, and

his successors introduced, on the whole, more and more irregularity. They made the mistake of considering liberty as licence, of regarding beauty as not merely connected with variety but as arising from variety itself. The degeneration of blank verse may therefore be viewed as a progress towards prose, which progress, however could never lead to pure and good prose. Sometimes for a passage the result is mere prose, but soon in reading we come on an awkward hybrid between verse and prose, where we have no sooner settled down comfortably to one medium than we trip over a piece of the other.

The development of the style and use of prose in drama after Shakespeare is closely related to this development and decay of blank verse. It is not true that the dramatists after him used verse and prose at caprice; but it is true that the subtlety with which the two were combined was not elaborated further after Shakespeare, and that as the blank verse degenerated the carelessness with which the conventional relation of prose and verse was applied in the late drama appeared and increased.* The latest plays are *equally*

* The general proof of this is found in the lists of prose use given above. That the use of prose was often subtle and exact in detail can be seen from the following examples, selected almost at random, in the plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries and successors:— In *The Honest Whore* of Dekker (1608) 1, 1, pp. 5-7, Matheo, a light-hearted gentleman, and Hippolito, a noble character are in

distinguished

often for carelessness of verse and carelessness in the use of prose. In Ben Jonson is seen the spreading of plain comic prose. In some of his plays it has ousted verse altogether; but when he combined verse and prose he was on the whole careful to observe the ordinary relation, as in The Case is Altered. Jonson tended to the play of simple plot, on classical lines, and therefore we familiar conversation. Hippolito is in distress, but Matheo cannot appreciate its cause. Matheo uses prose and Hippolito verse.

In Chettle's Tragedy of Hoffman (1602) Lorrique is at first a comic character and uses prose, but when (in defiance of character consistency) he becomes serious his medium changes.

In Wilkin's The Miseries of Enforced Marriage (1605) there are two brothers, whose difference in character is emphasized by their consistent employment of the two different media.

In Heywood's ~~The Royal King and the Lays Subject~~ A Woman Killed with Kindness (1603) pp. 128 & 141, are two conversations of the same form and substance; the first is between gentlemen and in verse, the second between servants and in prose.

Tangle in The Phoenix (1607) and Lucius Junius Brutus in The Rape of Lucrece (1603), naturally blank verse characters who are or pretend to be mad and speak prose, recover their sanity and with it revert to blank verse.

find that his tragedies do not contain any matter suitable for prose. In some comedies, such as *The Magnetic Lady* and *The New Inn*, he has, apparently in his desire to reform the drama, substituted plain blank verse for prose. His prose and verse, moreover, are not as distinct from one another in style as in most authors. Similarly in Chapman

In Dekker's *Match Me in London* (1611-1623) Cordolente is a man of exalted character but low rank, which fact is insisted on in the play. He uses prose.

The Characters in the list of disguised parts on pp. 157-158 all reassume verse with their natural condition.

In Heywood's *The Royal King and The Loyal Subject* (1618) 1, 1, p. 11 and 3, pp. 38-40, the alternation, speech by speech, of blank verse and prose, according as the character is of high or low rank, is seen.

In Ford's plays, where special attention is always paid to the traditional methods, good sense is sacrificed in the comic prose dying speeches of Berghetto in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* and Ferent- as in *Love's Sacrifice*.

In *The Opportunity* (1634) 3, 1, there is a comic low life conversation in prose, but one of the characters turns serious in contrast with the others, and with the change of tone his speech becomes verse.

tragedy tended to a single plot in verse only, while his comedy tended to be altogether in prose. Chapman's bombastic tragic verse is sharply distinguished from the passages of prose that do occur in the tragedies; but the blank verse in his comedies is very different, where it is found, approximating in style and diction to the prose. Marston varied considerably in the consistency with which he mixed verse and prose. In some plays, as Antonio's Revenge and The Dutch Courtesan, he is largely consistent, but on the whole his plays are irregular in this respect, as in The Malcontent and What You Will. In style his blank verse is well distinguished from the prose, which is remarkable for its diction. He uses much high comedy prose, as in Parasitaster, and also a great deal of farcical prose, where the curious diction appears principally. There is seen in his comedies the same spreading of prose as is observable in some of Jonson's plays, though not to so great a degree. The same is true of Dekker, who slips more easily into prose than Marston, and whose blank verse is not so well differentiated from his prose as Marston's is. But Dekker observes the conventional uses of prose better than Marston, though he has many irregularities. He has all the older uses of prose, and its style is as remarkable in a different way for its diction as the former's. Both these writers

could produce, when they wished a prose lively, easy and natural. Very similar to one another in their usages are Rowley and Heywood, in both of whom the verse and prose are well distinguished. This is perhaps because both belong principally to the popular pre-Shakespearean school in style of play, as can be seen from the somewhat mechanical way they alternate the comic and serious interests and the corresponding media, and in the tenacity with which they adhere to conventional uses of prose. Neither writer, in fact, was very original, and new tendencies are not often illustrated in their works. Some of their plays, as *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* and *Fortune by Land and Sea*, are full of irregularities; but the chaos is a chaos of crudities rather than the heaped fragments of a ruined civilisation. The excellence of Middleton's blank verse, to proceed, differentiates it from his prose, which is of all kinds, but frequently familiar and realistic. In him the older mannered styles have largely disappeared. On the whole he observes the convention, usually without much subtlety, however; and he is never averse from changing the medium without much reason, as in *Your Five Gallants*. The spreading of comic prose is as noticeable in him as in the others. Webster in his greatest plays avoided the use of ~~prose~~ deliberate prose except for the special purpose of indicating the particular characters of *Flamineo* and *Bosola*, in whom it is in marked

contrast with the verse. Appius and Virginia is in all respects like the older plays in use of prose and in style of prose and verse and in their distinct separation. In *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* his verse is of very various character, always distinguishable from the prose by its content, in metre it ranges from snatches of pure verse to a structure which is scarcely distinguishable from sheer prose. Tourneur's two plays are remarkably different in their employment of prose. *The Atheist's Tragedy* adheres to the traditional usages; and the prose, which is sometimes serious, sometimes familiar, and sometimes attempts to be comic, is plain in style, and well contrasted in this respect with the verse, which is careless but flowing and easy. In *The Revenger's Tragedy* the use of prose is much more irregular, and there is less contrast with the verse; but it is similar in style, on the whole, to the prose of the other play. In both plays the characters speak prose or verse indifferently, but each medium, especially in the first play, is in close relation to the tone of the action at the points at which it appears (See p. 298.)

All the authors mentioned in this hurried epitome can be summarily dismissed as continuing in one way or the other the older tradition, though they differ largely among themselves. The chief features they exhibit are increasing irregularity in use, the spread of comic

prose ~~was~~, the use of high comedy prose, and the gradual disappearance of the older peculiarities of style, their comic effects being derived rather from the humour of situation, character and manners, than from verbal peculiarities; with certain exceptions of a notable kind, the chief being the curious diction of Marston and Dekker and of the parodies of court speech that abounded (See p. 220 *ov*).

But with Fletcher and Massinger there appeared a new phenomenon which altered at once the relation of prose and verse - the sudden spreading of the new irregular blank verse over the whole province which belonged before to prose. The writers who have hitherto been mentioned continued to combine prose and verse in the same manner as it is found in the drama of Shakespeare and his predecessors, largely regardless of the changes in style which each medium was undergoing, and which were rendering them ^{two} more and more unfit for the old combinations. These changes were the ~~the~~ ^r increasing irregularity of the verse, and a continually recurring tendency to plainness in much of the prose (See p. 226 *ov*). The whole tendency was to discourage the Elizabethan clown with his tricks of language on the one hand, and on the other the passages of stately declamation which adorn the pages of Shakespeare and the tragic writers who preceded him. The consequence of these changes was that the style of the blank verse and the prose approximated to such a degree

that the older contrasts became impossible, as not ^{usually} perceptible by the audience; they were probably also obnoxious when perceptible, as the new ideal which was before the dramatist in writing his dialogue was the conversation of the man about town and the courtier, and the variations in style demanded by a well-differentiated prose and verse were necessarily in conflict with such an ideal. The author who envisaged this ideal most clearly in every way was Fletcher, as can be seen from the ~~plays~~ subject-matter and form of the plays that appeared after Beaumont's death. In them is *reflected* the cavalier of the later years of James' reign and the earlier years of Charles': and the likes and dislikes of the court have left an equally strong impression upon the subject-matter and ~~the~~ form. In the ^earlier plays of Beaumont and Fletcher the older methods and styles are still evident; but Fletcher clearly found irksome the bounds of the old convention, continually overleapt them, and before long flung them aside as useless and confining, just as he replaced the older tragedy by his new tragi-comedy, with its sensations, expectation or suggestion of the possibility of disaster, and unreal inevitable happy ending. As in the older play in Fletcher two plots are usually combined in the same play; but, while in the first class they are combined to gain contrasts of tone rank of characters and medium as well as to give variety and

wealth of incident, in Fletcher the latter become the sole reasons for their appearance together, all the contrasts being usually lacking.

The new irregular blank verse which Fletcher used for these plays was made by him to do duty for all uses of blank verse and prose, whether in history, tragedy, comedy, or tragicomedy.* In style and metre the new medium may be described as an irregular blank verse scheme with the diction of the later high-comedy prose. Of course, it contains regular ~~and~~ passages, and stretches of elevated poetry; but these are comparatively rare, and its polished ease is directed almost exclusively towards the imitation of familiar aristocratic conversation.

The following is a representative list of plays that are written in this new medium entirely (except for letters and proclamations):
 Monsieur Thomas, The Chances, Wit Without Money, Bonduca, Valentinian, The Loyal Subject, The Queen of Corinth, The Humorous Lieutenant, The Little French Lawyer, The Custom of the Country, The Laws of Candy, Women Pleased, The False One, The Double Marriage, The Pilgrim,

* Some examples are:—The Custom of The Country (1619-22) 1, 1, p. 314, comic speech; 3, 2, p. 334, speech of humble characters; 3, 3, p. 340, familiar conversation; Women Pleased, (1620) 4, 3, p. 293, Italian and Spanish jargon; The Beggars' Bush, (1622) 2, 1, pp. 220-226, Beggars'

The Wild Goose Chase, The Island Princess, The Beggars' Bush, The Prophetess, The Sea Voyage, The Spanish Curate, The Lover's Progress, Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, The Noble Gentleman, The Duke of Milan, The Unnatural Combat, The Bondman, The Parliament of Love, A New Way to Pay Old Debts, The Roman Actor, The Maid of Honour, The Great Duke of Florence, The Picture, Believe as You List, The Guardian, A Very Woman, A Bashful Lover, The Royal Master, Honoria and Mammon, The Duke's Mistress, Hyde Park, The Politician, The Gentleman of Venice, The Doubtful Heir, The Court Secret, A Tale of a Tub, The Old Couple, The Ordinary, The True Trojans, The City Match, The Queen of Arragon, The Parliament of Bees, The Novella, The Unfortunate Lovers, Love and Honour, The Wits, The Platonic Lovers, The Fair Favourite, Wallenstein, The Goblins, and Brennorait.

Fletcher's influence on the form of the verse and its use persisted, though not universally, to the end of the Elizabethan drama. His follower, admirer, and collaborator, Massinger, exhibits the same phenomenon. In his plays prose is deliberately avoided, except for two characters (See p. 260). But Fletcher's temper was foreign to Massinger's more serious and earnest character; in construction Massinger often tended to the older type of play, ^{by} the introduction of ~~artificial~~ ^{artificial} and natural speech generally: any and all of the plays in the list show the use of blank verse for many different purposes.

of humble characters and scenes among the more elevated passages, though these are not developed so far as to form distinct under-plots:and he accompanied this structure by variations in the style of his verse,so that the effects of the contrasts of medium used by the older authors have persisted in his plays. The tragic and serious parts are dealt with in a verse modelled on Shakespeare and the more regular writers,while his lighter parts are rendered in a style which approaches to Fletcher's ,but is not quite so irregular. A good example of these differences is formed by The Unnatural Combat,where the tragic part constitutes the main body of the play,and is in regular verse. But in the lighter part the other style of verse appears. The chief of the irregular passages and lighter parts are found at 3,1,pp.165-171(a servants' scene); 3,2,pp.xii 175-177(also a servants' scene);4,2,pp.205-211(a comic and familiar scene). The contrast of style is also well seen at 5, 2,p.226:-

(A Storm:thunder and lightning.)

MALEFORT. Do,do,rage on! Rend open,Aeolus,

Thy brazen prison,and let loose at once

Thy stormy issue!Blustering Boreas,

Aided with all the gales the pilot numbers

Upon his compass,cannot raise a tempest

Through the vast region of the air, like that
I feel within me,

.....I'll accuse my fates
That did not fashion me for nobler uses:
For if those stars, cross to me in my birth,
Had not denied their prosperous influence to it,
With peace of conscience, like to innocent men,
I might have ceased to be, and not as now,
To curse my cause of being -

(He is killed by a flash of lightning.)

(Enter Belgarde with soldiers.)

BELGARDE.

Here's a night

To season my silks! Buff jerkin, now I miss thee:
Thou hast endured many foul nights, but never
One like to this. How fine my feather looks now!
Just like a capon's tail stolen out of the pen,
And hid in the sink: and yet t'had been dishonour
To have charged without it.- Wilt thou never cease?
Is the petard, as I gave directions, fastened
On the portcullis?

Other good examples of the appearance of this verse in Massinger's
work in contrast with the style of the main interest at places

where, in plays written before Fletcher's time, prose would have been used are:- The Duke of Milan, 1, 1 (A Watch Scene), 3, 2 (comic and familiar conversation); The Bondman, 2, 3 (slaves); The Renegado (many places); The City Madam, 2, 2, p. 45; 3, 1 (humble and comic characters); A Very Woman, 2, 3, pp. 268-9 (temporary insanity); 3, 1 (a slavemarket scene); 3, 5 (drunkenness).*

There are also instances among the work of the other writers already mentioned of passages of blank verse of the same nature doing the duty of the earlier prose. Middleton, whose prose is, however, usually well distinguished from his verse, has the most notable of these passages. In *Your Five Gallants* (1607), where he uses verse and prose with apparent indifference, there is never any doubt as to which medium he is employing. But in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1612), the latter part of *the Spanish Gipsy* (1612-13), *Anything for a Quiet Life*, ~~DEBOSKIX~~ (1619-23), *Women Beware Women* (1612), and *The Game of Chess* (1625) the same irregular verse appears, either throughout or in passages, and frequently conveys matter traditionally prosaic. In Dekker's *Wonder of a Kingdom* (1623) the styles of the blank verse and the prose are also often much alike. In

* Massinger even secures a contrast with rhyme and blank verse, rather than apply the traditional method, by putting three of the letters in his plays into rhyme:- *A New Way to pay Old Debts*, 4, 3, p. 579; *The Great Duke of Florence*, 4, 1, p. 493; 5, 2, p. 512%.

Heywood's Fair Maid of The West and If You Know not Me You Know Nobody, especially on pp. 79 and 101, the elevated parts are in regular blank verse, but there are less serious parts where the verse can only be distinguished by occasional metrical scraps from prose. A similar use of irregular verse is found in passages in Jonson's verse comedies The Staple of News, The New Inn, The Magnetic Lady, The Tale of a Tub, and The Devil is an Ass (where, nevertheless, the Vice retains the old doggerel).

It does not appear that the style of the verse and prose in Webster's two great plays, though the verse is irregular, can be connected with Fletcher any more than the general tone and construction; and Appius and Virginia and A Cure for a Cuckold exhibit the traditional methods. But The Devil's Law Case, a Tragicomedy, shows the influence of Fletcher on an author who would otherwise have apparently followed conventional methods of the older kind in this play also. For example, at 3, 2, p. 59, there is a discussion among some surgeons in a mixture of irregular verse and prose, and other instances are found on pp. 24 and 26.

As laid down already, after the example given by Fletcher his style of verse may appear at any time, together with its use for all employments to which prose had been previously attached. In addition to the plays entirely in verse in the list given above, its use instead

of prose is seen in Shirley's *The Brothers* (Lüys -who also uses ~~verse~~ prose, however; *The Doubtful Heir* (e.g. I, I, pp. 285 and 293) -easily changing to prose; *The Coronation*; and *The Sisters*, where it is mixed indifferently with prose. Clapthorne's *Wit in a Constable* is nearly all in the same irregular style of verse; and *Ram Alley*, *A Woman is a Weathercock*, Greene's *Tu Quoque*, *The Antiquary*, *Albovine*, and *The Cruel Brother* contain passages of irregular verse in place of prose, often in large quantities. In the two last plays the conventional uses are well observed, though there is little difference in style between the verse and prose; but the others substitute verse for prose.

Brome's blank verse is very like Jonson's, and there is little contrast between its style and that of the prose. But he keeps prose for comedy usually, and shows signs of wishing to use verse alone in romantic plays, such as *The Novella*. His latest plays, especially *The Antipodes* (1641) and *The Jovial Crew* (1641), contain some very irregular verse; but even here he adheres to prose for comedy as a rule: Jonson's was his dominating influence, and this late irregularity may be due to increasing freedom and carelessness on his own part rather than to any specific Fletcherian influence. In

~~The general style of verse, and the irregularity of its mixture with prose had, of course, rapidly developed in all ways during the~~

the way in which he combined prose and verse there is much variety: in almost half his plays the use seems to be quite indiscriminate; in others, such as *The Queen's Exchange*, the conventional use is followed down to the smallest detail. There is an intermediate class of which *The Northern Lass* is an example, where the overflowing of comic prose is seen, but which are otherwise conventional. (See p. 300.)

The general style of verse, and the irregularity of its mixture with prose, rapidly developed, ~~of course~~, in all ways, during the

latest years of the drama. Nevertheless, there are examples of faithful adherence to older methods, among the most conspicuous of which are Ford's principal plays. Not only is Ford's verse of the older, more regular type, but he clings to all the older methods, though without much subtlety in his combination of verse and prose. ~~He even puts comic prose into the mouths of two foolish characters in their dying speeches (See p. 297).~~ The contrast between his prose and his verse is as strong as in Greene, and he retains all the old well-worn devices of style in the farcical prose (See p. 297). He has the kinds and uses of prose found in Shakespeare; in *The Broken Heart*, however, prose is replaced by irregular verse in the speeches of Grausis (e.g. \bar{x} 2, 1, pp. 276 and 277), who is the only character who would have used prose in an earlier and conventional play, though Orgilus in disguise might have done so.

Shirley's use of prose ^{varies} ~~has already been dealt with~~ (See p. 299). ^{especially at one period, when he wrote entirely in verse,} Though he ~~was~~ largely under Fletcher's influence, some of his plays, such as *The Maid's Revenge*, are constructed with the old combinations of prose and verse exhibited in perfection, and the majority follow the convention fairly. In such traditional plays the verse is more regular than in those which depart from the earlier tradition of prose use, and is well distinguished in style from the prose. But this is almost entirely free from the older devices of style,

is plain, easy and natural; and therefore when he employs the Fletcherian verse the difference of style between the two media is almost obliterated. *In several of his ^{comedies} prose has spread over much of the province of verse.*

Besides Ford's plays, The Jews' Tragedy (1638), the Lost Lady (1637?), and The Rebellion (1639) are examples of plays which follow the older manner in usages of prose, strong contrast of prose and verse, and the abundance of rhetorical devices in the comic prose. Randolph's plays, again, are even violent in the contrast made between the two media/in style, as well as employing the older methods in both prose and verse: Hey for Honesty, however, is the only play of his which is quite consistent in this respect.

The convention of prose and verse which has been isolated and formulated, and whose evolution has been traced, early acquired a great force. Elizabethan was no exception in the subservience which drama pays to stage conventions even when they have become restraints, whatever the attitude of the authors of the plays may have been to ancient, more sedate, but less powerful rules. The continuation of the traditional methods of alternating verse and prose to secure contrasts, when the two vehicles had become too similar in style and diction, is an example. Other examples are the constant repetition of certain jokes, such as the 'horn' jest,

those on 'nos autem populare', 'the case is altered', euphuistic parody verbal mistakes; the constantly recurring use of such phrases as 'He is such a man as you will see in a summer's day' and 'As proper a man as ever went upon neat's leather'; the watch scenes, e.g. much Ado About Nothing, 5, 3, When You See Me You Know Me, D2v and D3r, The Heir, 4, pp. 569 and 570, The Jews' Tragedy, 3, 1, 1275-1355; Grave Diggers, e.g. Hamlet and The Valiant Welshman, 4, 3; the rascally summoner being made to eat parchment in Sir John Oldcastle, 2, 1, and Pistol forced to eat the leek in Henry 5, 5, 1; the immense number of jargon parts with the gradual change from native dialect to foreign speech that they present; and indeed the very fact that the prose can be so easily classified into distinct styles with strictly corresponding uses - all these are testimony to the force of stage conventions rather than examples of gratuitous plagiarism. Especially, the convention of combining prose and verse, arising as it did from the conditions of the drama, and then elaborated far beyond the thought of its originators, was no exception. When the conditions changed, the tradition was slow in giving way to circumstances to which it was no longer suited, and it is found operating not only in plays where it had a natural application, but also in plays where it was evidently, sometimes at least, a trammel.

Perhaps the most signal instance of the intrusion of an irrelevant convention of prose is found in the Clown, who was in the early

inter-scenes of comic play apparently treated in ways which varied according to circumstances. Sometimes he was expected to render the words of the dramatist exactly and without addition of his own: but at other times he had licence to add 'gags'. Shakespeare complains in Hamlet of the behaviour of the clowns, 3, 2, that they speak more than is set down for them, and delay in order to make the spectators laugh though in the meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered, and in The Pilgrimage to Parnassus, 5, 5, 672-678, a speaker says, "Clowns have been thrust head and shoulders into plays ever since Kemp could make a scurvy face".* Evidence of the habit of extemporising, and of the audience's expectation that the clown should be able to show his inventive wit or appear to do so (this was probably a relic of older practice) is seen in Touchstone's parody of ~~Rosalind's~~ Orlando's verses on Rosalind in As You Like It, 3, 2, 90-120, and on a much larger scale in When You See ME You Know Me, or The Famous Chronicle History

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In A Knack to Know a Knave (1594), which is described as "..... A Most pleasant and merry new Comedywith Kemp's Applauded Merriments of the King of Coteham", a long passage which has nothing to do with the action of the play is inserted, beginning with the stage direction "Enter mad men of Gotham, to wit, a Miller a Cobler and a Smith." Here is seen evidence of a clown's part, not by the author of the play, called after the name of the clown, and apparently printed by mistake, although no doubt faithfully

of King Henry 8(L3r on). Here Will Somers, the king's jester, is engaged by the people of the court in a rhyming contest, and caps all their romantic stanzas by comic and vulgar anticlimaxes in the same form.

The licence to add, and the practice of extemporising, together with the popular demand for this kind of entertainment, were, there can be no doubt, a main cause of the many 'strapped-together' plays, - at least as great a cause as mere inability in the authors to produce better work. ~~Marlowe and his printer were probably quite at one in the disfavour with which they regarded the comic interruptions in such plays as Faustus (see p.)~~. The plea of comic relief could not always be led with justice, and in any case its value^e depended on the substance and nature of the comic relief and on its relation to the main action. In Locrine and other plays the action stands still/while the clown is on the stage, and in Selimus and as many there is no relation between the comic relief and the tragic part.

At any rate, from whatever cause, the tradition that prose was to be used in a certain way in combination with verse acquired representing the performance. There are, of course, many references to the subject of the extemporising clown in general histories and elsewhere.

considerable force, and there are several places where its strength is clearly exhibited.

Lodge's *Wounds of Civil War*, lively set forth in the True Tragedies of Marius and Sulla, provides a good example of its awkward youthful virility. The main characters in this piece are drawn from classical history, or are such as correspond to an atmosphere of classical antiquity. The comic characters, on the other hand, who use most of the prose, are Curtall and Poppey - two comic burghers - a stock clown, and Pedro, a jargon-speaking Frenchman. The irrelevance of their being Elizabethan in character needs no labouring; it is paralleled, for example, in the Elizabethan workmen who are introduced into *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Julius Caesar*. The insertion of any comic parts in an historical tragedy tending to the Senecan type, such as ^{*The Wounds of Civil War*} ~~it~~ is, shows the force of the native play. But it is the character and part of Pedro that are most suggestive. Besides being an aggressive anachronism, Pedro is necessary to the action, which the other comic characters are not. The manner of his appearances is illustrated by the following passage (l. 978):-

Pausanias (speaking of Marius, whom Pedro has been ordered to kill with a sword) 'Tis desperate, not perfect, nobleness.

For to a man that is prepared to die:

The heart should rent, the sleep should leave the eye:

But say, Pedro: will you do the deed?

PEDRO. Mon monsieurs per le sang dieu, mee will make a trou so large in ce belly, dat he sal cry nough come une porceau. Featre de lay, il a true me fadre, nee kill my modre. Faith a my trote, mon espee: fera le fay dun soldat. Sau, sau Jeieuera, come il founta pary, me will make a spitch-cocke of his persona.

It would have been easy to make the slave who was appointed to execute Marius a classical slave, even if he had to be comic to satisfy the audience, or some part of it. But the tradition which caused the appearance of this gibberish, as ~~well~~ ^{well} as ~~it~~ ^{is} provided ~~ing~~ ^{ing} the Porter's speech in Macbeth, operated further than the mere insertion of comic passages. Besides the introduction of a comic prose character not connected in any other way with the action, the choice of a jargon part for Pedro has to be explained. This play alone would not prove that a jargon part was strongly desired, although the number of jargon parts offers sufficient evidence of their great popularity. But no other explanation of the fact is forthcoming, and it happens that another play provides corroborative proof, which is conclusive, of the imperative demand for that species of amusement, at this time at any rate.

In Greene's James 4 there is a remarkable character named Bonan, who belongs to the inter-act machinery in that play, though his sons appear in the regular scenes. The inter-act machinery commences in the prologue somewhat farcically, but the passages between the

acts leave this tone, and rise to a more romantic and fantastic plane. Accordingly the prologue is in prose ~~and~~, while the remaining inter-act passages are in regular blank verse or rhymed regular verse. Bohan was a Scotchman and spoke Scotch dialect; and the convention was, as has been seen, that dialect characters should speak in prose. Hence Bohan, soon after the tone has begun to rise and his prose has disappeared, relinquishes his dialect and speaks standard English. This may be a defect in the characterisation, but it illustrates with great clearness the force of the demand for a comic prose dialect part such as Pedro's in *The Wounds of Civil War*. Further, it shows the force of the traditions that blank verse should be kept for elevated tone, and that dialect characters should employ prose. Moreover, -and confirming the view that a dialect part was unconditionally demanded- since with the disappearance of Bohan's Scotch, the play is left without such a part, at the point where he relinquishes his dialect a new character, a jargon-speaking Frenchman, is introduced. He speaks, of course, in prose, and develops to some importance in the piece. The following quotations show the basis of these remarks.

PROLOGUE (Dialect and prose.)

BOHAN (1.3) What wot I, or reck I that? Whay, guid man, I reck no friend nor I reck no foe: all's ene to me. Git the ganging, and trouble not may whayet (quiet), or ays gar the recon me nene of thay friend,

by the mary mass, sall I.

Between Acts 1&2. (Dialect in regular verse).

BOHAN (11.756-768) How blest are peur men, then, that know their graves

Now mark the sequell of my Gig

An weele meet ends. The mirk and sable night

Doth leave the pering morn to prie abroad:

Thou will me stay: hail then, thou pride of kings.

I ken the world, and wot well worldly things.

Marke thou my gyg, in mirkest termes that telles

The loath of sinnes, and where corruption dwelles.

Haile me ne mere with showes of gudlie sights;

My grave is mine, that rids me from despights.

Accept my gig, guid king, and let me rest.

The grave with guid men is a gay-built nest.

Between Acts 2&3. (Verse without ^{definite} dialect).

BOHAN (11.1226-1234) So Oberon, now it begins to work in kind,

The ancient lords, by leaving him alone,

Disliking of his humours and despite,

Lets him run headlong, till his flatterers,

Sweeting his thoughts of luckless lust

With vile persuasions and alluring words,

Makes him make way by murder to his will.

Judge, fairy king, hast heard a greater ill?

This is Bohan's style for the remainder of the play: he appears between each remaining pair of acts, but does not use another distinctive Scotch form save "yon laddie", and adheres to prose. But at 1.82 of Act 3 appears Jaques the Frenchman. His first speech is:-

Jaques. Sirrha, what be you that parlez contra Monsieur my lord Ateukin? En bonne foy, prate you against Syr Altesse, mee maka your test to leap from your shoulders, par ma foy cy ferei ie (c'y ferai-je).

Jaques continues in this style in Acts 4 and 5 also. ⁿNone of the other Scotch characters, who are of elevated character, and use blank verse, employs any Scotch dialect words, except Sir Bartram, who utters about a dozen in the first two acts, but none after the appearance of Jaques. No doubt the author could have the play in a more skilful manner; but the indications of the strength of the traditions are none the less clear for its crudity. In fact, in the Wounds of Civil War and James 4 there are examples of the tradition's operating in such a way as to cause difficulties to the playwright; and it operates forcibly not merely in its broad outlines, but with equal strength in details dependent on considerable elaboration of its simple form. A similar example is found in the Ball (p. 488), where a character abandons jargon when he changes from prose to

blank verse.

The combination of prose and verse became so constant a feature as to exercise an influence sometimes over the printing of plays which did not follow the usual method of combining these two vehicles. The typical chronicle play has an appearance which can easily be recognized owing to the regular alternation of masses of prose and verse. This fact accounts partly for the not infrequent printing, in plays which are in a rough state, of passages of prose as blank verse and of verse as prose (see e.g. *The True Tragedy of Richard 3*, p. 69). A curious instance of such interference is *The Famous Victories of Henry 5*. This play was perhaps written and produced about 1585. The earliest extant edition, dated 1598, shows the play in a rough state, and the manner of printing exhibits contemporary opinion about the prose and verse. At first sight its appearance is that of an ordinary carefully written chronicle play consisting of blank verse interspersed with passages of prose. But, in fact the play is largely uniform, it being impossible to separate the two media, and changes from one to the other not coinciding at all with the printing. There is no discoverable dramatic principle on which the printer set up his type sometimes for prose and sometimes for verse. He changes backwards and forwards without reference to tone or character-consistency. Evidently the

type was set up by someone ignorant of the real nature of the usual chronicle play, but familiar with its appearance, which he has succeeded in giving to it - unless the printer found the play in this rough state, was unable to find proper divisions of prose and verse, and set it up in its present form because he considered some such arrangement essential. In either case a knowledge of the common arrangement on his part is implied. The following passage shows its arrangement (C3r):-

Henry4 (to Lord Exeter) And is it true, my lord, that my son is already sent to the Fleet? Now truly that man is more fitter to rule the realm than I: for by no means could I rule my son, and he by one word hath caused him to be ruled. Oh my son, my son, no sooner out of one prison than into another! I had thought once ~~x~~ whiles I had lived to have seen this noble realm of England flourish by thee, my son; but now, I see, it goes to ruin and decay. (He weepeth)

Enter Lord of Oxford.

Oxford. And please your Grace, here is my Lord your son,

That cometh to speak with you:

He saith he must and will speak with you.

Henry. Who, my son Harry?

Oxford. Ay, and please your Majesty.

Henry. I know wherefore he cometh,

But look that none ~~ne~~ come with him.

In a chronicle play that followed convention there would be no change to prose form at the end of Henry's first speech; the whole passage would be blank verse probably, being spoken by elevated characters at a serious moment.

To sum up, evidence of the strength of the tradition, in addition to the great number of plays which conform to it naturally, is found in its being followed sometimes even where it is detrimental to the particular purposes of the dramatist; such as in the incongruous addition of clown parts, and the equally undramatic introduction of jargon parts where they are not required; as well as ^{in a} ~~the~~ modification of the manner of printing to conform to the usual manner of mixed plays.

The decay of the conventional use of prose and verse in combination can be illustrated better by reference to general tendencies which violated some aesthetic principle than by examining examples of scattered irregularities in the late plays. The conventional use has been described as the attachment of blank verse both to elevated tone and to persons of elevated character and of high rank. The disappearance of one or the other of these sides in the later plays is one of the main signs of its declining force. In earlier plays the two sides largely coincided. In later plays are found

frequent examples of adherence to tone in a scene, with disregard of character, in the choice of the medium; more rarely the choice of the medium follows rank and character in contradiction of the tone of speech or scene. Pure irregularity is rare in late plays as well as in early.

The alteration of the usual medium of a character for a special reason is found even in Shakespeare and earlier, but is always a subtilization, and is always kept within bounds: as, for instance, the changes made in the speech of Hamlet, Iago and Othello. This method was continued and developed till its irregularity obscured character-consistency. It began as emphasis on tone for special reasons, rapidly passed into emphasis on any momentary change in tone, and ended in the abolition of all attention to character in the use of verse and prose in a number of plays. The earlier stages of the emphasis on ~~tone~~^{tone} are illustrated by the following few ~~xxx~~ examples. In *The Shoemakers' Holiday* (p. 16) Ralph, a comic character, who usually speaks in prose, when sadly saying goodbye to his wife and friends on being pressed as a soldier, changes to blank verse for a few lines. In *The Family of Love* there are two romantic lovers, Maria and Gerardine, who use most of the verse in the play. When they are interrupted in their love-passages they usually exchange their verse for prose. In *Your Five Gallants*, a play which

is very irregular in its employments of verse and prose, there is an ecstatic exclamation in the midst of a prose scene, which is rendered by four lines ~~of~~ of verse (p. 286). A remarkable instance of the use of prose to indicate a character which is not human, and which adapts itself to the tone of its temporary surroundings, is the Devil in *The Birth of Merlin*; in his proper character he speaks verse, but in dialogue with other characters he always adopts the medium appropriate to the character he is addressing at the moment. In *The First Part of King Edward 4*, 1, 1, Smoke, a comic character, changes to verse to express with rapture his hopes of reaching London. In *The Golden Age*, 1, 1, a nurse uses prose till she mentions a tragic fact, when she speaks four lines of verse. Benatzi in *The Lady's Trial* makes a similar change at one point.

It is, no doubt, difficult to say exactly where these motivated alterations pass from elaborations into symptoms of decay. But, as in the evolution of the blank verse, the most daring and successful variations came just before the beginning of decay. When the emphasis on tone developed it defied character-consistency, and spread till in some plays it drove away all suggestions of character by ^{means of} the medium, destroying absolutely all special reasons for the use of prose. Examples of plays which are at this stage of the development are *Eastward Ho!*, *Old Fortunatus*, *The Roaring Girl*,

Philaster, Cupid's Revenge, The Coxcomb, and indeed the prose parts, where they occur, in Beaumont and Fletcher's plays generally. Fletcher pays some attention to tone in the style of his verse, which is more regular in the elevated parts; and Massinger followed him in this respect, with much more emphasis on tone. Tourneur in The Atheist's Tragedy lays much greater emphasis on alterations of tone than of character. Through his plays Shirley exhibits the same phenomenon, often in a remarkable degree, Love Tricks is an example. Other and later plays which are of the same nature are The Miseries of Enforced Marriage, Every Woman in her Humour, Amends for Ladies, Greene's Tu Quoque (Even in tone-adaptation often careless) and The Antiquary.

The opposite tendency, to lay emphasis upon character and rank in disregard of tone, though rarer, is by no means uncommon. The following are examples of this feature. Plain Dealing in The Whore of Babylon, though of the same tone as the other characters, consistently uses prose in a play which is nearly all blank verse, to lay stress on his character. Cordolente's low rank in Match Me in London is emphasized by his prose, though his exalted nature would lead one to expect verse. Middleton in nearly all his plays showed a disposition to adopt this practice, and to neglect tone in his alternations of prose and verse. Thus in Michaelmas Term,

4, 2, a naughty country wench speaks prose in contrast with her humble and grieved father's ~~verse~~ verse; and The Fair Quarrel as a whole provides illustrations of this habit of his. In Lady Alimony the characters keep the medium traditionally appropriate to their rank, though there is no reason in the tenour of their remarks why they should do so. In The Witches of Lancashire, again, there is a contemptible character called Whetstone, who, especially at the beginning of the play and in Act 2, in conversation with his acquaintances keeps to prose; whereas they usually ~~do~~ speak verse, although there is no justification ~~for this difference~~ to be found in the subject-matter of the speeches, for this difference, nor in the plot till later in the play.

Another sign of excessive attention to tone rapidly passing into pure irregularity is found in the use of speeches which contain more than one medium. The mixture of prose and verse in the same speech is very rare, ^{indeed} in the early drama, ~~if it is found at all~~. In itself it would not be remarkable, as there might be adequate reasons for its appearance, but when it becomes frequent and no reason can be discovered for it, it is a certain sign that decay is far advanced. Sometimes there is in the later drama an evident reason for the mixture. The part of Flamineo, especially his last speech, in The White Devil is significant in this respect. In his

speeches he alternates between prose and verse, his prose expressing his cynical, semi-humorous, contemptuous, disillusionment; the verse his poetic-villainous side. Several speeches (e.g. 2, 2, p. 26; 3, 2, p. 28) combine these two strains and his two media, each in his usual style. His last speech is :-

Flamineo I recover like a spent taper, for a flash,
And instantly go out.

Let all that belong to great men remember the old wives' tradition, to be like the lions in the Tower on Candlemasday: to mourn if the sun shine, for fear of the pitiful remainder of winter to come.

'Tis well yet there's some goodness in my death:
My life was a black charnel. I have caught ~~an everlastin~~
An everlasting cold: I have lost my voice
Most irrecoverably: Farewell, glorious villains;
The busy trade of life appears most vain
Since rest breeds rest, where all seek pain by pain.
Let no harsh flattering bells resound my knell;
Strike, thunder, and strike loud, to my farewell! (Dies).

In Beaumont and Fletcher's plays of mixed medium the change from prose to verse in a speech, or from verse to prose, is always indicative of real change of tone. They fled to this means of

indicating the change in the middle of a speech, as readily as the authors of the ^{consistent} plays ~~already mentioned~~ change from one medium to the other in harmony with change of tone, speech by speech, but not in the middle of a speech. The practice is well seen in *The Coxcomb*, *A King and No King* (e.g. p. 159 and 171); *The Captain*, 4, 4; and *The Honest Man's Fortune* p. 253.

The following are examples of mixed speeches of blank verse and prose, used in such a way as to obscure the rational combination of the two vehicles:—*Timon of Athens* (many); *The Widow's Tears*, p. 2315; *The Phoenix*, 1, 2 and p. 342, etc.; *A Mad World, My Masters*, p. 336, etc.; *The Witch*, several; *The Royal King and The Loyal Subject*, p. 18; *A Challenge for Beauty*, 1, 1, p. 345; *The Devil's Law Case*, 2, 1, p. 29; *Love Tricks*, 5, 1; *The Witty Fair One*, 3, 3, p. 315; *Changes*, 2, 3, p. 308; *The Sisters*, (often) e.g., 3, 1, p. 384; *When You See Me You Know Me*, C4r, H3r, K3r, L1r; *How a Man may Choose a Good Wife from a Bad*, F3v, Nobody and Somebody, C1r; *The Dumb Knight*, 1, pp. 124-5; 3, 1, p. 164; *The City Nightcap*, 3, p. 153; *The Queen and Concubine*, 1, 4, p. 10; 4, 3, p. 78; *Wit in a Constable*, several; *The Jealous Lovers*, 1, p. 121.

Some speeches pass through a crescendo of prose, blank verse and rhyme, especially at the ends of scenes; as in *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, p. 19; *The Wise Woman of Hogsden* (the last speech of the play); and many other places. Curiously, Middleton seems to

make rhyme sometimes intermediate between blank verse and prose in such speeches, as in Michaelmas Term, where there are frequent examples.

The last sign of decay to be mentioned here is the increasing tendency in the later plays to slip into prose, without any reason for doing so, as soon as an emphatic point is passed; and to revert to the other medium when another emphatic point is being reached. All through the drama it was the practice to mark the close of a division of the action, especially when *ap* climax was arrived at, by the use of rhyme in the wake of blank verse; whether at the ~~end~~ *end* of an important speech, a scene, an act, or the whole play. This practice was continued even in prose dramas: for example, it is found in *The Roaring Girl*, p. 160; in many speeches in *The Shoemakers' Holiday*; and in *The Jovial Crew*. This practice is perhaps a not unnatural and not undramatic effect of previous practice. But the other residuary effect of the tradition, which is common in the same stage of degeneracy, is really an abnegation of all formal principle. The dramatist in these enfeebled plays begins with blank verse of the usual style, ^gstruggles along for a short space, and then gradually slides exhaustedly into prose; this [^]remains till the close of the scene or the play, when blank verse reappears with a spasmodic effort and is capped by a heroic couplet. Some of the plays

which show the beginnings of this senility, in isolated passages or scenes, are Match Me in London (Act 1k), The Witch of Edmonton (Acts 1&4), The Mayor of Queenborough, (p. 203), Blurt, Master Constable (5, 1) A Match at Midnight (1, 1, p. 19; 5, 1, p. 83); The Honest Man's Fortune (Act 2); The Fatal Dowry (4, 2, p. 437); The Atheist's Tragedy (1, 2k; Love Tricks (2, 1); The Lancashire Witches (2, 1, p. 195); The Turk, (1, 2; 2, 32; Lady Alimony (Act 1). It is found as a main feature of the play in The Widow's Tears, Parasitaster, Grim The Collier of Croydon, Westward Ho!, Northward Ho!, Anything for a Quiet Life, The Wise Woman of Hogsdon, The Devil's Law Case, The Bird in a Cage, A woman is a Weathercock, Greene's Tu Quoque, The New Academy, The City Wit, The Northern Lass, -and all Brome's plays, The Puritan, Albovine, Wallenstein, and The Lovesick King.