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THE SECOND BOOK

Of Proportion° Poetical

Chapter 1

Of proportion° poetical

It is said by such as profess the mathematical sciences° that all things stand by proportion,° and that without it nothing could stand to be good or beautiful.[1] The doctors° of our theology to the same effect, but in other terms, say that God made the world by number, measure, and weight.[2] Some for weight say tune,°[3] and peradventure° better, for weight is a kind of measure° or of much conveniency° with it, and

1. **stand by . . . stand to be** are as they are by . . . have the capacity to be. Puttenham thinks of things, from various aspects of a poem or piece of music to the universe in general, as being arranged in a harmonious, mathematical way that relates individual entities to others systematically and regularly by what he calls *proportion*. Proportion thus defines the governing principle of the arrangement, and is synonymous with the qualities of harmony and mathematical regularity. Further, he uses the word to refer to the arrangement itself, so that a poem or the world may have or be proportion. Finally, he uses the word to refer to particular units within or features of an arrangement that are related to one another harmoniously or mathematically, such as meter and line length, stanza length or form, rhyme, and visual shape. Puttenham's notion that everything in the universe depends on proportion echoes what Henry Billingsley (d. 1606) said in his popular *Elements of Geometrie of the Most Auncient Philosopher Euclid of Megara* (1570). In his introductory statement to Euclid's fifth book, which concerns proportion and analogy, Billingsley writes that proportionality concerns not just lines, figures, and bodies in geometry but also sounds and voices in music, time and movement in astronomy, weights, and places. In effect, he comes close to saying, as Puttenham does, that everything can be understood in terms of proportion. We should perhaps mention here that John Dee (1527–1608), Elizabeth's astrologer, possibly wrote parts of Billingsley's Euclid, including its popular "Mathematical Preface."

2. Curtius traces the development of this idea from the Wisdom of Solomon 11:17 (Geneva), "Thou hast ordered all things in measure, number and weight," through Jerome and Augustine, to Rabanus Maurus, Anselm, and many others. See Excursus xv, "Numerical Composition" (501–9).

3. **tune** agreement in pitch or harmony. Puttenham goes on to say that "tune" is better than "measure" as a way of describing the nature of the universe. "Tune" is a better candidate for a member of the triad "number, measure, and weight" than "weight" is, because the triad ought to be a set of *different* ideas (i.e., nonredundant), and *weight* and *measure* are too closely linked ("weight is a kind of measure").

therefore in their descriptions be always coupled together *statica et metrica*,[4] weight and measures.[5] Hereupon it seemeth the Philosopher gathers a triple proportion,° to wit: the arithmetical, the geometrical, and the musical.[6] And by one of these three is every other proportion° guided of the things that have conveniency° by relation, as the visible by light, color, and shadow; the audible by stirs,° times, and accents; the odorable by smells of sundry temperaments;° the tasteable by savors to the rate;[7] the tangible by his objects in this or that regard.

Of all which we leave to speak, returning to our poetical proportion,° which holdeth of[8] the musical, because, as we said before, poesy is a skill° to speak and write harmonically; and verses or rhyme be a kind of musical utterance, by reason of a certain congruity in sounds pleasing the ear, though not perchance so exquisitely as the harmonical concents[9] of the artificial° music, consisting in strained[10] tunes,° as is the vocal music, or that of melodious instruments, as lutes, harps, regals,[11] records,[12] and such like. And this our proportion° poetical resteth in five points: staff,° measure,° concord,° situation,° and figure,[13] all which shall be spoken of in their places.

4. ***statica et metrica*** not a Latin phrase, but a translation or rough transliteration of Greek *statika kai metrika*, "the art of weighing and the art of measuring."

5. For the primacy of the musical figure, see, for instance, Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le istituzioni harmoniche* (1558), cited in Finney 35.

6. If, as so often, "the Philosopher" is Aristotle, then the author may be working here with *Nicomachean Ethics* 5.3–5 (1131a10–1134a24) (or some summary version of it), where Aristotle appeals to arithmetic, geometric, and reciprocal proportion to explain various types of justice. The element of music (not original with Aristotle) probably derives from Pythagorean or Euclidean sources. See also Scaliger 2.2.

7. **savors . . . rate** tastes proportional to (typical of?) the different foods.

8. **holdeth of** corresponds to, derives from.

9. **concents** harmonies.

10. **strained** uttered in song, melodious. Spoken and written verse are here distinguished from song and from the sounds of musical instruments.

11. **regals** a small portable organ (common ca. 1550–1625).

12. **records** recorders.

13. **figure** shape (Puttenham discusses "shaped poems" in 2.12).

Chapter 2

Of proportion° in staff°[1]

Staff° in our vulgar° poesy I know not why it should be so called, unless it be for that we understand it for a bearer or supporter of a song or ballad,° not unlike the old weak body that is stayed up by his staff, and were not otherwise able to walk or to stand upright. The Italian

1. **staff** Gascoigne (461) and Webbe (1.269–74) employ the term in the same sense of a verse stanza. Webbe also appears uncertain of the term's etymology, saying "some [verses consist] of many rymes in one staffe (as they call it)" (1.269). According to *OED*, "staff" does not become associated with musical notation until the early seventeenth century.

called it *stanza*, as if we should say, a resting place.[2] And if we consider well the form of this poetical staff,° we shall find it to be a certain number of verses allowed to go all together and join without any intermission,[3] and do or should finish up all the sentences of the same with a full period, unless it be in some special cases, and there to stay till another staff° follow of like sort.[4] And the shortest staff° containeth not under four verses, nor the longest above ten; if it pass that number, it is rather a whole ditty than properly a staff.° Also, for the more part the staves° stand rather upon[5] the even number of verses than the odd, though there be of both sorts.

The first proportion,° then, of a staff° is by quatrain or four verses. The second of five verses, and is seldom used. The third by sixain or six verses, and is not only most usual, but also very pleasant to the ear. The fourth is in seven verses, and is the chief of our ancient proportions° used by any rhymer writing anything of historical or grave poem, as ye may see in Chaucer and Lydgate, the one writing the loves of Troilus and Cresseida, the other of the fall of princes, both by them translated, not devised.[6] The fifth proportion° is of eight verses very stately and heroic,[7] and which I like better than that of seven because it receiveth better band.°[8] The sixth is of nine verses, rare[9] but very

2. *Stanza* means "room" in Italian, though it derives from *stare*, "to rest or stand": hence Puttenham's definition of it as "resting place." Cf. Donne's play on the word in "The Canonization": "We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms" (32).

3. Such binding together of numerous verses into a single staff or stanza may hint at a possible relation to barrel staves or the staves or rungs of a ladder (both given by *OED* for *stave*), plural linear shapes arranged in parallel into a single form.

4. The early modern notion of stanza is ultimately inseparable from rhyme, just as its opposite, blank verse, is insistently nonstanzaic, working (as in Milton) with verse paragraphs shaped by nonmetrical requirements. Puttenham uses *staff* and *stanza*, then, to mean by definition a group of rhymed lines. The references in this chapter to *intertanglement*, *band*, and *closure* are fully intelligible only on the presumption that stanzas are rhymed.

5. **stand . . . upon** consist of, depend on.

6. The seven-verse stanza of which Puttenham speaks was called rhyme royal (rhyming *ababbcc*). It appeared first in English in Chaucer (in *Troilus and Criseyde*, *The Parlement of Foules*, and four *Canterbury Tales*), and was used by many fifteenth-century poets. Lydgate's civic verse for royal entries suggests a link between the form and honoring historical as well as fictional royalty. The term seems to have first been used in English in Gascoigne's *Certayne Notes* (1575) to mark the form as fit for "grave discourses" (460). The "translations" by Chaucer and Lydgate of which Puttenham speaks are the former's *Troilus*, which reworked Boccaccio's *Il filostrato*, and the latter's *The Fall of Princes*, which reworked Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* (On the Falls of Famous Men).

7. Given the emphasis on the heroic, the author probably means to name *ottava rima* (rhyming *abababcc*), the verse form of heroic adventure in Boccaccio's *Il filostrato* (1338?) and *Teseida* (1340–42), from which Chaucer took his *Troilus* and *Knight's Tale* narratives (though not their verse forms). See also Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* (1483), Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (1516), and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), all of which the author might have known in Italian.

8. In this passage Puttenham regards the eight-line stanza as superior to the seven-line insofar as it allows somehow for better band, that is, for the stanzaic unity that results from the use of repeated structural elements such as rhyme. (See the Word Glossary definition of *band* and the crucial discussion at 2.11.178 on which it rests.) See LN 5.

9. **rare** splendid, excellent.

grave.[10] The seventh proportion° is of ten verses, very stately, but in many men's opinion too long; nevertheless of very good grace and much gravity. Of eleven and twelve I find none ordinary staves° used in any vulgar° language; neither doth it serve well to continue any historical report or ballad° or other song, but is a ditty of itself, and no staff,° yet some modern writers have used it, but very seldom. Then last of all have ye a proportion° to be used in the number of your staves,° as to a carol and a ballad,° to a song, and a round, or virelay.[11] For to a historical poem no certain number is limited, but as the matter falls out. Also, a distich° or couple of verses is not to be accounted a staff,° but serves for a continuance, as we see in elegy, epitaph, epigram, or such meters° of plain concord° not harmonically intertangled,[12] as some other songs of more delicate° music be.[13]

A staff° of four verses containeth in itself matter sufficient to make a full period or complement[14] of sense, though it do not always so, and therefore may go by divisions.[15] A staff° of five verses is not much used, because he that cannot comprehend his period[16] in four verses will rather drive it into six than leave it in five, for that the even number is more agreeable to the ear than the odd is. A staff° of six verses is very pleasant to the ear, and also serveth for a greater complement[17] than the inferior[18] staves,° which maketh him more commonly to be used. A staff° of seven verses, most usual with our ancient makers, also the staff° of eight, nine, and ten, of larger complement[19] than the rest, are

10. This description matches in both particulars the remarkable nine-line stanza of *The Faerie Queene* (first printed in 1590, and thus almost contemporary with Puttenham, but unmentioned in the *Art*). Spenser's stanza surely constitutes an attempt at the metrical "overgoing" of *ottava rima*, just as the poem itself aimed at the establishment of his English epic as equal or superior to those of his Italian models Ariosto and Tasso, whom he names in his Letter to Ralegh.

11. Puttenham appears here to move from describing the harmonies of particular *stanzas* of different lengths to a different aspect of harmony, that of appropriate *poem* length ("the number of your staves" in a given genre), attaching it to five forms or genres. Not all of these forms, however, have a normative number of stanzas. For a discussion of the generic terms, see LN 6.

12. **harmonically intertangled** To judge from the author's uses of "intertangled" in the final paragraph of this chapter, the sense appears to be "bound together by interlaced rhymes." Puttenham seems to assume that English elegies, epitaphs, and epigrams are composed of rhyming couplets (i.e., not "intertangled").

13. Puttenham appears to be distinguishing between the couplets used in elegy etc. and the more complicated rhyme schemes of more delicate (intricately constructed) poems.

14. **complement** completion.

15. As (in Puttenham's view) the shortest stanza, the quatrain has room for a full and complete thought, but perhaps only barely. When a larger thought is at issue, Puttenham seems to allow here for enjambed quatrains, with the (divided) sense carried from one to the next stanza without a full grammatical stop. The "period" Puttenham refers to here was, for classical writers of prose, a rhythmical, rather than syntactic, unit that was usually a lengthy sentence or even a paragraph. Puttenham discusses it in more detail in 2.5.164–65.

16. **comprehend his period** complete his thought.

17. **serveth . . . complement** provides more room to complete a unit of thought.

18. **inferior** i.e., shorter.

19. **complement** completeness, amplitude.

only used by the later makers, and unless they go with very good band,° do not so well as the inferior staves.°[20] Therefore if ye make your staff° of eight by two fours not intertangled, it is not a huitain[21] or a staff° of eight, but two quatrains. So is it in ten verses: not being intertangled, they be but two staves° of five.

20. Again, Spenser's nine-line *Faerie Queene* stanza exhibits an interlaced rhyme that certainly seems to constitute "very good band," rhyming *ababbcbcc*.

21. **huitain** a set of eight lines of verse (from Fr. *huit*, "eight").

Chapter 3

Of proportion° in measure°

Meter° and measure° is all one, for what the Greeks call μετρον, the Latins call *mensura*,[1] and is but the quantity[2] of a verse, either long or short. This quantity with them consisteth in the number of their feet,[3] and with us in the number of syllables which are comprehended in every verse, not regarding his feet otherwise than that we allow in scanning our verse: two syllables to make one short portion (suppose it a foot) in every verse.[4] And after that sort[5] ye may say we have feet in our vulgar° rhymes, but that is improperly, for a foot by his sense natural[6] is a member of office and function, and serveth to three purposes, that is to say, to go,[7] to run, and to stand still; so as° he must be sometimes swift, sometimes slow, sometime unequally marching, or peradventure° steady. And if our feet poetical want° these qualities, it cannot be said a foot in sense translative[8] as here. And this cometh to pass by reason of the evident motion and stir,° which is perceived in the sounding of our words not always equal: for some ask longer, some shorter time to be uttered in, and so, by the Philosopher's definition, stir° is the true measure of time.[9]

1. "Meter" comes from the Greek word, "measure" from the Latin.

2. **quantity** length of syllables, determined by the time required to pronounce them; chiefly used with reference to Greek and Latin verse.

3. **feet** i.e., quantitative feet.

4. Puttenham's account of quantitative verse is generally based on Scaliger's. For instance, Puttenham's playing on the literal meaning of "foot" in this chapter develops what is found at the start of Scaliger's 2.2, while the names Puttenham supplies for feet having two or three syllables can be found in 2.3 as well as in the individual chapters Scaliger later devotes to each of the feet. Puttenham's account of quantitative metrics is one of the earliest and most thorough in English, and the *OED* credits him as the first writer to use the words "bisyllable," "trisyllable," and "tetrasyllable."

5. **after that sort** in that sense.

6. **by . . . natural** anatomically.

7. **go** walk.

8. **translative** metaphorical.

9. Time is the subject of Aristotle's *Physics* 4.10–14, where he says, "Time defines motion by being its number, and motion defines time" (220b16–18). Puttenham is talking about the fact that in English we

The Greeks and Latins, because their words happened to be of many syllables and very few of one syllable, it fell out right with them to conceive and also to perceive a notable diversity of motion and times in the pronunciation of their words, and therefore to every bisyllable they allowed two times,[10] and to a trisyllable three times, and to every polysyllable more according to his quantity, and their times were some long, some short, according as their motions were slow or swift. For the sound of some syllable stayed the ear a great while, and others slid away so quickly as if they had not been pronounced. Then every syllable being allowed one time, either short or long, it fell out that every tetrasyllable had four times, every trisyllable three, and the bisyllable two, by which observation every word not under that size, as he ran or stood in a verse, was called by them a foot of such and so many times: namely, the bisyllable was either of two long times as the spondee; or two short, as the pyrrhichius;[11] or of a long and a short, as the trochee; or of a short and a long, as the iamb. The like rule did they set upon the word trisyllable, calling him a foot of three times: as the dactyl of a long and two short; the molossus of three long; the tribrach of three short; the amphibrachys of two long and a short; the amphimacer of two short and a long.[12] The word of four syllables they called a foot of four times, some or all of them either long or short, and yet not so content they mounted higher, and because their words served well thereto, they made feet of six times. But this proceeded more of curiosity° than otherwise, for whatsoever foot pass the trisyllable is compounded of his inferior, as every number arithmetical above three is compounded of the inferior numbers, as twice two make four, but the three is made of one number, *videl.*,° of two and a unity.

Now because our natural and primitive language of the Saxon English bears not any words (at least very few) of more syllables than one (for whatsoever we see exceed cometh to us by the alterations of our language grown upon many conquests and otherwise), there could be no such observation of times in the sound of our words, and for that cause we could not have the feet which the Greeks and Latins have in their meters.°[13]

do not have syllables that are regularly long or short (requiring regular amounts of time for their pronunciation), whereas the ancients did. Hence we cannot, properly speaking, talk about "feet" in English. Later in the chapter, however, he speaks of Anglo-Saxon, saying that it consisted of one-syllable words, all of which had the same quantity, so that its uniformity prevented it from developing a quantitative metrical system.

10. **times** units of time.

11. The *pes pyrrhichius* (pyrrhic foot) is a variant name for the dibrach (Gr., "two" + "beat"), a foot containing two short beats. Since this foot was commonly used in a dance known as the "pyrrhic war dance," it became known by this alternative name.

12. Puttenham has here switched the definitions of amphibrachys and amphimacer, while confusing the sequence of longs and shorts in both figures. He otherwise gets them right, both below in this chapter and at 2.10.207, 2.11.211, and 2.12.213.

13. For contemporary interest in quantitative verse in the English Renaissance, see 1.2, note 5.

But of this stir° and motion of their devised feet, nothing can better show the quality than these runners at common games,[14] who, setting forth from the first goal, one giveth the start speedily and perhaps before he come halfway to the other goal, decayeth his pace, as a man weary and fainting; another is slow at the start, but by amending° his pace keeps even with his fellow or perchance gets before him; another one while[15] gets ground, another while loseth it again, either in the beginning or middle of his race, and so proceeds unequally, sometimes swift, sometimes slow, as his breath or forces serve him; another sort there be that plod on, and will never change their pace, whether they win or lose the game. In this manner doth the Greek dactyl begin slowly and keep on swifter till the end, for his race being divided into three parts, he spends one, and that is the first, slowly, the other twain swiftly; the anapest his first two parts swiftly, his last slowly; the molossus spends all three parts of his race slowly and equally; bacchius his first part swiftly and two last parts slowly; the tribrach all his three parts swiftly; the antibacchius his two first parts slowly, his last and third swiftly; the amphimacer his first and last part slowly and his middle part swiftly; the amphibrachys his first and last parts swiftly but his middle part slowly; and so of others by like proportion.°

This was a pretty fantastical° observation of them, and yet brought their meters° to have a marvelous good grace, which was in Greek called ρυθμος: whence we have derived this word "rhyme," but improperly and not well, because we have no such feet or times or stirs° in our meters° by whose sympathy or pleasant convenience° with the ear we could take any delight. This *rithmus* of theirs is not therefore our rhyme, but a certain musical numerosity° in utterance, and not a bare number as that of the arithmetical computation is, which therefore is not called *rithmus* but *arithmus*.[16] Take this away from them, I mean the running° of their feet,[17] there is nothing of curiosity° among them more than with us nor yet so much.

14. The different paces at which runners run their races correspond to the length and shortness of the syllables inside the poetic feet; each foot (a measure of time through motion) amounts to a different style of running a race. The different racers, however, do not line up serially with the poetic feet discussed later in the paragraph. The parallel for the first runner, for instance (who "giveth the start speedily and perhaps before he come halfway to the other goal, decayeth his pace"), is not the dactyl but the bacchius: the "bacchius [runs] his first part swiftly, and two last parts slowly."

15. **another one while** at another time.

16. Puttenham is making two different distinctions here, one between *rithmus* and rhyme, and another between *rithmus* and *arithmus*. For clarification, see his more detailed discussion in 2.6 as well as our notes there.

17. **running . . . feet** i.e., rhythmical movement of their (quantitative) feet.

Chapter 4[1]

How many sorts of measures° we use in our vulgar°

To return from rhyme to our measure° again, it hath been said that according to the number of the syllables contained in every verse, the same is said a long or short meter,° and his shortest proportion° is of four syllables, and his longest of twelve; they that use it above pass the bounds of good proportion.° And every meter° may be as well in the odd as in the even syllable, but better in the even, and one verse may begin in the even, and another follow in the odd, and so keep a commendable proportion.°

The verse that containeth but two syllables, which may be in one word, is not usual: therefore many do deny him to be a verse, saying that it is but a foot, and that a meter° can have no less than two feet at the least.[2] But I find it otherwise as well among the best Italian poets as also with our vulgar° makers, and that two syllables serve well for a short measure° in the first place and middle and end of a staff;° and also in diverse situations°[3] and by sundry distances,[4] and is very passionate and of good grace, as shall be declared more at large° in the chapter of proportion° by situation.°

The next measure° is of two feet or of four syllables, and then one word tetrasyllable divided in the midst makes up the whole meter,° as thus:

Rēvē rēntlȳ.

Or a trisyllable and one monosyllable, thus: "Sovereign God." Or two bisyllables, and that is pleasant, thus: "Restore again." Or with four monosyllables, and that is best of all, thus: "When I do think." I find no savor in a meter° of three syllables nor in effect in any odd, but they may be used for variety's sake, and especially being interlaced with others. The meter° of six syllables is very sweet and delicate,° as thus:

O God, when I behold
This bright heaven so high,
By thine own hands of old
Contrived so cunningly.°†

1. At this point the *Art* text begins misnumbering the chapters of Book 2, treating this chapter as a second chapter 3; we correct silently hereafter.

2. Cf. King James I: "tak heid . . . that your langest lynis exceid nochte fourteen fete, and that your shortest be nocht within foure" (1.214–15). (The context suggests that he means syllables here, not feet.)

3. **situations** different locations in the stanza.

4. **distances** Puttenham uses this term to denote (1) the distances that separate rhymes from one another, and (2) the relative distance between feet of different quantities or meters. See 2.11, "Of Proportion by Situation."

The meter° of seven syllables is not usual; no more is that of nine and eleven; yet, if they be well composed, that is, their caesura well appointed, and their last accent, which makes the concord,° they are commendable enough, as in this ditty where one verse is of eight, another is of seven, and in the one the accent upon the last, in the other upon the last save one:

The smoky sighs, the bitter tears
That I in vain have wasted,
The broken sleeps, the woe and fears
That long in me have lasted
Will be my death, all by thy guilt
And not by my deserving,
Since so inconstantly thou wilt
Not love but still° be swerving.[5]

And all the reason why these meters° in odd syllable are allowable is for that the sharp accent falls upon the penultimate, or last save one, syllable of the verse, which doth so drown the last as he seemeth to pass away in manner unpronounced, and so make the verse seem even. But if the accent fall upon the last and leave two flat[6] to finish the verse, it will not seem so, for the oddness will more notoriously appear, as for example in the last verse before recited, "Not love but still° be swerving," say thus, "Love it is a marvelous thing." Both verses be of equal quantity, *videl.*,° seven syllables apiece, and yet the first seems shorter than the latter, who shows a more[7] oddness than the former by reason of his sharp accent which is upon the last syllable, and makes him more audible than if he had slid away with a flat accent, as the word "swérving."

Your ordinary rhymers use very much their measures° in the odd, as nine and eleven, and the sharp accent upon the last syllable, which therefore makes him go ill-favoredly and like a minstrel's music.[8] Thus said one in a meter° of eleven, very harshly in mine ear, whether it be for lack of good rhyme or of good reason or of both, I wot° not:

Now suck child and sleep child, thy mother's own joy,
Her only sweet comfort, to drown all annoy;
For beauty surpassing the azured sky,
I love thee my darling, as ball of mine eye.[9]

5. **swerving** turning aside, wavering, forsaking. A close variant of poem no. 214.1–10 (Anonymous; 5–6 omitted) in *Tottel.*

6. **flat** unstressed.

7. **more** greater.

8. **minstrel's music** base music. Although in early use "minstrel" was a general designation for anyone whose profession was to entertain patrons, whether with singing, music, and storytelling, or with buffoonery or juggling, by the mid-sixteenth century, minstrels were thought of in particularly pejorative terms by those who insisted on a more elevated vision of poetry, as Puttenham does in the *Art*.

9. These lines are a version of the beginning of an anonymous poem found in MS Harl. 7392, f. 31r.

This sort of composition in the odd I like not, unless it be helped by the caesura or by the accent, as I said before.

The meter° of eight is no less pleasant than that of six, and[10] the caesura falls just[11] in the middle, as this of the Earl of Surrey's:

When raging love, with extreme pain.[12]

The meter° of ten syllables is very stately and heroical and must have his caesura fall upon the fourth syllable, and leave six behind him. Thus:

I serve at ease, and govern all with woe.

This meter° of twelve syllables the Frenchman calleth a verse alexandrine,[13] and is with our modern rhymers most usual; with the ancient makers it was not so, for before Sir Thomas Wyatt's time they were not used in our vulgar.° They be for grave and stately matters fitter than for any other ditty of pleasure.

Some makers write in verses of fourteen syllables, giving the caesura at the first eight, which proportion° is tedious, for the length of the verse keepeth the ear too long from his delight, which is to hear the cadence° or the tunable° accent in the end of the verse. Nevertheless, that of twelve, if his caesura be just in the middle and that ye suffer him to run at full length, and do not as the common rhymers do, or their printer for sparing of paper, cut them off in the midst, wherein they make in two verses but half rhyme, they do very well, as wrote the Earl of Surrey, translating the book of the preacher[14]:

Solomon, David's son, king of Jerusalem.

This verse is a very good alexandrine, but perchance would have sounded more musically if the first word had been a bisyllable or two monosyllables and not a trisyllable, having his sharp accent upon the antepenultimate as it hath, by which occasion it runs like a dactyl, and carries the two later syllables away so speedily as it seems but one foot in our vulgar° measure,° and by that means makes the verse seem but of eleven syllables, which oddness is nothing pleasant to the ear. Judge somebody whether it would have done better if it might have been said thus:

Robóham, David's son, king of Jerusalem.

Letting the sharp accent fall upon *bo*, or thus:

Restóre king Dávid's són untó Jerúsalém.

10. **and** if.
11. **just** exactly.
12. Surrey, *Tottel* no. 16.1 (Jones no. 1).
13. **alexandrine** line of verse twelve syllables, or six iambs, in length; see 1.19, note 29.
14. **the book of the preacher** Ecclesiastes (meaning "Preacher"); the passage paraphrases verse 1.1 (see Jones no. 43). Cf. Webbe on dividing long lines in two (1.267–68), and 2.6.167.

For now the sharp accent falls upon *bo*, and so doth it upon the last in *restóre*, which was not in the other verse.[15] But because we have seemed to make mention of caesura, and to appoint his place in every measure,° it shall not be amiss to say somewhat more of it, and also of such pauses as are used in utterance, and what commodity[16] or delectation they bring, either to the speakers or to the hearers.

15. Alexander argues that this sentence is corrupt and should possibly read: "for now the sharp accent falls upon 'restóre,' and so doth it upon the last in 'untó,' which was not in the other verse" (371, note 20).
16. **commodity** benefit, profit. "Commodity and delectation" is a version of Horace's "dulce et utile," the sweet and the useful (*Ars poetica* 343), which he specifies as the aims of poetry in general.

Chapter 5

On caesura[1]

There is no greater difference betwixt a civil and brutish utterance than clear distinction of voices,[2] and the most laudable languages are always most plain and distinct, and the barbarous° most confused and indistinct. It is therefore requisite that leisure be taken in pronunciation, such as may make our words plain and most audible and agreeable to the ear. Also the breath asketh to be now and then relieved with some pause or stay more or less; besides that the very nature of speech, because it goeth by clauses of several construction and sense, requireth some space betwixt them with intermission of sound, to the end they may not huddle one upon another so rudely° and so fast that the ear may not perceive their difference.

For these respects the ancient reformers of language invented° three manner of pauses, one of less leisure than another, and such several intermissions of sound to serve (besides easement to the breath) for a treble distinction of sentences or parts of speech, as they happened to be more or less perfect° in sense. The shortest pause or intermission they called *comma*, as who would say a piece of a speech cut off.[3] The second they called *colon*, not a piece but as it were a member for his larger

1. Puttenham derives much of his material in this chapter from Scaliger 4.25. Gascoigne discusses the caesura at *Certayne Notes* 459–60; cf. also James I 1.214–15.
2. **voices** articulate sounds, utterances.
3. *Comma* in Greek means a short clause (from *kopto*, "to cut off"). *Colon* in Greek means the limb or member of a body. And *period* (*periodos*) in Greek means a going around something, making a full circle, hence a completed thought in rhetorical terms; Aristotle defines it as "a sentence that has a beginning and end in itself and a magnitude that can easily be grasped" (*Rhetoric* 3.9.3 [1409a]). On these terms, see Quintilian 9.4.22. Commas, colons, and periods were the units of prose rhythm into which classical writers divided their speeches. In Puttenham's theory, the words are coming to mean the punctuation marks indicating stopping points or pauses of varying types, which is what they have meant since then.

length, because it occupied twice as much time as the comma. The third they called *period*, for a complement or full pause and as a resting place and perfection° of so much former speech as had been uttered, and from whence they needed not to pass any further unless it were to renew more matter to enlarge the tale.[4]

This cannot be better represented than by example of these common travelers[5] by the highways, where they seem to allow themselves three manner of stays or easements[6]: one a-horseback calling perchance for a cup of beer or wine, and having drunken it up, rides away and never lights;[7] about noon he cometh to his inn and there baits himself[8] and his horse an hour or more; at night when he can conveniently° travel no further, he taketh up his lodging and rests himself till the morrow, from whence he followeth the course of a further voyage, if his business be such. Even so, our poet, when he hath made one verse, hath as it were finished one day's journey, and the while[9] easeth himself with one bait[10] at the least, which is a comma or caesura in the midway, if the verse be even and not odd, otherwise in some other place, and not just[11] in the middle. If there be no caesura at all and the verse long, the less is the maker's skill° and hearer's delight. Therefore, in a verse of twelve syllables the caesura ought to fall right upon the sixth syllable; in a verse of eleven upon the sixth also, leaving five to follow; in a verse of ten upon the fourth, leaving six to follow; in a verse of nine upon the fourth, leaving five to follow; in a verse of eight, just in the midst, that is, upon the fourth; in a verse of seven, either upon the fourth or none at all, the meter° very ill-brooking any pause. In a verse of six syllables and under is needful no caesura at all, because the breath asketh no relief; yet if ye give any comma, it is to make distinction of sense more than for anything else, and such caesura must never be made in the midst of any word, if it be well appointed.

So may you see that the use of these pauses or distinctions is not generally with the vulgar° poet as it is with the prose writer because, the poet's chief music lying in his rhyme or concord° to hear the symphony,° he maketh all the haste he can to be at an end of his verse, and delights not in many stays by the way, and therefore giveth but one caesura to any verse. And thus much for the sounding of a meter.°

Nevertheless, he may use in any verse both his comma, colon, and interrogative point, as well as in prose. But our ancient rhymers, as Chaucer, Lydgate, and others, used these caesuras either very seldom,

4. Cf. Mulcaster's description of the three pauses, at *Elementarie* 148, which Nashe cites as a byword in *The Anatomie of Absurditie* (*Works* 1.48).

5. **travelers** both those who journey and those who labor.

6. **easements** periods of repose and refreshment.

7. **lights** alights.

8. **baits himself** stops for food and rest.

9. **the while** for a while, a moment.

10. **bait** pause.

11. **just** exactly, precisely.

or not at all, or else very licentiously, and many times made their meters° (they called them riding rhyme)[12] of such unshapely words as would allow no convenient° caesura, and therefore did let their rhymes run out at length, and never stayed till they came to the end. Which manner, though it were not to be misliked in some sort of meter,° yet in every long verse the caesura ought to be kept precisely, if it were but to serve as a law to correct the licentiousness of rhymers, besides that it pleaseth the ear better, and showeth more cunning° in the maker by following the rule of his restraint. For a rhymer that will be tied to no rules at all, but range as he list,° may easily utter what he will. But such manner of poesy is called in our vulgar,° rhyme doggerel, with which rebuke we will in no case our maker should be touched. Therefore, before all other things let his rhyme and concords° be true, clear, and audible with no less delight than almost the strained[13] note of a musician's mouth, and not dark° or wrenched by wrong writing as many do to patch up their meters,° and so follow in their art neither rule, reason, nor rhyme.

Much more might be said for the use of your three pauses, comma, colon, and period, for perchance it be not all a matter[14] to use many commas, and few, nor colons likewise, or long or short periods, for it is diversely used by divers good writers. But because it appertaineth more to the orator or writer in prose than in verse, I will say no more in it than thus, that they be used for a commodious[15] and sensible° distinction of clauses in prose, since every verse is, as it were, a clause of itself, and limited with a caesura howsoever the sense bear, perfect° or imperfect,° which difference is observable betwixt the prose and the meter.°[16]

12. **riding rhyme** See 1.31, note 18.

13. **strained** sung, melodic.

14. **all a matter** all the same.

15. **commodious** convenient.

16. I.e., the three pauses in prose derive from the sense (the meaning), whereas a verse caesura derives from its place in the verse line, whether the sense calls for a pause there or not.

Chapter 6

Of proportion° in concord,° called symphony° or rhyme

Because we use the word *rhyme*, though by manner of abusion,[1] yet to help that fault again we apply it in our vulgar° poesy another way very commendably and curiously.°[2] For wanting° the currentness° of the Greek and Latin feet, instead thereof we make in the ends of our

1. **abusion** misuse. Webbe also finds the derivation of rhyme from *rhythmos* an abuse (1.267).

2. Puttenham is referring to the fact that in the English Renaissance *rhyme* and *rhythm*, both derived from *rhythmos* (Gk.

verses a certain tunable° sound, which anon[3] after with another verse reasonably distant we accord together in the last fall or cadence,° the ear taking pleasure to hear the like tune° reported,[4] and to feel his return. And for this purpose serve the monosyllables of our English Saxons excellently well, because they do naturally and indifferently° receive any accent, and in them, if they finish the verse, resteth the shrill[5] accent of necessity, and so doth it not in the last of every bisyllable, nor of every polysyllable word.[6]

But to the purpose: *rhyme* is a borrowed word from the Greeks by the Latins and French, from them by us Saxon Angles, and by abusion, as hath been said, and therefore it shall not do amiss to tell what this *rithmos* was with the Greeks, for what is it with us hath been already said.[7] There is an accountable[8] number which we call arithmetical (*arithmos*), as: one, two, three. There is also a musical or audible number° fashioned by stirring[9] of tunes° and their sundry times in the utterance of our words, as when the voice goeth high or low, or sharp or flat, or swift or slow. And this is called *rithmos* or numerosity,°[10] that is to say, a certain flowing utterance by slipper° words and syllables, such as the tongue easily utters, and the ear with pleasure receiveth, and which flowing of words with much volubility° smoothly proceeding from the mouth is in some sort harmonical and breedeth to the ear a great compassion.[11]

This point grew by the smooth and delicate° running of their feet, which we have not in our vulgar,° though we use as much as may be

ῥυθμός), by way of Latin *rhythmus*, were often used to mean what we call *rhyme*, although that is not what the Greek term means. Puttenham will go on to explain this confusion in this chapter, drawing on such sources as Scaliger 2.2, Sébillet 1.2.54–57, and Du Bellay 2.8.153–57. Cf. Webbe 1.267. Puttenham pretty consistently identifies rhyme as *concord* or *symphony*.

3. **anon** immediately.

4. **reported** echoed.

5. **shrill** sharp, strong.

6. Both Gascoigne and James I (1.215) note what Puttenham observes, that monosyllables accept any accent. Gascoigne also warns against using too many polysyllables, because "the most auncient English wordes are of one sillable, so that the more monasyllables that you use, the truer Englishman you shall seeme, and the lesse you shall smell of the Inkhorne" (*Certayne Notes* 457–58). Cf. Sidney, *Defence* 248–49.

7. In this passage Puttenham is distinguishing *arithmos* from *rithmos* (more properly transliterated from the Greek as *rhuthmos*, although he may be deliberately mis-transliterating to make the two words seem more closely related). Puttenham identifies *rithmus* (ῥυθμός, more accurately transcribed as *rhuthmos*) with "numerosity," and opposes it to *arithmus*, also called "bare number" (see 2.3.159). He seems to be distinguishing between the kind of counting involved in marking the rhythmical movement of music or poetry and the nonrhythmical counting of arithmetic. *Arithmos* is the Greek word for "number" (from *arithmeo*, "to count"). By contrast, *rhuthmos* means "measured motion, time," and hence "rhythm" (from *rheio*, "to flow"). Both "rhythm" and "rhyme" come from the Greek word *rhythmos*. "Rhyme" was originally spelled "rime," but its spelling was changed in the sixteenth century about the same time that "rhythm" was acquiring its modern meaning. (Puttenham first mentions this subject in 2.3.159.)

8. **accountable** able to be counted.

9. **stirring** uttering.

10. Cf. Scaliger 2.2.

11. **compassion** sympathy.

the most flowing words and slippery° syllables that we can pick out. Yet do not we call that by the name of rhyme as the Greeks did, but do give the name of rhyme only to our concords,° or tunable° concents[12] in the latter end of our verses, and which concords° the Greeks nor Latins never used in their poesy till by the barbarous° soldiers out of the camp it was brought into the court and thence to the school, as hath been before remembered.[13] And yet the Greeks and Latins both used a manner of speech by clauses of like termination, which they called ὁμοιοτέλευτον, and was the nearest that they approached to our rhyme, but is not our right concord.°[14] So as° we in abusing this term *rhyme* be nevertheless excusable applying it to another point in poesy no less curious° than their rhythm or numerosity° which indeed passed the whole verse throughout, whereas our concords° keep but the latter end of every verse, or perchance the middle and the end in meters° that be long.[15]

12. **concents** harmonies. Since *1589* spells the word "consents," it is possible that Puttenham may have meant that word (meaning "agreements"); the two spellings (and words) were interchangeable in the period, and both meanings are possible here.

13. See 1.6.100–1.

14. *Homoioteleuton* is a rhetorical figure which Puttenham defines as "a manner of speech or writing in their proses that went by clauses, finishing in words of like tune" (3.16.257–58). Puttenham misspells the figure as ὁμιοτελυτον. On *homoioteleuton* and rhyme, cf. Du Bellay 2.8.154 and Campion 294.

15. What is internal rhyme here may be the end-rhymes of the "cut" long lines Puttenham mentions at 2.4.162.

Chapter 7

Of accent, time, and stir° perceived evidently in the distinction of man's voice, and which makes the flowing of a meter°

Now because we have spoken of accent, time, and stir° or motion in words, we will set you down more at large° what they be. The ancient Greeks and Latins, by reason their speech fell out originally to be fashioned with words of many syllables for the most part, it was of necessity that they could not utter every syllable with one like and equal sound, nor in like space of time, nor with like motion or agility, but that one must be more suddenly and quickly forsaken, or longer paused upon than another, or sounded with a higher note and clearer voice than another. And of necessity[1] this diversity of sound must fall either upon the last syllable, or upon the last save one, or upon the third,[2] and

1. **of necessity** i.e., because.

2. **the third** i.e., the third from the end, the antepenultimate.

could not reach higher to make any notable difference.[3] It caused them to give unto three different sounds three several names: to that which was highest lifted up and most elevated or shrillest[4] in the ear, they gave the name of the sharp accent; to the lowest and most base, because it seemed to fall down rather than to rise up, they gave the name of the heavy accent;[5] and that other which seemed in part to lift up and in part to fall down, they called the circumflex, or compassed,° accent—and if new terms were not odious, we might very properly call him the Windabout, for so is the Greek word.[6] Then because everything that by nature falls down is said heavy, and whatsoever naturally mounts upward is said light, it gave occasion to say that there were diversities in the motion of the voice, as swift and slow, which motion also presupposes time, because time is *mensura motus*,[7] by the Philosopher. So have you the causes of their primitive invention° and use in our art of poesy.

All this by good observation we may perceive in our vulgar° words if they be of more syllables than one, but especially if they be trisyllables, as, for example, in these words *altitude* and *heaviness* the sharp accent falls upon *al-* and *hea-*, which be the antepenultimates; the other two fall away speedily as if they were scarce sounded. In this trisyllable *forsaken* the sharp accent falls upon *sa-*, which is the penultimate, and in the other two is heavy and obscure.[8] Again in these bisyllables, *endúre, unsúre, demúre, aspíre, desíre, retíre*, your sharp accent falls upon the last syllable, but in words monosyllable, which be for the more part our natural Saxon English, the accent is indifferent,° and may be used for sharp or flat and heavy at our pleasure. I say Saxon English, for our Norman English alloweth us very many bisyllables, and also trisyllables, as: *reverence, diligence, amorous, desirous*, and such like.

3. **could not . . . difference** i.e., could not be placed farther forward in the word because that would not distinguish it from a word having one of the other three accents (because the voice would naturally place an additional accent on one of the three last syllables?).

4. **shrillest** sharpest, strongest.

5. Puttenham's use of *heavy* here is counterintuitive, since it would seem to designate a strong accent but actually does just the opposite. In later chapters he uses *flat* (2.4.161, 2.14.208) and *low* (2.18.217) as synonyms for *heavy*, whereas for *sharp* he uses *shrill* (2.6.166) and *high* (2.14.207, 2.18.217).

6. Circumflex comes from *circumflexus*, a late Latin translation of the Greek *per spomenos*; both mean "drawn about or around." Cf. Gascoigne's discussion of the three stresses (*Certayne Notes* 456). Puttenham's description of the three kinds of accents in Latin and Greek reflects what he could have found in Latin grammars, such as in the section labeled "De Prosodia" (On Prosody) in Lily H1r–v.

7. ***mensura motus*** the measure of motion; see Aristotle, *Physics* 4.11.220a24–25.

8. **obscure** indistinctly heard.

CHAPTER 8

Of your cadences° by which your meter° is made symphonical;° when they be sweetest and most solemn in a verse

As the smoothness of your words and syllables running upon feet of sundry quantities make with the Greeks and Latins the body of their verses numerous° or rhythmical, so in our vulgar° poesy—and of all other nations at this day—your verses answering each other by couples, or at larger distances[1] in good cadence,° is it that maketh your meter° symphonical.°[2] This cadence° is the fall of a verse in every last word with a certain tunable° sound, which being matched with another of like sound, do make a concord.° And the whole cadence° is contained sometime in one syllable, sometime in two, or in three at the most: for above the antepenultimate there reacheth no accent,[3] which is chief cause of the cadence,° unless it be by usurpation in some English words, to which we give a sharp accent upon the fourth, as, *hónorable, mátrimony, pátrimony, míserable*, and such other as would neither make a sweet cadence,° nor easily find any word of like quantity to match them.[4] And the accented syllable with all the rest under[5] him make the cadence,° and no syllable above,[6] as in these words, *agílity, facílity, subjéction, diréction*, and these bisyllables, *ténder, slénder, trústy, lústy*. But always the cadence° which falleth upon the last syllable of a verse is sweetest and most commendable; that upon the penultimate more light, and not so pleasant; but falling upon the antepenultimate is most unpleasant of all, because they make your meter° too light and trivial, and are fitter for the epigrammatist or comical poet than for the lyric and elegiac, which are accounted the sweeter musics.

1. **verses . . . couples, or at larger distances** i.e., either adjacent verses that rhyme (couplets) or rhyming lines separated from one another by intervening lines.

2. "Cadence" means the rhythmical flow of language that marks the end of a line of poetry. It comes from a Latin word meaning "to fall," and in Italy by the end of the late Middle Ages, *cadenza* referred to the falling off of the voice in music at the end of a phrase or song. According to the *OED*, this Italian meaning became available in English only at the start of the seventeenth century. It appears, however, to underlie Puttenham's use of the word in this chapter. Here and elsewhere he uses it as something like a synonym for "rhyme" or "rhyming syllables."

3. **above the antepenultimate . . . accent** i.e., there is no accent in the line of verse more than three syllables before the last one.

4. Puttenham's claim here seems to be that although some English words do have the accent on the fourth syllable from the end, their pronunciation is a "usurpation," deriving unnaturally or non-natively from foreign tongues such as French and Latin. Moreover, there are few words available to rhyme with them. For both reasons they are not useful for English poetry. Puttenham restates his claim more straightforwardly in 2.9: "For some words of exceeding great length, which have been fetched from the Latin inkhorn or borrowed of strangers, the use of them in rhyme is nothing pleasant" (171–72).

5. **under** i.e., after.

6. **above** before.

But though we have said that to make good concord° your several verses should have their cadences° like, yet must there be some difference in their orthography, though not in their sound, as if one cadence° be *constraín*, the next *restraín*, or one *aspíre*, another *respíre*, this maketh no good concord,° because they are all one,[7] but if ye will exchange both these consonants of the accented syllable, or void but one of them away, then will your cadences° be good and your concord° too, as to say: *restrain, refrain, remain; aspire, desire, retire*—which rule nevertheless is not well observed by many makers for lack of good judgment and a delicate° ear.[8] And this may suffice to show the use and nature of your cadences,° which are in effect all the sweetness and cunning° in our vulgar° poesy.

7. **all one** i.e., all the same. Cf. James I 1.215–16.

8. For adventurous counterexamples of "good" "bad" rhyming, see 2.9, note 1.

Chapter 9

How the good maker will not wrench his word to help his rhyme, either by falsifying his accent, or by untrue orthography

Now there cannot be in a maker a fouler fault than to falsify his accent to serve his cadence,° or by untrue orthography to wrench his words to help his rhyme,[1] for it is a sign that such a maker is not copious in his own language, or (as they are wont to say) not half his craft's master.[2] As, for example, if one should rhyme to this word *restore*, he may not match him with *door* or *poor*, for neither of both are of like terminant,[3] either by good orthography or in natural sound. Therefore, such rhyme is strained. So is it to this word *ram* to say *came*, or to *bean, den*, for they sound not nor be written alike; and many other like

1. Webbe also inveighs against these faults (1.268, 273). Spenser is sometimes guilty of them, though uncertainty over flexible Renaissance pronunciation makes judgments about accent tricky. See, however, *Faerie Queene* 3.4.9, where *blowes* and *rowes* rhyme with *shallowes*, and 3.6.36, where *horrore* rhymes with *more* and *store*. Puttenham himself cites without complaint Kermesine's lozenge poem, which rhymes *eyes* with *enemies* (2.12.182), and writes Philo's odolet to Calia, which rhymes *flower* ("flour") with *honour* (2.12.186). He also cites Wyatt rhyming *color* with *therefore* as iambs (3.16.260). Orthographical manipulation can be seen in *Muiopotmos*, where Spenser writes *vow* for *vows* (237: "Ne may thee helpe the manie hartie vow") in order to rhyme it with *thou* and *now*.

2. Puttenham's "as they are wont to say" suggests an allusion to a proverbial saying, although we have not located it. Justice Shallow also remarks, "He is not his craft's master; he doth not do it right" (*Henry IV, Part Two* 3.2.278–79).

3. **terminant** termination.

cadences° which were superfluous to recite, and are usual with rude° rhymers who observe not precisely the rules of prosody. Nevertheless, in all such cases, if necessity constrained, it is somewhat more tolerable to help the rhyme by false orthography than to leave an unpleasant dissonance to the ear by keeping true orthography and losing the rhyme. As, for example, it is better to rhyme *dore* with *restore* than in his truer orthography, which is *door*, and to this word *desire* to say *fier* than *fyre*, though it be otherwise better written *fire*.[4] For since the chief grace of our vulgar° poesy consisteth in the symphony,° as hath been already said,[5] our maker must not be too licentious in his concords,° but see that they go even, just, and melodious in the ear, and right so in the numerosity° or currentness° of the whole body of his verse, and in every other of his proportions.°

For a licentious maker is in truth but a bungler and not a poet. Such men were in effect the most part of all your old rhymers, and especially Gower, who to make up his rhyme would for the most part write his terminant[6] syllable with false orthography, and many times not stick° to put in a plain French word for an English. And so, by your leave, do many of our common rhymers at this day, as he that by all likelihood, having no word at hand to rhyme to this word *joy*, he made his other verse end in *Roy*, saying very impudently thus:

> *O mighty Lord of Love, dame Venus' only joy,*
> *Who art the highest God of any heavenly Roy.*[7]

Which word was never yet received in our language for an English word.[8] Such extreme licentiousness is utterly to be banished from our school, and better it might have been borne with in old rhyming writers, because they lived in a barbarous° age, and were grave, moral men, but very homely poets, such also as made most of their works by translation out of the Latin and French tongue, and few or none of their own engine,° as may easily be known to them that list° to look upon the poems of both languages.

Finally, as ye may rhyme with words of all sorts, be they of many syllables or few, so nevertheless is there a choice by which to make your cadence° (before remembered)[9] most commendable. For some words of exceeding great length, which have been fetched from the Latin inkhorn[10]

4. This last example is unclear.

5. See 2.6.165.

6. **terminant** terminal.

7. These lines appear in Turberville, "The Louer to Cupid for mercie" (EE, leaves 451r–v: 1–4). They appear in a slightly different version in 3.22.338.

8. Smith says that "'Roy' is found in Northern writings, and is . . . a common word in Middle Scots" (*Essays* 2.416).

9. See 2.8.169.

10. The inkhorn was a portable container for ink and became a symbol of ostentatious learning and pedantry. Writers typically borrowed words from Latin and Greek, but also from other European languages, by means of which they sought not merely to display their knowledge but also, in many cases, to enrich the vernacular by importing foreign words into it. Since most Renaissance writers

or borrowed of strangers,° the use of them in rhyme is nothing pleasant, saving perchance to the common people, who rejoice much to be at plays and interludes,° and, besides their natural ignorance, have at all such times their ears so attentive to the matter, and their eyes upon the shows of the stage, that they take little heed to the cunning° of the rhyme, and therefore be as well satisfied with that which is gross,[11] as with any other finer and more delicate.°

shared some version of the goal of enriching the vernacular, what Puttenham is objecting to here is an *excessive* borrowing that shows too little respect for the properties of the vernacular. Puttenham himself imports such words, but frequently supplies English glosses for them.

11. **gross** coarse, common.

Chapter 10

Of concord° in long and short measures,° and by near or far distances,[1] and which of them is most commendable

But this ye must observe withal,° that because your concords° contain the chief part of music in your meter,° their distances may not be too wide or far asunder, lest the ear should lose the tune° and be defrauded of his delight. And whensoever ye see any maker use large and extraordinary distances, ye must think he doth intend to show himself more artificial° than popular,° and yet therein is[2] not to be discommended, for respects[3] that shall be remembered in some other place of this book.[4]

Note also that rhyme or concord° is not commendably used both in the end and middle of a verse, unless it be in toys° and trifling poesies,[5] for it showeth a certain lightness either of the matter or of the maker's head, albeit these common rhymers use it much.[6] For, as I said before, like as the symphony° in a verse of great length is, as it were, lost by looking after him,[7] and yet may the meter° be very grave and stately, so on the other side doth the over-busy and too speedy return of one manner of tune° too much annoy and, as it were, glut the ear—unless

1. **distances** i.e., between lines that rhyme.
2. **is** i.e., the use of such distances is.
3. **respects** considerations.
4. Puttenham may be referring to his discussion in the following chapter of rhymes that occur four or more lines apart in a poem. He may instead be referring to his praise for carefully dissembled artifice in 3.25.
5. **poesies** Puttenham may be playing on the pun *poesy/posy*, a posy being a short, light poem often inscribed on rings and armor. For Puttenham's own definition, see 1.30.146.
6. Internal rhyme was a feature of much English and French medieval verse, and of the rhymed Latin verse Puttenham decries in 1.7.
7. **by looking after him** i.e., having to find it because the line of verse is too long or because there are several unrhymed syllables that come after the rhyming syllable in it.

it be in small and popular° musics sung by these *cantabanqui*[8] upon benches and barrels' heads, where they have none other audience than boys or country fellows that pass by them in the street; or else by blind harpers or such like tavern minstrels that give a fit[9] of mirth for a groat,[10] and their matters being for the most part stories of old time, as *The Tale of Sir Topas*, the reports[11] of *Bevis of Southampton*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Adam Bell*, and *Clym of the Clough*, and such other old romances or historical rhymes, made purposely for recreation of the common people at Christmas dinners and bride-ales,[12] and in taverns and alehouses and such other places of base resort. Also they be used in carols and rounds and such light or lascivious poems, which are commonly more commodiously uttered by these buffoons or vices[13] in plays than by any other person. Such were the rhymes of Skelton; usurping the name of a poet laureate, being indeed but a rude,° railing rhymer, and all his doings ridiculous, he used both short distances and short measures,° pleasing only the popular° ear. In our courtly maker we banish them utterly.

Now also have ye in every song or ditty concord° by compass,° and concord° intertangled, and a mixt[14] of both. What that is and how they be used shall be declared in the chapter of proportion° by situation.°[15]

8. *Cantabanqui* (It., "sings-on-benches"; more accurately, *cantabanchi*) were itinerant ballad-singers and entertainers akin to the "blind harpers" and "tavern minstrels." Like the similarly named mountebanks (quack peddlers of medicine), they would mount a bench or stage in a town square and entertain crowds with popular songs, often on legendary or historical subjects, and with buffoonish antics. Puttenham's attitude toward them here is clearly condescending although in Book 1 he seems to have a more positive view of the part of their repertory that included such historical romances as *Bevis of Southampton* and *Guy of Warwick* (see 1.29.131). Sidney exhibits similar ambivalence: "Certainly, I must confess mine own barbarousness, I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style" (*Defence* 231).
9. **fit** division (usually larger than a stanza) of a poetical (or musical) composition.
10. **groat** silver coin worth four pence.
11. **reports** narratives.
12. The bride-ale was the wedding feast: when the bride and groom had returned from the church, they and the wedding party were presented with warm, sweet spiced ale.
13. **vices** See 1.11.117.
14. **mixt** mixture.
15. Puttenham distinguishes here among three kinds of rhymes: those that can be connected by vertical curved lines ("compass") not intersected by other such lines, such as couplets; those in which the curved lines drawn between the rhyme words intersect other such lines ("intertangled"), as they would in alternating rhyme; and those rhyme patterns involving both kinds, such as the rhyme royal stanza (*ababbcc*). See Puttenham's drawings of various kinds of rhyme schemes in 2.11.