

PART VI.

PROSODY.

360. Prosody treats of metres and versification.

361. Latin Verse. Latin Poetry was essentially different in character from English. In our own language, poetry is based upon *accent*, and poetical form consists essentially in a certain succession of *accented* and *unaccented* syllables. Latin poetry, on the other hand, was based not upon accent, but upon *quantity*, so that with the Romans poetical form consisted in a certain succession of *long and short syllables*, *i.e.* of long and short intervals of time.

This fundamental difference in the character of English and Latin poetry is a natural result of the difference in character of the two languages. English is a strongly accented language, in which quantity is relatively subordinate. Latin, on the other hand, was a quantitative language, in which accent was relatively subordinate.

QUANTITY OF VOWELS AND SYLLABLES.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

362. The general principles for the quantity of vowels and syllables have been given above in § 5. The following peculiarities are to be noted here :—

1. A vowel is usually short when followed by another vowel (§ 5. A. 2), but the following exceptions occur:—

- a) In the Genitive termination *-ius* (except *alterius*); as, *illius*, *tōtius*. Yet the *i* may be short in poetry; as, *illius*, *tōtius*.
- b) In the Genitive and Dative Singular of the Fifth Declension; as, *diēi*, *aciēi*. But *fidēi*, *rēi*, *spēi* (§ 52, 1).
- c) In *fiō*, excepting *fit* and forms where *i* is followed by *er*. Thus: *fiēbam*, *fiat*, *fiunt*; but *fierī*, *fierem*.
- d) In a few other words, especially words derived from the Greek; as, *dīus*, *Aenēās*, *Dārīus*, *hērōes*, etc.

2. A diphthong is usually long (§ 5. B. 2), but the preposition *prae* in composition is often shortened before a vowel; as, *præacūtus*.

3. A syllable containing a short vowel followed by two consonants (§ 5. B. 2) is long, even when one of the consonants is in the following word; as, *terret populum*. Occasionally the syllable is long when both consonants are in the following word; as, *prō segete spīcās*.

4. Compounds of *jaciō*, though written *inicit*, *adicit*, etc., have the first syllable long, as though written *inj-*, *adj-*.

5. Before *j*, *ǎ* and *ě* made a long syllable, e.g. in *major*, *pejor*, *ejus*, *ejusdem*, *Pompejus*, *rejēcit*, etc. These were pronounced, *mai-jor*, *pei-jor*, *ei-jus*, *Pompei-jus*, *rei-jēcit*, etc. So also sometimes before *i*, e.g. *Pompe-i*, pronounced *Pompei-i*; *re-iciō*, pronounced *rei-iciō*.

Quantity of Final Syllables.

A. Final Syllables ending in a Vowel.

363. 1. Final *a* is mostly short, but is long:—

- a) In the Ablative Singular of the First Declension; as, *portā*.
- b) In the Imperative; as, *laudā*.
- c) In indeclinable words (except *itā*, *quiā*); as, *trīgintā*, *contrā*, *posteā*, *intereā*, etc.

2. Final *e* is usually short, but is long —

- a) In the Ablative Singular of the Fifth Declension; as, *diē*, *rē*; hence *hodiē*, *quārē*. Here belongs also *famē* (§ 59. 2. b).
- b) In the Imperative of the Second Conjugation; as, *monē*, *habē*, etc.; yet occasionally *cavē*, *valē*.
- c) In Adverbs derived from Adjectives of the Second Declension, along with *ferē* and *fermē*. *Benē*, *malē*, *temerē*, *saepē* have *e*.
- d) In *ē*, *dē*, *mē*, *tē*, *sē*, *nē* (*not*, *lest*), *nē* (*verily*).

3. Final *i* is usually long, but is short in *nīsī* and *quasī*. *Mihi, tibi, sibi, ibi, ubi*, have regularly *ī*, but sometimes *ī*; yet always *ibīdem, ibīque, ubīque*.

4. Final *o* is regularly long, but is short —

a) In *egō, dūō, modō* (*only*), *citō*.

b) Rarely in the First Person Singular of the Verb, and in Nominatives of the Third Declension; as, *amō, leō*.

c) In a few compounds beginning with the Preposition *pro*, especially before *f*; as *prōfundere, prōficīscī, prōfugere*.

5. Final *u* is always long.

B. Final Syllables ending in a Consonant.

364. 1. Final syllables ending in any other consonant than *s* are short. The following words, however, have a long vowel: *sāl, sōl, Lār, pār, vēr, fūr, dīc, dūc, ēn, nōn, quīn, sīn, sīc, cūr, hīc*¹ (*this*). Also adverbs in *c*; as, *hīc, hūc, istīc, illūc, etc.*

2. Final syllables in *-as* are long; as, *terrās, amās*.

3. Final syllables in *-es* are regularly long, but are short —

a) In the Nominative and Vocative Singular of dental stems (§ 33) of the Third Declension which have a short penult in the Genitive; as, *segēs* (*segetis*), *obsēs* (*obsidis*), *mīlēs, dīvēs*. But a few have *-ēs*; *viz. pēs, ariēs, abiēs, pariēs*.

b) In *ēs* (*thou art*), *penēs*.

4. Final *-os* is usually long, but short in *ōs* (*ossis*), *compōs, impōs*.

5. Final *-is* is usually short, but is long —

a) In Plurals; as, *portīs, hortīs, nōbīs, vōbīs, nūbīs* (*Acc.*).

b) In the Second Person Singular Perfect Subjunctive Active, as *amāverīs, monuerīs, audīverīs, etc.* Yet occasional exceptions occur.

c) In the Second Person Singular Present Indicative Active of the Fourth Conjugation; as, *audīs*.

d) In *vīs, force*; *īs, thou goest*; *fīs*; *sīs*; *velīs*; *nōlīs*; *vīs, thou wilt* (*māvīs, quamvīs, quīvīs, etc.*).

6. Final *-us* is usually short, but is long —

a) In the Genitive Singular and in the Nominative, Accusative, and Vocative Plural of the Fourth Declension; as, *fructūs*.

¹ Rarely *hīc*.

- b) In the Nominative and Vocative Singular of those nouns of the Third Declension in which the *u* belongs to the stem; as, *palūs* (-ūdis), *servitūs* (-ūtis), *tellūs* (-ūris).

365. Greek Nouns retain in Latin their original quantity; as, *Aenēā*, *epitomē*, *Dēlos*, *Pallas*, *Simoīs*, *Salamīs*, *Dīdūs*, *Paridī*, *āēr*, *aethēr*, *crātēr*, *hērōās*. Yet Greek nouns in *-ωρ* regularly shorten the vowel of the final syllable; as, *rhētōr*, *Hectōr*.

VERSE-STRUCTURE.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

366. 1. The metrical unit in versification is a short syllable, technically called a *mora* (∪). A long syllable (—) is regarded as equivalent to two *morae*.

2. A **Foot** is a group of syllables. The following are the most important kinds of fundamental feet:—

FEET OF THREE MORAE.

— ∪ Trochee.
∪ — Iambus.

FEET OF FOUR MORAE.

— ∪ ∪ Dactyl.
∪ ∪ — Anapaest.

3. A **Verse** is a succession of feet.

4. The different kinds of verses are named Trochaic, Iambic, Dactylic, Anapaestic, according to the foot which forms the basis of their structure.

5. **Ictus**. In every fundamental foot the long syllable naturally receives the greater prominence. This prominence is called **ictus**.¹ It is denoted thus: ∠ ∪ ∪; ∠ ∪.

6. **Thesis and Arsis**. The syllable which receives the ictus is called the **thesis**; the rest of the foot is called the **arsis**.

7. **Elision**. Final syllables ending in a vowel, a diphthong, or *-m* are regularly elided before a word beginning with a vowel or *h*. In reading, we ordinarily omit the elided syllable entirely. Probably the ancients slurred the words together in some way. This may be indicated as follows: *corpore* in *ūnō*; *multum* *illē* *et*; *mōnstrum* *horrendum*; *causae* *īrārūm*.

a. Omission of elision is called **Hiatus**. It occurs especially before and after monosyllabic Interjections; as, *Ō et praesidium*.

¹ Ictus was not accent, — neither stress accent nor musical accent, — but was simply the quantitative prominence inherent in a long syllable.

8. The ending of a word within a foot is called a **Caesúra** (*cutting*). Every verse usually has one prominent caesura. The ending of a word and foot together within the verse is called a **diaeresis**.

9. Verses are distinguished as Catalectic or Acatalectic. A Catalectic verse is one in which the last foot is not complete, but lacks one or more syllables; an Acatalectic verse has its last foot complete.

10. At the end of a verse a slight pause occurred. Hence the final syllable may be either long or short (**syllaba anceps**), and may terminate in a vowel or **m**, even though the next verse begins with a vowel.

11. Iambic, Trochaic, and Anapaestic verses are further designated as dimeter, trimeter, tetrameter, according to *the number of dipodies* (pairs of feet) which they contain. Dactylic verses are measured by *single feet*, and are designated as tetrameter, pentameter, hexameter, accordingly.

SPECIAL PECULIARITIES.

367. 1. Synizésis (Synaéresis). Two successive vowels in the interior of a word are often united into a long syllable; as, —

aure^uis, de^uinde, ante^uire, de^uesse.

2. **Diástole.** A syllable usually short is sometimes long; as, —
vidēt, audīt.

3. **Sýstole.** A syllable usually long is sometimes short; as, —
stetērunt.

a. Diastole and Systole are not mere arbitrary processes. They usually represent an earlier pronunciation which had passed out of vogue in the ordinary speech.

4. After a consonant, **i** and **u** sometimes become **j** and **v**. The preceding syllable then becomes long; as, —

abjete for abiete; genva for genua.

5. Sometimes **v** becomes **u**; as, —
silua for silva; dissoluō for dissolvō.

6. Sometimes a verse has an extra syllable. Such a verse is called an **Hypérmeter**. The extra syllable ends in a vowel or **-m**, and is united with the initial vowel or **h** of the next verse by **Synaphéia**. Thus: —

..... ignārī hominumque locōrumque^h
errāmus.

7. **Tmesis** (*cutting*). Compound words are occasionally separated into their elements; as, —

quō mē cunque rapit tempestās, for quōcunque, *etc.*

8. **Syncope**. A short vowel is sometimes dropped between two consonants; as, —

repostus for repositus.

THE DACTYLIC HEXAMETER.

368. 1. The Dactylic Hexameter, or Heroic Verse, consists theoretically of six dactyls. But in all the feet except the fifth, a spondee (— —) may take the place of the dactyl. The sixth foot may be either a spondee or a trochee, since the final syllable of a verse may be either long or short (*syllaba anceps*). The following represents the scheme of the verse: —

∠∞, ∠∞, ∠∞, ∠∞, ∠∞, ∠∞.

2. Sometimes we find a spondee in the fifth foot. Such verses are called Spondaic. A dactyl usually stands in the fourth place, and the fifth and sixth feet are generally made up of a quadrisyllable; as, —

armātumque aurō circumspicit Ōrīōna
cāra deum subolēs, magnum Jovis incrēmentum.

3. Caesura.

a) The favorite position of the caesura in the Dactylic Hexameter is after the thesis of the third foot; as, —

arma virumque canō || Trōjae quī prīmus ab ōrīs.

b) Less frequently the caesura occurs after the thesis of the fourth foot, usually accompanied by another in the second foot; as, —

inde torō || pater Aenēās || sīc ōrsus ab altō est.

c) Sometimes the caesura occurs between the two short syllables of the third foot; as, —

Ō passī graviōra || dabit deus hīs quoque finem.

This caesura is called Feminine, as opposed to the caesura after a long syllable, which is called Masculine (as under *a* and *b*).

- d) A pause sometimes occurs at the end of the fourth foot. This is called the Bucolic Diaeresis, as it was borrowed by the Romans from the Bucolic poetry of the Greeks. Thus :—
sōlstitium pecorī dēfendite ; || jam venit aetās.

DACTYLIC PENTAMETER.

369. 1. The Dactylic Pentameter consists of two parts, each of which contains two dactyls, followed by a long syllable. Spondees may take the place of the dactyls in the first part, but not in the second. The long syllable at the close of the first half of the verse always ends a word. The scheme is the following :—

∠ ∞ ∠ ∞ ∠ || ∠ ∞ ∠ ∞ ∞

2. The Pentameter is never used alone, but only in connection with the Hexameter. The two arranged alternately form the so-called Elegiac Distich. Thus :—

*Vergilium vīdī tantum, nec amāra Tibullō
 Tempus amīcitiāe fāta dedēre meae.*

IAMBIC MEASURES.

370. 1. The most important Iambic verse is the **Iambic Trimeter** (§ 366. 11), called also **Senarius**. This is an acatalectic verse. It consists of six Iambi. Its pure form is :—

∪ — ∪ — ∪ — ∪ — ∪ — ∪ —

Beātus ille quī procul negōtiīs.

The Caesura usually occurs in the third foot; less frequently in the fourth.

2. In place of the Iambus, a Tribach (∪ ∪ ∪) may stand in any foot but the last. In the odd feet (first, third, and fifth) may stand a Spondee, Dactyl, or Anapaest, though the last two are less frequent. Sometimes a Proceleusmatic (∪ ∪ ∪ ∪) occurs.

3. In the Latin comic writers, Plautus and Terence, great freedom is permitted, and the various equivalents of the Iambus, *viz.* the Dactyl, Anapaest, Spondee, Tribach, Proceleusmatic, are freely admitted in any foot except the last.