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The Punctator's World: A Discursion (Part Four)

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The Punctator's World: A Discursion

BY GWEN G. ROBINSON

Part Four

England: Up to 1650

This, the fourth in a series of essays on the history of punctuation, deals with Renaissance and Jacobean England, a period of intense experiment both in language and in the bookmaking arts. Printing, now fully in action, governed the public perception of what looked best on the page and how text should be pointed and spelled.

During the fifteenth century, rustic England moved into the ambiance of the marketplace and contracted thereby a host of radical ambitions. Commerce put money into the pockets of 'pour unconnynge' folk, whose focus accordingly rose from the mud on their feet to the concerns of the world and how to deal with them. With lucre so opportunely at hand, the popular urge for skills to acquire it was not to be suppressed—though the church as well as the crown, fearing an educated proletariat, certainly tried. While the study of Latin with its complex of elite disciplines had long prepared the privileged for royal, state, or clerical duties, the public had been more or less abandoned to vernacular ignorance. But now that trade brought fresh opportunity, new vision, and the desire to participate, a groundswell of homespun teaching developed. For a few pennies little Johnny, and perhaps sister Mary too, could learn the ABCs from the neighboring widow or the village bellringer.

Theory soon followed practice, opening up the way for a legitimate and effective aristocratic interest in the mental nourishment of the humbler classes. Between 1466 and 1483 a school near York engaged an extra master to "teche to Write and all such things as belonged to the Scrivener Craft to all manner of persons . . . within

the realm of England . . . openly and freely without the exaction of money".[1] In 1483 the Archbishop of York founded Jesus College, for which he provided teachers of grammar, music, and writing. The school statutes give definition to the evolving educational policy:[2]

> Because that country-side brings forth many youths endowed with the light of keen wit and not all of them wish to attain to the lofty dignity of the priesthood, we have ordained a third fellow knowing and skilled in the arts of writing and keeping accounts in order that such youths may be rendered more capable for the mechanic arts and other worldly affairs.

In the late fifteenth century, merchants and booksellers were importing hundreds of printed volumes into London; for the English, racked by the Wars of the Roses, were slow off the mark to manufacture their own. Ecclesiastical prohibitions against vernacular translations of the Scriptures added their weight to the repression of enterprising spirits. Thus, of the some fifteen hundred established European presses only a few were on English soil. To bring the country up to snuff, Richard III's Act of 1484, regulating the book trade, included a proviso that foreigners who were living in England might import and sell books made abroad, and furthermore, that they might engage in other facets of the bookmaking business: such as printing, illuminating, and binding. Many responded to this appeal—so many indeed, that for the next fifty years two-thirds of all the people connected with English bookmaking were foreigners. These escaped the stringent jurisdiction of stationer companies by locating close to St. Paul's Cathedral or within the liberties of St. Martin's or Blackfriars, where the lubberly Londoners admired them guardedly. Their burgeoning presses put out mostly popular, uncomplicated materials—rhymes, romance, official documents, and the like—for clerical censorship stayed harsh. Bolstered by the proclamations of Henry VIII against heretical and seditious publications, church attitudes contin-

1. J. W. Adamson, "The Extent of Literacy in England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: Notes and Conjectures", *The Library*, 4th ser., 10 (September 1929): 175–76.
2. Ibid, 176.

ued to drain the courage of those who might have been tempted to put out learned books in any language. So beaten down were the start-up printers in England, that amongst the lot there was not even sufficient Greek type to print Greek quotations within a text of roman lettering. Accordingly, the import of cheap, scholarly books from Antwerp and liturgical books from France persisted for many decades, and until 1535, England was notably dependent on the continent for intellectual works.[3] Listed on the custom rolls by consignments only—by barrels, vats, baskets, pipes, cases, coffers and sometimes by number—these books, alas, remain nameless. Evidence of their presence mounts dramatically after 1500 and among the names of importers appear those of bookbinder Henry Cony and printers Wynken de Worde and William Facques. An account of 1502 registers the arrival of hundreds upon hundreds of primers.[4]

The school *par excellence* of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the grammar school, either administered by its own governing body or adjoined to a cathedral or collegiate church, a chantry, or a hospital. Its mission was to hammer into the skulls of adolescent gentry the inherited Latin rhetorical and grammatical traditions. But humbler grammar schools soon began to admit 'petties', that is, little children to be taught the alphabet and how to read by a second master, the usher. With this custom the implantation of English into the pedagogical scheme became permanent. Those who were thrown by the heels straight into the classical languages found it easy enough to read English syllables in place of the Latin ones. The activity of writing in either language was considered a step harder, and even as late as the eighteenth century, a more elevated attainment.[5]

If literacy means the ability to read a book, then many people in England by the end of the sixteenth century were without doubt

3. E. G. Duff, *Westminster and London Printers 1476–1535* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1906), 189. Until 1510 the only English book-related men were Caxton (England's prototypographer, translator, and a major influence on the settling down of the English language), Hunte (the Oxford stationer), and Bretton (a patron of printing). See pages 205–40; and also Curt F. Bühler, *William Caxton and His Critics* (Syracuse: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1960), passim.

4. H. R. Plomer, "The Importation of Books into England in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries: An Examination of Some Customs Rolls", *The Library*, 4th ser., 4 (1 September 1923): 146–50.

5. Adamson, "The Extent of Literacy", 173–74.

literate. As early as 1533 Sir Thomas More in his *Apology* had written that "farre more then four partes of all the whole [English population] dyvyded into tenne" could not read English.[6] The remaining literate sixty percent—about two million people—would have included both ordinary boys and Latin scholars, probably girls, and definitely women. Though in this case Sir Thomas was bewailing popular access to Tyndale's English translation of the Scriptures, the complaint itself reflects the fact that democratized literacy was by that time in the ascendency. Within a few decades signs would appear of an approved pre-grammar-school system, preparatory in the case of some for life and work, and in the case of others, for further education. In 1561 the churchwardens of St. Olave's, Southwark, were instructed to find a schoolmaster who was prepared to teach the "childerne . . . to write and rede and caste accompthe", such children being "mene" (men) children only. This school was for all the parish children "untyl such tyme that they sayd children can be lerned to rede awrighte [and write] sufficiently till they be abell to goo to servyce, or elles other wyse to goo to gramer, as their frendes shall thinke for them most fetyst at that tyme". In Essex in 1599, a single endowment supported both a grammar school and a writing master to teach in his own dwelling the three Rs to small children.[7] By this time, children "qui Latine nesciunt" (who don't know Latin) were well entrenched in the school system, and reciting their catechism in English.

Respondent to the growing audience of ambitious parents and would-be teachers, Richard Mulcaster wrote and had published in English his book *Positions . . .* (1581), in which he discussed at length all conceivable aspects of education for boys (and for girls too, though their learning must be considered accessory). In 1582 Mulcaster published *The First Part of the Elementarie, which entreateth chefelie of the right writing of our English tung* (complete with a very brief discussion of punctuation "for a right and tunable uttering"), in order to help those who taught children to read and write English.[8] Another guide to teach the teacher was Edward Coote's *The Englische Scholemaister*

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6. Thomas More, *The Apologye of Syr. T. More, Knight* (London, 1530), 20r and 20v, published in facsimile (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970).

7. Adamson, "The Extent of Literacy", 184–85.

8. Richard Mulcaster, *The First Part of the Elementarie* (London: Thomas Vautroullier, 1582), 5, 148, and the unpaged prefatory "Epistle to Robert Dudlie, Earle of Leicester".

(1596), a book that enjoyed repeated editions up to 1704. In the 1636 preface, Coote wrote:[9]

> I am now therefore to direct my speech to the unskilfull, which desire to make use of it for their owne private benefit; and to such men and women of trade as Taylors, Weavers, Shoppe-keepers, Seamsters and such others as have undertaken the charge of teaching others. [Study it diligently] and thou mayest sit on thy shop-board, at thy loomes or at thy needle and never hinder thy worke to heare thy Schollers, after thou hast once made the little book familiar to thee.

With nets so broad, not many would escape being proficiently (often insatiably) literate. Unless gross misfortune overtook him, the average child could expect to learn both to read and to write his letters, and thereafter to acquire for his own the vocabulary and rhythms of the English Bible.

The following will give a feel for the accessibility of print in the sixteenth-century working man's home. In the 1470s Sir John Paston had paid some three shillings and four pence for the rubrishing of capital letters in a small book. Scriveners in general had been charging one shilling for 3100 words of missal text or for 6200 words of academic text.[10] By 1520, however, a mere two pennies would purchase a child's book bound in vellum, four pounds of cheese, or a hen. By 1549 Edward VI's entire prayer book was available in print, unbound, for two shillings and twopence. In 1595 you could buy a sheep for nine shillings, that is, a little less than the price of an unbound copy of the Bible.[11] Generally speaking, during the reign of Elizabeth, two pounds ten shillings was deemed a meagre but adequate annual income for common folk. For the 4000 or more country gentlemen and their professional cousins in the church, in law, and the trades, it was considered more seemly to possess upward of fifty pounds per annum.[12]

9. Adamson, "The Extent of Literacy", 185–86.

10. H. E. Bell, "The Price of Books in Medieval England", *The Library*, 4th ser., 17 (December 1936): 316–19.

11. Marjory Plant, *The English Book Trade* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1939), 239–45.

12. Lacey Baldwin Smith, *The Horizon Book of the Elizabethan World* (New York: American Heritage, 1967), 86. Another informative assessment of the ratio of Re-

Against this background the English language took its shape. Writers of authority and position began to turn to it with interest, national pride, and with a very thorough, even bilingual, knowledge of Latin. Sir Thomas More, for example, and Sir Francis Bacon were equally comfortable writing in both languages. A facility with French, and a smattering of Italian and German were standard acquirements in educated circles. In comparison—particularly with the ancient languages, but also with the more developed vernaculars—English prose could not for many years measure up. It lacked the authority of a distinguished tradition and the precision to handle complexity. Chaucer's prose rendering of Boethius, in sharpest contrast to his verse, had been unsure. Sir Thomas Malory's prose was sufficient for narrative, but not for the rigors of philosophical discussion. Sir Thomas More showed a firmer control, though even he seemed sometimes in doubt about the boundaries of sentences and the subordination of clauses. George Gascoigne's 1566 translation of Ariosto exposed an English syntax that was still not very feasible.[13] Yet the improvement, culminating in the precocious clarity of Richard Hooker [d. 1600], was constant. In the atmosphere of dispersive literacy, English was pulling free from Latin (the language of the Church and all serious scholarly exposition) and from French (historically the tongue of high fashion and the courts of law). Popular translations into English from the more sophisticated continental literatures enforced lessons that enlarged and confirmed its special grammatical capabilities. Words, as they were needed to support the pervasive spirit of inquiry, had at first been borrowed indiscriminately from any language at hand; but gradually, common sense prevailing, the unused, the redundant, and the wildly exotic entrants were discarded. Thus, out of experience and authorial self-examination, there grew an assured, flexible, more purely English syntax. Increasingly, the literary figures of the day—Sir John Lyly (the polished euphuistic stylist and author of *Euphues*) and Roger Ascham amongst them—recognized that the new vernacular did not require classical graftings or imitative manipulation, either for beauty or for the power of expression. It could

naissance income to the cost of books can be found in Sandra Hindman, *Pen to Press* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1977), 196–99.

13. Jonas A. Barish, *Ben Jonson and the Language of Prose Comedy* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960), 7.

simply be itself. Sir John Cheke, their contemporary, put it neatly: "I am of the opinion that our own tung shold be written cleane and pure, unmixt and unmangeled with borrowing of other tunges".[14] Adopted and refined by men of such good name, English established itself in the hearts of the literate public.

How to construe a Greek or Latin passage, speak French, and debate learnedly over the intricacies of prosody were matters solely for youths whose fathers had money to spare. Those with such luck attended the major schools—Winchester, St. Paul's, Eton, which were now well established. But grammar schools, imitating their Latin curricula, were also beginning to flourish in towns as rustic as Stratford-upon-Avon. Shakespeare, who came of gentle stock, must have attended such a school (probably the King's New School) until his middle-teens, and been thereby sufficiently stimulated, under a well-qualified master, to begin a lifetime of reading and storing knowledge.[15] It is moving indeed to think of him in the midst of Bodley's books at Oxford, where as an adult he spent quiet stopover hours on his way to and from London, absorbing world literature from the rare volumes of that still extant collection.[16] In his omnivorous literary quests and with his special access to the libraries of noble houses, he unquestionably handled books from the finest presses of continental Europe. More likely from those than from the less polished English

14. Charles Sears Baldwin, *Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1959), 220–25 and 37–50. Richard Mulcaster and Sir Thomas Elyot also gave voice to sentiments of this nature. Cf. Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, *A History of the English Language*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1978), 203–6, 214–19.

15. Stanley Wells, *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), xiii. Wells conjectures that the young Shakespeare attended a 'petty school' to acquire the necessary rudiments for grammar school, which his father's position would have qualified him to attend. The grammar school education was centered on Latin. In the upper forms, the speaking of English was forbidden.

16. Peter Levi, *The Life and Times of William Shakespeare* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 293. The Bodleian Library opened in early November 1602 and charged a shilling for entry. But its books were accumulating for years before it formally opened. Oxford town was full of books and book-loving people, and Shakespeare went there often. G. W. Wheeler in *The Earliest Catalogues of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1928) tells us (page 21) that when the Bodleian Library first opened, it probably contained some 5000 items and was considered to be a practically complete collection. By 1604 the holdings, nevertheless, had doubled.

editions, he would have known text well differentiated into chapters and paragraphs and grown familiar with clear-faced roman types, meted out between punctuation marks that were positioned strategically to evoke the sound of the voice and delineate syntactical shapes.

This is not to say that he gave his deepest attention to these matters. Shakespeare was noted for writing in haste; for carelessness in finishing off details, as for example, his apparent failure to indicate exits. His excessive facility, said Jonson, was a fault, and it encouraged a natural disinclination to cross out or reshape.[17] Generally, in Shakespeare's era, playmaking was very much an oral-aural art form. It focussed squarely on performance. Once acted on the stage, a drama was for all intents and purposes 'published', so that a subsequent printing might well be deemed both redundant and unexciting. Indeed, many plays of the time never saw print. Though in the end all Shakespeare's finished plays were put out in book form, not a manuscript fragment of them exists today that is reliably in his own handwriting. Apparently satisfied that the acclaim of his contemporaries would keep his works alive, he did not choose, as did Ben Jonson, to escort his theatre manuscripts through the printing operation. The poems "Venus and Adonis" and "The Rape of Lucrece" were the only pieces to have been printed with Shakespeare's certain authority.[18] Nevertheless, by one means or another, about half of Shakespeare's plays were printed singly in his lifetime, "almost all of them in the flimsy paperback format of a quarto" that normally sold for sixpence.[19] Scarcely worth the while of a serious printer, these 'pamphlets' were put together quickly and without the protection of an effective dramatic copyright.

17. Ben Jonson, *Discoveries* (London: The Bodley Head, 1923 reprint of the 1641 edition), 28–29. For a delightful and elucidating treat the reader is urged to read Maurice Baring's imaginary account of Shakespeare's rushed, on-stage amendment to "Macbeth", entitled "The Rehearsal". It is to be found most recently in *Parodies: An Anthology from Chaucer to Beerbohm and After*, ed. Dwight Macdonald (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), 294–302.

18. Henry Farr, "Notes on Shakespeare's Printers and Publishers", *The Library*, 4th ser., 3 (March 1923): 227. Peter Levi in *The Life and Times* (cf. p. 276) is less certain of Shakespeare's insouciance: Levi says of Shakespeare that he did sometimes revise and work with the printers; he did care about the fate of his plays, but was seldom in complete personal control of what survived.

19. Wells, *William Shakespeare*, xxx.

Relevant to our theme is the fact that none of these editions indicated either act or scene divisions; instead, the text of the piece was produced without stop. Though on stage the five-act structure was being marked in varying degrees by pauses with music, readers were left on their own to deal with the sequences and unities. In Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590), a brief note added to the dedication (possibly by Ponsonby, the publisher) reads: "The division and summing of the Chapters was not of Sir Philip Sidneis dooing, but adventured by the over-seer of the print, for the more ease of the Readers".[20] Nor did Shakespeare as a young playwright follow the new convention of act-pauses that threw emphasis on the integrity of the divisions. Nevertheless, he seems to have recognized the principle of breaks between theatrical segments; for even in his early "The Taming of the Shrew" he more often than not ended both scenes and acts with a rhyming couplet. But overall, it is difficult to see why he and his fellow company shareholders were willing to allow so many avowed masterpieces to appear in garbled, unproofread, and sometimes badly printed texts. None of the quartos, 'good' or 'bad', "bears an author's dedication or shows any sign of having been prepared for the press".[21] Unlike the authors who took up residence with their printers (one thinks especially of Erasmus) or stopped press owing to change of mind, Shakespeare simply had no time.[22] Also, he may have viewed the printing of plays as a matter of small consequence.

20. Percy Simpson, *Proof-reading in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1935), 2–3.

21. Wells, *William Shakespeare*, xxviii, xxx.

22. James Binns, "STC Latin Books: Further Evidence for Printing-House Practice", *The Library*, 6th ser., 1 (December 1979): 351. An interesting verification of the confusion that was commonly the printer's lot is to be found in the introductory pages of the *Vindiciae ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London: 1625), B2^r. Here the author, Francis Mason, recounts the trauma of emerging into print. "When this work came to the press, I was transfixed by a sudden anxiety that I had perhaps scrutinised the work with insufficient diligence. And so in the first edition of this work, I several times caused the printing presses to be stopped whilst I hastened to the Archives to examine whole passages afresh with my own eyes. I had some second thoughts too in preparing this second edition." Shakespeare, undoubtedly, had second thoughts too—but not the leisure nor inclination to chase down, correct, conciliate, and compensate a piratical printer, who had bought the rights for his own, however corrupt, first printing. Cf. also the first folio reproduction introduction by Sidney Lee (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), xiii.

Such an attitude, however ambivalent intellectually, seems rather in keeping with the proverbial Elizabethan rush to fulfil theatrical commitments. John Marston, introducing the printed text of his play "The Malcontent" in 1604, wrote: "Only one thing afflicts me, to think that scenes invented merely to be spoken, should be enforcively published to be read".[23] Shakespeare could well have been similarly "afflicted".

Despite the hopelessness of divining Shakespeare's attitude to the benefits of print, it is interesting to consider the state of the art in the books that he might, indeed, have handled. To this end let us glance briefly at the most influential contemporary printing houses on the continent, from where so many English bibliophiles were gathering their prize collections. Though English translations of many of the classics appeared in print during the sixteenth century, the coveted exempla came from abroad. Christopher Plantin's press in Antwerp was established and productive by the 1560s. In 1592 he published his eight-volume Complutensian Polyglot Bible, the supreme achievement in a series of masterly editions that embraced many fields: science, jurisprudence, the classics, and religion. Johannes Froben, the most famous of the Basel scholar printers, was operating four presses by 1515, and later, more. His printing house was famous for its fine contributions (totaling some 250 publications), for popularizing roman type, for hiring Hans Holbein as an illustrator and many famous scholars as correctors. Meanwhile, the Estienne dynasty in Paris and Geneva was in operation more or less throughout the sixteenth century. Henri Estienne II, grandson of the founder, was a noted classicist, as well as a scholar printer. His voluminous output included the Latin edition of Herodotus, a Greek and Latin text of Plutarch (thirteen volumes), and his monumental Greek dictionary. Venice, where the House of Aldus had published and kept in print the first series of books with uniform formats,[24] continued to

23. Wells, *William Shakespeare*, xxxii. Charles Tyler Prouty in his introduction to Shakespeare's first folio (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1954) offers another example of this unmodern attitude. He quotes from Thomas Heywood, a contemporary of Shakespeare: "It never was any great ambition in me to be in this kind voluminously read". See page ix.

24. Colin Clair, *Christopher Plantin* (London: Cassell, 1960), 113–33; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v. "Froben", "Estienne". See also, Harry Graham Carter, *A View of Early Typography up to about 1600* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 75.

ro confuetudinem multorum annorum,
quam habes cum ifta ciuitate, illi etiam
reipub. gratum & optatum, magnope⁄ .
re confido fore. Datis X V I. Calend.
Aprilis. M. D. X I I I. ante coronatio⁄
nem. Roma.

　　Leonardo Lauredano Veneto⁄
rum principi.　　　　　　　　　I I I I
　　　　　Vfsimus interpretem apud te
　I　　remᴐ publicam tuam effe no⁄
　　　　ftrum Petrum Bibienam, cum
prudentia & rerum gerendarū ufu præ⁄
ditum hominem, tum imprimis nobis &
probatum & gratum: fcripfimusᴐ ad il⁄
lum ea de re. Quamobrem abs te peti⁄
mus, ut omnibus in rebus, quas is noftro
nomine ad te perferet, eandē illi fidem
habeas, quam haberes nobis ipfis, fi te
coràm alloqueremur. Datis X V I. Cal.
Aprilis. M. D. X I I I. ante coronatio⁄
nem. Roma.

　　Sigifmundo Poloniæ regi.　　　V
　　　　Ntellexi magna quidem cum
　I　　moleftia, inter te atᴐ Albertū
　　　　Marchionē, ut appellāt, Bran
denburgenfem focietatis Marianorum
　　　　　　　　　　　Theuto⁄

A sample page of clear, well-broken text from Pietro Bembo, *Epistolarum* (Basel: J. Froben, 1547). Courtesy of the Syracuse University Library.

95

maintain its high standards of carefully edited, scholarly publications. Appropriately, it was from the Aldine Press that the first significant post-print treatise on logical punctuation volleyed forth.

THE *INTERPUNGENDI RATIO* OF ALDUS MANUTIUS II

In 1561, at the unlikely age of fourteen, Aldus Manutius II (1547–1597: the grandson of Aldus I and a scholar himself in the family tradition) wrote his *Orthographiae ratio*, to which he appended a short eight-page octavo, the *Interpungendi*, on the subject of pointing.[25] The body of this Latin text is printed in Aldine italic, with only the opening word of each paragraph and the various paradigmatic examples printed in roman. Practice not being yet the equal of theory, not all the sentences in the original begin with capitals.

The *Interpungendi* opens with a letter to Franciscus Morandus.

> Since you are of the opinion, Franciscus Morandus, that the subject of punctuation is related to orthography, we shall be strengthened by your support, in our treatment of this section too: that learned men are well known to disagree on this matter of punctuation is in itself a proof, that the knowledge of it, in theory and practice, is of some importance. I myself have learnt by experience, that, if ideas that are difficult to understand are properly separated, they become clearer; and that, on the other hand, through defective punctuation, many passages are confused, and distorted to such a degree, that sometimes they can only with difficulty be understood, or even cannot be understood at all.

Bravely, this reasonable boy continues to deal with the various points. The "mark that some call the virgule, others the comma, and others again the half-point" he describes as useful in distinguishing the varying parts of a series; but he advises against appending it in profusion to all the words that one wishes to separate, since the sentence will then in no way be "freed from difficulty". For one could

25. In preparing this section I have used both a copy of the 1561 Aldine Latin edition and the translation of it from T. F. and M.F.A. Husband, *Punctuation: Its Principles and Practice* (London: Geo. Routledge and Sons, 1905), 130–36.

argue that every word is different in meaning from its neighbor and therefore needs to be thus separated.

He describes semicolons (which were not used by English printers until the 1580s nor discussed by English grammarians until the 1600s) as being, generally, separators of word groups that are opposed in meaning to each other.

> It is quite clear, that [often] a comma alone is not enough, and that the mark, which is made with a double point so (:) interrupts the sentence too much. The mark in question (;) is also sometimes found in passages, in which the words are not opposed in meaning, but the sense depends on the words in such a way, that, if you use the comma it is too little; if the double points, too much. I was thinking to give an example: but, I felt the point had come out plainly enough, in the immediately preceding sentence. A great many instances of this kind occur in the books of the ancients. Why then should I grudge the trouble? especially as amongst all the marks, I consider this one, at present under consideration, to be the most difficult of all, these then will be our examples: *Our good sense teaches us, that, if our lot be ill, we must not grieve too much; if good, we must rejoice with moderation.* For, if you put a comma after this, *too much,* the sentence is carried on as by a headlong current: since however, it consists of two members, it ought after the first part to stop altogether for a little. But if you want rather to put the double point in this place, the sentence will not stand so much of a break: its latter part depends on its former: since the word, *teaches,* dominates each part of the sentence in the same degree.

The colon (or double point) effects the most compelling break within the sentence and is to be used

> when the sentence has two, or more, parts, which individually are dominated by their own verbs and are independent, and complete so that, just as a whole body consists of limbs complete in themselves, the sentence in its entirety is made up of integral parts. . . . But sometimes the sentence con-

tinues to such a length, that a break has to be made by the double point not simply once, but a second time, and even oftener; this is generally the case when the sentence consists of integral parts, for the distinction of which neither a comma, nor yet the point in conjunction with the comma is enough.

As for the entire sentence, the young Aldus prefers long to short and advocates combining short sentences by means of the colon. Everyone, he says (perhaps a bit blithely), knows instinctively where the precise end of a sentence is. In the following example, two short sentences have been joined entailing a further problem: whether to capitalize the opening letter of the second segment. Here, he is addressing in very clear terms a matter that would baffle the English for another century and a half.

> *I give you no orders concerning my affairs: you yourself will decide, what is to be done.* It seems to be in harmony with the account given, that, if after the single point a sentence follows, that is akin to the preceding, the first word begins with a small letter; if the second sentence be quite unlike the preceding then a capital is used. If in addition to the sentence being unlike, an altogether different subject is introduced: then what follows, must be separated, not merely by a single point, and a capital letter, but also by a short space: this seems to be the principle that controls the introduction of a different subject.

He carries on with an interestingly modern analysis of interrogation. In cases where no answer is required and the prominence of the question subsides in the flow of wordage, he advises that the writer dispense with the mark of interrogation. The emphasis demanded by it in purely rhetorical instances is neither suitable nor elegant.

He is equally assured, as well as perceptive, in his assessment of when to apply the parenthesis.

> This one thing I cannot refrain from remarking, that people act foolishly, who enclose in a parenthesis, *As I think, As the matter shows, As has been handed down to us from our ances-*

tors, Which I myself could easily understand, and such phrases; if they are separated by the comma, or even by the point with a comma, it is enough. Those words ought to be enclosed in a parenthesis, which are not a part of the sentence, and do not depend on any word either preceding, or following: words whose absence causes no loss to the sentence.

EYES VERSUS EARS

Imbued with the spirit of the age, scholar printers everywhere were probing their way towards readable type and the intelligible layout of text, towards consistency and accuracy. At some expense they hired 'correctors' to scrutinize their proofs for literals, to vouch for foreign words, spellings, and punctuation. Their fine productions, acclaimed by an ever more discerning readership, pressed new standards on all their fellow craftsmen.

Accordingly, in the daily round of life, the status of books improved. From the Queen down, reading was essential to one's pleasure, and so, apparently, was scribbling. The Elizabethans, who were nothing if not communicative, left behind them an abundance of drama, poetry, and fiction—not to mention millions of letters, pamphlets, broadsides, diaries, account books, journals, and contemporary histories. The affluent middle class, keen to improve itself—to straddle that invisible, but palpable, barrier to upperclass acceptance—began to buy books and pamphlets of advice and instruction. As experiences broadened, so sharpened too the hunger for more reading matter. From 1586 to 1640, as there were only about twenty-five master printers at work in London sharing some fifty-three presses, it was a scramble to keep the St. Paul's bookstalls supplied with the romances, encyclopaedias, plays, prayers, jest books, and histories that the public were demanding. Though literacy was clearly there to stay, society (loving to read aloud and fond of its sermons) continued to operate largely through speech, and ears remained the dominant organs in sifting the intake of information. Printing, in time, would lock the chatter into metal type and impose its rules of uniformity; but for the moment, variability was the major component of commonplace, typographical products. If the book was merely average, the reader's ride, though improved, was still a bumpy one. The immense mix of word choice, the unsettled spellings, and erratic

punctuation were having their last fling before printers marked out their targets and coordinated networks of agreed-upon details.

Notoriously, England was slow to come to heel. The publications of the Early English Text Society offer a veritable quarry of the misapplied stop. One sees it there, meandering onto alien terrain where it disrupts the unity of subjects and verbs and creates so many false trails and jerky rhythms that one can only excuse its presence on the grounds of childish ornament, used perhaps wistfully to lend touches of professionalism. How could the reader, oral or silent, possibly have paid any attention to them? Yet, Caxton, for example, had sought to be clear. Witness his comment in the dedication (ca. 1489) of the poem *Blanchardyn and Eglantine* to the Queen: "I hope that it shall be understonden of the redars and herers: And that shall suffyse".[26] Despite all that earnestness, he proceeded forthwith to contribute to the confusion (of terminology and sense) that he so yearned to lay to rest, by his own random and undifferentiated application of the comma and virgule. In his printing of *The Churl and the Bird*, translated from the French by John Lydgate, the line endings as *per cola et commata* (see Part One) seem to have satisfied his breath intakes as well as, on occasion, his sense of completed concept. Within the entire twenty or so pages of rhymed verses (seven lines per stanza), there is but one (:) and only a few (/)s—the latter unfailingly found in the middle of a line, where it sometimes confounds the meaning absolutely.

Meanwhile, as we have seen, visionaries were reasoning a path through the disorder. It was their goal to convert mutable sound into durable images. The expanding visual sense favored syntax as the critical element in language structure, and logical (or syntactical) punctuation to accompany it, for the eye tends to disjoin not only words, but sentence segments—that is, clauses and phrases—and to analyze them in terms of how they preponderate over one another. But while these new fields were greening, old aural customs persisted. Pitch, volume, and rhythm—all grist for the ear—continued to pattern a great deal of the written delivery. Word sounds that were still vividly imagined in the head dictated the placement of rhythmical (or euphuistic) puncts. The clash came when speech habits coerced pausal marks into positions that trespassed the boundaries of syntac-

26. William Caxton, *Blanchardyn and Eglantine* (London, 1489), *Early English Text Society* (London: Trübner & Co., 1890), 2.

wpnes that thenne shall be come to the astate of wydowhed
their doughters & also their children/ their grete treysours &
all that they be worthe shall be rauysshed. habandouned/ ta-
ken & departed in to an hondreth thousand shippes/ chassed
carped & transported & expised from theyr contrey/ and putte
oute of their nacyon/ the one slayne. the other in prison in
right grete seruage & captyvyte/ they shalbe solde as wylde
bestes/ iniuried desopsed & beten/ Theyr fayr doughters & the
ir vyrgynes shall be habandouned to men by force & deflow-
red/ and to a ryght grete shame deliuered & vyolated apenst
their wylle. A hondred thousande cuysses shall be apparey-
led for theym more than men can recoute ne telle/ Thenne
shall my shame be socoured & the maculates taken from me
by Hanyball that shall be borne of myn assches/ whiche shal
be a man of grete power & of grete renomee/ preu hardy &
estuial wyse aboue all men y shall be in his tyme. so that me
more shalbe therof as longe as skyn & erthe shall last. but
in y meane whise I make a request to you all/ & after to yo
ur children whan they sh all be borne & to all their lygnage
y of theym shall come vnto thende of the worlde/ that they
make werre by armes & by batayles/ by see & by londe/ by
assaultes & shippes apenst y traytours twians asonge as
they shall lyue/ & that y see whiche is in oure lond & the ry
uages & portes & the walwes be to them repulsyng cotrare
& rebel euer more. thise thynges sayd by dydo enraged from
hir good wytte/ troubled in courage more than euer she was
esprised so all partes. sekyng meanes moost subtil to thē-
de of her myserable lyf. whiche she can support no senger soo
weri she was of it/ wyllyng to fynde som meane to voyde o
ute of hir castel all them y were there/ as she had of custu-
me whan she wold do sacrifyces. & y she myght abyde alone

tical integrity. We will be studying some of these clashes later, but for the moment let us define the two styles in terms of example.

> Logical: But, in general, the public did not take to cold baths.
> Euphuistic: But in general, the public did not take to cold baths.

As is apparent, the logical pointing brings out the intellectual texture. Through separation of word groups, it stresses the contrariness of the *but*, which is there to refute some previous assertion and which differentiates the writer's slight change of stance in expressing his two views: 1) that some of the public liked cold baths; 2) that most of them did not. The euphuistic approach scoops up the song of the three opener words, ignoring syntactical sensitivities. Sadly, it fails the voice as well. All the delicate variance that it might have conjured up has escaped, for euphuistic punctating is utterly inadequate to reflect fully the subtleties inherent in the drop, rise, rhythm, and volume of the human voice. To guide the likeliest rendition would call for another pause after the subject:

> But in general, the public, did not take to cold baths.

Or, in the case of an open-air speech:

> But in general, the public, did not take, to cold baths.

Contemporary news readers such as Peter Jennings or Dan Rather tire their listeners with the monotonous trick of pausing before each noun group:

> But in general, the public did not take to, cold baths.

Nevertheless, as it stands in any one of our examples, the statement is comprehensible. As for the interesting option of deleting all the punctuation in the sample sentence, that will be a matter for discussion in the final part of "The Punctator's World", where we will deal with contemporary styles.

Sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century England wavered over the two incompatible principles of pointing text. Whereas euphuistic punctuation disarranges hierarchical relationships, logical punctua-

tion is awkward in talk. Thus neither is perfectly satisfying. When the eye began to participate in, then to dominate intellectual communication, the balance tipped. Under the guidance of the scholar printers and the new breed of author (whose concern for literary eternity was now broadly emergent), punctating forsook speech, with its breathing rhythms, its hodgepodge of dialects and transient idiom, and inclined to the permanence of logic.

INTO PRINT WITH POETRY

How the compositor dealt with his author's copy during this standardization period is a rich source for discovery. An example is the British Library's autograph manuscript (Cantos XIV–XLVI, intact with notes and instructions to the printer) of Sir John Harington's translation into English *ottava rima* of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. According to W. W. Greg it is certain that this manuscript was the one used by Richard Field ("as good a printer as any in the London of his time") for the original edition of the work in 1591. As such, it affords a splendid opportunity for precisely observing how an Elizabethan compositor followed copy in the matter of punctuation. Comparisons of two verses are made below. In italics, the verses are as they appear in Harington's manuscript; in roman, as Field printed them.[27] The lines where punctuation varies are marked by asterisks.

<div align="center">

6

And so far foorth his wrath and fury grew,
* *hee wryngs his necke as pincers wryng a nayle,*
* *and twyse, or thryse, abowt his hed him threw,*
* *as husbandmen, that threshe do tosse a flayle:*
* *Dyvers reports, doe afterward ensew,*
  but which be trew, and which of truth do fayle,
  Is hard to say: some say hee was so battered,
* *that all his lymms, abowt a rocke wear skattered./*

And so farre foorth his wrath and furie grew,
  * He wrings his necke, as pincers wring a naile,

</div>

27. W. W. Greg, "An Elizabethan Printer and his Copy", *The Library*, 4th ser., 4 (September 1923): 110–15.

* And twise or thrise about his head him threw,

* As husbandmen that thresh, do tosse a flaile:

* Diuerse reports do afterwards ensew,
But which be true, and which of truth do faile,
Is hard to say: some say he was so battered,

* That all his limbs about a rocke were scattered.

7

* *Some say that to the sea hee hurled him*
thowghe dyvers furlongs distant from the place,

* *and that hee dyde, becawse hee cowld not swim,*

* *others report, som saynt did him that grace:*
to save his lyfe, and heale each broken lim,

* *and to the shore, to bring him in short space.*
the lykelyhood heerof, who lyst may way,

* *for now of him I have no more to say./*

*Some say that to the sea he hurled him,
Though diuerse furlongs distant from the place,

* And that he dide, because he could not swim:

* Others report, some saint did him that grace,
To saue his life, and heale each broken lim,

* And to the shore did bring him in short space.
The likelyhood hereof, who list may way,

* For now of him, I haue no more to say.

The changes from Harington's archaic spelling, typical of the average educated writer at the end of Elizabeth's reign, to Field's generally more regular and modern style are apparent. As for punctuation, Harington's is curiously mechanical, with a colon ending every fourth line and a period every eighth—quite regardless of sense, as for example, in the case of the colon in verse 7. Harington ends all other lines (the first in verse 7 being an exception, and most likely an oversight) with a comma or a full stop—a feature, typical of poetic metrical punctuation, that imposes a harping rhythm, scarcely relieved by the internal pausal commas, which appear in profusion and sometimes without relation to meaning. Field regularizes these phrasal points, and brings them firmly into keeping with the sense. In his

version the internal commas largely disappear. Professor Greg notes "a distinct though by no means consistent tendency to confine them to grammatical positions. . . . But again, uniformity is not stable: in the very last line Field has introduced a purely rhetorical comma that is not in the manuscript."[28]

Overall, one can rely very little on the authenticity of punctuation in early editions. Although a point might seem effective, it cannot with confidence be attributed to the author. In any case, the average compositor would probably have paid little attention to it, whatever it was or wherever it was placed. Perhaps some of the "striking instances of dramatic pointing that critics have discovered in early editions do in fact represent sudden inspirations of the author, though it is likely that they have survived more or less by chance in a general system (such as it was) imposed upon the text in the printing house".[29]

Now let us watch how, twenty years later, a more intellectual poet, John Donne, punctuated the lines of "A Letter to the Lady Carey, and Mrs. Essex Riche". This sixty-three-line piece, the only extant holograph manuscript of a Donne poem, is now in the Bodleian Library. Written in 1612 and represented below by italic lines, it offers the only reliable view of the poet's punctating practice in verse. The intervening indented roman lines are as they appear in the first printed collection of Donne's poems, assembled by his son in 1633. Asterisks mark the punctuational changes.[30]

28. Greg, "An Elizabethan Printer", 115. See also: Mindele Treip, *Milton's Punctuation and Changing English Usage, 1582–1676* (London: Methuen, 1970), 15. Harington's style of punctuation (essentially a metrical one) was motivated by a concern to delineate the poem's formal shape and contours: that is, the verses, lines, caesuras. During the period under discussion, metrical pointing was not unusual in poetry; often it was mixed with rhythmical punctuation, to open up the lines for a more natural breathing and for the accentuation of word groups. For the reader of this survey it will perhaps be simplest to think of metrical punctating as a subset of the rhythmical (or euphuistic, or elocutionary), and to think of that rhythmical group as incorporating all the pointing practices that do not deal with logical (or syntactical) clarification.

29. W. W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 111.

30. A. C. Partridge, *John Donne: Language and Style* (London: André Deutsch, 1978), 24–27; and John Donne, *Poems by J. D.* (London: John Marriot, 1633).

Madame/
Madame, *
Here, where by all, all Saints invoked are,
Here* where by All* All Saincts invoked are,
T'were too much Scisme to bee singulare,
'Twere too much schisme to be singular,
And gainst a practise generall to war;
And 'gainst a practise generall to warre. *

Yett, turninge to Saints, should my Humilitee
Yet turning to Saincts, should my'humility
To other Saint, then yo^w, directed bee,   5
To other Sainct* then you* directed bee,   5
That were to make my Scisme Heresee.
That were to make my schisme,* heresie.

nor would I bee a Convertite so cold
Nor* would I be a Convertite so cold,*
As not to tell ytt; If thys bee to bold,
As not to tell it; If this be too bold,
Pardons are in thys Market cheaply sold.
Pardons are in this market cheaply sold.

where, because Fayth ys in too lowe degree,   10
Where,* because Faith is in too low degree,   10
I thought yt some Apostleship in mee,
I thought it some Apostleship in mee*
To speak things wch by Fayth alone I see:
To speake things which by faith alone I see. *

That ys, of yo^w, who are a firmament
That is, of you, who is a firmament
Of vertues, where no one ys growen, nor spent;
Of virtues, where no one is growne, or spent,*
Thay'are yor Materialls, not yor Ornament.   15
They'are your materials, not your ornament.   15

Though the single on-line dot of the italicized manuscript (cf. line
6, followed by *nor*; and line 9, followed by *where*) is startling at first,
the modern reader comes to see that Donne was attributing to it the

value of a heightened comma and applying it to clarify relationships. Where his concern for elocutionary guidance was strong, however, he was ready enough to respond, though not at the cost of meaning. His commas, which are often superfluous to syntactical needs, must as a rule be attributed to euphuistic intentions. It is interesting to note the care that he took: to divide the two *alls* in the first line; to maintain the enjambments (unlike Harington) in lines 4, 7, and 13; to implant the comma after *mee* (line 11) to signal its appositive connection with *yt*; to separate by commas the *because* clause in line 10; and to distinguish by comma the antithesis between *Materialls* and *Ornament* (line 15). Another interesting comma occurs in the last line (not shown) of the poem: "He that beleevs himselfe, doth never ly". In this case, Donne was following a strong convention that has remained standard in English into the twentieth century. The marking off of a multiword subject from its verb is not infrequently found in literature and even journalism today, and is a common feature in the literature of other languages (for example, German and Italian). In general, however, the modern writer of English, with his tight sentences and strong feel for syntactical ordering, has discarded this particular device.

In the entire poem Donne himself used twelve semicolons, a very high number for any writer at this date. Usually, they are followed by a capitalized word, but in three cases they are followed by a lowercase word, without apparent differentiation. In some instances a greater-than-comma-value pause seems justifiable. All in all, Donne, though attentive to the powers of both the aural and the visual punct, applied no system to his semicolons as strict as the one that typography would soon introduce. As for colons, two are to be found in his holograph, and both times they are used syntactically for the purpose (still in force today) of indicating a resumptive function.[31]

SHAKESPEARE: DRAMA, POETRY, PUNCTUATION

We will turn next to the theatre to see how dramatic literature fared as it was readied for public consumption. In their passage from

31. Partridge, *John Donne*, 30–31. See also Treip, *Milton's Punctuation*, 31. Where no capital letter follows a perfect stop (colon or period), the intention, apparently, is to stress the near independence of each main component, "without indicating any complete discontinuity either in thought or delivery until the concluding full stop".

manuscript to type, plays received even less certain treatment than poems or prose tracts, the manuscripts of which would have passed directly from author (or author's scribe) to printer to be set into type and punctuated according to shop standards. Autograph copy from theatre production, however, ran a gauntlet of graftings by the playhouse scribes, the bookkeeper, the prompter, and later, the compositor at the printing shop. Of all of these, it is the prompter's marks that are perhaps the most confusing to the modern eye. His excessive insertions *despite syntax* of commas and colons (to indicate dramatic pauses and breathing stops) and his sometimes mid-sentence capital letters (for emphasis) were regarded as essential aids to the actor.[32] Such disorder, moreover, was further compounded in a number of ways. For a fee the bookkeeper (an experienced scribe) would copy out a play in his best, but nevertheless inexact, script. When originals and prompters' copies went astray, and particularly after the burning of the Globe in 1613, bookkeepers would produce fresh texts from memory, or from foul papers, or actors' scraps, or rough drafts supplied by authors.[33] But normally, once the performance was over and the text released for printing, the prompter's manuscript (for it was often enough his) then passed to the compositor, where it underwent its final overhaul. There, hit or miss, it was subject to the vagaries of house editing rules, to decisions inspired by carelessness or stupidity—even to the mischance that the needed piece of type might be missing from the type drawer. In any case, Elizabethan printers rarely expended their best efforts on the quarto format publications, which they considered ephemeral. And even though they might strive for accuracy while setting type, they were hampered by the heavy annotations generally to be found on dramatic manuscripts. Even the neat scribal transcripts could not be trusted. Scribes were "liable to introduce error in copying difficult manuscripts, and also had a habit of sophisticating what they copied—for example, by expanding colloquial contractions—in ways that would distort the dramatist's intentions".[34]

32. A. C. Partridge, *Orthography in Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama* (London: Edward Arnold, 1964), 125.
33. W. W. Greg, "Prompt Copies, Private Transcripts, and the 'Playhouse Scrivener' ", *The Library*, 4th ser., 6 (September 1925): 149–56.
34. Wells, *William Shakespeare*, xxxv.

As the Harington-Field example (see pages 103–4) suggests, Elizabethan punctating habits were not subject to any principle more dominating than flexibility itself. The language was evolving by giant steps, and where past met present lay a great mix. As the grammar firmed, punctuation moved—according to the taste and assurance of the individual writer—away from the essentially rhythmic and into structural domains. As far as we can tell, Shakespeare punctuated his own fluid syntax with a light pen. Lines from act 5, scene 1, of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" attest to his sensitive ear and to an interest in the matter of pausal stops—at least in oral delivery.

> Lysander: [About Quince] He had rid his prologue like a rough
>   colt: he knows not the stop. A good moral, my Lord: it
>   is not enough to speak, but to speak true.
> Hippolyta: Indeed, he hath played on this prologue like a
>   child on a recorder—a sound, but not in government.

Ralph Crane (scrivener to the King's Men) is known to have imposed his pointing system upon the texts that he transcribed.[35] In general, when manuscripts went to press, the printers strengthened the stops they found in the copy, changing a comma to a colon, a colon to a period—and thereby took great liberties.[36] One is not surprised, then, to discover that the 1600 quarto of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (which was probably written and performed some five or six years earlier) is far more precisely punctuated than Shakespeare was likely to have intended it to be. The imposition of such a precision reduced ambiguities that might have been wanted, and forced definition onto indefinition. The light stopping that appears in the better, more authoritative Shakespeare quartos seems more suited to the freer, literary flow of Elizabethan statement.[37]

The English Renaissance attitude towards all aspects of writing was unstable. Spelling forms were still unsettled, as were words themselves and the syntax that couched them. But particularly in the area of drama, where poetical concerns intersected with speech and both

35. Ibid., xxxvii.
36. Raymond Macdonald Alden, "The Punctuation of Shakespeare's Printers", *PMLA* 39 (1924): 579–80.
37. Greg, *Editorial Problem in Shakespeare*, 111.

again with the strictures of print, indecision about punctuation seemed common. The uncertainty was demonstrated more or less constantly in the unsure vacillation between rhythmical and logical motives for the breaking up of text. Not infrequently, the final version of a printed play would issue forth pointed for syntactical emphasis but bearing still the undeleted marks of previous punctators. A. E. Partridge, in speaking of Shakespearean texts, notes, for example, that brackets have been found "in some Good Quartos to indicate a drop or change in the voice. These reappear in the Folio, along with the use of brackets for syntactical parentheses in the form of interpolated phrases and clauses."[38] On the general importance of Shakespearean punctuation, Partridge adds:[39]

> In his most passionate outbursts [Shakespeare's] style could be tortured, and neglect its syntax. His is, perhaps, the most difficult of Elizabethan styles for the grammarian to analyse into recognizable clauses. There are passages of the writing so characteristically his, that no one else could have been responsible for them. These passages called equally for his own individuality of punctuation. It is, therefore, regrettable that this pointing can never be certainly recovered, to throw further light on the processes of his thought.

In his book *Shakespearean Punctuation*, Percy Simpson has defended the effectiveness of Elizabethan punctators. They were, Simpson insisted, quite consistent in their assignments of value for the various points in use. The fact is simply that English punctuation has changed radically in the last 300 years. "Modern punctuation is, or at any rate attempts to be, logical; the earlier system was mainly rhythmical. Modern punctuation is uniform; old punctuation is quite the reverse. For the poet a flexible system allowed subtle differences of tones."[40]

Although flexibility might well have appealed to the sensibilities of a poet, there is, nevertheless, evidence of sheer uncertainty in printers' shops. A good example is found in the varied versions of

38. Partridge, *Orthography*, 135.
39. Ibid., 140.
40. Percy Simpson, *Shakespearean Punctuation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), 8.

the final six lines of Shakespeare's sonnet "Two loves I have". In his 1599 edition, Jaggard, a notorious heavy-stopper, has rendered them almost meaningless:[41]

> And whether that my Angell be turnde feend,
> Suspect I may (yet not directly tell:
> For being both to me: both, to each friend,
> I ghesse one Angell in anothers hell:
>   The truth I shall not know, but live in doubt,
>   Till my bad Angell fire my good one out.

The poem is thus left to grind to its conclusion in the dropped-voice gear activated by an unclosed left parenthesis. Compare now Thorpe's lighter stopping in his edition of 1609 (asterisks mark the punctuational changes):[42]

> And whether that my angel be turn'd finde,
> Suspect I may* yet not directly tell,*
> But being both from me* both* to each friend,
> I gesse one angel in an others hel.*
>   Yet this shal I nere know* but live in doubt,
>   Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

Clearly, compositors enjoyed a broad license in the placement of stops; but they were not, according to Simpson, the pack of bumbling boneheads that many critics have proclaimed them to be. Is it conceivable, he asked, that "a human being endowed with reason sufficient to serve an apprenticeship, could work at the trade of printing all his life, and set up the type of book after book, without fathoming the inscrutable mystery of the comma and the full stop?"[43]

Simpson, who shows a sensitive appreciation of euphuistic punctuation, minutely compares a number of Shakespearean lines to see how the various distinctions affect the meaning. For example, in his section entitled "Comma marking a metrical pause", he says:[44]

41. Partridge, *Orthography*, 133.
42. Ibid., 134.
43. Simpson, *Shakespearean Punctuation*, 8.
44. Ibid., 24.

[In the following excerpt] the effect of the comma is to give a momentary check to the rhythm and fix attention on the words which follow.

> And nothing gainst Times sieth can make defence
> Save breed to brave him, when he takes thee hence.
>   (Sonnet xii)

A beautiful and suggestive pointing: the alliteration of "breed" and "brave" carries on the line to the pause where the voice seems to falter at the thought of the final parting. The passage is ruined by the modern punctuation,

> And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
> Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

Here are only a few of the forty-three punctuational topics about which Simpson has genuinely interesting and elucidating things to say. As will be realized, the punctator's world is not necessarily a small one.

> Vocative without commas
> Comma between object and complement
> Comma marking ellipse of copula
> Semicolon with preliminary clauses
> Semicolon marking an interrupted speech
> Colon marking an interrupted speech
> The use of ? in exclamations
> Comma marking the logical subject
> The emphasizing semicolon
> The emphasizing comma
> Colon marking an emphatic pause
> Antithetic colon
> The full stop in an incomplete sentence [to be used for a *huge*
>   pause when the field is already littered with colons, semi-
>   colons, and commas]
> Capital letters for emphasis

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, fashions changed in English prose. The Attic (or Senecan) style re-emerged with a fresh strength to challenge the euphuistic dogmata that rhetorical studies had been instilling into students for centuries. Science was now beginning to thrive in the radiance of Ramist logic and puritanical sincerity, and it was recognized that stark truth was not satisfactorily conveyed by tropes and schemes and *cursus* cadences. Serious writers—politicians, lawyers, doctors, gentlemen-scholars, and theologians—needed to express their thoughts as precisely as they could, clarity being the declared intent. Accordingly, their prose took on a different ring. It was marked by the straightening out of the hitherto circuitous modes of saying what was meant; and by the repression of rhythmic repetitions, forced alliterations, and the symmetries of phrases and clauses—all the elaborate patterns and balances that, before the common usage of punctuation, had helped to guide the reader (see Part Three). Now, the Attic stylist was favoring short, deliberately disparate clauses because they suggested in their faster, irregular breathing spans the actuality of hard thinking. For the belief was that to keep its integrity, an idea should be captured in the full ardor of its conception, not molded by afterthought into an artificial casing that was, in effect, the thought of a thought, and not so reasoned either.[45] To assure a safe passage for an idiosyncratic insight, the conveying words needed to impact directly. As for the reader—with the multiplicity of materials that print was now making available to him—he no longer had the time to absorb fatuous gush, however prettily packaged. He needed the facts. The more help the author could give him, the better. In this atmosphere logical punctuation grew stronger.

The old euphuistic school, represented by writers like Sir Thomas More, Roger Ascham, Sir Philip Sidney, and John Lyly, followed the precepts of the oratorical style, replete with the rhetorical ploys inaccurately associated with Cicero. Whereas the euphuistic 'Ciceronians' wrote in strings of echoing and parisonic word groups to achieve

45. Morris W. Croll, *Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1966), 210.

the effect of controlled copiousness, the true Ciceronian periodic sentence, it should be remembered (see Part One), was distinguished by a copious grammatical 'roundness', where clausal and phrasal members did not continue on and on, but held together by interreferential inflexion and the centripetal impulse of the Latinate conjunction.[46] Though the relationship with Cicero was tenuous indeed, the 'Ciceronians' continued to keep up the nominal connection, for the name maintained a tremendous clout in the world of letters. In truth, however, centuries of medieval curricula, patristic writings, and the prestigious *Ars dictandi* had transformed the medium of 'classic' expression. When vernacular English prose took over the burden of hard-nosed explication (previously Latin's job), euphuism attempted to ennoble it not only with 'classical' but also with poetical adornment. The resultant loss of clarity brought protest against the ornaments of 'Ciceronianism' and increased recommendation for the study of argument and structural framework.[47] Embellishment was no longer acknowledged to be the cardinal virtue of expression. Nevertheless, when the 'Ciceronian' formalities were not so dense as to inhibit the warmth or impair the clarity, the euphuistic style could be attractive, and there were sensitive, restrained writers (Lyly on occasion, and certainly Shakespeare) who believed in the value of its artistry. Roger Ascham, another, distraught by the severity of Atticism, wrote sadly, "You know not what hurt ye do to learning, that care not for words, but for matter".[48]

Ascham's own writing illustrates how pleasing both to ear and to mind the controlled 'Ciceronian' rhythms could be:[49]

It is your shame (I speake to you all, you yong gentlemen of England) that one mayd should go beyond you all, in excellencie of learnying, and knowledge of diuers tonges. Pointe forth sir of the best given gentlemen of this Court, and all they together, shew not so much good will, spend not so

46. Barish, *Ben Jonson*, 67.
47. Charles Sears Baldwin, *Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1959), 38. See also Lee A. Sonnino, "Critical Bibliography of Important Renaissance Texts", in *A Handbook to Sixteenth-Century Rhetoric* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), 236–40.
48. Croll, *Style, Rhetoric*, 120.
49. Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster* (London: John Daye, 1570), 21.

much tyme, bestow not so many houres, dayly orderly, &
constantly, for the increase of learnying & knowledge, as
both the Quaenes Maiestie her selfe. Yea I beleue, that be-
side her perfit readines, in Latin, Italian, French, & Spanish,
she readeth here now at Windsore more Greeke every day,
than some Prebendarie of this Chirch both read Latin in a
whole weeke. And that which is most praise worthie of all,
within the walles of her priuie chamber, she hath obteyned
that excellencie of learnying, to understand, speake, & write,
both wittely with head, and faire with hand, as scarse one or
two rare wittes in both the uniuersities have in many yeares
reached onto.

The sentences are manageable in length and the ideas emerge
clearly, unburdened by wearisome alliteration. But note the space-
and time-consuming repetitions, the dyads and triads of synonyms,
and imagine the tedium of ploughing "dayly orderly, & constantly"
through a whole book of them.

But John Donne was the true liberator of this style. He brought it
up to the boundary line of Attic prose with an eloquence that not
only appeals to sensory experience, but also is contentious and func-
tional, plied with muscular rhythms and the wit favored by the in-
tellectual, anti-'Ciceronian' Atticists. Though he did employ eu-
phuistic patterns to accumulate his argument, they are neither rigid
nor restricting. Where he wrote to be seriously read, he broke up the
symmetry of his phrases and pared them of extravagant qualifiers. His
vocabulary is not unduly freighted with Renaissance latinity; on the
contrary, it flows naturally with an occasional colloquialism in token
of warmth. His style, neither aureate nor casual, is full of tension
and so, one can presume, reflects the torments of his temperament.
His words are charged with meaning; their rhythms wake you up.
His wonderful English usage bore out George Puttenham's boast, that
the English language is "no lesse copious pithie and significative then
theirs [the ancients'], our conceipts the same, and our wits no lesse
apt to devise and imitate than theirs".[50] The following sample por-

50. George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (London: Richard Field, 1589),
3. On this point, the author makes further comparison of English poetical possibility
with the triumphs of "the Greeks and Latines". They have their metrical feet which

tion of a sentence is from Donne's "A Defence of Women's Inconstancy".[51]

> That Women are *Inconstant,* I with any man confess, but
> that *Inconstancy* is a bad quality, I against any man will
> maintain: For every thing as it is one better than another, so
> is it fuller of *change;* The *Heavens* themselves continually turne,
> the *Starres* move, the *Moone* changeth: *Fire* whirleth, *Aire*
> flyeth, *Water* ebbs and flowes, the face of the *Earth* altereth
> her looks, time staies not; . . .

As will have been noticed, a dexterous use of points (both rhetorical and logical) shapes the statement.

But there is more for the punctator in an autograph letter written by Donne about the year 1610, now in the Bodleian Library. It follows, as taken from Partridge.[52]

> Sr
> I make account that thys Booke hath inough perform'd
> y[t] w[ch] yt undertooke, both by Argument and Example. Itt
> shall therfore the lesse neede to bee yttselfe another
> Example of y[e] Doctrine. Itt shall not therefore kyll yttselfe;
> that ys, not bury itselfe. for if ytt should do so, those   5
> reasons by w[ch] that Act should bee defended or excusd,
> were also lost w[t] ytt. Since ytt ys content to liue, ytt cannot
> chuse a wholsomer ayre than yo[r] Library, where Autors of
> all complexions are preserud. If any of them grudge thys
> Booke a roome, and suspect ytt of new, or dangerous   10
> Doctrine, yo[u], who know us all, can best Moderate. To
> those Reasons, w[ch] I know yo[r] Loue to mee wyll make in
> my fauor, and dischardge, yo[u] may add thys, That though

"we have not, nor as yet never went about to frame (the nature of our language and wordes not permitting it) we have in stead thereof twentie other curious points in that skill more then they ever had, by reason of our rime and tunable concords or simphonie, which they never observed".

51. John Donne, "A Defence of Women's Inconstancy" from *Paradoxes and Problems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 75.

52. Partridge, *John Donne,* 32.

thys Doctrine hath not beene tought nor defended by
writers, yet they, most of any sorte of Men in the world,   15
haue practisd ytt.

In 1651 the same letter appeared in print in the first published
edition of Donne's letters. The printer had imposed a number of
punctuation changes on the original holograph. These are:

Line 5: The period after *itselfe* is now a semicolon, an acceptable
change by modern standards.

Line 6: A comma has been inserted after *reasons*, violating the
integrity of the words *those reasons by which* that Donne had properly
perceived to be restrictive.

Line 10: Donne's rhetorical comma after *new* has been deleted in
favor of a stronger coupling of *new* with *dangerous*, and thus both,
equally, with *Doctrine*. Modern sensibilities will perhaps prefer this.

Line 11: The logical comma has been deleted after *you*, but not
after *all*. Thus, the subject is divided from the verb it governs.

Line 12: The comma has been deleted after *Reasons*, a proper cor-
rection in modern terms, since the clause that follows is restrictive.

Line 13: The comma is deleted after *favor* to unite *make* with *dis-
chardge* (acceptable); the comma after *dischardge* now marks off an
opening, lengthy prepositional phrase (acceptable); and the *T* of *That*,
after *thys*, is lowercased (again, acceptable). Given the resumptive
nature of the point after the said *thys*, which introduces the final
noun clause, writers today might have preferred a colon.

As this example suggests, Donne was a thinker when it came to
punctuation. He used commas and semicolons liberally to assort his
pile-ups of clause and phrase, and in this way served his complex,
often turbulent, prose very well.[53]

The Attic style opposed profuseness. Its proponents had a taste for
bare and level expression, for the exact portrayal of things as they
are. Conceived in the spirit of Erasmus, Lipsius, and Ramus, and

53. Ibid. Evelyn M. Simpson in "A Note on Donne's Punctuation", *Review of
English Studies* 4 (1928): 295–300, corroborates this feature of Donne's extreme care
and fine shading in the matter of pointing. Careful printers followed it with respect
though never with total accuracy. As the century progressed and the customs of
pointing firmed, Donne's commas seemed increasingly excessive.

championed most notably in England by Sir Francis Bacon (for whom, *pace* Ascham, content was paramount), it drew its authority from Senecan terseness, with worshipful nods to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Atticists despised the Gorgianic figures associated with conventional sermonizing. The sought-after element was ingenuity, which was best displayed by sparky aphorisms, with unexpected imbalances of phrasing to prove alertness and to sharpen up inattentive minds. These were either set into short, choppy sentences (the curt style) or strung together (the loose style) in a progression of short clauses frailly conjoined with *ands*, *ors*, or *buts* and without syntactical connection. Parentheses in the loose style also figured prominently, as did open-ended and noncommittal absolute-participle constructions. The effect of all this was cumulative and massive, as indeed was that of the true Ciceronian period. But here, there was no artificial rounding off, no elaborate interweaving or tight cohesion of parts rendered possible by Latin inflexions; nor was frequent use made of the strong conjunctives—*who, which, although, because*—that would soon structure the classical prose of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Instead, as does thinking, the loose style simply pattered on: opening statements were second-guessed, then enlarged upon and illustrated, as the pulses of intellect produced them. Juxtaposition proved the relationship.[54] Yet despite the unexpected twists and jumps of thought in writing such as this, one senses that the communicating effort in general was becoming a collaborative affair. Exterior reality, perceived through the lens of science by an enlarged (thanks to print) visual sense, was drawing writers out of self-absorption. They were learning to accept readers as full partners in the acts of thinking, explaining, and understanding, for which logic was, increasingly, the universal medium.[55] Communication, in the era's best form, was at last discarding the histrionics that had for centuries relieved the author's emotions at the reader's expense.

The Attic style relied on tropes (antithesis, metaphor, *argutiae*— or turns of wit). *Sententiae* (or aphorisms) were thought to add incisiveness and an aura of profundity. Though called a 'natural' style, Atticism had been crafted by many intelligences, whose desire was

54. Croll *Style, Rhetoric*, 58–67, 220–24.
55. Walter J. Ong, *Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974), passim.

to reveal the experiences of solitary intellects, to express (even in the subtleties of style) the difficulties of a mind exploring unfamiliar truth. The movement, in general, was an effort to divorce prose writing from the formalism of Renaissance rhetoric, and to fit it for philosophy and science.[56]

Two samples will illustrate its claims: first, a quotation taken from Seneca's "On Benefits" from the *Moral Essays*. Seneca's works had come down through the centuries almost unimpaired and constantly studied. Reeking of medieval acceptance and marked by a curtness that aligned it with the camp of science and Puritanism (with overtones of heresy), Senecan prose was generally suspect by the church fathers.[57, 58]

> But he who is happy in having received a benefit tastes a constant and unfailing pleasure, and rejoices in viewing, not the gift, but the intention of him from whom he received it. The grateful man delights in a benefit over and over, the ungrateful man but once.

The writing of Sir Thomas Browne abounds in the strung-out sentences of the loose Attic style. Morris W. Croll's analysis of a sentence from the first book of the *Religio Medici* is worth the while of any punctator to inspect closely.[59]

> As there were many reformers, so likewise many reformations; every country proceeding in a particular way and method, according as their national interest, together with their constitution and clime, inclined them: some angrily and with extremity; others calmly and with mediocrity, not rending, but easily dividing, the community, and leaving an honest possibility of a reconciliation;—which, though peaceable spirits do desire, and may conceive that revolution of time and the mercies of God may effect, yet that judgment that

56. Croll, *Style, Rhetoric*, 90, 95.
57. Ibid., 147, 49.
58. Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Moral Essays*, 3 vols., trans. John W. Basore (London: Wm. Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1935), 3:159.
59. Croll, *Style, Rhetoric*, 225.

shall consider the present antipathies between the two extremes,—their contrarieties in condition, affection, and opinion,—may with the same hopes, expect a union in the poles of heaven.

The entirety constitutes a single sentence. However, as Croll points out, the opening, sharply formulated statement, being itself complete, fails to imply anything of what follows. Appearing brusquely, it gives way to an absolute participial construction that itself buds off a pair of appositional members, one of these again budding two new members by means of dangling participles. A *which*, relating only to the word 'reconciliation', then picks up the thought and leads it into a complex (initially tight) *though . . . yet* construction. Nevertheless, the sentence still moves freely, digressing at will and extricates itself from the complex form by a kind of anacoluthon (an abandonment of the ongoing construction) in the *yet* clause, "broadening its scope, and gathering new confluents, till it ends, like a river, in an opening view".[60]

Punctuation is a necessity for such an elastic style. In this era of post-rhetorical, pre-Cartesian freedom, the heavy freight of such sentences strains the grammar about which the English of that period had not really begun to think. The rules of syntax were thus made to bear the extravagances of the new liberty. Connections were casual between units of thought; digressions frequent; parentheses overdone. Anacoluthon was relied on to keep up the flow. Even the limits of sentences were not always clear. The way through the tangle was to cut off the assimilable bits by colons and semicolons, which for the time were the symbols of a smart fashion. Later, concern for the precise meaning of words, and for the sentence as a logical unit, would bring about a gradual reduction of sentential length and with that, the replacement of semicolons and colons with commas and periods. Because of the unsure syntax, the "only possible punctuation of seventeenth-century prose [was] that which it used itself".[61]

As Morris Croll points out, both curt and loose Attic writing reveal aspects of the seventeenth-century mind: "its sententiousness, its penetrating wit, its Stoic intensity, on the one hand, and its

60. Croll, *Style, Rhetoric*, 225.
61. Ibid., 230–33.

dislike of formalism, its roving and self-exploring curiosity, in brief, its sceptical tendency, on the other". Rarely is either style found in a pure and extended state, nor are the two "always distinguishable". Rhythms and formulae from the rhetorical camp were always on hand. For to be truly representative of its age, seventeenth-century prose needed to draw on both: the loftily formal, eloquent in its grave demeanor; and the intense and profound, the realistic and revealing.[62]

Sir Francis Bacon, the prophet of modern science and the protagonist of sound logic in prose, combined the two, as witness the following single sentence (with punctuation intact) from the 1605 edition of *The Advancement of Learning*.[63]

> And that learning should take up too much time or leasure, I answere, the most active or basic man that hath been or can bee, hath (no question) many vacant times of leasure, while he expecteth the tides and returnes of businesse (except he be either tedious, and of no dispatch, or lightly and unworthily ambitious, to meddle in thinges that may be better done by others) and then the question is, but how those spaces and times of leasure shall be filled and spent: whether in pleasures, or in studies; as was wel answered by *Demosthenes* to his adversarie *Aeschynes*, that was a man given to pleasure, and told him, *That his Orations did smell of the Lampe: Indeede* (sayd *Demosthenes*) *there is a great difference betweene the thinges that you and I doe by Lampe-light*: so as no man neede doubt, that learning will expulse businesse, but rather it will keepe and defend the possession of the mind against idlenesse and pleasure, which otherwise, at unawares, may enter to the preiudice of both.

BEN JONSON

With the national mind so respectful of knowledge and mechanical proficiency, the Jacobean gentleman quite naturally gave his at-

62. Ibid., 194.
63. Francis Bacon, *Of the Proficience and Advancement of Learning, Divine and Humane* (London: Henrie Tomes, 1605), 10b.

tention to the pursuit of precision. He had learned to use his brain, and was confident that his intellectual powers would lead him to some good end. Detail, measurements, definition, categories, hierarchies, and analyses characterized his thinking.

Such a man was Ben Jonson, who, to our delight, applied his sharpened mind not only to grammar but to the subtleties of pointing. He was himself the owner of a large collection of grammars, amongst them the *Grammatica* of Pierre Ramus, a prime inspirant of the emergent Attic prose movement. Among the better known English grammatical authorities, whose works sat upon Jonson's shelves, were: John Hart (1570), Richard Mulcaster (1582), William Bullokar (1586), P. Greenwood (1594), and Charles Butler (1633).[64]

Jonson prepared his own texts for the printer with exacting care— rewriting, then checking again over the compositor's shoulder. Partridge notes his meticulousness in marking elisions, his hyphenation of compound words, his use of scholarly spellings, and of the commas, colons, and semicolons, all applied abundantly but with meaningfulness.[65] Simpson observes that within twenty-four lines (act 3, scene 3 of "Criticus") Jonson corrected three italic colons and two italic notes of interrogation, inserted three apostrophes, and changed two initial capitals to lowercase. Though English authors were generally reading proof by the mid-1530s,[66] Jonson was indeed rare to oversee his own publications so intellectually and to exhort his followers to do likewise with theirs. Like John Donne, he was strongly moved by the pull of logic and the benefits to be derived from careful use of points for syntactical distinction. Nevertheless, the urges of orality were strong, even in him, causing a confluence of punctating motives, as he tried to combine the logical and the rhythmical systems.[67] We have noticed earlier in our glance at Renaissance drama publication how at times confusion was generated from the blending of the two potentially incompatible pointing styles: that which delineated grammatical structures to elicit strict meaning and was hence appropriate for legal, scientific, and theological treatises, where con-

64. Cf. *Ben Jonson: The Man and His Work*, 418–19. Butler's book probably postdated the actual writing of Jonson's grammar.
65. Partridge, *Orthography*, 138.
66. Simpson, *Proof-reading*, 12, 5.
67. See Simpson, *Shakespearean Punctuation*, 56.

tent was both regent and difficult; and that most used for poetry and drama, where the domination of rhythm required a voice for the full effect.

Jonson's delight in seemingly small matters is manifest throughout his short book *The English Grammar*, which first came out in 1640 for the purpose of teaching to "all Strangers" the laws of language. Its spirit of order is strong, as the following admonitory notice from his preface testifies:[68]

Confusion of Language, a Curse.
Experience breedeth Art: Lacke of Experience, Chance.

The flavor of Jonson *Pedagogus* (or as he referred to himself, *elementarius Senex*) is powerfully present in the following type facsimile of his final chapter, from which only his supernumerary examples from the literature are deleted. Interestingly, it was Jonson who brought the "commonly neglected" and vagrant semicolon (he calls it a *subdistinction*) to anchor in English, giving it the distinct value (between comma and period) that it retains today.[69] This point brought a finer grading to the three already fully accepted stops: the period, colon, and comma. Its common appearance, ca. 1589, marked the beginning of the strong logical system in use today.[70, 71]

OF THE DISTINCTION OF
SENTENCES

All the parts of Syntaxe have already beene declared. There resteth one generall affection of the whole, dispersed thorow every member thereof, as the bloud is thorow the body; and consisteth in the breathing, when we pronounce any *Sentence*; For, whereas our breath is by nature so short, that we cannot continue without a stay to speake long together; it was thought necessarie, as well for the speakers ease, as for the plainer deliverance of the things spoken, to invent this meanes, whereby men pausing a pretty while, the whole speech might never the worse be understood.

68. Ben Jonson, *The English Grammar* (London, 1640), I B, 74.
69. Partridge, *Orthography*, 138.
70. *Ben Jonson: The Man and His Work*, 431–32. The semicolon was apparently introduced into England in 1569 and began to be used (erratically) about 1580.
71. Jonson, *English Grammar*, 75–77.

These distinctions are, either of a *perfect*, or *imperfect* sentence. The distinctions of an *imperfect* sentence are two, a *sub-distinction*, and a *Comma*.

A *sub-distinction* is a meane breathing, when the word serveth in-differently, both to the parts of the sentence going before, and following after, and is marked thus (;)

A *Comma* is a distinction of an imperfect sentence, wherein with somewhat a longer breath, the sentence following; and is noted with this shorter semicircle (,).

Hither pertaineth a *Parenthesis*, wherein two comma's include a sentence [i.e., a statement]:

Jewell: *Certaine falshoods* (by meane of good utterance) *have some-time more likely-hood of truth, then truth it selfe.*

These imperfect distinctions in the Syntaxe of a substantive, and an adjective give the former place to the substantive:
Ascham: *Thus the poore Gentleman suffered griefe; great for the paine; but greater for the spite.*

Gower. lib. 2. Speaking of the envious person:
Though he a man see vertuous,
And full of good condition,
Thereof maketh he no mention.

The distinction of a perfect sentence hath a more full stay, and doth rest the spirit, which is a *Pause*, or a *Period*.

A *Pause* is a distinction of a sentence, though perfect in it selfe, yet joyned to another, being marked with two pricks (:).

A *period* is the distinction of a sentence, in all respects perfect, and is marked with one full prick, over against the lower part of the last letter, thus (.).

If a sentence be with an interrogation, we use this note (?).

Sir John Cheeke: *Who can perswade, where treason is above reason; and might ruleth right; and it is had for lawfull, whatsoever is lustfull;*

and Commotioners are better then Commissioners; and common woe is named Commonwealth?

If it be pronounced with an *admiration*, then thus (!)

Sir Tho. More:
  O Lord God, the blindnesse of our mortall nature!

These distinctions (whereof the first is commonly neglected) as they best agree with nature: so come they neerest to the ancient staies of sentences among the Romans, and the Grecians. An example of all foure to make the matter plaine [or more confusing, since he only makes use of two], let us take out of that excellent Oration of Sir John Cheeke, against the Rebells, whereof before we have made
  so often mention: *When common order of the law can take no*
    place in unruly, and disobedient subjects: and all men will of
      wilfulnesse resist with rage, and thinke their owne vio-
        lence, to be the best justice: then be wise Magi-
          strates compelled by necessitie, to seeke an
            extreme remedy, where meane salves
              helpe not, and bring in the Mar-
                tiall Law where none other
                  law serveth
                    *   *
                      *