Chapter Four

Variants with Changes Incorporated

Duplication is found to be operating in the fourth stage of Dickinson's process of versification. Two or more fair copies are made in search of a precise telling of the truth. The different occasions that produce the variants are only incidental to creativeness. Revision appears to be intended for reproducing fair versions of the text as a slant method of overpassing the limits of the lyric.

Incorporated changes alone are taken into consideration in the case of poems with variant versions because suggested alterations appear nowhere in the text. The substitutes are understood; without them the variants could not be.

Duplication operates on the apparently fair version/s of a poem, except for 12 instances. (See Appendix 5). Apart from the 10 Crisis Poems there are 205 poems in this group. (See Appendix 3). All the Crisis Poems bear fair, and apparently final, copies. The fascicles contain 99 fair versions of the poems of this group, and one cancelled version. (See Appendix 6).

Different copies of a poem are produced in order to intensify the degree of fairness of the text though its finality is not thereby guaranteed. Duplication accounts for the verbal and extraverbal changes in the variant versions. Accordingly, there occurs a rephrasing of utterances. Imagery becomes more compact. The alteration of a word is enough to adapt the version of a poem to an occasion. The extraverbal items are given more attention when poems are duplicated. There is a larger number of capitals. The variations in the use of dashes establish greater precision.
There are changes in the lineal positioning of words, and in the arrangement of stanzas.

Crisis Poems 240, 259, 343, and 350 receive special consideration in this chapter. They are analysed with the purpose of examining how Dickinson uses duplication as a slant method of transcendence. Poems 216, 326, and 433 are also taken for illustration here.

A consideration of Emily Dickinson's aesthetic transcendence demands that a poem be treated on a par with its variant versions. "The variants show the care with which Emily Dickinson arrived at her final choices." Nevertheless, the "fair copies are not reliable as an indication of final intention for publication." They, in fact, pose certain problems. One cannot always be certain as to when one version was written and when its variants. Similarly, one often cannot conclude which version of a poem be regarded as final or best, since all variants are not fair copies of poems.

Revising the text is any poet's approach to get closer to the reality of a poem. It indicates a change in the poet's vision of the poem, a greater precision in utterance, and a desire for poetic excellence. It, of course, is a way to perfection because it can lead to greater power and poignancy. Revision is often unavoidable to "the anguish of composition, that anguish of painstakingly trying out in all possible combinations phrase after phrase, that struggle for the impossible balance in a medium so slippery as language."
Revision is of paramount importance to the process of Dickinson's poetic composition. It marks a significant stage in the shaping of the slant telling of the truth to be even more precise. A poem may thus go through several revisions, and result in two or more versions; thereby, the accidents could obviously be done away with, and the essence be retained. This course of duplication may involve only a nominal alteration verbal and extraverbal. It may imply tremendous change. The verse can be reformed altogether in the retelling. Three hundred and nineteen poems exist in variant copies; and 48 pieces are partly rendered variants. (See Appendixes 2 and 3). Two hundred and thirty-nine poems carry two copies each; 59 pieces bear three versions each; 16 verses have four variants each; two poems exist in five copies each, two others in six versions each, and one in seven. The variants would involve changes nominal and multiple. Four poems (228, 297, 322, and 332) of the Crisis Period have three variant readings each. The double-version Crisis Verses are: 219, 240, 259, 310, 319, 325, 326, 327, 328, 333, 334, 342, 343, 350, 433, and 446. Poem 342, however, carries a variant with a difference.4

"Safe in their Alabaster Chambers --" (P 216) is a unique case in question, especially its second stanza which runs into as many as seven versions -- the only instance of its kind in Dickinson. The piece, composed in 1859, did not please Sue whose judgement the poet always valued.5 Hence the revision and the "variant trial substitutes"6 of 1861. It is probable that Dickinson was almost forced to compose the multiple variants of
the poem because of her sister-in-law's comment that the first stanza "is complete in itself; it needs no other, and can't be coupled --." She certainly had to get at the truth of things. Much sagacity was, therefore, expended in the expression of the verse as it was re-told variantly. Emily sought to make Sue and Austin "proud" of her, and to "give me taller feet --."*

Dickinson obviously worked hard "to create a finished poem" by rendering it in variant versions. All the versions are quite fair but not quite final. It, of course, is most true to say that none of the versions "entirely satisfied her." The cause of the dissatisfaction must partly have been that the variation game was played during her Crisis Period. It should have been a time when nothing could indeed satisfy her.

An examination of "Ah, Moon -- and Star!" (P 240) can show how duplication increases the degree of fairness of the text. Dickinson expresses the inaccessibility of her lover. The moon and the star are very far away from the earth. If her lover were only as much removed from her as the firmament, she could have reached him. She would borrow a bonnet of the lark, for the purpose. Or a chamois' silver boot, or a stirrup of an antelope. But he is farther than the moon and the star themselves. He is more than a firmament from her. Therefore she cannot hope to join him.

The two versions of the poem harp on the same theme. But there is a shift in emphasis brought about by the variants; and both are in the fascicles. The first is in Fascicle 11, and the second is in Fascicle 14. The Fascicle 14 copy seems to be the
fairer of the two. If there had been a version published by Dickinson one could possibly speak of a fair and final piece. As the versions stand, the poet seems at best to have given an extension to her slant way of dwelling in possibility. The difference between the two versions occur in the final line of the second and third stanzas.

The whole poem is built on hyperbolic terms. The lover is farther away from the poet than "Moon and -- Star!" Dickinson wishes to post-haste to him on a swift-footed antelope. The course of the antelope is better imaged in "leap to you" of the fairer second version than in "be with you" of the first. A change in diction obviously is a gain in imagery; it begets a more meaningful utterance.

Dickinson at times brings an alteration in the verbal constituents of a poem because it suits the moment. The three versions of Poem 1366 bear this out. The first version was written about 1876, the second about 1878, and the third in 1880. The three "seem to be personalized messages touching symbolically on the theme of friendship." For whom the first version was made is not known. The second formed a part of a message to Dickinson's sister-in-law. Hence the change of "Brother of Ingots -- Ah, Peru --," of the first version, into "Sister of Ophir -- / Ah, Peru --," of the Susan version. The third version was sent incorporated in a letter to Mrs. Edward Tuckerman after the death, on 3 December 1880, of Elihu Root, the 35-year-old professor of mathematics and natural philosophy in Amherst College. The poet did not know him, but knew the esteem with which the Tuckermans
had regarded him. Accordingly, she touched up the poem with necessary modifications. The opening lines of the second version are suitably adapted in those of the third: "Brother of Ophir / Bright Adieu."

The effectiveness of duplication is proved even by the verbal and extraverbal variation in the last line of Poem 240. The Fascicle 11 text reads: "So I can never go!" The Fascicle 14 version has: "And I cannot go!" The logical tone struck by "So," and the generality of statement echoed by "never," become intensely personalized in the Fascicle 14 version: "And I cannot go!" The sad negation in "cannot" stresses the urgency of the present. However, the personal element in the poem does not generate maudlin tears; it is balanced by the exaggerations employed here. The hyperbolic narration transcends the rather sentimental content.

A change in capitalization helps it out. The final "He --" (1 16) of the Fascicle 11 version loses its initial capital in the Fascicle 14 version (1 13). Dickinson thereby tones down the personal plea to her lover yearning for closer proximity.

"My Reward for Being -- was This --" (P 343) is a more significant instance of this kind, where the reproduction of a verse gives greater effectiveness in utterance. The poem speaks gloriously of Dickinson's choice of solitude. She has no material achievements to speak of. But neither an admiralty nor a sceptre could equal her grace as a poet. Dominions could not be exchanged for her present state of bliss.

The Fascicle 18 version is an 11-line piece; the other in
Fascicle 24 is cast in 14 lines. Several changes are involved in the formation of the variant versions. The longer is here considered first.

The poem is a kind of apology for Dickinson's life. Her "Reward for Being" is none other than her profession of poetry. It is hers "by the Right of the White Election!" (P 528). Aesthetic joy is the only fee for changing her life into ever-current verses. There is no material gain or temporal power involved.

Dickinson is "'Miss -- Me --'" (l 7) with the quote marks denoting her singleness. But to her, it is a "Title divine --" (P 1072). Her lover is "Sufficient Dynasty --" (l 9), to uphold her royal statuf'. No "State," no "Empire," (l 12) can be equal to "this Grace" (l 11) of hers. She cannot render in words the "bliss" (l 2) that she feels in being a "Wife -- without the Sign!" (P 1072). Her verse creation is apparently powerless to assess her "so Great --" a "Dower --" (l 14) that is her "Being --"
(l 1).

The ellipsis in line 10 imparts silent emphasis to the inexpressible intensity of personal emotion, just as the inversion in the final line stresses the paradox involved -- the dowry of an unmarried woman. Jane Locke Wadsworth may be the lady of the Calvary parsonage but the presbyter's 'Little Emily' is the true "Empress of Calvary!" (P 1072). The matter could hardly be as Sewall puts it: "The 'title' Emily assumes here may be that of the imagined wife of Samuel Bowles, a title denied her in reality. Or, as the bride of Christ, she may be sharing with him the
martyrdom of Calvary." Indeed, in her letter to Ottis P. Lord, on 3 December 1882, Dickinson calls Wadsworth --"my Clergyman" (L 790).

Owen Thomas contrasts the poem with "Nine by the Right of the White Election!" (P 528), and says that Poem 343 lacks the unity and coherence of the other. What, in fact, serves as the better key to the right appraisal of the piece is its corollary and complement to be found in "Title divine -- is mine!" (P 1072).

Dickinson is keenly aware of the limits of expression here. Her transcendent aesthetic operates; and one sure way to it is to try telling it again. None can even "Peer" (1 11) the soul, and speak out in adequate terms. No set phrase or style can hope to achieve an exact verbal equivalent to the truth. So Dickinson goes in for the variant of a poem as an indirect means of telling the truth, which cannot easily and satisfactorily be told in one version. Hence the variant of the poem, as found in Fascicle 18.

The first line itself marks the difference in the re-telling. In the other version, the line ends in a dash, thereby inviting the reader to pause and consider the thought that has gone before, and to await the thought that is to come. In the Fascicle 18 version, the dash is replaced by a full stop, thereby giving definite finality to the idea that the line contains. The line becomes a proper introduction to all that ensues. The 10 lines following it thus expand and explain "This" (1 1). It is similar to the manner of Shakespeare's Sonnet 66: "Tir'd with all these, for restful death I cry;" the 11 lines to follow the opening line account for the particulars which sum up "these."
The continuity of thought in the Dickinson piece is maintained by the dashes at the end of lines 2 to 10. In the Fascicle 18 version, the poet has befittingly done away with the period that concludes the stanza in the other copy. The dashes within lines mark sudden changes in thought, as the parallelism in "My premium -- My Bliss -- " (1 2), and the contrast in "A Sceptre -- penniless --" (1 4). Truly remarkable is the change in punctuation at the end of the Poem. The Fascicle 18 version concludes the piece in a full stop while the other ends in a dash. The period suits the narrative pattern. "This" has been elaborated; and the poem reaches a fine finale in "just that." There is no further continuity or suspension of thought, but completion. Hence the full stop. This sense of finality is not to be found in the other version. Dickinson is so careful in her craft that a variant would be made just for the sake of a period, as in Poem 1157.

The second stanza of Poem 343 undergoes tremendous change in the Fascicle 18 version. Nine lines have shrunk into a six-line affair; accordingly, a 14-line piece becomes an 11-line one. The final six lines of the one version are transformed utterly in the last three lines of the other. But for "this Grace --" (1 9), nothing of the earlier copy is recognizable in the later one. There, of course, is the "Dower" of the last line of the earlier hidden away in the decapitated, negated "dowerless" of line 9 of the later version. The lines are thus rendered more compact in the Fascicle 18 version.

Dickinson applies compression to the last 4 lines of the
earlier version, and turns out the ninth line of the Fascicle 18 copy as "beside this Grace." It indeed is a rare instance of condensation. "Dominions dowerless" quite succinctly becomes the general imagery of the poem. Dickinson has been resorting to "images which integrate royalty and poverty."16

The Fascicle 18 version shows greater precision. There is more of the sense of finality to it. Its shortened stanza is one sure sign that it is the later and the fairer of the two. The altered punctuation is another. According to Johnson, the Fascicle 18 version was written early in 1862 and the other copy, later in the same year. It must have been the other way round.

The pattern of variation differs in the variants, given in Fascicles 13 and 36, of Poem 259, "Good Night! Which put the Candle out?" The alterations involved are extraverbal; they affect the capitalization and punctuation in the poem.

The poem captures the atmosphere of a lonely night in Dickinson's life. She has sat down to write to her lover. But the candle in her room is put out. It could be a jealous zephyr who did the mischief. The extinguished light was to the poet like the lighthouse to a sailor, or like the re-lit lamp to the drummer in an army camp.

The poem expresses Dickinson's longing and loneliness now that her "friend" (l 3) is out of reach. Distance has brought about only their physical separation. But her active mind experiences his presence beside her. Evidently she has been writing in the candlelight. "The Angels " (l 5) are her attendant Muses. It is probable that she has been flying on the viewless
wings of fancy; or, more probable still, she has been labouring
diligently -- correcting and revising and re-writing her poems.
These verses have been made into fascicles "for you!" (1 6). But
Wadsworth "little knew" (1 3) of what was going on in his Emily's
room at the Homestead. The "friend" of line 3 could not stand for
"Zephyr" of line 2; the "for you!" of line 6 could not go with
such a reading. Dickinson could have been shaping a letter
for her lover; it would later be sent to Elizabeth Holland who
would then address and forward it to Wadsworth. 17 Hence the
"jealous Zephyr -- not a doubt --" (1 2), who put out the candle
in a vain bid to separate her from "My Philadelphia" (1 750).

The zephyr as a symbol of separation occurs in Keats's
"Isabella": "Parting they seemed to tread upon the air,/ Twin
roses by the zephyr blown apart/ Only to meet again more close." 18
Dickinson could have been reminded of the lot of Isabella and
Lorenzo when she considered her own pangs of separation. The "It
might have been's" (1s 7 and 10) of the second stanza "torment her
for separation from her friend." 19

The two versions of the poem are identical in text, and fair,
even as are the first and second versions of Poem 299, and the two
copies of Poem 350. 20 The changes obviously are extraverbal; they
concern only the capitalization and punctuation.

The Fascicle 13 version of Poem 259 contains 12 majuscules,
apart from those at the beginning of lines. Four more words of
the piece get capitalized in the Fascicle 36 version: "You," both
in lines 3 and 6, "Spark" (1 7), and "Lamp" (1 10). Since "You"
begins neither of the lines it does not deserve a capital
according to the rules, or conventions, of versification. The eighteenth-century practice of capitalizing the initial letters of nouns anywhere in a line was not entirely rejected even in the mid-nineteenth century. "Mrs. Todd, for example, used capitals inside of words and out," as Franklin says; and Dickinson "was participating in the fashions of her times, for a free use of capitals."21

Dickinson's free use of majuscules depends on the importance of words. The significance of a word does not stem from the mere fact of it being a noun or a verb. If so, "doubt" (1 2), "friend" (1 3), and "wick" (1 4) ought to have been thus magnified. Capitalization is based on the word's poetic might, conditioned by its given context. Parts of speech and syntactical order have little to do with it. The apostrophic status of "You," Dickinson's absent friend, does deserve a majuscule. "You little knew" (1 3) objectively highlights the idea of how much the "I" of the verse did know, and does. The other "You" of the poem emphasizes the fact that Dickinson's diligent labour is for her friend.

In her Preface to Poems (1891), Todd notes that in Dickinson's poetry "all important words began with capitals."22 But it is importance of words as the poet sees it; and she sees slantingly.

As in the case of "You" above, in Poem 259, capitalization serves a purpose the bearing of which has external and internal ramifications. The eye of the reader is drawn to the capitalized words spatially when these are not governed by rules of grammar or
conventions of prosody. This is the external level of operation. The mind of the beholder is strongly drawn to such words; and it dwells with rapt attention on their worth. Capitalization serves this internal design which is its true purpose. Thus the attentive mind becomes conscious of the magnification given to "You," despite the fact of it being a pronoun, in the Fascicle 36 version of Poem 259.

This is nothing but a studied "way of conferring dignity upon ... poetic objects." The pattern of it emerges clearer when the other two capitalized words are taken enough note of. The metaphors that throw light on the thought of longing -- in "the Light House Spark" (1 7), and in "the waning Lamp" (1 10) -- are picked for particular emphasis. Hence the magnification of "Spark" and "Lamp" so that greater attention may be rivetted to them.

Herein is witnessed a sound psychology in Dickinson's use of capitals. It is evidenced in her letters. Any portion of a letter from her Crisis Period is enough to illustrate the point. During the autumn of 1861 Samuel Bowles suffered from sciatica. In October he visited the Dickinsons several times. In grief Dickinson writes to him: "Can I bring you something? My little Balm might be o'erlooked by wiser eyes -- you know -- Have you tried the Breeze that swings the Sign -- or the Hoof of the Dandelion?" (L 241). The "Balm" is capitalized even as are the "Breeze", "Sign", "Hoof", and "Dandelion." The capitalized words seem to stick out from the text; they are telegraphic codes to wire her prescription for Bowles's illness.
The weight and significance of such words are para-lexical and contextual. These may not directly be set forth in a verse. The unusual use of capitals is of help in overcoming this difficulty. A variant version enables the poet more effectively to sharpen the slant of it as she does in Poem 259.

Dickinson's application of the dashes is a similar step. The dashes "may indicate a grammatical stop as well as a rhetorical inflection." They can "mark the pauses of suspense and anticipation." In the Fasicle 13 version of Poem 259, there are 11 dashes but the Fasicle 36 copy contains four more of them. Four exclamation marks are replaced by dashes, thereby gaining in a continuity of utterance with sudden stops and turns of thought neatly filled in.

The dashes draw the reader's attention to the shape of the thought in a verse. That is their external objective. Their internal design is to make, as in the case of the majuscules, the mind's eye dwell on the semantic and symbolic worth of the words held between dashes. The thought pattern better represented in the Dickinson system of punctuation.

Her dashes can cut up a line in order to draw the beholder's attention to each and every word in it, as in line 11 of Poem 315: "Deals -- One -- imperial -- Thunderbolt --." These "explosive dashes" cause a very staccato effect. The pauses thus engendered "convey the ecstatic disruption of a person taken from her familiar reality into an alien reality -- God's." In Poem 259, the wishful thinking that underlies the "It might have been's" get more accentuated when the words are
rendered in an unbroken line. The dashes that separate "might" and "have," in lines 7 and 10 respectively, of the Fascicle 13 version, are removed for giving a sense of totality to that sad phrase of longing, in the Fascicle 36 version. The deletion of a dash can be as significant as its addition.

The two metaphors accompanying "It might have been" are worked out in detail-- the solitary sailor in the dark sea, and the lonely drummer in the weary camp. These instances show the care with which Dickinson employed her dashes.

In the Fascicle 13 of the poem, "-- rowing in the Dark --" (l. 8) is kept parenthetically endashed. Quite appropriately too. The "Light House spark -- " would not serve any purpose to the sailor rowing in broad daylight. It has certainly to be "Dark--." It is "rowing" that saves the expression from turning entirely redundant. If the "Sailor" (l. 8) were only helming his boat to the tune of the wind when he sails he could probably last longer at the sea. But "rowing" just takes the wind out of him. So he would be all importunate even for a "spark" from the lighthouse. The dashes signify that "-- rowing in the Dark --" is a necessary parenthesis, an idea which cannot so well be shaped by a pair of brackets.

The same principle operates in the case of line 11. In the first version, the line is unbroken: "That lit the Drummer from the Camp." It is a run-on, wedged between the lines before and after. Great alteration occurs with the introduction of dashes in "That lit the Drummer -- from the Camp --," in the Fascicle 36 version. The words "Drummer" and "Reveille" (l. 12) render "from
the Camp" rather redundant. Eor "Reveille" is a military waking-
signal, made by the bugle or the drum. The "Drummer" specifies
how the soldiers are awakened at daybreak. Run on, the words
"from the Camp" would be taken for an integral part of the second
metaphor; they are not. Hence the dashing parenthesis, to clarify
the point of an included but not essential unit, and to sharpen
our intellect to see it as such. Besides, the pauses in thought
thereby engendered can link "That lit the Drummer --" with "To
purer Reveille --," which forms the crux of the metaphor.

In the Fasicle 13 version, the two metaphors, cast in three
lines each, are rounded off with exclamations. Exclamations
"invite the listener's agreement to something on which the speaker
has strongly positive feelings." They are likely therefore to
draw the attention of the reader of the poem to the metaphors in a
greater measure than is required. The two images in the second
stanza are only to enlighten us on the "Extinguished" (l 6) candle
of the first stanza -- what it might have been if it had not been
put out. Dickinson could at least have been writing to someone
near her heart if "that celestial wick" had not been so jealously
zephyred. The exclamations, glossing over the metaphors, do stand
in the way of the denotative feedback in the images. Hence their
removal in the Fasicle 36 version of the poem.

The dashes after the lines 9 and 12 in the Fasicle 36
leave the images pictured incompletely. They draw our attention
to the unsaid personal implication of the metaphors for Dickinson.
The concluding dash of the poem holds the cue to the possibility
of begetting fresh images to body forth the notion of Dickinson's
piteous loneliness and weary yearning. But an endless piling of "It might have been's" could serve no greater purpose than the two already stored in. Therefore the rest could only be an endashed silence.

Dickinson's "system of aesthetics -" (P 137) dwells on the necessity of yet more variations as is evidenced in the two fair copies of Crisis Poem 350, "They leave us with the Infinite." Duplication here pays particular attention to the rearrangement of words in lines, and of the stanzaic pattern.

The poem speaks of God's protection that is extended to everyone who trusts in Him. He cannot be given an anthropomorphic representation. His arm is as large as 'Himmaleh' itself. The poet asks her friend to abide by Him for his own sake. She will seek the Almighty's succour in behalf of both of them.

There are no changes of the verbal kind between the two versions of Poem 350. The copies are identical in text. Alterations occur in punctuation and capitalization. But the more conspicuous variations are in the word organization in lines, which affects the stanzaic pattern, as is found in Poem 433 of the Crisis Period.29

There is no change in the arrangement of words in the first and second stanzas of the Poem 350 when they are rendered in their variant. But the final quatrains of the first version becomes six lines in the second. The first line, however, remains the same except for the capitalization of "Him," (l 9), and the displacement of the dash with the exclamation. Nearly so is the case of the third line; but the dash is preferred to the comma.
Thus the alterations are restricted to the first and fourth lines of the stanza. Each of the lines is cut in two though not halved exactly.

The second copy, Johnson says, "is folded as if enclosed in an envelope." Written "probably in 1863," it could very well have been developed for her Master pastor in California, to be dispatched via Mrs Holland -- the reason probably why it is "without address or signature." 

Dickinson counsels her "Comrade" (1 9) to place his trust in the Lord; He will protect His faithful for ever and ever. This is the very sempiternal truth that the dead who "leave us" (1 1) tell us. The European and Asian mountains are introduced as earthly symbols of "the Infinite --" (1 1), to signify "God's fidelity, strength, and power." The poet is only too sadly aware that her love has little chance of realization on earth. But "Eternity is ample --"(1 11) compensation. The two will remain for each other; they will have life enough if they are "true" (1 12) and faithful. Dickinson here uses "quick" (1 12) in the sense of 'living', as Laertes does when he tells the Gravediggers, "Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead." 

One totality of utterance that is line 10, according to the first version, is broken up, in the second, and its lineality ends at "I". The eye, and so the mind of the reader, might not take adequate note of the contrast between the two expressions, "You for you," and "I, for you and me," when they are unilineally positioned. Duplication makes it clearer.

Surely, some effort is made in this regard by the two commas
in the first version. But not demonstrative enough. By placing "For you and me --" as a separate line in the second version the poet succeeds in showing how "I" is sharply different from "You." The end position of "I" begets a little pause for the eye and the mind to dwell on the same before proceeding to the next line. For this same reason, the comma after it is dropped. Besides, a run-on feel is thus given. The initial position of "For" (l 11) emphasizes, by virtue of its majuscule, however conventional, that the poet cares more for his friend than even himself does; his minuscule "for" (l 10) is sufficient evidence thereof.

This is an extraverbal feat Dickinson brings to bear upon a cardinal point in the poem. The contrast had to be focussed; an extra dole of words would make it merely prosaic. A word reorganization in the lines alone could transcend the difficulty.

The same step is taken with regard to the final line of the first version: "And quick enough, if true." The two words that the poet must manifest more clearly to the reader are "enough" and "if". The comma between them is of much help in this direction. But not quite enough. The unilineality is to bear some blame in this. Hence the partition in the second version. As lovers, this world is nearly denied to the poet and her comrade. Dickinson is ready to love on; for there is eternity in store for them, and it is "quick enough,". The Lord has promised eternal life to those who trust Him: "In my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2). Therefore one is to "trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Tim 4:10). But we must not budge from truth if perpetual light is to
shine upon us. It is to be true to God, true to one another, and true to oneself. So it is with Dickinson and her dearest earthly friend. "If true --" puts it most effectively. An elliptic utterance could not be more compressed and compact. There is "much virtue in If," as Touchstone would put it. That capitalized "If" (1 14) leaves no doubt that the friend is not so "true" to the poet as she is to him, which is the bore of the matter in the splitting of line 10. It points out a condition for divine fulfilment as it is a personal reminder to the comrade.

The disappearance of the quatrains in the second version highlights the worth of "If true --." In the first, the stanzal pattern could mislead the eye to the notion of three ideas being developed in three versified compartments. In the second, it is a single unit though it is obviously longer by two lines. The lines are cast in Dickinson's favourite hymn or ballad measure: four iambics followed by three. With the ninth line the number of feet turn irregular, ending the poem in a single iamb. It is a clear illustration of how the iambic feet, the "classic and large carrier of English poetry," operates "as an expressive force" in the poem. Neither the line reorganization nor the change in the stanzal pattern has, however, affected the natural rhythm of Dickinson's English. It is the same genuine "te-tum, te-tum rhythm favoured by Shakespeare and which is the mainstay of our poetic tradition." But the shape of the second version heads towards the last line in a rather tapering manner. "If true --" would appear, almost literally too, a coda to the poem, placing itself as a condition to all that goes before, or above, it. This
positional importance meets the eye the quicker in the reorganized pattern of the non-stanzaic kind. The Fascicle 14 copy of Poem 240 could have been more appealing to Dickinson. It must be the fairer of the two because it is shorter than the other. As Johnson points out, Dickinson "always shortened her poems if she made stanza changes in later fair copies -- never lengthened them." The fairer variant assuredly is a greater success in the transcendent process.

Duplication can be employed for a shift in emphasis, to be brought about by extraverbal alteration. In the variant copies of 20 poems, all the changes involved are concerned wholly with dashes, commas, periods and exclamation points. She boldly experimented with extraverbal items to such an extent that she produced verses as heavily marked as 31 dashes in 16 lines (P 504) or 51 dashes in 28 lines (P 495). Forty-three poems carry no punctuation signs except the concluding dash while 41 pieces entirely lack punctuation.

The variant versions remain fair despite all the changes effected by duplication. As a matter of fact, the reproduced copies of the Crisis Poems are all fair though this cannot be said about the rest of the poems of this category. The truth is that Dickinson’s scrapbook does not provide us with each and every rough copy and semifinal draft of the variants. If these were available, her transcendent process could have been made more transparent.

The variants studied show that the changes incorporated in them are either nominal or multiple, in the Crisis Poems as well as others. (See Appendices 2 and 3). Most of the alterations are
of the verbal kind, from the one-word change in the duplication of Poem 326, to the numerous ones in Poem 433. But the extraverbal considerations are of paramount importance to Dickinson's variation exercise. These speak for the meticulous craft of the poet worrying even along the apparent minutiae of a poem. By reproducing a verse, Dickinson proves to be achieving a greater degree of fairness for the text though it does not certify its finality. Duplication has found to be a slant method of telling the truth more effectively. It incorporates a rephrasing of verbal items, especially the tightening up of imagery. A verbal change may be made to suit a particular occasion. The alteration of a word is enough to show the difference in the gender of the person to whom a variant is sent. The reproduction of a verse can entail a condensation of its verbal details.

Incorporated changes of the extraverbal kind are found to be no less important in duplication. These are designed specially to draw the reader's greater attention to the details thus set forth. A larger number of capitals is introduced upon reproduction of a copy representing the worth of words more precisely. The changes in punctuation are conditioned in the same manner. A variant copy can show the difference in the thought pattern of a verse, with the dashes indicating the sudden stops and turns of thought in it. Lineal repositioning of words, and rearrangement of stanzas, are aimed at highlighting the shift in emphasis.

Thus, turning out variant versions with changes incorporated
proves to be an indirect way of transcending the limits of the lyric mode. Duplication or triplication ensures greater space, thematic and structural. It provides wider scope for the precise telling of the truth. Dickinson's process of transcendence is stretched to the widest possibility in her turning out the fascicle versions of poems.

The process of surmounting the limits of the lyric mode of expression passes through its initial stage, in Chapter One. It gathers greater precision and comprehensiveness, in Chapters Two, Three and Four, and reaches its final stage in the fascicles. The next chapter considers how Dickinson collects her poems into fascicles in the act of transcendence.
Notes

2. Franklin, The Editing, 132.
4. A different copy of its fourth stanza forms Poem 331. A variant of the second stanza of Poem 937 becomes Poem 992. This is noted by Franklin, The Editing, 109. Variant portions of Poems 1574, 1576, and 1584 are to be found in Poems 1586, 1584, and 1588 respectively. See Appendix 2 for the rest of the poems carrying partly rendered variants, most of which served as letter poems sent to Susan Dickinson, Higginson, Helen H. Jackson, and others.
5. Dickinson dispatched the largest number of poems to her sister-in-law, a total of 276, between 1853 and 1885. Johnson, Appendix 1, The Poems, III, 1191.
7. The Poems, I, 152.
8. The Poems, I, 153.
10. The Poems, I, 152.
12. There are nine verses besides Poem 240 given double-version entry in the fascicles:– Poems 7 (in Fascicles 1 and 14), 170 (Fascicle 8 itself), 174 (Fascicles 8 and 21), 185 (Fascicles 10 and 12), 216 (Fascicles 6 and 10), 259 (Fascicles 13 and 36), 269 (Fascicles 9 and 36), 343 (Fascicles 18 and 24), and 903 (Fascicles 3 and 40).


17. "It has always been understood by the Holland family that for years Emily made a practice of sending to Mrs. Holland the letters she wrote to Dr. Wadsworth," says Theodora Ward, *Emily Dickinson’s Letters to Dr. and Mrs. Josiah Gilbert Holland*, quoted by Sewall, Footnote 1, *The Life*, 593. The fact that direct documentary evidence is wanting to it is not proof enough to ignore entirely the Holland tradition, as Sewall is inclined to.

Poems 1576 and 1588 point towards the secrecy between Emily Dickinson and Elizabeth Holland. The last six lines of Poem 1576 are adapted from the eight-liner 1588. The final for them are quite illuminating:

> The Rumor’s Gate was shut so tight
> Before my Mind was sown,
> Not even a Prognostic’s Push
> Could make a Dent thereon --

"Could" has displaced "Can" of Poem 1588; Dickinson chose in Poem 1576 that only change advanced in the semifinal copy of the other. (Poem 1576 is non-variant and fair but Poem 1588 offers no fair copy at all.) The adaptation proves Poem 1576 to be of a later date. Johnson seems to have overlooked this piece of evidence.

A worksheet draft of Poem 1588 is jotted down on the leaf torn from a notebook on the back of which is the rough copy of
part of Letter 806, written to Mrs. Holland, in March 1883. The poem too was probably meant for her, to tell her how they managed to have shut the gate of gossip on all. Early in April 1883, Poem 1576 was sent incorporated in a letter to James D. Clark with whom Dickinson corresponded for information concerning Wadsworth who had died on 1 April 1882.

It is to be noted that in early 1883 Dickinson wrote to Mrs. Holland: "All other Surprise is at last monotonous, but the Death of the Loved moments -- now -- Love has but one Date -- 'The first of April(.) ' 'Today, Yesterday, and Forever -- ' " (L 801). Then, after a line from "In Memoriam," follows this from Tennyson's "Love and Duty": "O Love that never found its earthly close, what sequel?" It assuredly is a pregnant allusion to Dickinson's own matchless love. Evidently, Mrs. Holland was in the know of things; she would understand the line perfectly well.


20. There are 91 more poems in this category where the copies carry identical texts: 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 35, 44, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 86, 88, 114, 121, 131, 138, 159, 162 (first and second versions), 185 (second and third versions), 204, 216 (second, sixth and seventh versions; third and fifth versions), 221, 224, 225, 304, 305, 314, 320, 323, 324, 671, 683 (first and second versions), 688, 808, 810, 815 (first and second versions; third and fourth versions), 816, 820, 824 (first
and second copies of the 'First Version'), 829, 830, 831, 832, 845, 896, 903 (first and second versions), 983, 985, 988, 990, 1070 (first and second versions), 1073, 1084, 1138, 1158, 1157, 1159, 1183, 1208, 1210, 1213 (second and third versions), 1223, 1243, 1245, 1248, 1332 (first, third and fourth versions), 1352, 1354, 1356 (first and second versions), 1391, 1459, 1465, 1466 (first and second versions), 1487, 1564, 1569 (first and second version), 1570 (first and second versions), 1599, 1619 (first and second versions), and 1648.

28. Quirk and Greenbaum, A University Grammar of English, 199.
29. The other variants of this category showing changes both in the stanzaic pattern of the verse, and in the line organization of the stanzas, are found in Poems 4, 10, 35, 67, 76, 86, 159, 174, 186, 204, 216, 240, 300, 301, 305, 331, 343, 494, 666, 816, 830, 1072, 1084, 1159, 1213, 1272, 1352, 1366, 1402, 1515, and 1569.
Poems 160, 299, 326, 814, and 986 have variants that are notable for their changes in the stanzaic pattern but bear no alteration at all in the line arrangement within the piece.


Poems 323 and 1566 deserve special mention -- the former's third copy and the latter's second lose their versified status; these are arranged in prose. The worksheet draft of Poem: 1619 is set down with no attempt at line organization.

35. Shakespeare, Ham, William Shakespeare, 1067.
38. Finch, "Dickinson and Patriarchal Meter," 166.
40. See Poems 8, 12, 66, 304, 808, 816 (first and third versions), 820, 845, 903 (first and second versions), 983, 990 (first and second versions), 1070 (first and second versions), 1084 (second and third versions), 1157, 1183, 1245, 1354, 1391, 1459, and 1564.
41. See Poems 1064, 1124, 1139, 1145, 1215, 1233, 1246, 1250, 1261, 1268, 1313, 1328, 1337, 1362, 1387, 1389, 1457, 1489, 1493, 1522, 1534, 1536, 1550, 1557, 1559, 1600, 1641, 1650, 1654, 1656, 1661, 1671, 1672, 1673, 1674, 1676, 1682, 1701, 1706, 1708, 1709, 1750, and 1752.
42. See Poems 683 (third version), 1050, 1070 (second version), 1127, 1157 (first version), 1165 (first, second and third versions), 1172, 1214, 1236, 1240, 1242, 1345, 1375, 1378, 1429, 1452, 1559 (third version), 1496, 1505, 1507, 1589, 1620 (first version), 1623 (first version), 1625, 1634, 1635, 1636, 1653, 1655, 1675, 1684, 1686, 1687, 1688, 1696, 1698, 1702, 1703, 1704, 1705, and 1707.