3. LITERARY SCENE

For the 16th century lyric it is the Petrarchan tradition as introduced by Wyatt that has generally been taken as the right type of background. It is according to this criterion that the lyrical poetry of the sixteenth century has for the most part been evaluated and appreciated. It may be claimed that this approach has been responsible for the neglect of the kind of verse, as found in the Poetical Miscellanies; and even, condemnation of it.

Recent criticism has proved that although Petrarchan mode was worth accounting for, there were two main native traditions of lyrical verse which were earlier and more significant than the Petrarchan and which continued to develop and flourish with full vigour through the 16th century to the end of the Elizabethan period.¹ These two traditions provided the essential context to the lyrical verse of the 16th century; and, the Petrarchan mode, when introduced, simply was adjusted to the framework of these

¹ Douglas L. Peterson: The English Lyric from Wyatt to Donne, Introduction P. 4
earlier traditions. Approached through this angle the verse of the Poetical Miscellanies, from Tottel (1557) to Davison's Rhapsody (1602), assumes an importance and significance not realised here-to-fore; and, the contemporaneous popularity of these collections may not seem enigmatic.

It is a well-established fact that after the death of Chaucer there occurred a break in the English literary tradition. This hiatus was partly caused, and partly strengthened by the political upheavals of the reign of Henry VI when hardly any literary activity was possible. When with the accession of the Tudor Henry VII political stability was restored and peace returned and interest in literary activity was revived the writers realised that they were faced with the problem of the medium of expression. There was no adequate vernacular medium that could be effectively employed for literary

Berdan, J.M. Early Tudor Poetry PP. 50-52
Evans, Maurice: The Sixteenth Century English Poetry PP. 33-34.
purposes. Language had regressed since Chaucer. The loss of final "e" had completely overthrown the metre and rhythm of the verse and rendered it unfit, not only for future poetic writing but also had made the earlier poetry unintelligible. With the impulse to writing emerging again the writers looked for sources which could be tapped, and found that the well-established traditions of 'eloquent' and 'plain' styles in lyric writing could offer a solution. 'Plain' mode was employed to give instruction in religious, and, commonplace didactic matters to a 'parochial audience' in plain, bare, naked, unadorned language. The 'eloquent' mode related to court and courtly circles; used embellished language; its aim mostly stylistic; and its themes mostly court de amores. Both these styles were fully known in the Middle Ages. And in the 14th and 15th centuries the lyric poets employed each style as the subject required.

The history of the development of these two styles in England at the hands of the new poets from the late 15th century to the end of 16th century is bound up with the general

3. Peterson, op. cit. P. 4
4. Peterson, op. cit. Chapter I "The Medieval Lyric".
5. Ibid PP. 9 & 24.
movement of refinement and improvement of English as a medium of expression, which was of emergent importance to the English.

For instruction in matters religious, moral, serious and didactic, the plain, simple, unadorned, bare, 'artless' language of native make was always regarded as adequate and sufficient. The problem was with matters literary. It was here that the language of Chaucer and his contemporaries could not be employed and no distinctive native tradition existed. To start with, there alternatives presented themselves to the writers. They could, of course, modify and adapt the forms and models of medieval English; they could resort to the scholastic Latin which was the language of the universal Church and the state. Or, they could imitate forms and models from classical literatures, interest in which was revived under the influence of humanism.

Medieval vernacular authors could not be

7. Vide ante- PP. 49-51
8. R.F. Jones: The Triumph of the English Language P. 11
9. Berdan op. cit. P. 120
imitated by poets because of change in language and metre—as stated above. Only the content of the type of the long moral allegory of Lydgate seems to have come down, probably due to its profitability. "Glad and merry" Canterbury Tales were not to the liking of the morally inclined age. Hence the popularity of Lydgate over Chaucer. Chaucer's over all poetic superiority could not be recognised. It was his "Legend of Good Women" that was popular. Similarly contact with humanist authors was of not real help to the poet at this state. Although ultimately it became great intellectual stimulus, it was still in its incipient stage and was mostly confined to men in contact with the Church who mostly wrote in prose.

With the revival of classical Latin two literatures came to exist in the same language. But they were diametrically opposed both in form and content. The classical Latin is Pagan, quantitative and unrimed. Medieval Latin literature is Christian, accentual, and rimed. Whereas the classical Latin literature is national, local and hymns the pride

10. cf. Jerdan op. cit. The Medieval Tradition Chapt. II
11. cf. Jerdan op. cit. Humanism Chapter IV.
of Rome, the medieval Latin literature is international and sings the praises of the universal church. Under such circumstances, because of proximity in spirit and similarity in form between English and medieval Latin, it was logical that the medieval Latin was imitated; and, Classical Latin would not have affected English poetry. The striking feature of medieval scholastic theory of composition was that it had been worked out to the last bit of detail. For example, the *Exempla honestae Virtut* whose date of composition is the middle of the 13th century lists sixty-four rhetorical devices which it entitles as anaphora, epiphora, symplocke, antithesis, rhetorical question, polysyndeton, asyndeton, word-play, climax, hyperbole, synecdocie, metaphor, allegory etc. No more vastly detailed book as to the use of rhetorical terms could be found. Its great popularity is attested by the fact that while it was written in the late second quarter of the 13th century, the manuscript belongs to the 14th.

*Laborintus*, another such treatise, nearly of the same


13. This paragraph is an adaptation from Berdan, *op. cit.* PP. 125-6.
period, in its fourth book contains 28 examples of various stanza forms. John of Garlandia in 1250 adds to the number of stanza forms when he puts the number at 34. And in his Ars Rithmica he carries the number of verse forms to an incredible extent. Still in other such type of tracts the prosody of the line is considered, and the proper vocabulary to be used and the proper introduction of a quotation, and the employment of curious verbal tricks etc. etc. All this phenomena is baffling to the modern reader. The art of verse had turned into a science; poetry had become, an affair of the head rather than of the heart; no longer could it be termed as an emotional out-burst; it was fully an intellectual process. Verse writing, was taught in the university as an intellectual exercise. It was part and parcel of the university curriculum. A degree was given for proficiency in verse-writing. What is most worth remembering here is that treatises of this type were written by the serious men and for the serious men. The concern centres entirely on stylistic qualities. Content the sake of is not considered for qualification by style, it seems to exist merely as a trestle for supporting the rhetorical
framework. That this was the actual case is shown by one example, at least: "The epitaffe of the Moste noble and valyant Jasper late Duke of Bedde Iorde". It purports to record the lament of "Smerte, maister de ses ouzeaus" - an account of the death of Duke of Bed ford (1495). What makes this poem remarkable is neither the sincerity of the grief, nor the poetic excellence of the phrase; it is due to the fact that the twenty metres employed and the various rhetorical tricks used, are explained by side notes, in Latin. As these side-notes refer obviously to rhetorical treatises, the poem may be regarded as a series of experiments, each of which is differentiated and labelled. This mode of writing verse which was the most fashionable literary mode, Prof. Peterson designates as 'eloquent'.

Prof. Peterson also establishes that in the 15th century along with the 'eloquent' tradition in lyric which was, of course, the dominant mode, the 'plain' tradition, was also current - no doubt, due to its own right. In contrast to the 'eloquent' mode which was concerned

14. Quoted Berdan P. 129
15. Peterson: The English Lyric ...
16. Peterson: The English Lyric ...
with stylistic matters, the 'plain' way of writing lyric verse was preoccupied with 'matter' or content. The course of the development of these two traditions, during the late 15th and through the 16th centuries, did not entirely run parallel. Each influenced the other. The qualities and attributes of the one were absorbed by the other, and, vice versa. This led to the fusion of the two styles ultimately. The great lyrical verse of the so-called Elizabethan out-burst - the great verse of Cacoigne, Raleigh, Jonson, and Shakespeare, is the outcome of this fusion.

The 'plain' and 'eloquent' modes or styles had their beginning in their true forms in the didactic and courtly verse, respectively, of the Middle Ages. Didactic designates those poems that were written specifically to teach and persuade an unsophisticated audience of the desirability of Christian conduct. Didactic verse either expands a "commonplace" (that is, a generalized moral truth or 'sentence' which according to Richard Rainolde, "doeth agree universally to all menne") or elaborates or

17. Peterson: The English Lyric . . P. 9
paraphrases Christian doctrine. It aims at the instruction of a parochial audience in the general principles of religion, and it is written in what was known then as the "rude" "barren" or "plain" style. The language used is simple, generalized, aphoristic, and often colloquial.

The syntax is very elementary and even disordered, to an extent. The development of the subject almost always proceeds by means of typical illustrations and examples. When the didactic poet feels that logical distinctions and elaborate argument would be wasted, he occasionally employs rhetorical devices of allegory, personification, simile and simple antithesis. By and large, however, he relies on aphoristic phrase and homely proverb.

A structural difference between 'commonplace' and doctrinal verse of the plain mode may be noted. In the 'commonplace', verse structure depends ultimately on the principle of classification. In the doctrinal verse it depends on the logic implicit in the doctrine being paraphrased. Although both kinds show varying degrees of structural complexity, from the barest exigencies of
coherence to relatively advanced uses of refrain and narrative framework, the chief function of structure is always determined by the simple pedagogical practices of repetition and dilation. For example, "The Personalties of the Age"

(No. 175 In Carleton Brown's Religious Lyrics of the fifteenth Century" Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1939) is typical of the simplest treatment of the 'commonplace':

Wise men bene but secorne,
& wedowz eke foryerned,
Gret men arn bot glosid,
& smale men arn borne down & myslosed,
lordis wex euor blynd,
ffrendis ben vnkynde,
deth is oute of mynde,
Treu th may no men fynde.

The poem is simply a series of aphorisms dilating the commonplace stated in the title. The order of the lines is determined only by the requirements of the rhyme. The same elementary technique is used frequently for illustrative purpose in longer poems as in No. 193,

19. Peterson PP. 9-10

entitled "Counsels of Prudence and Patience", and, occasionally the commonplace is expanded more discursively, as in No. 181, titled "See Much, Say Little, and Learn to Suffer in Time". The three-fold commonplace topic as introduced in the opening stanza is continued in the following stanzas each being devoted to the dangers of 'false tongues' (unlike the method of medieval pulpit oratory where one would have expected first each of the subject first defined and then expanded by example and illustration in the order in which they are originally stated). There is no reason for the order of the stanzas. The author has not made any attempt to establish a principle of progression in terms of which the relation of stanzacic units to the entire poem or of particular details to each other might have been given meaning. "Virtues Exiled—Vices Enthroned" No. 176 is an example of enumerative method wherein the first stanza catalogues some ten personified virtues which have been 'exiled', and the second, the vices which have been subsequently 'enthroned'. Though the allegorizing provides an additional thread of coherence, the technique is essentially enumerative.
Numerous poems that in various ways employ categories set up by theological doctrine by the mystical number "3" or by some arbitrary principle of order, exhibit more sophisticated structural technique than the catalogue technique. In "Death, the Soul's Friend" No. 163, for example, the use of theological doctrine as structural principle occurs. The poem instructs the reader in the progressive steps of reflection necessary for Christian resignation. "Three Lessons to Make Ready for Death" No. 155, illustrates how the three steps of penitence provide a similar scheme. Structurally unimpressive, the poem however, makes the beginning of a tradition in English poetry which culminates in the great penitential lyrics of Sidney, Greville, Jonson, Donne: poems in which the doctrine treated here didactically functions as an aid to self-analysis and as a structural principle within the individual poem.  

"A Balade by Squire Halsham" No. 171, though, similar in structure like the poems based on 'doctrine' 

21. Peterson op. cit. P.13
22. Peterson op. cit. PP. 14-15
is a rather ingenious treatment of the theme of the variability of fortune. The four elements, without any apparent reason for the order in which they are introduced, provide the scheme for expansion in the first stanza. The second stanza wherein grammatical schemes of antithesis and 'gradatio' exhibits, incidentally, a consciousness of style that is unusual in the didactic poetry of the time. The rhyme royal stanza, the elaboration of change in terms of the four elements, and the grammatical schemes surprisingly put in mind the 'stylistic' exercises frequently found in the 16th century 'miscellanies'—one of the early examples of a combination of the 'plain' and 'rhetorical' styles.

Another structural method, in the 'plain' style, used to develop the 'commonplace, is the "summary refrain" which made possible a closer mode of organisation than the techniques so far discussed. But it is worth noticing that the device was not monopolized in the 15th century by the "plain"

23. Ibid
24. Vide Infra. PP. 125-128
25. Peterson P. 16
style poets. The courtly poets writing in the 'eloquent' style too made use of it. In the well-known Quia Amor Languet, a Latin refrain serves within a narrative framework both as a unifying principle and as a means of emphasis. The refrain method appears frequently in the work of the 16th and 17th century poets, though in revised and various forms for a variety of purposes. One of Wyatt's contributions to the lyric was his use of the refrain in modified form to establish logical progression between the stanza. In No. 182, "Think Before You Speak", the refrain technique is found in its simplest form. It answers to the pedagogical purpose by emphasising the lesson to be remembered at the same time that it establishes unity in a fairly long poem. Although there is also some order of progression apparent between stanzas, an order of increasing particularity; and, although stanzas three, four and five together dilate the advice of stanza two, and, although the two concluding stanzas constitute a

27. Ibid
28. Ibid PP. 16-17
summary of all that has gone before, it is the refrain which is chiefly responsible for what unity is present in the poem.

Not unoften, the summary refrain is combined with narrative framework to assure additional coherence and unity. The framework most commonly used is that of the 'Chanson d' aventure'. The author begins by relating an account of a walk in the country during which he encounters a person whose lament, either over-heard or addressed directly to the poet, he then relates and comments upon. It is worth noting that the narrative framework, like the allegory, personification etc., fulfills the important didactic requirement that the abstract be presented concretely. Further, the narrative framework simplifies the writer's problems of progression, because narrative establishes the sequence of events according to an established time scheme. Examples of narrative framework as applied to a variety of purposes are No. 147, 178, 186 entitled respectively. "The Day of Life Night Comes Soon", "Medicines

29. Ibid. P. 18
30. Ibid.
to Cure the Seven Deadly Sins", "Measure Is the Best of All Things".

In the poems so far briefly discussed, structure, style, and language are controlled exclusively by an intent to teach. Organic unity in these poems hardly matters. The authors are evidently satisfied to expand generalities by more or less random example, and illustration. They are conspicuously uninterested in style and evince only an occasional indebtedness to the current rhetorical treatises on 'eloquent' style. The most distinctive features of the early didactic verse are, rather, its lack of 'style' and the plainness of its language. These are, however, the attributes which in the style-conscious late Middle Ages and throughout the first three quarters of the 16th century are regarded as non-literary - the characteristics which distinguish the "uneloquent" "barren", "base", "home-spun", "barbarous", or "plain" style from the "eloquent", "weighty" or "courtly" style. 31

Poems in the plain style occur, however, occasionally, both in the 14th and 15th centuries which point

31. Peterson. P. 19
to concerns beyond the didactic. They are distinguished by a concern for the commonplaces of human experience which is intensely personal and non-didactic. Whereas ordinarily the didactic poem cursorily glances at mortality as a truism, this other kind of poem, which may be designated as 'contemplative' is controlled by an awareness that mortality has personal as well as general implications and that they must be faced and somehow accepted. This difference of intention is demonstrated in style and in the qualifications and adjustments of feeling that are present on the level of connotation. For instance, in No. 149, "Farewell, this world is but a Chemry Fair", and No. 152, "A Mirror for Yong Ladies at their Toilet", there is a consciousness of style not common in the purely didactic lyric. In No. 152, particularly, it is apparent in the adherence to a fairly consistent metrical norm and in the lack of excessive illustration. A degree of complexity can also be discovered in the consistent adherence to the fundamental figure used to develop the theme which is beyond the requirements of instructional
verse. 32

However, none of these poems can be called successful; but they do show the distinction that rests neither on subject-matter nor on style, but rather on the strategies of style that are employed to realise intention. 33 Dunbar's "Lament for the Makaris" and Chaucer's "Flee from the Press and dwelle with soothfastness", both of which are commonly assumed as didactic are remarkable examples of the case in point. 34 Both the poems are written in the plain style and are about moral subjects. But neither poem is didactic, save perhaps in the sense that any poem that deals with moral experience may be so interpreted. Dunbar's poem is a statement of his inability to resign himself to death and the strategies of style are employed not out of a desire to instruct but are developed in the interest of meditation that has for its purpose the exploration of the implications that death has for the author. The poem is at once both the instrument of that meditation and the statement of its results. "Flee from the press"

32. Peterson PP. 19-21
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid. PP. 21-24
is similar in purpose although the "Envoy" states that the poem is for the instruction of Sir Philip la Vache. It is a statement of a moral position, a statement of personal conviction; and because Chaucer is concerned with the precise statement of the position, he employs the style that is best suited to "conveyen his mateere" - a style polished and pared of excessive pedagogical amplification in the interest of the precise statement of personal conviction - the realization in language of a contemplative intention.

The lyric in 'eloquent' style in the 15th century was written on numerous occasions. It was written on request to commemorate public occasions or deaths of nobles. It also appears in the form of elaborate and sometimes obsequious compliment. Most pervasively it appears in the courtly poetry which was then fashionable in court society. The point to note is that "whatever its specific occasion, the eloquent lyric is always controlled by a rigid notion of style." It seeks

35. Peterson, P. 24
36. Peterson, P. 25
originality through ingenious variation, emphasis through copiousness, and elegance through the exploitation of the schemes and tropes as found in the text book rhetorics that originally had come down from the Middle Ages. It employs almost exclusively techniques of dilation and ornamentation culled from pamphlets on style which treated both poetry and rhetoric as art of eloquence. It is important to note that owing to its late classical origin the 'eloquent' style was mistaken for the classical style and thus assumed to be the only standard of literary excellence. It was also the 'learned' style because rhetoric was one of the great disciplines of learning. It was unthinkable that illiterate people could know the use of rhetorical terms. The address of Chaucer's

   cf. Berdan op. cit. The Scholastic Tradition PP. 120-56

38. Peterson op. cit. P. 34.
Franklin is instructive. He says that he lacks the art of eloquence because he is lacking in learning:

But, Siuys, by cause I am a burle man,
At my bigynnyng first I yow tiseche,
Have me excused of my rude speche.
I lerned never rethorik, certeyn;
Thynge that I speke, it moot be bare and plaun.
I sleep never on the Mount of Pernaso,
Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Scithero.
Colours ne knowe I none, withouten drede;
But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
Or elles swiche as men dye or peynye.
Clours of rethoryk been to me queynte.

(The Franklin's Prologue II. 3-18)\(^39\)

Knowledge of rhetoric was the province of learned persons: colours of rhetoric could be used only by them who were learned in the art. This style was varnished with colours of rhetoric, therefore, was fit for addressing the nobility. Chaucer's Harry Bailley, while asking the clerk to tell something plain says, \(^40\)

Youre termes, youre colours, and your figures,
Kepe hem in stoor til so be that ye endite
Heigh style, as whan that men to keynges write.

\(^39\) Quoted Peterson P. 26

\(^40\) Quoted Peterson P. 27
The amorous courtly verses, written to the medieval conception of eloquence are usually highly formulary developments of the commonplaces of courtly love: pledges of service; pleas for mercy and grace; detailed and stereotyped descriptions of the physical and spiritual attributes of the beloved; and plaints, apostrophes, and schematized descriptions of the lover's suffering emotions.\textsuperscript{41} The poet writing within the eloquent tradition, be it noted, makes no attempt to look into the causes of his suffering, nor does he evince any concern for the heretical implications of courtly love. He accepts its doctrines uncritically as SUITABLE FOR THE EXERCISE OF STYLE.\textsuperscript{42}

Most significant implication is that by accepting the analytical distinction between style and content as a real distinction – a distinction attributable to the medieval rhetoricians – the courtly poets deny style its purpose.\textsuperscript{43} And when this was the case, stylistic preoccupation in courtly poetry resulted in a lack of

\textsuperscript{41} cf. C.S. Baldwin \textit{op. cit.} PP. 39-40
\textsuperscript{42} Peterson, P. 28 : Capitals mine
\textsuperscript{43} Vide Note 41
variety in selection and treatment of subject and tendency
to regard language and structure as extrinsic and unrela-
ted to content. The subject exists only as the occasion
for the poem. The boring recurrence of the hackneyed
attitudes of courtly love, dedication and eulogy are the
results. Structure is employed merely as a supporting
frame-work for verbal embellishment. It rarely appears
as a means of ordering insights. And language as ornament,
selected and rigidly controlled by the notion of eloquence.

The interesting thing is that all the concern
and activity of the poet is reduced to lifeless poetic
diction. Being concentrated on style the poetic qualities
came to be regarded as matters of style merely. Thus
poetry became tantamount to style. And since
style implied the use of rhetorical terms, verbal elabo-
ration and amplifications, it entailed skill, care, labour,
learning, experimentation in the use of words, phrases,
schemes and topics of rhetoric, resulting in ornamentation,

44. Baldwin, PP. 13-26, PP. 39-40
45. Peterson, PP. 29-30
46. C.S. Baldwin op. cit. Preface P. IX.
   cf. Hardin Craig op. cit. Chapt. VII. The Eloquence
   of Persuasions. cf. Berdan, J.K. op. cit. PP. 124-128
   (The Scholastic Tradition).
embellishment; surely, refinement and improvement and augmentation of the vernacular. The 15th century English vernacular poets with an impulse to write but faced with the problem of medium of expression, plagued with the poverty of language, obviously could find no better means to solve their problem than to resort to the eloquent tradition of writing. At the same time they were not being less the poets for that because writing in eloquent mode was tantamount to writing poetry.

The 15th century (vernacular) poets of the eloquent tradition found the conventional 'catalogue' a convenient way to illustrate his "bitter bale", "madness" "woe" and "grief". In it they also found a means of describing copiously the virtues and physical charms of the beloved. No. 127, "A Catalogue of Delights" is an

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47. Peterson, Chapter "The Eloquent Lyric" of F.R. Jones op. cit Chapter VI: The Eloquent Language.

47. Vide ante PP. 79-33

48. Peterson, P. 29
example. Seven stanzas are devoted to the lady’s charms:

Her heer is yelou as the gold,
Her forhed shapyn as it shuld
With all the feturs thereabout,
Her Eris ben comply & round,
Her browes with bewte bene bound;
Wel wer aym that wanne her mouth.

Her lovely yen of colour gray,
Her rudy is like the rose yn may
With leris white as any milk,
Her nose is set right womanly,
With mouth & teth bothe so goodly,
her lippes soft as any silk; etc., etc.,

The method and description are equally trite, and it is not surprising to find such poems parodied in the contemporary literature. It should be noted that all the structural forms used by the didactic poets appear also in the courtly poets. Even 'doctrinal' frame-work was modified to support the adornments of the courtly love conventions - Charles d' Or leans's 'A Confession of Love' No. 185 for instance, is a parody of public confession.

The courtly poets also developed a scheme of arrangement in one of their favourite genres, the love epistle.

49. Peterson, P. 30
50. All the poems in this section (PP. 95-98) on eloquent lyric are from "The Secular Lyric in the 14th & 15th Centuries" Russell Robbins (Oxford: Clarendon Press); unless otherwise stated.
The love-epistle was the main conventional form during the 15th century. "As means of teaching style, 'letter-writing' (Dictamen) ranked with the disciplines of rhetoric and poetic in the Middle Ages. Dictamen was of practical nature. Besides giving exercises in correctness, it compelled attention to elegance".\textsuperscript{51} The manuals of letter-writing, in addition to stressing eloquent style, preserved the classical divisions of oration: "... Ancient love (i.e. Dictamen) was immediately and practically applicable. It did not as in "Pratice" have to be perverted ... Immediately adaptable were the five parts of a speech. The 'exordium' is always cardinal in a letter as benevolentine captatio. 'Narratio' applies exactly in its proper sense of statement of the facts. 'Petitio', though it has less scope is quite pertinent. 'Conclusion', though varying most in its ancient function, has some general correspondence. In a word, the classical doctrine for the parts of a speech applied to a letter by mere reduction of scale".\textsuperscript{52}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{52} Baldwin, PP. 214-215.
There is always evidence in the verse epistles of the 15th century of the conscious application of 'dispositio'. It is also more than likely that the numerous "plaints" and "pleas" in the courtly tradition were at times written according to the specific instructions in the letter-writing manuals on how to construct an exordium, narratio, or petitio.\(^5^3\) A Letter to His Heart's Sovereign No. 191, for example, develops the five parts of the art structure of the art of letter-writing. The salutation takes up the whole of the first stanza. The second and third stanzas develop the complimentary exordium and present the facts of 'narration' which are finally summarily stated in the 4th stanza. The fourth stanza also contains the 'petition'. The conclusion is a brief, formulary appendage of polite compliment ending tritely:

The throwes of loue doth my hert so chase
That, truly a god, ther ys no remedy
Without your comfort, but mercylese today.

Such "epistles" are typical of the many available epistles.

\(^{53}\) Peterson, op. cit. P.32.
illustrating about how the formulae for letter-writing were used for stylistic purposes: (Nos. 129, 130, 131, 146, 161, 188, 208, 209 Robbins). The point is that letter-writing manuals continued to be used to add to rhetorical training in the Renaissance, and vogue of the love-epistle subsisted.\textsuperscript{54} This is particularly evident in 'A Gorgeons Grallery of Gallant Inventions.'\textsuperscript{55} Peterson states that by the turn of the 16th century the two modes of 'plain' and 'eloquent' verse distinct from each other, were well established.\textsuperscript{55} Examples of both the styles existing together in the works of each of the two famous poets, Skelton and Dumbar are very obvious. And they exist observing the same distinctions as Chaucer observed. Dumbar is mainly a devout, moral poet who mostly writes 'plainly' of virtue and sin and, various requirements of his religion. But when it comes to courtly verses, he composes in the fashionable literary eloquent style:

\textsuperscript{54} Peterson, Page 34.

\textsuperscript{55} The Gorgeons Gallery of Gannont Inventions ed. Rollins, H.E. Introduction P. XXIII.
My hertis tresure, and swete assured so,
The final endar of my lyfe for ever;
The cruell breaker of my hart in tuo,
To go to deathe, this I deservit never:
O man-slayer quhill saule and life dissever;
Stynt of your slaughter; Allice your man an I
A thousand tymes that dos yow mercy cry.
Quhone He List to Feyne" (74)

Skelton's interests were mainly in moral instruction, and contemplation. His preferred mode was the unadorned style. But in his early elegies he uses the decorated style, for instance, as in "On the Death of King Edward the Fourth", and, "Upon the Dolorous Death of the Most Honourable Earl of Northumberland". By the end of the 15th century, both the eloquent and plain styles of writing obviously had limitations. The eloquent or decorated mode encouraged the writing of such verse as we now brand as "inflated" or "literary". It is stiff, elaborated and fit mostly for stereotyped themes of "court

56. The Poems of William Dunbar, ed. John Small Quoted by Peterson op. cit. P. 35

de amor'. And it is deficient in literary models. The plain style is afflicted with chaotic syntax, excessive moralising and the use of the most hackneyed of aphorisms. It appears that even the chief virtue of the 'plain' writing of realistic plain statement often accomplished with aphoristic conciseness worked against the refinement of its syntax. Unless the 'plain' style acquires a firmer syntax and structures more elastic than afforded by the refrain and commonplace techniques its possibilities as medium of reflection and analysis, the sort of themes to which ultimately it came to be devoted remain severely limited. These defects of technique, structure, and style were to be overcome when both the "plain" and 'eloquent' modes under newer influences, further developed as well interacted, and, interfused. 58

It is a matter of common knowledge that in the last decades of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century, new horizons of thought and action were

58. cf. Peterson PP. 37-38
opened up in every sphere of life by the printing press, humanist movement, discoveries in Geography and by the stimulating influence of the Renaissance. The writers in the vernacular acutely felt the insufficiency of their medium. They felt it necessary to further develop and refine the language. In the logic of the situation, the traditional theory of eloquence taught them that the inadequate vocabulary had to be augmented and elaborate and complex rhetorical figures had to be employed to enhance the expressive powers of the mother tongue.

The writers, it seems, set upon the task of enriching the vocabulary with unprecedented zeal because by 1525 already the practice of augmenting the vocabulary had given rise to the century-long quarrel over 'inkhorn

59. F.R. Jones Chapter II. cf. C.S. Lewis op. cit Introductory.
The need to enhance the capability of expressive powers of the language led to adaptation, paraphrase and translation. The kind of thing that happened with prose for instance, was on the one hand a slavish imitation of Cicero ridiculed by Nash in *The Unfortunate Traveller* and on the other "the excessive reliance on the schemes of Gorgias that is characteristic of Lily, Gosson, and Pettic". In poetry the desire to enhance stylistic capacity is exemplified by the controversy over what Ascham calls the "barbarous" and "Gothic" habit of "rhyming", the imitation in accentual verse of classical

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60. Vere de Rubel (Poetic Diction in the English Renaissance) P.3 States "... by 1528 More was affirming the adequacy of the vernacular. For as for that our tong is called barbarous, is but a fantasyc ... And if they would call beryan of wordes, there is no doubt but it is plenteous enough to expresse our myndes in anye tning of one man hath vsed to speke with another (A Dialogue concerning herery ed, Tottel P. 243 ..."

This statement reveals the amazing progress in the development of the vernacular in the comparatively few years which had elapsed since Caxton's familiar remant in the Prologue to Eneydos over the multipicity and instability of the English dialeots"

61. cf. Maurice Evans op. cit. P. 36

62. Peterson P. 39

63. W.L. Renwick: Edmund Spenser, An Essay on Renaissance Poetry 1933 Chapter III. Style and Language P. 81
metres, and by the attempt to introduce into English the classical system of prosody; all of these matters involved the larger employment and use of the figurative terms.

In this general movement to improve and refine only the vernacular, lyric was one of the genres of literature. The virtue of the lyric is that it is more susceptible to the use of rhetoric. And hence its contribution in the refinement of the vernacular is quite conspicuous. The important thing is that the rhetorical standards by which the vernacular in general was judged inferior, and the attempts which gave direction to the linguistic movement aiming at improvement, also gave direction to the development of the lyric.  

Because of the close association between Latin and English, it was logical that the new words for augmenting English should be coined from Latin above all others. The English writers believed that in this respect they had the sanction by the precepts of

64. cf. F.R. Jones op. cit. PP. 180-182.
65. Peterson P. 40.
Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate. We find them acclaiming 'aureate', 'laureate', 'high and curious', 'silver garnished', 'pullyshed enamalit', 'embellished', 'fructuous' 'facondious' 'sugrit', 'mellifluate, language'. The revival of learning had stimulated interest in the classical languages. Since those great languages provided the standard in the Renaissance, words and terms from those languages were thought highly appropriate and effective. And 'archaisms' of local origin provided another method to add to the sources of vocabulary.

Borrowing was pursued with zest with the result that in relatively short time the vernacular was sufficiently enlarged. By the second quarter of the century a revolt was already brewing up, and two dangerous aspects of borrowing had manifested themselves. In the first place, many of the borrowings from the beginning had been outrageously 'inkhorn'. Secondly new words were introduced in such number and with so little discrimination that not only they could not be assimilated but they were often

67. Rubel, op. cit. P. 5 Chapter I.

68. Vide Note. 60.
distinct barriers to the ideas which the writers sought to express.

Sir Thomas More, the greatest figure from amongst the early group of humanists, in the *Confutation* (1532) condemned the abuse of the practice: If a word were taken out of Latin, Frenche, or Spanish, and were for lack of venderstandyng in English then it was in the former tonnge then signifyth it in Englande none other thynge than as we vse it and understande thereby, wotsoever it sygnifye any where elles... '69 Thomas Wilson, too, 21 years later, in his *Arte* (first published in 1553 and re-published in much extended form in 1560) concedes that some borrowing is valuable but condemns those who seek for "out landish English" and "... pouuer their talk with oversea language..."70 Elyot announces to Henry VIII that his intention in *The Book named The Governor* was 'to augment our English tongue, whereby men shoulde as well expresse more abundantly the toynge that they concerned in theyr hertis (wherefore language..."

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.
was ordained) having words apte for the purpose; as also interprete out of greke, Latyn or any other tongue into Englysshe..." 71 Nevertheless, he is careful to add that when he did make use of a Latin or a French word, he saw to it that the meaning was clear, either by making it one of a doublet or by defining it.

Consciousness of 'inkhornisms' might be attributed to the effect of humanist teaching. The earliest recorded use of the term 'inkhorn' is by Ashton in 1546, but the stricture doubtless began earlier: certainly in the passage from More above it is obvious. After 1546 the term is frequently in use, and practically every writer on the subject of diction inveighs against it. Indeed by the later part of the 16th century the charge is fairly common one and always an effective method of vilification. 72

The attitude toward archaism is at the opposite extreme from that toward inkhornisms, with the commonplace

71. Ibid.
72. Consciousness of 'inkhornisms' as bad taste may be attributed to the effect of humanist teaching. cf. Rubel, op. cit. PP. 9-10.
attitude toward borrowings as the middle ground. 73

From the records it appears that the questions of propriety of archaisms seems to have been little considered after Caxton until the end of the early period. Then we have on the one hand the learned stand of Cheke (who sought to keep vernacular pure from foreign mach-potch by adhering to words of native origin), and on the other that of the layman in the significant address of Richard Tottel to the 'Reader' of his 'Songes and Sonets', wherein he not only admits that the poems have a "stateliness of stile removed from the rude skill of common ears", but also counsels the reader, if he would purge himself of "swinelike grossnesse", to study them as examples of "English Eloquence". 74 Later we have, on one side, Sidney unfavourably disposed, and on the other side E.K. Sticking to the legitimacy of the use of old words. Of course, Mulcaster, finally, disposed the matter in the most common-sense manner. 75 But old language, was, generally

73. Vere de Rubel P. 9
74. Ibid
75. Renwick, R.L. op. cit. 80–85.
forwned upon except by the courtly poets and their audiences, among whom Chaucer's influence became increas-
singly dominant. 76

Related to the old language was the distinction between 'rural' language and 'court' language that became a matter of debate and had considerable effect on style of the language. This distinction is to be found, naturally enough, in the poetry of the first writer of formal eclogues, Alexander Barclay. These eclogues are in the main, translations, but near the opening of the First Eclogue there is a notable introductory passage which refers to the principle of decorum to emphasise the subject:

It were not fitting a heard or a man rural
To speak in termes gay and rhetoricall
So teacheth Horace in arte of poetry
That writers mainly their reason should apply
Mete speeche appropring to every personage,
After his estate, havhauer, wot, and age..

( Beatrice White ed... E.E. T.S.(London) 1928, P. 3. 11. 73-88) 77

Of course, no one could describe Barclay's language in

76. Vide Note 73
77. Quoted, Rubel op. cit. P. 12
practice as rural, not even Tudor rural. But throughout the eclogues it is surprisingly simple. It has generally been held that Barc-lay's influence on the pastoral was negligible. But Miss White believes that Spenser could scarcely have helped knowing the ec-logues (Ibid : P. 7x). Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the subject of rural language for pastorals became a question of some critical debate in the middle decades of the 16th century.

It is worth remembering that the question of rural language had became implicated with the 'fashion in archaisms' when 'inkhorn' borrowings fell under the ban and the poets began to resort increasingly to obsolete or obsolscent language to distinguish their poetry. Wyatt and Surrey who had their lessons from renaissance Italy were the leaders. By the early Elizabethan period, when critical opinions arose against the aureate language of the first quarter of the century, the rise of the pastoral reawakened an interest in archaic diction and the readers responded to the charm of Turberville's ec-logues first and later on

78. Ibid.
79. Rubel P. 13
that of Spenser's. In the decade of the eightees the dominant attitude opposed archaic language; but with the popularity of the Shepherd's Calender the vogue for archaisms flared anew. 80

As for the matter of refinement and enrichment by means of figures of speech it is quite interesting that while other poetic attitudes fluctuated, the stress laid on the use of tropes never abated. 81 Rather the emphasis on rhetorical tropes becomes more apparent as the century progresses. What actually was medieval vestige, heretofore, is now increasingly an essential element in the poetic art of the Renaissance. "Rhetoric in the early Tudor period though apparent is not only somewhat tentative in nature but is also often subordinated to the auration of the language or obscured by it. 82 With the reaction against florid diction - a preponderating quality of the first quarter - "and under the sanction of humanism there re-emerged a lively interest in rhetorical patterns which

81. Ibid
82. Ibid
showed "invention", "filing", "wit". A consequence of this feature is that the extent and variety of figures of speech in a work of a writer are always in direct proportion to his poetic powers.

An important factor that reinforced the stress laid on the use of figures was the rise of interest in the classical versifying under which influence Sidney and Spenser too fell, though only Campion in some poems really succeeded. Lack of accent, stress and rhyme etc. are sought to be made up by the heavy reliance on tropes. The only type of such poetry that proved to be acceptable was that which achieved its effect through relatively greater use of figures of speech.

Interestingly on the question of rhetorical figures critics and writers were both for once in complete accord. Gascoigne specifically states that tropes are more fitting to verse than to prose; and when Puttenham wrote his treatise to serve as a practical guide for the novice poet, he devoted the final and by far the largest

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83. Ibid.
84. Vide Note 64 above
85. Rubel, P. 275
part of it to enumeration, explanation, and illustration of the figures of ornamentation. The last stage of the improved use of tropes becomes evident when the actual practice of the closing years of the 16th century is examined. It revealed that poets of the calibre of Sidney, Warner, and Spenser did not stop with using figures singly. They showed the extent of their inventive genius by highly complex combinations, variations, and mutations of the rhetorical figures that for generations had been acknowledged part of the poet’s craft.  

It may be mentioned that the earliest full-blown humanist treatment in English on the subject is Wilson’s *Art of Rhetoric* (1553–60)—(written not for poets but for orators). Wilson states, "If we think it comeliness and honestie to set forth the bodie with handsome apparel, and think them worthy to have money, that both can and will use it accordingly: I cannot otherwise see but that this part deserveth praise, which standeth wholly in setthafort forth matter, by apt wordes and sentences to-gather and

86. Ibid.
beautifieth the tongue with great change of colours, and varietie of figures" And then he proceeds through many devices for "exornation": metaphor, onomatopoeia, synecdoche, abusio, metonymia, circumlocution, and the like.\textsuperscript{87}

Thus by borrowings, neologising, archaisms and the employment of figures, the vernacular had acquired sufficient copiousness and by the epochal year of 1687 it was generally held that English had become adequate, even abundant.\textsuperscript{88} Borrowings might continue, but the practice was to be carefully restricted by taste and the need for earliness. Cheke threw, as slightly referred to above, the not inconsiderable weight of his influence against any further borrowing, holding that where needed words were lacking, there was sufficient adaptability in the language to fashion anew on the mould of the old. Archaisms - not Chaucerian - were affectations, and made for obscurity. But figures of speech, in that they skilfully cloaked the "sentence" and delighted the reader by ingenuity, were admirable means of ornamentation.

\textsuperscript{87} Rubel op. cit. P. 10
\textsuperscript{88} Rubel op. cit. PP. 12-13
It is significant that the term "eloquence" meant for the 16th century precisely what it had meant earlier in the Middle Ages. Though through the revival of learning the goal of the Tudor writer or poet was to write by emulating the classical authors or those continental writers whose verse reflected what he thought were classical qualities, his literary theory, had been inherited as a part of medieval rhetoric. That is to say, his notion of the style was not derived from his reading of the classics but from the rhetorical theory in which he had been trained. That is the theory which construed eloquence as almost exclusively a matter of copiousness and superficial decoration, was the one primarily available to the early Tudors. R.F. Jones rightly points out that the tradition of medieval rhetoric was the

89. Peterson, Chapter I. PP. 9-41
primary source of Renaissance literary theory.  

Eleanor Sweeting observes, too, that the 16th century poets were indebted to medieval manuals of style. "They drew upon the laws of composition preserved in medieval text-books such as Geoffroi de Vinsauf's Nova Poetria, from whom Chaucer says he derived his knowledge of rhetoric". Scholarship has established moreover, that the handbooks most widely used in the Renaissance schools were essentially medieval.

90. "Though one seeks in vain for any significant body of literary criticism in England before the Renaissance, there did come down through the Middle Ages a very definite rhetorical tradition, based upon the post-classical writers and supported by the position of rhetoric in the university curriculum. It is not strange then, that in the absence of a critical terminology, those who might wish to comment on poetry should use rhetorical terms, and that criticism should be primarily interested in that element which is common to both rhetoric and poetic namely, style" N.E. Jones, The Triumph of the English Language. P. 1


92. "The two most popular text-books in the Grammar Schools were Erasmus' De duplici copia verborum et verum and Aphonius' Prozymmata W. F. Erne: Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance (New York: Columbia University Press 1939) P. 61. Quoted Peterson P. 42."
The force of the medieval tradition was such that even those new texts, such as Thomas Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique*, which offered a balanced treatment of the five parts of rhetoric, and which thus represent a return to the classical tradition, preserve the medieval ideal of the eloquent style in their sections on 'elocution'. Thomas Wilson accepts the commonly accepted definition of the term: "Elocution getteth words to set forth invention, and with such beautic commendeth the matter, that reason seemeth to be clad in purple, walking afore both bare and naked". By its tropes the writer is able "to beautifie the sentence, as precious stones are set in a ring to commend the gold"; and "among all the figures of rhetoric, there is no one that so much helpeth forwarded an Oration, and beautifieth the same with such delightfull ornaments, as doth aplification".

From this statement of Wilson's it is obvious that Wilson in consonance with the medieval 'eloquent' tradition does not consider style as the final clarification.

Quoted Peterson P. 42
of thought, Thus conceiving of eloquence as something added to content he perpetuates the dichotomy between style and content. 94

The conception of this dichotomy persisted throughout the period. It is implicit wherever the emphasis is upon copiousness and ornamentation. W. C. Crane summarising the treatises on rhetoric by Cox, Sherry, and Rainolde, concludes: "The English rhetorics of the sixteenth century reflect the emphasis which the Renaissance placed on amplification and ornamentation".95 Francis R. Johnson comments upon the consequences of this one-sided concern: "With instruction in rhetoric centred primarily on elocutio, defined at the time as the classification and illustration of the various figures of speech, the inevitable tendency was to regard style as the superficial ornamentation whereby the writer adorned or 'prettified' his discourse".96 To quote Eleanor Sweeting again, "The poets and prose writers of the late 15th

94. Peterson, Ibid.
95. Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance, P. 97. Quoted P. 45
96. Richard Rainolde, The Foundation of Rhetorike, Introduction IX. Quoted by Peterson P. 43
and early 16th centuries were preoccupied with matters of style. When they use the term 'rhetoric' they usually signify elocutio, since it provided them with the means of achieving the 'aureate' style in verse and ornamental prose'. Sweeting further adds, "This conception persisted in the 15th and early 16th centuries when there was a strong feeling for the 'high style' in Europe, and English poetry for a time no less than elsewhere".97

The method of composition followed in the early 16th century by poets concerned with eloquence is epitomised by Stephen Hawes in "The Pastime of Pleasure". "Inventio" and "dispositio" exist only as subordinate means necessary to the eloquent intention. "Inventio" refers not to the original choice of theme, but to the discovery of a method which enables the 'ymagynacyon to draw a mater full facundeous' (II. 708-9), that is, to develop a theme copiously. Disposito "dooth emermor dyrecte the matters found ... Gyynge theme place after the aspect (II. 834-37). The poet chooses a theme

97. Studies in Early Tudor Criticism by Eleanor Sweeting. PP. 111 Quoted Peterson.
and a means of expanding it copiously, establishes a convenient principle of order, and then concentrates on "swete and dalcyous" rhetoric. 98

Petrarch whose influence in 16th century is common knowledge, was admired because his name was synonymous with eloquence, not, as is often assumed, with modernity. 99 His praise by the anonymous author of sonnets Nos. 218 and 219 in Tottel's Miscellany is characteristic.

O Petrarke bed and prince of poets a V, Whose lively gift of flowyng eloquence, Wel may we seke, but finde not how or whence So rare a gift with thee did rise and fall, Peace to thy bones, and glory immortall be to thy name .... (No. 218 II. 1-6)

With Petrarke to compare there may no wight Nor yet attain unto so high a stile .... (No. 219, II 1-2)

98. Quoted op. cit. P. 44.


"Petrarch, the leader of an eager band of humerists, is also, it is true, one of the great modern: poets of Italy, but the success of his Tuscan poetry and the revival of its influence more than a century after his death, have somewhat obscured the fact that it belongs to a pre-Renaissance tradition" (Edmund Spenser: An Essay on Renaissance Poetry: London, Edward Arnold & Co. 1925)
The Tudor poets translated and adapted his sonnets more because he represented to them the eloquence that could be achieved in a vernacular, rather than for his content. Moreover, Petrarch presented to the Tudor poets the refinement of a native vernacular, and they felt that he afforded them models not far removed from their own tongue as those afforded by classical poets. 100

The poets and critics who comment on the early Tudor lyrical poetry also demonstrated their preoccupation with style: "The poets are praised to the extent they have beautified the mother tongue". Jonson praises Wyatt and Sumey as "for their times admirable: and the more, because they began Eloquence with us" 101. Churchyard distinguishes Surrey as a "Tullie for his tonge" 102 and Turberville, too, for his refinement of the vernacular:

Our mother-tongue by him hath got such light,
As ruder speach thereby is banisht quight. 103

100. Peterson op. cit. PP. 45-46
103. Peterson op. cit. P. 46
Puttenham whose views represent the average Elizabethan thought on poetry, sums up the popular attitude toward Wyatt and Surrey and the "new company of courtly makers". His main concern is with their contribution to the general improvement of the English tongue: "Sir Thomas Wyat th' elder and Henry Earle of Surrey were the two chieftains, who hauing trauialed into Italie, and there tasted the sweete and stately measures and stile of the Italian Poesie as nouioses newly crept out of the schooles of Dante Arioste and Petrarch, they greatly pollished our rude and homely maner of Vulgar Poesie, from that it had been before, and for that cause may justly be sayd the first reformers of our Englishe meetre and stile". 104

Neither Wyatt nor Surrey is praised for freeing the poetic imagination from the bonds of medievalism. They are "reformers", not revolution-aries. They are "the two chief lanterns of light to all others that have employed their pennes upon the English Poesie", not because they captured the spirit of the Italian Renaissance, but because they learned from Petrarch how to achieve the "high style".

104. Ibid
in the vernacular: "Their conceits were loftie, their stiles stalely, their termes proper, in all imitating very naturally and studiously their Maister Francis Petrarch". 105

Tottel in his famous preface clearly says that the courtly lyric was read for its stylistic beauties: it is pertinent to quote the Preface in full.

"That to have wel written in verse, yea & in small parcelles, deserueth great praise, the workes of divers Latines, Italians, and other, do proue sufficiently. That our tong is able in that kynde to do as praiseworthely as the rest, the honorable stile of the noble earle of Surrey, and the weightinesses of the depewitted Sir Thomas Wyat the elders verse, with seueral graces in sundry good English writers, do show abundantly. It resteth nowe (gentle reder) that thou thinke it not evill doon, to publish, to the honor of the English tonge, and for profit of the studious of English Eloquence, those workes which the vngentle borders vp of such treasure have heretofore enuied thee. And for this point (good reder) thine own profit and pleasure, in these

105. Ibid.
presently, and in more hereafter, shall answer for my defence. If perhaps some dislike the stateliness of stile removed from the rude skill of common eares: I ask help of the learned to defend their learned frendes, the authors of this work: And I exhort, the unlearned, by reading to learn to be more skilfull and to purge that swinelike grossenesse, that maketh the sweete maierome not to smell to their delight.  

Tottel is publishing his collection 'to the honour of the English tongue, and for profit of the studious of English eloquence'. To "The weightinesse of the deep-witted Sir Thomas Wyat the elders verse", it is only a passing reference. Tottel expresses no interest in the content of the verse he has collected and limits his comments to a defence of English eloquence. The stately style of the collection equals to that of any as found in the works of "divers Latines, Italians, and other". It affords profit as well as pleasure, for it may "purge" the unlearned of their "swinelike grossenesse" and serve

as a standard for the learned who wish to master high style.

The Tudor poets, evidently writing in the eloquent style, are appreciated chiefly for their contribution to the English language. Surrey's superiority to Wyatt was because to his successors he seemed to achieve a style which approached the accepted standard of excellence, equal to Petrarch. Wyatt, too, is praised as one of the first refiners of the language, but he is praised in this connection for his Petrarchan translations and not for his most representative work in the "plain" style.

Side by side with the eloquent style 'plain' style continues to be in force for didactic and contemplative effects, and remains a class of not inconsiderable importance. Its value as an instrument proper for expressing serious ideas and as a medium of popular instruction was never questioned. 107 The use of the expressions like 'plain', 'unlearned', 'rude' 'unadorned' 'barbarous'

107. F.R. Jones op. cit. P. 15
'unpollyshed' 'homespun' 'barren' did not carry as strong connotations as the modern reader generally assumes. These terms merely meant that the language was not "eloquent"; that the rhetorical qualities were lacking in it which were supposed to inhere in their best form in the classical languages.108 "The Englishman viewed his native tongue as plain, honest and substantial.109 The soundness of this view is exemplified by a number of poems in Tottel's Miscellany and the miscellanies that followed. 110

During the first two decades (1557-1577) of Elizabeth's reign hardly any essential change in the conception of eloquent lyric takes place. Eloquent or literary lyric is still subsumed under the rhetorical tradition which regards poetry as a matter of rhetoric (and which rg regards poetry a matter of rhetoric) and which still tends to view rhetorical discipline as the art of "elocutio".111 Eloquence still aims at the refinement

107. F.R. Jones op. cit. P. 15
108. Ibid.
109. Ibid. P. 11
110. PP. 228 fol ....... Tottel's Miscellany
111. Peterson, P. 120
and decoration of the vernacular. Critics like Wilson, Richard Sherry and Fenton as well as the better known Puttenham faithfully sustain the hallowed tradition devoted to the use of verbal embellishment, topics and schemes. \(^\text{112}\)

George Gascoigne in his *Certayne notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or ryme in English*, except for a passing reference to the consideration of the content, keeps himself engaged to discussing the means of refining style. Much space in the "certayne notes" is devoted to those techniques of style which were required for the writing of the courtly verse. Invention or poetic originality in Gascoigne here amounts to standard types of embellishment such as rhyme schemes, versification, figurative language, and devices of poetic license \(^\text{113}\) as in *The Pastime of Pleasure of Hawse* Googe in "An Epytaphie of Maister Phayre"(1563) reflects the continuing preoccupation with style. \(^\text{114}\)

\(^{112}\) Ibid.

\(^{113}\) Ibid. P. 121

\(^{114}\) Ibid P. 121.
Phayres achievement according to Googe lies in his successful introduction of the 'high' or 'learned' style of Virgil into English. Turberville in a retraction appended to "Tragical Tales and other poems (1574), goes over his duties at court and thus provides a valuable commentary on the reasons and occasions for writing "eloquent" verse. Note-worthly thing about about the recantation is the way in which it confirms Wyatt's charge that hypocrisy and affectation is the order of the day in the court society in the writing of verse as well as in social relationships. Needless to say the affectation "in the writing of verse" refers to the affected qualities in the eloquent mode of writing:

..... I lived in place among the moe,
Where found affection bore the cheefest sway,
And where the blindd archer with his bow
Did glaunce at sundry gallants every day:
And being there, although my minde were free
Yet must I seeme love wounded eke to be.

I sawe how some did seeke their owne mishap,
And hunted dayly to devoure the hoopes
That beuty bayted, and were caught in trap,
Like wilfull wights that fed on women's lookes:
Who being once entangled in the line,
Did yelde themeselves, and were content to pine.

115. Ibid.
Some other minding least to follow love,
By haunting where dame venus darlings dwelt,
By force were forst cupidos coales to proove,
Whose burning brands did make their minds to melt,
So as they were compeld by meere mischaunce,
As others did, to follow on the dance.

Some eke there were that groapt but after gaine,
That faynd to fire and burne with blooming heate
Of raging love and counterfetted paine,
When they (God wot) had slender cause to treate:
But all was done to make their Ladies deeme
How greatly they their beuties did esteeme.

And then (O Gods) to vew their greeful cheeres,
And listen to their fonde lamenting cries,
To see their cheekes deepe dented in with Teares,
That day and night powred out from painful eyes,
Would make a heart of marble melt for woe,
That sawe their plights, and their sorowes know.

And all for lacke of ruthe and due remorse,
Their cruel Ladies bore so hard a hand,
And they (poore men) constreynd to love perforce,
And fruit lesse cleane to sowe the barain sand:
That unto me, who privie was of all,
It was a death, and grieved me to the gall.

Then for my friends (as divers loved me well)
Endite I must some light devise of love,
And in the same my friends affection tell,
Whom nothing mought from beauties bar remove:
My pen must plead the sillie suters case,
I had my hire, so he mought purchase grace.

Some otherwhile, when beautie bred dis daine,
And feature forst a pride in hawtie brest,
So as my friend was causelesse put to paine,
And for good will might purchase slender rest:
Then must my quill to quarels flatly fall,
Yet keepe the meane twist sweete and sower brall.

Sometimes I must commend their beauties much
That never came where any beautie lay,
Againe somewhatles my mates would have me tutoh
The quicke, because they had received the nay:

And thus my pen, as change of matter grew,
Was forst to grief, or els for grace to sue.

Thus did I deale for others pleasure long
(As who could well refuse to do the like?)
And for myself sometimes would write among
As he that lives with men of war must strike.
I would devise a sonet to a dame,
And all to make my sullen humor game.

(St. 2-11)\textsuperscript{116}

That the writing of such verse served, the purpose of improving the language is evident when Gascoigne refers to the numerous 'trifles' he has published. In a letter 'To al yong Gentlemen', he explains that to take such literary verse seriously, is to 'take chalk for cheese'.\textsuperscript{117}

Knowing only native techniques, he explains that his critics have not been able to see that in the "Areignment and divorce of a lover" and similar poems he employs \textsuperscript{116. Quoted, Peterson PP. 122-124

117. Works, I, The Epistle to the Reverend Divines P. 5
foreign techniques to show how vernacular can be refurbished by such means "... I will not say how much the areignment and divorce of a Lover (being written in jest) have been mistaken in sad earnest ... Of a truth (my good gallants) there are such as having only lerned to read English, do interpret Latin, Greke, French and Italian phrases or metaphors, even according to their own motherly conception and childish skill."George Gascoigne, evidently, is not concerned in such poems with subject-matter, but rather with the domestication of continental techniques.

Reference is to be made to three new tendencies in the eloquent verse in Tottel's Miscellany. They assume distinct shape during 60's and 70's, and later are developed as distinct types. First there is the courtly verse of polite compliment and amatory decorum, of course, Secondly, the learned verse written in the 'high style'

118. Ibid.
120. Peterson, PP. 126-127 "A Handful of Pleasant Delights (1566, 8A) contains courtly polite songs and a form of "learned" verse which becomes one of the most popular genres in the 70s and 80s".
distinguished from the courtly by a new emphasis upon elaborate schemes and classical allusions. Then, the argumentative or sophistic verse such as might have been suggested by Aphthonius' exercises in confirmation and refutation. Each of these types is distinguished by the requirements of distinct subject-matter and style. Surrey's verse is the example of the courtly type and Wyatt suggests such verse in his Italianate poems. Grimald provides examples of both the "learned" and the 'argumentative' as one could expect from the teacher of rhetoric. The examples of the 'learned' verse are his poems of praise. The sophistic or argumentative verse is represented by Nos. 131 & 132, wherein the thesis of the virtues and demerits of getting married is discussed. It may be noted that these types are yet not fully marked out, and overlapping still occurs.

In the tradition of the 'plain' styles, too, two new tendencies are manifest. The old notion of poetry as an art of moral persuasion gains impetus under

182. Peterson, P. 126
the rising Puritan trends and this new pressure is absorbed by the plain style verse by frequently adopting eloquent techniques, particularly those as developed in the argumentative kind. Examples of such poems may be cited as Nos. 135, 138, 154, in Tottel. In the contemplative poems of the plain mode, also, eloquent techniques of structure and syntax are more frequently employed than before, often with brilliant results as in Nos. 169, 205 and 248.

More interesting and certainly more effective than these and which may be said to register an advance in the art of 'plain' lyric is the poem "Of Money" by Googe, wherein the subject of friendship is treated. Judged by the occurrence of the poems on the same theme in the contemporary "Paradise" and the "Gallery" this theme must have been a favourite among the school-masters:

OF MONEY

Give Money me, take Friendship whose lyst,
For Frends are gon come once Aduersytie,
When Money yet remayneth safe in chest,
That quickly can the bryng from myserye,
Fayre face showe frendes,,whan ryches do habounde
Come, tyme of proofe, farewel they must awaye,
Beleue me wel, they are not to be founde,
If God but sende the once a lowrynge daye,
Golde neuer starts asyde, but in dystres,
Fyndes wayes enoughe, to ease thyne heuynes.

It is remarkable how the poem shows the signs
of discipline gained from the eloquent tradition. The
poem may have been written as an exercise in 'refutatio'
as was taught in schools. The poem, however, has acquired
refinement because it shows none of the crudeness that
usually accompany school assignments.\textsuperscript{123} The poem is
further distinguished by the personal conviction that
comes through in its unrelieved severity of statement
which corresponds to an uncompromising honesty in attitude
and language.

"At Bony-all in Fraunce", "The Heart absent",
and "Unhappy tonge why dydste thou not consent" are
also written in native plain song tradition,\textsuperscript{124} except
that Googe uses the pentametre line in place of short-line

\textsuperscript{123} Peterson P. 186
\textsuperscript{124} Peterson PP. 138-139
forms which usually go with native songs. The best is "The Harte absent" wherein the treatment is formulary but language unpretentious, idiomatic, and unrhetorical. The distinguishing quality lies in the variation of caesural length and placement, resulting in cadences though unsophisticated (as compared with the cadences in the songs after Sidney), but which mark the beginning of the process of refinement of the pentametre line that culminates in the sonnets of Sidney and Shakespeare.

Similarly, "To Doctor Bale" and "To the Translation of Pallingen" are written in the old plain mode but in conjunction with the principles of order that Coore derived from rhetorical tradition and also from his study of the Tottel's Miscellany. Those principles of rhetorical tradition operate both as principles of order and methods of analysis, since by establishing an order of progression they also provide a means of discovering what to say about a given subject.  

125. Peterson P. 145  
125b. Ibid.
Conversely, in the sphere of the embellished verse, before the late seventies and early eighties, when wide modifications will be introduced in it under renewed Petrarchanism and renaissance effects, the eloquent style, too, was getting influenced by the 'plain' mode. A striking example of the process is the poem "Of Maistres D.S." by Barnaby Googe. Googe's poems of praise are mostly in the tradition of "hawty verse" but there are some exceptional poems which illustrate the discipline that can be imparted to the high falutin of the eloquent mode by the adoption of 'plain' and dignified language.

Thy fyled wordes, that from thy mouth did flow
Thy modest looke with gesture of Diane.
Thy curteous mynde, and althynges framed so.
As answered well, into thy vertuous fame,
The gentlenes, that at thy handes I founde
In straungers hou (s) e, all vnaquynted I,
Good S. hath my hart to the so bounde,
That from the canit not be forced to flye,
In pledge whereof, my seruyce here I gyue
Yf thou so wylte to serue the whylst I lyue.
The cataloguing of the lady's spiritual and physical gifts, the confession of love, and the avowal to serve faithfully are saved from the triteness and self-pity by the 'plain' attributes of the language. The poet's reference to the kindly way he has been received into a stranger's household by D.S. and his desire to serve only if it pleases her, set the poem apart from the customary exercise. The poem's charm lies in the way in which the convention is restrained and made to express a genuine respect for the lady.

The poems in the plain mode by Googe indicate the way, the plain style was improved by attracting the rhetorical practices from the eloquent method. Other two important poets after Tottel and before the great Elizabethan outburst who successfully carry on the development of the plain style by using structures from the eloquent mode are (i) to a lesser degree George Turbervile and (ii) to greater degree George Gascoigne. Stylistically, Turbervile's \(^{126}\) work varies from the plain but polite, (1)

\(^{126}\) Ibid P. 145
to the weighty and grandiloquent ("The Lover hoping
in May to have had redresse of his woes"). In his
epitaphs and aphoristic verse he shows his distinction
in the plain style. His epitaphs, of course, are neither
to moral didacticism and a corresponding shift to the
plain style. In the first of his two epitaphs for Master
Tuf-ton of Kent, Turbervile treats Kent's death as an
equation that all men must die. He is
not interested in lamenting Kent's death but with stress-
ing the importance of man's need to resign himself to
death. The same moral lesson is propounded in "An Epitaph
On The Lady Br." and in the first of the two epitaphs
for "Maister Win Drowned In The Sea", but with important
difference in technique. Both are conceived as etho-
poeia - the figure wherein "Wee imagine a talk, _for

126b. Peterson, P. 74
some one to speak, and according to his talk we frame the Oration" - and bear a close resemblance to The Mirror for Magistrates "complaint". Turberville's aphoristic poems are in the old didactic tradition, though they show a degree of competence (the result, probably, of Turberville's study of the classical epigram) that earlier epigrammatists had seldom approached. Mostly his epigrams are witty but rarely distinguished and not profound. However, three of the best ("Declaring What Vertue It Is To Stick To Former Plighted Friendships", "Of The Clock And The Cock", "To An Olde Gentle woman, That Painted Hir Face") are early representatives of a tradition to which Greville, Donne, Jonson, and Herrick contributed. 126°. Of the three poets, it is in Gascoigne that there appears in best way, how the plain style borrows structures from the eloquent tradition. The finest result of the combination is conspicuous in "Woodmanship", "Memories" and "The Constancie of a Lover". The theme of the theme in "The Constancie..." is gentle and honest

126°. Peterson, P. 74
Language is pure and unpretentious; the poem discloses a control of style not approached by any writer of love poems after Wyatt. It is completely the fashionable pledge of service and the theme that has been worked out in terms of the 'catalogue' method. But the distinction lies in that the catalogue not merely joins the different parts but works in serving the development of the conceit. "Memories 3" is an elaborately developed refutation of the proverb "Spend and God will send" into carefully worked out seven part scheme. The poet consciously adopts the principle of deliberative oratory for developing the theme, and, bring unity in the poem. "Woodmanship" directly confronts the ethical dimensions of the role that the courtier must play if he is to win recognition. The theme suggests the old plain style and its didactic pre-occupations. The question of imparting coherence of the long lyric was a problem facing the writers. The great contribution of the poet here is that he solves this problem by using the structure of the demonstrative oration as enunciated by Cicero.
In the high tide of Renaissance, later, the plain style discloses extensive modifications. But primitive didactic habits persist and in conjunction with the primitive structural techniques the medieval aphoristic style still appears. In its most austere form it is used by Raleigh in "The Lie", and, in his epicrammatic poems. "In Time of Pestilence" by Nash is an excellent example of the virtues of the plain mode when affected by the pessimism of Renaissance. Its plain diction, simple syntax and primitive technique of development illustrate the persistence of the vigour of the tradition. Nevertheless, now the plain style shows Petrarchan influences in its increased structural and syntactical complexity and its use of the sonnet form. It is further distinguished by being put to use in the analysis of a broader range of subjects than ever before.  

In the late 70s and early 80s with the reintroduction of Petrarchism and newer humanistic influences

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128. Peterson, PP. 164-165.

128b. Ibid.
whose effects can be seen in Watson's *Passionate Century of Love* (Heke tonosaibia) and Sidney's *Astrophel* and *Astrophilia* new directions and, emphasis seem to emerge in "eloquent" English lyric. But these new developments cannot be called revolutionary in the sense that they were in reaction against the prevailing notions of academic and stereotyped composition of verse. These developments are better understood if they are considered as taking shape within the context of the rhetorical theories of style and the continuous experimentation with structure that characterised eloquent lyric from the beginning of the 16th century. The eloquent tradition retains its identity up to the end, although it is modified, by newer refinements and interests.

General refinements of language and verse techniques emerge now. Under newer influences and stricter discipline excessive aureation has been pruned and a good deal of the rigidity of syntax which characterised the earlier verse has been remedied. New and more sophisticated adaptations of classical inventions like the pastoral and

129. Ibid. PPs. 162-165
neo-Platonism are introduced. The pentametre line absorbs many of the practices of the song-writers and acquires new flexibility. Similarly the impact of the Italian and French Petrarchans is no less influential.

By the epochal 1580s the efforts of the writers in improving the vernacular actually began bearing fruit. The language was fit for anything now. The rudeness, barbarism, the unpolished nature, the stiffness, the rigidity of syntax had been overcome. No longer the vernacular is suffering from inferiority complex in comparison with continental and classical languages. Instead, it has become "a free medium of expression, in which brave new words and elaborate figures could puzzle or displease whom they would." \[129^b\] Confidence in its potentialities mounts higher and higher. It is capable of giving went to great conceptions and inspirations." \[130\]

The often talked of great out burst followed only when language had reached this pinnacle.

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\[129^b\] F.R. Jones: *The Triumph of the English Language*

P. 168

Lastly, one unusual but interesting element in regard to language in the 16th century needs emphasis. A modern reader of the 16th century poetry feels somewhat uneasy at the enjoyment of verbal & rhetorical dexterity by the Elizabethan writers which often seem to be indulged in for its own sake. Samuel Johnson's attack on Shakespeare's abuse of puns looks carrying weight, but however much this characteristic may be jarring to the modern reader, for the Elizabethans it was part of the pride in their mother tongue. In the light of the poor status and deficiency of the vernacular as a vehicle of literary expression the poets in the late 15th and early 16th centuries had been compelled exclusively to concentrate on the adornment, refinement and enhancement of the language; literature virtually came to be considered as instrumental to language, not language to literature.

This fact may appear unwarranted to the present day readers who have no idea of the mode of development

130 Vide ante PP. 92-96
131 Jones, P. 183.
of the English vernacular after the break with the past subsequent to 1400. Writer after writer is praised for what he has done for the medium of his expression than for the intrinsic value of his compositions. In view of the humble opinion entertained of the "vernacular during the long period from the last quarter of the 16th century to the last two decades of the 16th this is not surprising. Holinshed attributes the excellence of the English tongue to the "many excellent writers (who) have fully accomplished the ornament of the (language) to their great praise and immortal commendation." The severest criticism that E.K. brings against those who objected to Spenser's revival of old words is that they not only do not know their own language but have such a low regard for it that they both refuse to embellish it, and regret that others do. The English poets whom Horace puts against the ancients derive their value from the "rare ornaments and resplendent abiliments" which they have enriched their vernacular. In order to remind

132. Ibid.
133. Ibid.
writers of their proper subordination to the vernacular, William Warner asserts that "whatsoever Writer is most famous, the same is therefore indebted to his native language". That the language was a prized possession, its improvement an all important goal and a notable achievement and its revealed excellence justification for pride and confidence, is expressed, once for all, by Samuel Daniel - one of the rarest spirits in an age of rare spirits.

Should we this ornament of glorie then
As th' immateriall fruits of shades, neglect ?
Or should we careless come behind the rest
In poure of wordes, that go before in worth
When as our accents equall to the best
Is able greater wonders to bring forth :
When all the ever hotter spirits exprest
Comes bettered by the patience of the North ?

And who in time knows whither we may vent
The treasure of our tongue, to what strange shores
This gain of our best glorie shal be sent,
Taaenrich vnknowing Nations with our stores ?
What words in th' yet vnformed Occident
May come refin'd with th' accents that are ours?
Or who can fell for what great worke in hand
The greatnes of our stile, is now ordain'd ?

135. Ibid
What powers it shall bring (, what spirits command,
What thoughts let out, what humors keep restrain'd.
What mischiefe it may poyrfuully with-stend,  
And what faire ends may Thereby be attain'd
And as for Poesie (mother of this force)
That breeds, brings forth, and nourishe this might,
Teaching it in a loose, yet measured course,
With comely motions how to go vpright ;
And forstring it with bountiffull discourse
Adorns it thus in fashions of delight. 136

136. Found in The Poetical Essays of Samuel Daniel
Newly corrected and augmented, 1599.
cited by Jones op. cit. PP. 184-185.

"In Spirit Mulcastoris akin to Daniel : If the spreading sea, and the spacious (and could use anie spech, thei would both show you, where and how manie strange places, thei have sene our peple, and also give you to wit, that theie deall in as much and as great varietie of matters, as anie other peple do, whether at home or abrode. Which is the reason why our tung doth to so manie vses, by cause it is conuersant with so manie peple, and so well acquainted with so manie matters, in so sundrie kindes of dealing". (The First Part of the Elementrie, 1582, P. 90)

cited by F.R. Jones : The Triumph of the English Language. P. 185