CHAPTER VIII

Style

Style does not consist in the formulation of new words, although new words are born everyday. Nor does it consist in a deliberate breaking of time-honoured syntactical rules, though to continue to be alive language has to change. Coleridge’s definition of poetry as “the best words in the best order” should apply equally well to prose. Style is language transformed, enlivened and illuminated by the enlightened personality of a writer.

Style, it is admitted, cannot be taught. But no one can be an effective artist without taking pains. There is a difference between great prose and effective prose. But both of them involve painstaking. “This technical part of an artist’s life may be learned, and the learning may be carried so far that it ceases to be narrowly technical and becomes a study of the grand strategy of artistic practice.” As Sheridan said, easy reading is “damned hard writing”. The words have to be “picked, sifted clean and put into tune”.

1. Table Talk, vide Coleridge’s Literary Criticism ed. by J.W. Mackail, p. 4.
2. The Writer and his World by Charles Morgan, p. 119.
3. Vide A Writer’s Notes on his Trade by C. E. Montague, p. 147.
4. Ibid., p. 147.
American literature is not merely a search for new life — it has been a search for a new literary idiom. American culture, in its origins and in its early stages, was European, especially English. But with the development of American culture, American literature, too, gradually became independent to a great extent, though European thought and literary modes continued to traverse the Atlantic. For instance, the movement of realism/naturalism, which reached its acme in France with Zola, reached America at the end of the nineteenth century and continued to be popular in the nineteen-twenties.

Like its literature, the American language, too, was derivative. The traditionalists, like Willa Cather and others, and the realists and naturalists, like Crane, Norris, and Dreiser, made few demands upon the reader in their subject-matter or their style. The subjects were usually familiar and so were the words and sentence-structure. Attempts were made in the nineteenth century to achieve a typical American style, especially in dialogue, and very beautiful realistic effects were achieved by Mark Twain.

But as the subjects grew in their complexity, as with Henry James for example, the style and structure were experimented with. Freud made erotic themes fashionable and with him came technical words like "subconscious", 
"motivation", "Oedipus complex", "ego" etc. Technical experiments and daring innovations went together.

But World War I changed much the subject-matter and style. The novels were written mostly by disillusioned young men, many of whom had undergone harrowing experiences in the War. Secondly, many of the writers who wrote after World War I had been journalists — Hemingway, Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, John P. Marquand, and Steinbeck. Naturally, the subjects, as well as the style, were new and different.

The language of Hemingway is, as it should be, modern. It is a language which one hears everyday. Words undergo a constant change — their forms sometimes, their meanings more often. Hemingway's syntax and use of words are of the common man of twentieth-century America. He has never tried to confound and impress one with the use of scientific terms in psychology — the stock-in-trade of many modern writers. A great writer will not go in search of uncommon and romantic words. He will instead, with his gift of imagination and ear for rhythm, create new beauty with old words. "Poetic language, like wine, probably gains a new flavour as it grows older". Hemingway uses old words (not archaic ones), but he produces new music. "I use the oldest words in the English language. People think I'm

5. The Poetic Approach to Language by V. K. Gokak, p.100.
an ignorant bastard who doesn't know the ten-dollar words. I know the ten-dollar words. There are older and better words which if you arrange them in the proper combination you make it stick. Remember, anybody who pulls his erudition or education on you hasn't any.6

Hemingway does not undertake writing or publishing easily. He does not "broadcast" his books upon the world to take their chance. He is a very scrupulous artist. He wrote about himself in 1950 that "all his life he had tried to learn to write better and to know and understand." All his life has been an apprenticeship. A newspaper office, with its insistence on an objective point of view, its pressure in the matter of time and its restriction in the matter of space, is a good training-ground for a young man with the right temperament. The Kansas City Star, for which he first worked, "infected its staff with a curiosity about mankind and a craftsman-like regard for clear, provocative, good — as opposed to "fine" — writing".8 "They worked us very hard", Hemingway remembered thirty-five years later, "especially Saturday nights. I liked to work hard though, and I liked all the special and extra work".9 His love of

6* Portrait of Hemingway by Lillian Ross, pp.56-7.*
7* Ibid., p.21.*
8* The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway by C.A. Fenton, p.34.*
9* Ibid., p.34.*
work is something remarkable. There are stories of how Plato wrote seventy different drafts of one of his Dialogues and how Ariosto wrote the first line of Orlando Furioso fiftysix times. But that Hemingway rewrote the last paragraph of A Farewell to Arms thirtynine times is no story. He did it because he wanted to get "the words right".

"Getting the words right"¹⁰ — this is the central purpose of his style. In fact, of all styles. The choice and arrangement of words is important. "The one word for the one thing, the one thought, amid the multitude of words, terms, that might just do; the problem of style was there! — the unique word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, essay, or song, absolutely proper to the single mental presentation or "vision within".¹¹ There is no muddling of words and emotions in Hemingway. Rather, there is no muddling of words because there is no muddling of emotions. Hemingway has restricted himself to the portrayal of the basic emotions and instincts of man. It could even be said more appropriately that he does not describe the emotions at all. He describes actions which are either the cause or the result of emotion and in such a way as to convey the emotion itself. He makes no direct emotional appeal to

¹⁰ Interview given to George Plimpton, vide Imprint, Sept., 1961, p.139.
¹¹ "Style", vide Appreciations by Walter Pater, p.29.
the readers. No "Prepare ye women to shed your tears now"
mars the scene. Nick, in "Big Two-Hearted River", says that
"he did not want to rush his sensations any". Nick could
have said the same thing about his creator's style. The
deliberate slowness with which he adds up to the emotion
he wishes to create in the reader could be compared to
Cagancho's style of bullfighting at its best: "... sometimes standing absolutely straight with his feet still,
planted as though he were a tree, with the arrogance and
grace that gipsies have and of which all other arrogance
and grace seems an imitation, moves the cape spread full
as the pulling jib of a yacht before the bull's muzzle so
slowly that the art of bullfighting, which is only kept
from being one of the major arts because it is impermanent,
in the arrogant slowness of his veronicas becomes, for the
seeming minutes that they endure, permanent". 13

A statue may be built up by adding material from
without or by chiselling the material down until the statue
is released from the mass of material. The same is true of
a literary artist also. "For in truth all art does but
consist in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish
of the gem-engraver blowing away the last particle of

12. The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p.325.
invisible dust, back to the earliest divination of the finished work to be, lying somewhere, according to Michelangelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block of stone. 14 Swinburne and Victor Hugo used to amplify what they wrote. So did Balzac who, first covering the whole ground shortly, went on filling it out, not once but again and again. But others like Bacon whittled down their mode of expression. "The artist," says Schiller, "may be known rather by what he omits"; and in literature too, the true artist may be best recognised by his tact of omission. ... Surplusage! He will dread that, as the runner on his muscles. 15 Charles Morgan reiterates this very important principle: "He (the writer) will cut in sentences, phrases, single words, until, in an athlete's metaphor, his prose is 'trained down' and is fighting-fit." 16 Hemingway holds the same view: "The test of a book is how much good stuff you can throw away." 17

Personality, subject-matter, and style are an inseparable trinity, though we do speak of them as if they are all independent of, and separable from, each other. In a sense, a subject chooses a writer as much as a writer

15. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
16. The Writer and his World by Charles Morgan, pp. 139-40.
17. Portrait of Hemingway by Lillian Ross, p. 56.
chooses a subject. Jane Austen could not have written an Ivanhoe, Scott, a Vanity Fair, Thackeray, a Pickwick Papers, or Dickens, a Gulliver's Travels. It is equally incorrect to speak as though the style can be separated from the man and the matter. There are styles which are so much an intrinsic part of the writer's personality that they cannot at all be spoken of apart from the writer, as for example, the style of Charles Lamb or Oscar Wilde. But, if one were to speak of style independently of the writers, it could be said that Dickens or Defoe had no style worthy of mention, though none would deny their greatness as writers. Jane Austen, Gissing, and H.G.-Wells have an adequate style. The styles of Gibbon and Newman, different as they are, are great styles. The style of Addison, which Dr.-Johnson recommended for assiduous study and imitation, is not as great a style as Swift's, which defies imitation.

With Hemingway style cannot be divorced from his personality. A character in The Bell says of herself, "But so simple I am very complicated." The same could be said of Hemingway's technique. The pomp of song and the wealth of ornament have been eschewed with an almost puritan harshness. He admits nothing extraneous. Description for the sake of description — there is absolutely none. His directness produces an effect impossible for jewelled

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18. For Whom the Bell Tolls, p.152.
epithets, exotic phrases, flowery vocabulary, or ornamental embroidery. The stately march of sonorous words parading in gracious periods is entirely absent. The sentences are usually short. Everything is apparently simple. But it is a deceptive kind of simplicity. It is not a naive kind of simplicity or the natural simplicity of the unsophisticated. It is the simplicity of a man who has eschewed all the fanfare, not because he is in love with the lack of colour, but because he is afraid of giving tongue to all that he feels, lest his feelings should get the better of his carefully controlled nerves. The voice has been carefully rationed out the amount of breath required, lest the speech should abruptly end in a scream.

The sentences are concise but not curt, and compact without being epigrammatic. The style has not the elegance of Addison's, or the sententious quality of Bacon's. It suffers not from the obvious artificiality of Overbury's: "The gilded ears of corn fall and kiss her feet when she reaps them, as if they wished to be bound and led prisoners by the same hand that felled them"; or, the Latinised majesty of Dr. Johnson's: "But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for having accurately weighed the reasons

for arrogance and submission, I find them so nearly equiponderant, that my impatience to try the event of my first performance will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance; 20 or, the loftiness of Milton's: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat; 21 or, the scholarship of Thomas Hardy's: "It had as many ramifications as the Cretan labyrinth, as many fluctuations as the Northern Lights, as much colour as a parterre in June, and was as crowded with figures as a coronation." 22 Hemingway's style lacks, too, a naturalness that is the characteristic of a perfect style — if any style can be called perfect. Hemingway's is firstly the language of war, suffering and death. The terse, apparently simple style, which does not require from the reader years of preparatory study and erudition to understand and enjoy, has a subtle rhythm which requires a sensitive and delicate ear to appreciate. There are critics in America who still consider his early style as much greater than his mature and more natural style of later years. Maxwell

20. The Rambler, the first paper, quoted in The English Essay and Essayists by Righ Walker, pp. 133-34.
22. The Return of the Native by Thomas Hardy, p. 125.
Oeismar wrote, "I imagine that Hemingway, too, has received his prize for the wrong book, and for the wrong period of his work. It is problematical today whether he will produce anything to match the best work of his past. The Old Man is supposed to represent a "new development" in his craft. But I doubt if his writing can be extended beyond that area where it has been so original, so inimitable — as his present disciples in the Scandinavian countries will find out — and also, in certain respects, so unfortunately restricted".23 But this early style will not endure. It is a style well suited to describe violence and disillusionment. And violence and disillusionment are not lasting things. In the earlier books with the grace of restraint there is also a suggestion of the exertion of strain. With the vitality of control there appears to be also the tension of the nervous break-down: with the vigour of the well trained athlete there is the hint of a desperate clinging to sanity of one who is on the point of losing it. It could be said that it suffers from "an agony of verbal precision".24 It is in the later books when the hero and his creator have been slowly nursed back to normalcy and sanity that the language gains its strength and beauty.

It has been rightly said that the problems of a style are problems of personality. In Hemingway the style reflects the personality of the author as well as that of the hero since the hero is the alter ego of the writer. It is a clear reflection of his growth -- artistic, intellectual and spiritual. Hemingway's early adventures in Michigan woods, his shocking experience of the world of violence in all walks of life, the serious injury in Italy during World War I and the more serious disappointment in love with a nurse, and disillusionment regarding war, were the experience which went into his books. Every story of his tears apart violently the veil of respectability to unmask the brutality below. A narration of such shocks cannot have the grace of a poetic style. There is a straining for the naked truth, the very bedrock of reality. It is "a style that will faithfully reflect his mind as it utters itself naturally". 25 Jordan declares, "He would write a book when he got through with this. But only about the things he knew, truly and about what he knew." 26 Hemingway was never in favour of mystifying or faking.

Because of this innate sincerity his subject-matter and style faithfully reflect the mind of Hemingway. Every book marks a stage in his development. For him writing was

25 *Modern Prose Style* by Bonamy Dobree, p.216.
26 *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, p.238.
a means of achieving catharsis. "He had gotten rid of many things by writing them." The neurotic condition of "Nick is best expressed in the short sentences of "Big Two-Hearted River". The first para has eight sentences with a total number of one hundred and ten words. Each sentence has on an average 13.8 words. By the time The Sun Also Rises was written, the hero had partially recovered. He can face the world better. He, therefore, comes across slightly longer sentences. Compound sentences become more common, though those with the simple conjunction "and" are predominant. If we compare the first paragraph of "Big Two-Hearted River" with the fishing-scene in The Sun Also Rises, we find that the average length of the sentences has gone up to almost twenty-three words. When we come to For Whom the Bell Tolls the language is much more natural — it is the language of a sane and normal man. The sentences are longer. Taking the first illustration that occurs, we see that the first paragraph of Chapter III has one hundred and twenty-two words divided amongst only four sentences. That means each sentence has 30.5 words on the average — more than double that of the "Nick story!"

But this is oversimplification. Sentences vary in length depending upon the purpose they are expected to

serve. In A Farewell, for example, the sentences are normally short. In Chapter III, pages 12-15, Lt. Henry describes his return to the front. While the sentences on pages 12, 13 and 15 are short, we find that the sentences on page 14 are unexpectedly, but rightly, longer. For, he is narrating something of the past which no longer affects him seriously. He is mentioning reasons why he did not go to Abruzzi. The whole thing is narrated in pluperfect. When one tries to narrate what had taken place and especially when one does not retain a clear memory of it, the actions and the reasons therefore get telescoped into each other. But when it is simple narration even in pluperfect, Hemingway makes the sentences of almost a regular length like the wagons of a goods train with just sufficient variations to prevent them from getting mechanically monotonous. In The Old Man and the Sea the sentences are long when it is simple narrative, but when there is emotion involved, the sentences are short again.

It is instructive, too, to compare the paragraphs dealing with the activity of fishing in "Big Two-Hearted River", The Sun Also Rises and The Old Man and the Sea. In the story, fishing is intimately connected with the emotional state of Nick. In The Sun Also Rises, it is a break in the routine of newspaper reporting, but still it is a necessity more or less for Jake. In The Old Man and the Sea, the activity is a reflection of Santiago's
enlightened soul. "In prose as well as in poetry, the passage should contain in itself, as Coleridge said, the reason why it is so and not otherwise, if it is to please permanently".  

A simile, a metaphor and an adjective serve the same purpose, viz., to throw additional light on the subject under reference. But they do it in different ways and with different degrees of poetic intensity. An adjective merely qualifies a thing; a metaphor identifies two dissimilar objects; and the simile serves the same purpose but in a less arresting manner. Metaphors age with time and cease to be metaphors. They get assimilated into current speech. "A metaphor", says Middleton Murry, "is the result of the search for a precise epithet". But more important is the metaphor's or simile's recognition of the homogeneity of the universe, which it does by pointing out the affinities between two different objects. Metaphor is not applied ornament but "almost a mode of apprehension". Even common words are worn out metaphors. Having been a hard-boiled newspaperman, Hemingway does not use a metaphor or a simile as an instrument of ornamentation. The similes throw light on the state of the mind of the characters. In his early

30. Ibid., p.13.
books the characters are so "sick" that they are in no condition to discover the oneness of the universe. As a young man Kick set out with all confidence to save the world, but his first experience was too nerve-racking for him. He cannot sleep without lights. He has withdrawn himself into his shell. Such a person cannot be in the proper shape for recognising the unity of the universe. But as he slowly recovers, his sensibilities return. Metaphors and similes become more common. For example, choosing some pages at random from *A Farewell to Arms*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Old Man and the Sea* we find that:

- Pages 30 - 39 of *A Farewell* contain two similes.
- Pages 222 - 233 of *A Farewell* contain one simile.
- Pages 85 - 94 of *the Bell* have eleven similes, including one repetition of one.
- Pages 289 - 298 of *the Bell* have twenty similes, including five repetitions of one.
- Pages 21 - 45 of *The Old Man* have twelve similes, and
- Pages 59 - 84 of *The Old Man* have seven.

"...Writing of the highest kind is distinguished by a commanding use of metaphor". 31 The *Old Man*'s language on the whole is more metaphorical than that of the previous novels, for example, "... the old man saw the great

31. Ibid., p-12.
scythe-blade of his tail go under and the line commenced
to race out", 32 or "... the boat moved into the tunnel
of clouds". 33 Besides, the whole book is one magnificent
allegory.

"A simile, to be perfect, must both illustrate and
ennoble the subject; must show it to the understanding in
a clearer view, and display it to the fancy with greater
dignity; but either of these qualities may be sufficient
to recommend it", 34 says Dr. Johnson in his admirable
essay on Alexander Pope. There is nothing outstanding
about the similes in Hemingway. They are appropriate
and to the point, for example, "The little eyes were shut
and a fresh drop of blood stood in the corner of one like
a tear"; 35 "... the smell of the regiment like a copper
coin in your mouth"; 36 "Like a battleship"; 37 "... clouds
that looked like high snow mountains above them"; 38 "The
hide was an inch thick where it hung in a cape behind the
head and was as white where it was cut as freshly sliced

32. The Old Man and the Sea, p.61.
33. Ibid., 81.
34. Lives of the English Poets by Samuel Johnson,
36. Ibid., p.73.
37. To Have and Have Not, p.139.
38. The Old Man and the Sea, p.37.
coconut"; 39 "... the trees looked like the double sails of a fishing-boat"; 40 "... the shadows of the Heinkels moving over the land as the shadows of sharks pass over a sandy floor of the ocean"; 41 or "... his lips made a tight line, like the mouth of a fish". 42

Since many of his books deal with war and the after-effects of war, and the consequent lack of home, Hemingway gives us some similes which remind us of home and contented, quiet life, for example, "... she would shiver like a wet dog"; 43 "She stroked under his hand like a kitten"; 44 and "I will drop it in that gorge like a broken bird-cage". 45

Sometimes Hemingway has the trick of repeating the same simile to produce a particular effect. In The Bell, the guerrilla leader, El Sordo, has been trapped on a hill which, he knows, will certainly be his grave. The knowledge gives him no comfort. He compares the hill to a chasm.

40. *A Farewell to Arms*, p. 223.
41. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, p. 75.
42. Ibid., p. 205.
43. Ibid., p. 30.
44. Ibid., p. 66.
45. Ibid., p. 152.
A chancre is "an ulcer arising from the direct application of syphilitic poison". It would not be surprising if El Sordo had been suffering, like most soldiers in war, from a chancre. It could not have been a pleasant experience and must have been unavoidable. The simile is repeated five times in six pages. It is wonderfully apt and realistic, even if it is unpleasant.

He has used the same device earlier in a story of his, called "Hills Like White Elephants". The subject of the story is abortion but that is a subject which the man and the girl are trying to avoid by making small talk. The point whether the hills are like white elephants is a matter of disagreement between the man and the girl. This disagreement only serves to mask the matter of deeper disagreement. When he finally agrees that the hills do look like white elephants, his agreement is as unconvincing to himself and to the readers as her statement that she was feeling fine.

The language becomes more natural and has an easier grace as we come to the later books. It has become poetic. There are passages of striking beauty, for example, "We ate in pavilions on the sand. Pastries made of cooked and shredded fish and red and green peppers and small nuts like grains of rice. Pastries delicate and flaky and the

46. Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary:
fish of a richness that was incredible. Prawns fresh from the sea sprinkled with lime juice. They were pink and sweet and there were four bites to a prawn. Of those we ate many. Then we ate paella with fresh sea food, clams in their shells, mussels, crayfish, and small eels. Then we ate even smaller eels alone cooked in oil and as tiny as bean sprouts and curled in all directions and so tender they disappeared in the mouth without chewing. All the time drinking a white wine, cold, light, and good at thirty centimes the bottle. And for an end; melon. That is the home of the melon --- The melon of Valencia for eating. When I think of those melons long as one's arm, green like the sea and crisp and juicy to cut and sweeter than the early morning in summer. Aye, when I think of those smallest eels, tiny, delicate, and in mounds on the plate. Also the beer in pitchers all through the afternoon, the beer sweating in its coldness in pitchers the size of water jugs. It is to be doubted whether a more convincing description of the flavour of food and the bouquet of wine has been given to us by anybody else. And that deceptively simple and poignantly touching passage where Jordan recalls the pleasures of life while all along we know that he is nearing his end: "Then he

47. For Whom the Bell Tolls, pp. 83-4.
had made a pillow of the things he took off and gotten into the robe and then lain and waited, feeling the spring of the boughs under the flannelly, feathered lightness of the robe warmth, watching the mouth of the cave across the snow; feeling his heart beat as he waited. ... He smelled the odour of the pine boughs under him, the piney smell of the crushed needles, and the sharper odour of the resinous sap from the cut limbs. ... Which would you rather smell? Sweet grass the Indians used in their baskets? Smoked leather? The odour of the ground in the spring after rain? The smell of the sea as you walk through the gorse on a headland in Galicia? Or the wind from the land as you come in toward Cuba in the dark? That was the odour of the cactus flowers, mimosa, and the sea-grape shrubs. Or would you rather smell frying bacon in the morning when you are hungry? Or coffee in the morning? Or a Jonathan apple as you bit into it? Or a cider mill in the grinding, or bread fresh from the oven?48

But with the restraint of the earlier books has also gone the controlling discipline to a certain extent. He introduces similes that are unnecessary, for example:

"... Augustin... cursed him... cursing as steadily

48. Ibid., p.249.
as though he were dumping manure on a field, lifting it with a dune fork out of a wagon", 49 or "... the woman started to curse in a flood of obscene invective that rolled over and around him like the hot white water splashing down from the sudden eruption of a geyser. 50 It is difficult to understand the point of comparison, especially in the second simile. But such similes are few and far between.

But when we proceed to *The Old Man and the Sea* we find that the style has not the severe restraint of the earlier books or the poetic glow and the romantic sheen of *The Bell*. It has the Greek grace and Greek self-control. It reminds one of Greek sculpture — its clear-cut lines that show disciplined vigour and wiry energy. Matthew Arnold wrote of Wordsworth's poetry: "Nature herself seems, I say, to take the pen out of his hand, and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power". 51 Arnold could well have been speaking of Hemingway’s style in *The Old Man*. It is again the index of the state of the mind of the hero. The nerve-racked Nick and the romantic Jordan have given place to a self-reliant,

49. Ibid., p.207.
50. Ibid., p.145.
51. *Essays in Criticism* (Second Series) by Matthew Arnold, p.158.
The style represents the personality of a writer; the language represents the age in which he lives. The modernness of Hemingway's language was due to his newspaper work. The 110 rules which governed the Star's prose had to be familiar material to the paper's reporters. The first paragraph read: "Use short sentences. Use short first paragraphs. Use vigorous English. Be positive, not negative." This Hemingway never forgot.

Rule 3 said: "Never use old slang. Such words as stunt, cut out, get his goat, come across, sit up and take notice, put one over, have no place after their use becomes common. Slang to be enjoyable must be fresh." 53

Slang is the result of what Bradley calls the "desire for freshness and vivacity of expression". 54 "There is a certain exuberance", writes Otto Jespersen, "which will not rest contented with traditional expressions, but finds amusement in the creation and propagation of new words and in attaching new meanings to old words". 55 One of the results is slang. Slang is usually limited in fiction to dialogue, which it enriches by its freshness,

52. Quoted in The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway by Charles A. Fenton, p.35.
53. Ibid., p.36.
vivacity and brevity. "Perfect slang has a cunning brevity that braces you. It should taste sweet and keen, like a nut". 56 Hemingway does use ordinary slang: Bums, rummy, limey, mucked, spooked, bitching, etc.. Sometimes he uses slang of compound words, for example: talk-box for larynx (perhaps an echo of "knowledge-box" for "head" of nineteenth-century England), shut-eye for "sleep" etc. At other times he has got new forms for old words, or uses old words in a new context with striking effect, as for example, whiskey whisper, flamingoes flying in the dark, rained drizzlinolv, which display a sense of inventiveness, of the forceful and the picturesque. He uses pled for pleaded. The new word tiredor of Hemingway sounds more appropriate with Santiago than the more orthodox more tired. He sometimes uses an archaic form as well as a new form. In his short story, "Soldier’s Home", he uses the form got while in most of his other short stories and novels he has used gotten. Prof. V-K-Gokak, in his book, The Poetic approach to Language, writes that in America "gotten is still used as a past participle in place of got". 57 Gotten may not be an archaic form in America but to a non-American it does sound like one, and as such it has got a beauty of its own. Archaism within limits is inherently poetic. Besides,

"true archaism is a return to something older, not for
pedantic or merely decorative reasons, but for more life
and for a fuller expression of the principle of life." 58

Hemingway, again, has the knack of using compound words
with wonderful appropriateness, and creating a new
pictorial beauty which formerly had been the domain of
painters: the bounding away of bucks is described as
"leg-drawn-up leaps": 59 the description of the fawning
attentions of a shop-keeper — "... he smiled at us in
well-oiled, unsuccessful storekeeping, brotherly humanity,
and hopeful salesmanship" 60 — is still to be bettered, and
vultures are painted: "... the huge filthy birds sit.
their naked heads sunk in the hunched feathers. A fourth
planed down, to run quick-legged and then waddle slowly
toward the others". 61 He says that he has been very much
influenced by painters: "I learned to write by looking at
paintings in the Luxembourg Museum in Paris.... This is
what we try to do in writing, this and this, and the woods,
and the rocks we have to climb over. ... I learned how to
make a landscape from Mr. Paul Cezanne by walking through
the Luxembourg Museum a thousand times with an empty gut.

58. Ibid., pp-139-39.
59. "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber", vide
The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, p-109-
60. Green Hills of Africa, p-87-
61. "The Snows of Kilimanjaro", vide The Short Stories of
Ernest Hemingway, p-151-
and I am pretty sure that if Mr. Paul was around, he would like the way I make them and be happy that I learned it from him". 62 There have been few American writers who have been as much influenced by painting as Hemingway has been. His enthusiasm for art was stimulated by Gertrude Stein.

The laws of poetry are not the laws of painting. The dominion of poetry is different from that of painting. It has been generally accepted that the modes of representation for poetry and painting are different. Lessing maintains that "succession of time is the department of the poet, as space is that of the painter". 63 Middleton Murry, too, advises the writer not to imitate the art of painting: "... he must not allow himself to be corrupted by trying to emulate the art of painting. If anything is more wearisome than a long passage of so-called musical prose or poetry, it is a long passage of laborious pictorial description...". 64 It would be difficult to reconcile these precepts and Hemingway's statement that he learnt to make a landscape from Cezanne, if Hemingway is to be taken literally. But if we take the spirit of it, it will not sound so inconsistent. The writer tries to achieve in his writing the sense of a physical

63. Laocoon by Lessing, quoted in The Making of Literature by R.A. Scott-James, p.185.
64. The Problem of Style by J. Middleton Murry, p.87.
background, the equivalent of the sense of depth in painting, even something more than the equivalent of a "three-dimensional" picture, the aim of which is to achieve a sense of external reality. Hemingway, in his Green Hills, speaks of heights that can be reached in prose if "one is serious enough and has luck. There is a fourth and fifth dimension that can be gotten". In such writing it is not the parts or the details that matter. Minor details may not be true to nature. They may appear even to be distorted. This would be not merely excusable but even justifiable, if the total effect can successfully convey the aesthetic feeling which the artist intends to. This was what Cezanne was trying to do. "Cezanne more fully than any other painter added a new dimension in Western art. What Goya and Constable and Corot introduced into their pictures occasionally, beyond the realistic virtues, what Blake and Turner and Daumier intuitively grasped at, without finding disciples or founding a modern school, Cezanne richly achieved. He made a life-long search for the elusive quality termed "form", exploring the realms of abstract realization and extra-dimensional revelation...". "Poetry", said Shelley, "lifts the veil from the hidden

beauty of the world...". What is true of poetry is true of fiction. In literary art, it is through style that it is to be achieved. And style is a matter of rhythm, the ear. Prose can be as satisfying and effective as poetry without being metrical. "Prose-rhythm aims characteristically at a general harmony in which the parts are subdued to get the tone of a total effect; even the sounds which give the support or the relief, yet to a great extent seem to be trying to efface themselves in order not to disturb by a too striking particular effect the general harmony which is the whole aim". Words, of which style is formed, have a meaning, a shape and a sound. But they can be used in such a way that they gain significance, a form and a music, not perhaps originally theirs, or even if they had been theirs, they had not been released and exploited by writers. The writer has to make the word "carry in it not only the intellectual notion but the emotion and the psychical sensation of the thing he would make present to us".

Hemingway's syntax, too, is unconventional. Grammatical English may not be good English, and good English may not be necessarily conventional and correct. Words are old and

68. The Future Poetry by Sri Aurobindo, p.29.
69. Ibid., p.380.
out-worn through long usage. But the writer has to create a new music out of old words. To this end Hemingway writes in a way purists may not like, but the beautiful effects he achieves justify the means. He can write: "... Romero moved his arms ahead of the bull, wheeling, his feet firm".  

"I'd rather get one, a good one, than all the rest"; "It blew our scent every bloody direction"; "Me, dictionarying heavily"; "As I went out the door..." and "I do not care who kills who".

The quality of humour in Hemingway has not been sufficiently appreciated by any critic of his except C.A. Fenton, who, in his *The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway*, has quoted a number of examples of the sense of humour which Hemingway evinced as a student and newspaper reporter. One of his class-mates said: "His literary ability was recognised, but one might have predicted that he would be a writer of humour". "In the months immediately after his abandonment of newspaper work, in fact, Hemingway was inclined to think of himself at least in part as a humorist".

70. *Fiesta*, p.165.  
72. Ibid., p.11.  
73. Ibid., p.156.  
75. *The Old Man and the Sea*, p.92.  
77. Ibid., p.203.
A sense of humour is a sign of the health of the body and the mind. But the wellspring of his humour appears to have been frozen because of the shocking injury Hemingway received at Fossalta di Piave. He could not sleep in the dark for a long time. It was a slow recovery. He got rid of it by writing about it. His early short stories betray no sense of humour at all, although his newspaper work between 1920 and 1922 contains examples of humour. But these sound more like deliberate attempts at arousing laughter than expressions of a genuine and natural sense of humour. The Torrents of Spring (1926) was an equally deliberate attempt at comedy. With The Sun Also Rises (1926) and A Farewell (1929) we start getting glimpses of the true sense of humour that Hemingway possesses. In A Farewell the Italian soldiers carrying two leather cartridge-boxes on the front of the belts under their capes are described: "... the men, passing on the road, marched as though they were six months gone with child". More interesting is the battle of wits between Lt. Henry and Miss Van Campen, the head-nurse, regarding whether Lt. Henry had intentionally brought on an attack of jaundice through alcoholism to avoid going to the front. Comic too is the argument between the two Swiss customs officers, each one of whom, impressed by the cash Lt. Henry and Catherine have on their person, claims that his town is the better place for winter sports.

78. A Farewell to Arms, p. 8.
One of the best examples of comedy is to be found when Lt-Henry, who is in need of a shave, sends the porter for a barber. The barber was very solemn and refrained from talking. Lt-Henry tries to make polite conversation:

"What's the matter? Don't you know any news?" I asked.

"What news?"

"Any news. What's happened in the town?"

"It is time of war," he said. "The enemy's ears are everywhere."

I looked up at him. "Please hold your face still," he said and went on shaving. "I will tell nothing."

"What's the matter with you?" I asked.

"I am an Italian. I will not communicate with the enemy."

I let it go at that. If he was crazy, the sooner I could get out from under the razor the better. Once I tried to get a good look at him. "Beware," he said. "The razor is sharp." I paid him when it was over and tipped him half a lira. He returned the coins.

"I will not. I am not at the front. But I am an Italian."

"Get to hell out of here."

"With your permission," he said and wrapped his razors in newspaper. He went out, leaving the five copper coins on the table beside the bed. I rang the bell. Miss Gage came in.

"Would you ask the porter to come, please?"

"All right."
The porter came in. He was trying to keep from laughing. *Is that barber crazy?*

*No, signorino. He made a mistake. He doesn't understand very well and he thought I said you were an Austrian officer.*

*Oh*, I said.

*Ho, ho, ho!* the porter laughed. *He was funny. One move from you, he said, and he would have --* He drew his forefinger across his throat.

*Ho, ho, ho!* he tried to keep from laughing. *Then I tell him you were not an Austrian. Ho, ho, no!* 

*Ho, ho, ho!* I said bitterly. *How funny if he would cut my throat. Ho, ho, ho!* 

*No, signorino. No, no.* He was so frightened of an Austrian. *Ho, ho, ho!* 

*Ho, ho, ho!* I said 'Get out of here!' 

He went out and I heard him laughing in the hall." 79

To Have has a very good example of slap-dash comedy:

"Hayzooz, they tell me you had a baby."

"Yes, sir", says Hayzooz very proudly.

"When did you get married?" Rodger asked him.

"Last month..."

"Listen, Hayzooz, what makes you think that's your baby?" Rodger asks him. "That's not your baby."

79. Ibid., pp.73-4.
'What you mean not my baby? What you mean? By God, I no
let you talk like that! What you mean not my baby? You buy
the cow you no get the calf? That's my baby. My God, yes.
My baby. Belongs to me. Yes, sir! ' 

Hemingway does not reject the lower type of comedy —
Mrs. Albert Tracy learns that her husband has been killed
and she rushes to the pier. In the crowd some people shoved
forward and Mrs. Tracy fell into the water. When two coast-
guardmen dived and brought her out safely, she came out
minus her set of artificial teeth. "My teeth", said
Mrs. Tracy tragically. 'Lost my teeth'.

A sense of humour is the surest sign of a person's
heart being in the right place and its being whole. The
Fifth Column has a high-spirited sense of fun. The examples
of genuine humour we get in The Bells are a proof of the
recovery of the hero and his creator. Repartee between
Rafael and Anselmo, Rafael's deliberate and mischievous
clowning about the method of recognising the hour of the
day by the state of his stomach, Pilar's friendly chaffing
of Jordan about Maria, the broad jokes of the guerrilla
fighters are all there. Joaquin talks lightly of the burden
he had to carry when he removed Maria to a place of safety:

80. To Have and Have Not, p.95.
81. Ibid., p.199.
"I was glad thou wert hanging over my back when the shots were coming from behind us." 82 If laughter can also be used to conceal love, this is it.

Maria, too, can laugh at herself: "Maria filled his (Jordan's) cup with wine. 'Drink that', she said. 'It will make me seem even better. It is necessary to drink much of that for me to seem beautiful.'" 83

Sri Aurobindo, in his enlightening book, The Future Poetry, marks out different gradations in the style of poetry. The first or the simplest is the style of "poetic adequacy", 84 which, at its lowest, almost touches a prose statement, and, at its highest, enables us to "see the object or idea in a certain temperate lucidity of vision". 85 The second and higher style is the "effective", 86 which, ranging from a kind of poetic rhetoric on its lower levels to a higher level of intensity, is illuminative, having an "intuitive intensity of the life spirit". 87

But it would be wrong to judge prose style by the norms of poetry. High intensity and passion enable a poet to concentrate in a line what a prose writer would require.

82. For Whom the Bell Tolls, p.129.
83. Ibid., p.65.
84. The Future Poetry by Sri Aurobindo, p.382.
85. Ibid., p.383.
86. Ibid., p.384.
87. Ibid., p.391.
a paragraph or more to express, and by its very length the passage deprives itself of the illuminating flash of lightning. Dryden wrote:

"And Paradise was opened in his face."

An equivalent of it in prose (not its paraphrase) could be: "You are killing me, fish, the old man thought. But you have a right to. Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful or a calmer or more noble thing than you, brother. Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills whom.

"Now you are getting confused in the head, he thought. You must keep your head clear. Keep your head clear and know how to suffer like a man. Or a fish, he thought."

One is a flash, the other calm and compelling prose. As Elizabeth Drew said, "The perfect essay is a triumph, but the perfect lyric is a miracle."

In prose also there can be gradations. Hemingway's early style could be called "adequate. Whether he was describing a disordered retreat from the battlefield, or a row in a boat across a lake, or a bullfight, or fishing, or hunting, the style was adequate for the purpose. Then he came to write The Bell and The Old Man the style became

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88. Absalom and Achitophel, line 30.
89. The Old Man and the Sea, p. 92.
90. The Enjoyment of Literature by Elizabeth Drew, p. 63.
"effective". In the "effective" style on its lower levels "its attempt at effect takes the shape of rhetoric and appeals to a kind of nervous energy of the intelligence". A passage from "Banal Story" is a good illustration: "All the papers in Andalucia devoted special supplements to his death, which had been expected for some days. Men and boys bought full-length colored pictures of him to remember him by, and lost the picture they had of him in their memories by looking at the lithographs. Bull-fighters were very relieved he was dead, because he did always in the bull-ring the things they could only do sometimes. They all marched in the rain behind his coffin and there were one hundred and forty-seven bull-fighters followed him out to the cemetery, where they buried him in the tomb next to Joselito. After the funeral every one sat in the cafes out of the rain, and many colored pictures of Patera were sold to men who rolled them up and put them away in their pockets. But when the mood of prose is "more intellectually deep and sincere, it prefers to arrive rather by subtler means, suggestive turn, aptness and vividness and richness and beauty of phrase". The last paragraphs of The Bell are a very good example of the "effective" style in prose at its best.

92. The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway, op.459-60.
Hemingway's style, says Dr. Philip Young, "is as eloquent of his content as the content itself: the style is a large part of the content". 94 His style matches the matter. "The true basis of criticism", writes Charles Morgan, "is never subject. Nor is the true basis of criticism style. The true basis of criticism is the harmony of style with subject, of form with vision". 95

So when we examine the style of Hemingway we find concrete evidence of the development of his personality — how a sensitive young man, exposed to the evils of the world and the injuries of war, receives a shock, but from which he slowly recovers until his personality develops into that of a healthy and sound man. That his books shew this development is natural enough, but, Hemingway being a fine and sincere artist, we find his development traced as clearly as in a graph in the development of his style.

94 *Ernest Hemingway* by Philip Young, p.177.
95 *The Writer and His World* by Charles Morgan, p.39.