danger, depart severally in quest of the vanished hero, and thus leave not only the stage but the orchestra vacant for the soliloquy that precedes his suicide.

No such general description as has been here attempted can give even a remote impression of the march of Sophoclean tragedy—by what subtle yet firm and strongly marked grada­tions the plot is unfolded; how stroke after stroke contributes to the harmonious totality of feeling; what vivid interplay, on the stage, in the orchestra, and between both, builds up the majestic, ever-moving spectacle. Examine, for example, the opening scene or πρόλογοί of the *Oedipus Tyrannus.* Its function is merely to propound the situation; yet it is in itself a miniature drama. First there is the silent spectacle of the eager throng of suppliants at the palace gate—young children, youths and aged priests. To them the king appears, with royal condescension and true public zeal. The priest expresses their heartfelt loyalty, describes the distress of Thebes, and, extolling Oedipus’s past services, implores him to exercise his consummate wisdom for the relief of his people. The king’s reply unveils yet further his incessant watchfulness and anxious care for his subjects. And he discloses a new object to their expectancy and hope. Creon, a royal person, had been sent to Delphi, and should ere then have returned with the response of Apollo. At this all hearts are trembling in suspense, when Creon is seen approaching. He is wreathed with Apollo’s laurel; he looks cheerfully. What has Phoebus said? Another moment of suspense is interposed. Then the oracle is repeated—so thrilling to the spectator who understands the story, so full of doubt and hope and dread to all the persons of the drama: “It is for the blood of Laius—his murderers are harboured in the land of Thebes. The country must be purged.” That is the cul­minating point of the little tragedy. While Oedipus asks for information, while in gaiety of heart he undertakes the search, while he bids the folk of Cadmus to be summoned thither, the spectators have just time to take in the full significance of what has passed, which every word that is uttered sends further home. All this in 150 lines!

Or, once more, consider the employment of narrative by this great poet. The *Tyrannus* might be again adduced, but let us turn instead to the *Antigone* and the *Trachiniæ.* The speech of the messenger in the *Antigone,* the speeches of Hyllus and the Nurse in the *Trachiniæ,* occur at the supreme crisis of the two dramas. Yet there is no sense of any retardation in the action by the report of what has been happening else­where. Much rather the audience are carried breathlessly along, while each speaker brings before their mental vision the scene of which he had himself been part. It is a drama within the drama, an action rising from its starting-point in rapid climax, swift, full, concentrated, until that wave subsides, and is followed by a moment of expectation. Nor is this all. The narrative of the messenger is overheard by Eurydice, that of Hyllus is heard by Deianira, that of Nurse by the chorus of Maidens. And in each case a poignancy of tragic significance is added by this circumstance, while the speech of the Messenger in the *Antigonei* and that of Hyllus in a yet higher degree, bind together in one the twofold interest of an action which might otherwise seem in danger of distracting the spectator’s sympathies.

So profound is the contrivance, or, to speak more accurately, such is the strength of central feeling and conception, which secures the grace of unity in complexity to the Sophoclean drama.

The proportion of the lyrics to the level dialogue is consider­ably less on the average in Sophocles than in Aeschylus, as might be expected from the development of the purely dramatic element, and the consequent subordination of the chorus to the protagonist. In the seven extant plays the lyrical portion ranges from one-fifth to nearly one-third, being highest in the *Antigone* and lowest in the *Oedipus Tyrannus.* The distribu­tion of the lyrical parts is still more widely diversified. In the *Electra,* for instance, the chorus has less to do than in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*, although in the former the lyrics constitute one-fourth, and in the latter only one-fifth of the whole. But then the part of Electra is favourable to lyrical outbursts, whereas it is only after the tragic change that Oedipus can appropriately pass from the stately senarius to the broken language of the dochmiac and the “ lamenting ” anapaest. The protagonists of the *Ajax* and the *Philoctetes* had also large opportunities for vocal display.

The union of strict symmetry with freedom and variety, which is throughout characteristic of the work of Sophocles, is especially noticeable in his handling of the tragic metres. In the iambics of his dialogue, as compared with those of Aeschylus, there is an advance which may be compared with the transition from “ Marlowe’s mighty line ” to the subtler harmonies of Shakespeare. Felicitous pauses, the linking on of line to line, trisyllabic feet introduced for special effects, alliteration both hard and soft, length of speeches artfully suited to character and situation, adaptation of the caesura to the feeling expressed, are some of the points which occur most readily in thinking of his *senarii.* A minute speciality may be noted as illustrative of his manner in this respect. Where a line is broken by a pause towards the end and the latter phrase runs on into the following lines, elision sometimes takes place between the lines, *e.g. (Oed. Tyr.,* 332-333);—

Έγώ o!5√ *eµavTÒv oüre σ\* &Xyvv&. τL τaυτt* dλλωs *eλeyχeιs't*

This is called *synaphea,* and is peculiar to Sophocles.

He differentiates more than Aeschylus does between the metres to be employed in the *κoμμoi* (including the *κoμμaτcκh)* and in the choral odes. The dochmius, cretic, and free anapaest are employed chiefly in the *κομμοί.* In the stasima he has greatly developed the use of logaoedic and particularly of glyconic rhythms, and far less frequently than his predecessor indulges in long continuous runs of dactyls or trochees. The light trochaic line ·, so frequent in Aeschylus, is comparatively rare in Sophocles. If, from the very severity with which the choral element is subordinated to the purely dramatic, his lyrics have neither the magnificent sweep of Aeschylus nor the “ linked sweetness ” of Euripides, they have a concinnity and point, a directness of aim, and a truth of dramatic keeping, more perfect than is to be found in either. And even in grandeur it would be hard to find many passages to bear comparison with the second stasimon, or central ode, either of the *Antigone (eυδaιμoves οϊσι κακών) or* the first *Oedipus* (et µot *%υvdη φepovτi).* Nor does anything in Euripides equal in grace and sweetness the famous eulogy on Colonus (the poet’s birthplace) in the *Oedipus Coloneus.*

Bibliography.—Sophocles was edited (probably from the Venetian MSS.) by Aldus Manutius, with the help of Musurus, in 1502. The Juntine editions in which the text of Aldus was slightly modified with the help of Florentine MSS. were published in 1522, 1547, respectively. An edition of the Scholia, very nearly corre­sponding to those on the margin of the Medicean or chief Laurentian MS. (La or L) has previously appeared at Rome in 1518. The first great modification of the text was due to Turnebus, who had access to the Parisian MSS.; but he was not fortunate in his selection. The earliest editors had been aware that the traditional arrange­ment of the metres was faulty, but little way had been made towards a readjustment. Now it so happens that the Parisian MS. T, which is a copy of the recension of Triclinius, an early 14th-century scholar, contains also the metrical views of the same editor; and, having found (as he erroneously supposed) a sound authority, Turnebus (1552) blindly adopted it, and was followed in this by H. Stephanus (1568), and by Canter in Holland (1579), who was the first to recognize the arrangement of the odes in strophe and antistrophe. The error was to a large extent corrected by Brunck (1786), who rightly preferred Par. A (2712), a 13th-century MS., belonging, as it happened, to the same family with Ven. 467, which Aldus had mainly followed. Thus after nearly three centuries the text returned (though with conjectural variations) into the, former channel. Musgrave’s edition was published posthumously in 1800,and Gilbert Wakefield had published a selection shortly before. Erfurdt in Germany then took up the succession, and his edition formed the basis of Hermann’s, whose psychological method set the example of a new style of commentary which was adopted by Wunder. A new era commenced with Peter Elmsley’s collation of the Laurentian MS. (made in 1818, but only published in full after bis death). His transcription of the Scholia still exists in the Bodleian Library. The most important German commentaries