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 Œdipus 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 crises 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 thrilling 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 *pησL<s* in the *Antigone,* 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.

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 Æschylus, 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 *Œdipus 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 *Œdipus 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 Œdipus can appropriately pass from the stately senarius to the broken language of the dochmiac and the “ lamenting” anapæst. 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 Æschylus, 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 situations, adaptation of the cæsura 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 line, elision sometimes takes place between the lines, *e.g. {Œd. Tyr.,* 332-3) :—

’Εγώ *ο∖>τ' ιμαυτbv οtiτe d aKyυvw.* τf ταΰτ’

⅛λλωs eλeγχeιs ;

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

He differentiates more than Æschylus does between the metres to be employed in the *κομμοί* (including the *κομματίκά)* and in the choral odes. The dochmius, cretic, and free anapæst are employed chiefly in the *κομμοί.* In the stasima he has greatly developed the use of logaœdic 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

\_z\_ v w \_z\_ w \_, so frequent in Æschylus, 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 Æschylus 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* (eυδαιpoveς oισt *κaκωv)* or the first *Œdipus (cl μοL ζvveig ψίροντι).* Nor does anything in Euripides equal in grace and sweet­ness the famous eulogy on Colonus (the poet’s birthplace) in the *Œdipus Coloneus.*

Sophocles was edited (probably from the Venetian MSS.) by Aldus Manutius, with the help of Muslims, 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) had 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 blindly adopted it, and was followed in this by H. Ste­phanus (1568), Capperonier, and Vauvillers in France, and Canter in Holland (who was the first to mark the correspondence of strophe and antistrophe). This 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 many conjectural varia­tions, some of which were due to Scaliger, Auratus, and other earlier scholars) into nearly the same channel as at first. Meanwhile the study of Greek metres had greatly advanced, and, while much licence was given to conjecture (in which Valcknaer and Porson were especially happy), documentary evidence was also better weighed and sifted. The collation of the Laurentian MS. by Peter Elmsley in 1825 (with his transcription of the Scholia) may be said to mark the most important epoch in the textual criticism of Sophocles. But the great work of Gottfried Hermann, whose editions (1823-1830), which are critical in every sense of the word, are adorned with an ample Latin commentary, made perhaps the longest step in advance. Since Hermann the editors of Sophocles have been very numerous. The list, from Schneidewin to Wecklein and Pappageorgius amongst Continental scholars and from Linwood to Jebb (who is last, not least) amongst our own, is too long for insertion here. (L. C. )

SOPHRON of Syracuse, next to Epicharmus the greatest representative of Sicilian comedy, flourished about 430 b.c. He was the author of mimes, written in prose, containing both male and female characters—Μίμοι drδp∈Γoι and Μίμοι γυναικείοι—and depicting scenes from the daily life of the Sicilian Greeks. From the extremely scanty fragments which remain of his writings we can only see that he used the local dialect, frequently sacrificing refine­ment to vigour ; he sometimes reminds us of Plautus in his employment of bold and expressive figures and turns of expression. But we can judge of the dramatic power