

**ENGLISH METRISTS IN THE EIGHTEENTH  
AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES: BEING A  
SKETCH OF ENGLISH PROSODICAL  
CRITICISM DURING THE LAST TWO  
HUNDRED YEARS**

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English Metrists in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Being a Sketch of English  
Prosodical Criticism during the Last Two Hundred Years by T. S. Omond

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# ENGLISH METRISTS

(18th AND 19th CENTURIES)

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© **ENGLISH METRISTS**

IN THE  
**EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH  
CENTURIES**

BEING A SKETCH OF ENGLISH PROSODICAL  
CRITICISM DURING THE LAST TWO  
HUNDRED YEARS

BY

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"A STUDY OF METRE"

*etc.*

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## PREFACE

THIS volume completes a survey which was originally meant to form an Appendix to my *Study of Metre*, and of which a small introductory portion has been already printed, as mentioned in the first paragraph of my text. As there explained, however, the present volume is practically independent and self-contained, since within its period comes all that constitutes our real criticism of prosody.

While regretting the delay which has unavoidably intervened between outset and completion, I am glad that this enables me to mention in my Postscript several recent works of importance.

It has been my endeavour not merely to enumerate and summarize treatises, but to trace the gradual development of sounder views about verse-structure. Writings which influenced this development are therefore considered somewhat more fully than others. No such report on the progress of metrical science has appeared, that I know of, in any modern European language; the necessary materials, indeed, have scarcely been brought together.

I am much indebted to several correspondents who, accepting an invitation now renewed on behalf of a volume which must need their good offices still more, favoured me with notice of errors or omissions in my previous pamphlet. Some particular obligations are



acknowledged in Appendix A. But I would here especially thank three friendly contributors, Mr. E. L. White of Baltimore, Mr. E. P. Morton of Indiana University, and Mr. F. I. Carpenter of Chicago, for help which has enabled me to make my list of American publications less incomplete than before.

May I suggest to American writers on *metric* the expediency of forwarding a specimen of their work to the British Museum? Few people care to buy unseen books; a copy deposited there might attract some purchasers, and would at least advance knowledge. Our subject not being popular, the Museum authorities are apt to pronounce "unnecessary" even volumes that readers wish to consult.

When this book was planned, I seemed to have the field to myself. Now, a formidable competitor may be thought to have arisen in the person of Prof. Saintsbury. How far future volumes of his *History of English Prosody* will take possession of this field I do not know. Judging by what has already appeared, I incline to suspect that our aims diverge, and that students may profit by seeing the same matters treated from two very different points of view. However this turn out, I rejoice that a cherished design is being executed before "the night and the shadows" come to prevent; and shall hope that my narrower attempt may share some of the interest which, I trust, my friend's work is destined to excite in a subject too much neglected of late years by English scholars.

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