

**THE RHYMESTER: OR, THE RULES OF RHYME.
A GUIDE TO ENGLISH VERSIFICATION. WITH
A DICTIONARY OF RHYMES, AN
EXAMINATION OF CLASSICAL MEASURES,
AND COMMENTS UPON BURLESQUE,
COMIC VERSE AND SONG-WRITING**

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The rhymester: or, The rules of rhyme. A guide to English versification. With a dictionary of rhymes, an examination of classical measures, and comments upon burlesque, comic verse and song-writing by Tom Hood & Arthur Penn

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TOM HOOD & ARTHUR PENN

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THE
RHYMESTER

TOM HOOD

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NOTE

BY THE AMERICAN EDITOR.

Exchange MAR 8 '45

IT is now ten or a dozen years since there appeared in London a little volume called "The Rules of Rhyme," and signed by Tom Hood. The author of this manual of versification was the only son of the Thomas Hood who sang the "Song of the Shirt" and wrote "Whims and Oddities," who mingled smiles and tears all his life long, making a brave fight against disease and death, until at last the latter won the victory, snatching him from the bed whereon he lay "spitting blood and puns." Named after his father, Thomas Hood the younger took to his father's trade, and led the laborious life of a working journalist all his days. Proud of his father's name, he chose always to sign himself "Tom Hood," that he might not be accused of

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trying to trade on his father's reputation. He was born in 1835, and he died toward the end of 1874. He began life as a clerk in the War Office, a position he gave up in 1865, when he became editor of "Fun." In the course of his literary career he wrote four or five novels, of which at least one—"For Valor"—was republished in this country; and he edited as many Christmas annuals. In 1868 he published his first "Comic Annual," in imitation of his father, and so popular did he make it that it continues to appear even now, seven years after his death. He also wrote and illustrated many books for children. As editor of "Fun," he showed that he was also the author of "Rules of Rhyme"; he practiced what he preached, and he neither wrote nor tolerated slipshod rhyme and halting rhythm. While he edited "Fun," its verse—comic or serious, pathetic or satiric—had always a high degree of technical merit. He could not make poets of all those who wrote verse for the paper; but he could and did make them mend their paces and mind their stops. He was only a minor poet himself, but he had a keen under-

standing of verse and great metrical facility, as any one may see who considers the posthumous volume of his poems edited by his sister, Frances Freeling Broderip.

In the present edition the American editor has dealt very freely with the English author's text, treating Tom Hood's "Rules of Rhyme" very much as he treated the "Young Poet's Guide" when he reprinted it as a supplement to his own treatise. He has made occasional alterations, a few omissions, and more frequent insertions. The most of the added matter is indicated by brackets, [thus]. It has been deemed inadvisable to point out in detail all the minor changes, and it is hoped that a general acknowledgment here will suffice. Three whole chapters have been added—one on the sonnet, another on the *rondeau* and the *ballade*, and a third on the other fixed forms of verse. The brief dictionary of rhymes has been revised, simplified, rearranged, and somewhat enlarged; and to it have been prefixed a few lines of Ben Jonson's on the difficulties and dangers of rhyme, which seemed pertinent. A. P.



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