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THE RHYTHM
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ENGLISH PROSE

A Manual for Students

BY

NORTON R. TEMPEST
Sometime William Noble Fellow in the University of Liverpool

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1930

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To

MY MOTHER AND FATHER

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PREFACE

THIS work is primarily intended for the use of those who are approaching the subject of English prose-rhythm for the first time. It has been the writer's aim throughout to avoid controversy, and to present, in a simple way, a subject which readily lends itself to confusion. He has no desire to impose his views upon his reader, but would afford the opportunity of making a beginning, whence any special direction that may seem attractive may be followed. In the matter of scansion there is no intention to dogmatise. Syllables and groups frequently occur whose stress is uncertain, but this does not change the general principles and features with which this book is chiefly concerned. Finally, readers are reminded that this is a pioneer work, the first of its kind in English, and thus, unlike text-books on better known subjects, cannot benefit from the errors of its predecessors. If it will stimulate others to follow, and help them to go further, whilst serving in the meantime as a guide, it will achieve its purpose.

The writer wishes to record his gratitude to the authors of the books listed in the Bibliography, and, in particular, to Professor Oliver Elton, with whose guidance and encouragement he first embarked on research in prose-rhythm; to the founder and trustees of

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the William Noble Fellowship Fund, through whose generosity he has found time for its pursuit; and to Professor L. C. Martin who has, by his unfailing kindness and assistance, placed him under a debt which he cannot repay.

N. R. T.

January 1930

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