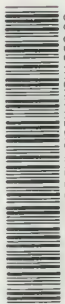


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On the history of the definite tenses in  
English

Alfred Akerland

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ON THE HISTORY  
OF  
THE DEFINITE TENSES IN ENGLISH

BY

ALFRED ÅKERLUND

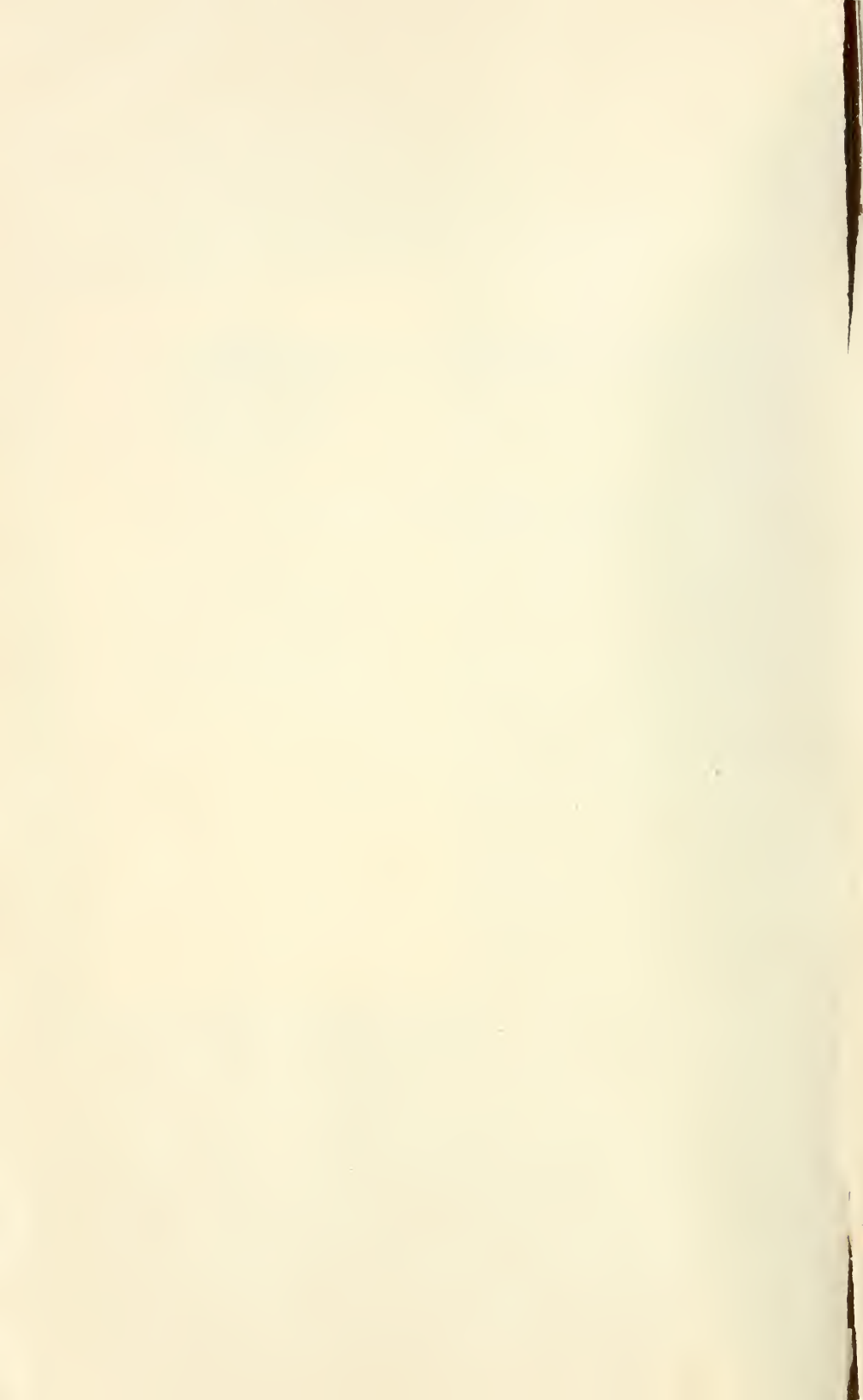
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SEPTEMBER 23, 1911, AT 4 O'CLOCK P. M.  
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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## PREFACE.

The following investigation, in an abridged form, was originally meant to appear as part of a more comprehensive work, announced in the 'Englische Studien', band 40 (1909), under the title: 'The Origin and Development of the Definite Tenses in English'.

My interest in the subject was at first roused by the diverging views on the origin of the definite tenses in Modern English.

Thus much may suffice to say here concerning these views: some scholars recognize in the *-ing*-form the present participle with the new ending, and are of opinion that they have developed directly from corresponding periphrastic forms in Old English, where we have to do with the old participle — which is also the case in texts belonging to northern dialects in Middle English; other scholars, on the contrary, hold that their origin is to be sought in such expressions as 'he is a-going', *a* standing for the preposition *on*, and the form in *-ing* being not the participle proper but the verbal noun.

Later on, when working out my material, I grew more and more interested in the various uses of the periphrastic forms, be their origin what it may, and I thought it worth while to deal with them in a comparatively exhaustive way, while I was about it.

In the present treatise, therefore, I altogether turn my back on the verbal noun question.

I start from the fact that the construction 'be + ing' in Modern English is morphologically, if not historically, the same as that occurring in Old English, and follow it from this period through Middle and Early Modern English, adding at the end a section on the compound definite tenses.

In short, the treatise is intended to give, in the first place, a history of the periphrasis (in the active voice) from an exclusively syntactical point of view, and secondly, to contribute, so far as the investigation may furnish conclusions on this point, towards the formation of an opinion on its origin, by comparing its functions during the different stages of the language.

In a later essay I shall take up this question from the point of view of the verbal-noun expressions, by giving an account of their origin and their relations to the definite tenses, in other words: a history of the 'a-phrases' — such as the one quoted above — in standard English, dialects, and vulgar speech, this account also comprising the rise and growth of the passive definite tenses.

Finally, I desire to record my hearty thanks to my teacher, Professor Eilert Ekwall, of Lund, University, for the valuable advice and encouragement he has given me during the progress of my work; to Mr. Charles Scott Fearenside, formerly English Lector in the University of Lund, who has read through the treatise in manuscript and in proof with a view to normalizing my English; and lastly to the officials of the University Library at Lund for their unflinching courtesy and help in facilitating my researches.

Landskrona, September 1911.

Alfred Åkerlund.

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---

<sup>1</sup> See also *Grenville Grove*, Modern Engelsk Lärobok, Del II Grammatiken, p. 53 ff. — This book came into my hands when my own work was just finished.



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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

### 1. General Character of the Definite Tenses in Recent English.

The existence of the periphrastic and simple forms side by side furnishes the English language with an admirable means of expressing even very subtle shades of meaning: the use of a definite tense may indeed represent a stylistic nicety of an exquisite effect, just strong enough to be felt and appreciated, but too delicate, I am tempted to say, to allow of being properly analyzed. They prove, then, frequently enough, rather hard to judge; and on the whole, to get at the intrinsic character of the definite tenses is perhaps no easy task.

Most authors agree, however, that they have a general meaning of duration which is to be looked upon as their main characteristic.

Western, who has treated this subject somewhat fully, explains the difference between the simple and the periphrastic forms thus:

As a rule, one can only say that, whereas the simple tenses express the infinite and the unlimited, as: 'the church *stands* on a hill', 'I *have never seen* him', or the momentary, as: 'he *fell* dead', or a series of events, as: 'when he *had gone*, I *sat* down and *wept*', — the periphrastic tenses imply that the action or the state of things is limited

within a certain space of time, either directly expressed or to be understood, as: 'he *has been sleeping* for six hours', or that it is simultaneous with another action, as: 'he *was dressing* when I *entered* the room'. (Indledning, 2).

This pronouncement is not intended to stand as an exhaustive definition of the definite tenses ('At gi nogen udtommende og noiagtig definition af de omskrevne verbalformers brug i engelsk er neppe muligt'. — Indledning, 1.), but it covers the main uses.

Taking it, therefore, as the starting-point for forming a more general and comprehensive definition, we may sum up the different statements by saying that the indefinite tenses are used where no special time is thought of, whilst the definite tenses are employed when this is the case. Thus put, I venture to say that it gives us the key to an explanation of the other uses<sup>1</sup> as well, and I arrive at the following view of the matter:

The fundamental principle, that which underlies all the different functions of the definite tenses, is that the periphrasis gives, so to speak, a stronger inner stress to the verb, makes it more sentence-stressed, by calling the interest directly to the idea of time: the indefinite tense is more neutral and apt to act in a way more as a copula than as a tense, properly taken, whereas the definite tense is more pregnant in this respect and is preferred where the action, as such, is to be emphasized.

## 2. Views of Previous Investigators Concerning the Old English Periphrasis.

Old English possesses an equivalent to the Modern English definite tenses in a periphrasis formed by the verbs 'wesan' or 'beon' with the present participle.

<sup>1</sup> See Concluding Survey.

It occurs already in the oldest texts and was noticed remarkably early by grammarians; but until lately no thorough investigation as to its character and syntactical uses has been undertaken.

Most of the authors concerned agree in attributing to the Old English periphrasis about the same meaning and grammatical functions as characterize the corresponding modern forms, e. g. Mätzner, Einenkel, Müller, and others.

Several scholars, however, are of a somewhat different opinion.

Thus Sweet, in *New Engl. Gr.* II, § 2203, remarks that the extended forms in Old English are 'only vaguely differentiated from the simple forms'. In § 2205 he supposes the fundamental difference to be that the periphrastic tenses 'are associated with the idea of incompleteness', and then admits that, as a natural result of this, they very often occur in constructions which involve the idea of continuity or progression (§ 2206). — Thus far, I think, Sweet's remarks will hold good, but then he ventures the following restriction: 'But that this idea is only a secondary one is shown by those instances in which the context excludes the idea of duration, as when the periphrase is accompanied by the adverb *sōna* 'immediately', as in *þa sōna on anġinne þæs ġefeohtes wæs se munt Garganus bifġende mid ormætre cwacunge*<sup>1</sup>. — That the periphrasis in this instance, as indeed in some others as well, admits of an inchoative meaning in no wise excludes the idea of continuity: on the contrary, it must always be understood that the action in question is not only beginning, but also that it continues for some time. Thus in the above example we might very well infer that Mount Garganus 'started

<sup>1</sup> This is Aelfric's translation of the Latin: *Garganus immenso tremore concutitur*. — See Max Förster, *Zu den Blickling Homilies*, *Herrig's Archiv* 91, p. 194.



trembling' <sup>1</sup>, which certainly implies duration. Moreover, one is justified in saying that, in these instances, the durative element is not only admissible but, as a rule, predominant, the inchoative meaning being only the secondary one.

Jespersen holds (*Growth and Structure* etc., p. 205) that Old English 'he wæs feohtende' corresponds to Modern English 'he used to fight'. — It will not be denied that, in some cases, the Old English periphrasis involves such an idea; but if Jespersen's interpretation should be taken to mean that the main use of the extended tenses in Old English is that they denote a habit, it must be downright rejected. — It would seem as if Jespersen had adopted this interpretation in order to support his conjecture of the altogether different origin of the Old English periphrasis and its modern counterpart, by thus assuming different functions for the two extreme stages of the language <sup>2</sup>.

Lately the periphrasis in Old English has been treated, on a larger scale, by no fewer than three scholars, namely, Erdmann and Pessels, and lastly by Püttman, who has also brought some specimens of the Early English period under his investigation.

Without entering into details in this place I confine myself to stating that the results arrived at agree on all main points, and especially in recognizing the idea of duration or progression as the general character of the periphrasis.

<sup>1</sup> Sweet has (§ 2207): 'began to tremble'.

<sup>2</sup> The passage referred to runs as follows: 'The periphrastic tenses *I am reading, I was reading, I have been reading, I shall be reading*, etc. were not fully developed even in Shakespeare's time and seem to have little, if anything, to do with the Old English *he wæs feohtende* 'he used to fight'; the modern forms are aphetic for *I am a-reading*, where *a* represents the preposition *on* and the form in *-ing* is not the participle, but the noun'.

Only I think fit to quote, in its entirety, Erdmann's very interesting definition (p. 12): 'The Participle Present is used to form, together with the various parts of the auxiliary verbs *wesan* and *beón*, that periphrastic conjugation which is commonly called the Progressive form, and the characteristic of which is that it denotes an action as being in progress at a certain time, present, future, or past. It differs in this from the corresponding simple forms, which represent the action merely as a fact, that takes, will take, or has taken place. Being the adjective form of the verb, the Part. Present naturally has in its character a shade of permanence and durability, that does not belong to the rest of the verb. Accordingly, though actions put in the simple forms also must be considered to occupy some space of time and the two forms may not unfrequently be interchanged, without infringing the sense of the passage, there will however be found to exist a perceptible distinction between their several ways of giving the same idea. This distinction may be greater or less in particular cases, but it is seldom quite effaced. By using a tense of this periphrastic conjugation, the speaker, mentally entering into the very time of events, describes the action as going on, as continuing; whereas, if choosing the simple form, he would take no notice of it from that point of view, but mention it as a fact only'.

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## I. OLD AND EARLY MIDDLE ENGLISH.

**Occurrence.** Both in Old and in Early Middle English the periphrasis is very sparingly used, as compared with modern usage.

*Beowulf* musters only 3 examples, and in the whole of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* we have only about 24. In *Aelfric's Lives of Saints* the number of instances seems at first sight fairly large — about 100; but when we take into consideration the great length of this work, one must say that, even here, the frequency is, comparatively, small. Also, it is a striking fact that the occurrence of the extended forms is here very uneven: while some of the legends exhibit no instances at all, e. g. II, IV, IX, X, XI, XIV, XV, XVII, XIX, etc., we find them in comparatively great numbers in others, especially in XXIII with 13 instances, and, even more, in XXIII B, where some two dozen are on record. This might partly depend on the more or less free use Aelfric made of the Latin sources which were at his disposal. In the works translated from the Latin, in fact, the periphrasis is much more frequently used than in the works that are original or partly original. Thus in the Blickling Homilies which are, as has been shown by Max Förster<sup>1</sup>, a very close translation from the Latin, there

<sup>1</sup> Zu den Blickling Homilies, Herrig's Archiv 91.

are no fewer than about 130 instances, a considerable number of which occur in *Hom. XIII*, where we find the periphrasis on almost every line. In the *Old English Homilies* there are 26, which is certainly no great number for a book of that size. As regards the *Genesis and Exodus* I have gone through the greater part of the text itself and the whole of the glossary, with the meagre result of finding only two examples. The instances are likewise very few in other texts belonging to this period: *The Life of Saint Katherine* and *Alfred's Proverbs* have only two or three each. These texts, however, are rather short. An exception from the general scantiness is afforded in the *Vices and Virtues*, with 36 instances of the periphrastic form.

The tense which is most often met with is the past, while, owing to the narrative nature of most of the texts concerned, the present is comparatively scarce.

## A. Main Uses.

### 1. The Present Tense.

(i) **Defined.** The function of the periphrasis is seldom quite clear, unless it is strengthened by time-definitions, which, however, is the case in only a very limited number of instances.

It then expresses the actual present in some cases where the definitions are 'nu' (Ae. L. XVI, 217), or 'nu gyt' (Ae. L. XXIII, 452), which even more emphasizes the present moment. Occasionally the complement lies in a clause, as in V. a V. 47, 14 and A. Pr. 40.

In other cases the definitions employed show that the periphrasis implies duration, as in O. E. H. II, 175, 18 ('eure'), V. a V. 137, 31 ('niht and daig').

**Examples.**

- Ae. L. I, 45. Symble he bið *gyfende*. And he ne wanað swa-  
þêh nan þing lís.  
— XVI, 217. and ða synd nu ealle on þam ecan wuldre  
for heora clænnysse mid criste *wunigende*.  
— XXIII, 452. and decius se casere is nu gyt *smeagende*  
hwæt we gefaran habban.
- O. E. H. II, 175, 18. Ðe se is eure *wagiende*.  
— 21. þis wrecche world. þat eure is *wagiende* noht fra  
stede to stede : ac fro time to time.
- V. a V. 21, 12. To alle ðo halzen ðe hier on liue waren ibo-  
ren, and nu mid ure lauerde gode *wuniende* bied, ic  
clepie  
— 47, 14. ic ðe beseche and bidde ðat tu ðese halwende  
lore on write sette, for ðan ic am michel *þenckinde* ðar  
hwile ðe ic on ðese wrecche lichame am *wuniende*,  
— 137, 17. Godd is haure *fastinde*.  
— 31. For ðan ðe gode mann is niht and daiȝ *þeinkinde*  
hu he muȝe gode icwemen, and him betst hersumen;  
alswa is ðies beswikene mann niht and daiȝ *þeinkinde*  
hwu he muȝe fellen [h]is unȝesali beli mid swete metes  
and drenches.
- A. Pr. p. 40. If hit so bi-tydeþ,  
þat þu bern ibidest,  
þe hwile hit is lutel,  
ler him mon-þewes;  
þanne hit is *wexynde*,  
hit schal wende þar-to;  
þe betere hit schal iwurþe  
euer buuen eorþe.

**Remarks.**

- Ae. L. I, 45. Here the expression involves an idea of  
recurrence.
- O. E. H. II, 175, 18. Translated from the Latin 'Mare  
semper est in motu'.

(ii) **Undefined.** In the majority of the examples found  
the tense occurs by itself, and the function of the periphra-  
sis in many cases scarcely differs from that of the simple

form, as, for instance, in Ae. L. I, 49 and in O. E. H. II, 175, 25. Here the extended tense seems to be called into existence chiefly by virtue of the durative or rather progressive character of the verbs in question ('creopende' and 'fleonde' respectively).

Rather often the participle approaches an adjective in meaning: Ae. L. I, 131; Ae. L. XVI, 293; Ae. L. XXXIV, 114; V. a V. 15, 23; V. a V. 137, 6; here the periphrasis seems to denote *absolute duration*. In the last example one might also say that it stands instead of the indefinite present, according to modern notions: the translation 'helps much' is the correct one to render the meaning of the Middle English expression 'is — — swiðe helpinde'.

Thus, on the whole, one must say that where it stands undefined, the present periphrastic very seldom denotes the actual present in the same strict sense as we have it in Modern English; a few examples, however, might be singled out as fairly good specimens: Ae. L. V, 417; O. E. H. I, 43; V. a V. 21, 3; V. a V. 95, 3; V. a V. 107, 8. Note, however, that the verbs employed here, 'eardigende' and 'wunigende', are by nature durative.

### Examples.

- Ae. L. I, 49. Ða gesceafta þe þæs án scyppend gescéop synden mænig-fealde. and mislices hiwes. and úngelíce farað. — —. Sume syndan *creopende* on eorðan. mid eallum lichoman. swá swá wurmas doð. Sume gað on twam fotum. sume on feower fotum. -- —. Sume fleoð mid fyðerum. sume on flodum svimmað.
- 131. And swá *styrigende* is seo sawul. þæt — —
- 176. Heo is unge-sæwenlic. and ún-lichomlic. butan hæfe and butan bleo. mid þam lichaman befangen. and on eallum limum *wunigende*.
- V, 417. Ic me gebidde to ðam gode. þe bið *eardigende* on heofonum.
- XVI, 293. Twa unrot-nyssa synd. an is þeos yfele.

and oðer is *halwende* þæt is þæt se man for  
his synnum geunrotsige.

Ae. L. XXIII B, 244. god sy gebletsod se ðe is sawla hælu  
*tilligende*;

— 227. Ðe gedafenað abbud Zosimus to biddenne and to  
bletsigenne. forþan þu eart underwreded mid þære sacerd-  
lican lare. and þu eart *tellende* cristes gerýnu mid þam  
gyfnum þæra godcundlican

— XXXIV, 114. We habbað cyne-helmas halige mid us  
scinende swa swa rose. and snaw-hwite  
swa swa lilic.

þa þu ne miht geseon þeah þe hí *scinende*  
beon.

O. E. H. I, 43. ah prud heo wes swiðe and modi. and liðere and  
swikel. and wredful and ontful. and forði heo bið *wunniende*  
inne þisse pine.

— 95. On culfre onlicnesse and on fures heowe wes godes  
gast isceawed. forðon þet he deð þa þe beoð bilehwite.  
and wið-utan ufelnesse. and *birrende* on godes willan.

— II, 175, 25. He is *fleonde* else shadewe and ne stont neure  
on one stede.

V. a V. 15, 23. ðe deade man[n]es þruh, þe is wiðuten ihwiteð,  
and wið-inne *stinkende* and full of wermes.

— 21, 3. To ðeu ic clepiðe iec ðe bið *wuniðende* mid  
ðemaneliche hlauerde gode,

— 35, 28. He wisseð ðes mannes iðang[c] ðe he to-cumð,  
oðer ðurh halige writes oðer ðurh hali sermuns, þe he  
him ðurh sume wise manne ðe he is inne *wuniende*, sant.

— 37, 32. Ʒif ðu wilt sikerliche wuniðen on karite and on  
gode, þanne do ðu als wa we hit a boke finden iwriten,  
þæt is, ðat tu mid rihte ðeleane and mid faste hope and  
mid soðe luue bie *werchinde* ðat god ðe ðu iliefst.

— 57, 11. To sume menn hie cumð and farð, and mid  
sume men hie is *wunende*, and on swiðe feawe menn hie  
is *rixende*. On ða manne ðe hie is *rixende*, þis [is]  
ðe tacne: al swo ðe worold-mann lihtliche lei[c]heð of  
ydelnesse ðe he isieð oðer iherð, al swa ðe gastliche man  
ðe hie on rixed, lihtliche wepð oðer sobbed,

— 59, 14. godes milsce last æuremo (to) alle ðo mannen ðe  
him bið *dradinde*,

— 75, 16. and wite ðu te soðe, bute ðu him bie hier *tei-  
dinde* hwat swa hit ðe ratt to donne: ðanne ðu cumst  
— —, ðanne ðu art itwamd fram ðine lichame, hit te  
wile betachen — —



- V. a V. 75, 22. Diuicie si affliant, nolite cor apponere, 'Worl-  
des eithe,  $\text{z}$ if hie is swiðe *rixinde* to ðeward, ne do ðu  
naht ðine herte ðerto,
- 95, 3. Cariteð arist up fram ðe grundwalle, and beclepð  
all ðe wouh, (and) alle ðe bieð in ðo hali huse *wuni-  
ende*;
- 95, 11. For ði he bitt ðat pais bie aiðer on licame and  
on saule, and ðat þies hali mihte sibsumnesse bie *rixende*  
on  $\text{z}$ eu baðe;
- 95, 23. ic am on michele aruednesses, on hungre and on  
ðurste(s), on waches and on swinkes, and on mani $\text{z}$ e(s)  
kennes wrecchades, sori and sorhfull, *woninde* and *we-  
pinde*.
- 101, 14.  $\text{z}$ if ani cump and bri[n]gþ tidinges of idelne(s)-  
ses, and is *spekende* sotwordes ðe aræred up hleitres,  
none wunienge ne haue he mid ðe,
- 107, 8. Ðies ilche halige mihte, hie is tur and strengþe  
to alle ðo mihte(s) ðe ðar inne bieð *wunige<sup>nde</sup>*,
- 133, 24. þat is, ðat he wordliche him loki mid alle hise  
lemes of his likame. Hise ei $\text{z}$ ene, þat hie ne bien to  
swiðe *gawrinde* hider and  $\text{z}$ eond; þo earen, ðat hie bliðe-  
liche ne hlesten ydelnesses, — —
- 137, 6. To alle ðo nedes ðe mann hafð to donne þanne  
is (þes)e hali mihte swiðe *helpinde*.

### Remarks.

- Ae. L. I, 49. It is scarcely possible to perceive any  
difference in meaning between the periphrastic  
tense 'syndan creopende' and the simple forms  
'gað', 'fleoð' and 'swimmað'.
- 176. 'Heo' applies to 'seo sawul'.
- O. E. H. II, 175, 25. 'Qui fugit velut umbra et — —'.  
It is not impossible that the adverb 'neure' in  
the second clause has been felt as an equiva-  
lent to an 'eure' in the first, and thus has  
brought the periphrasis into use there.
- V. a V. 57, 11. Here the periphrasis is very happily  
chosen, according to modern notions, to mark  
the intensive-durative idea in 'is wunende',

'is rixende' — it is concerning God's grace — as opposed to 'cumð and farð'. This stylistic nicety, however, may have been far from the author's mind: we find 'is rixende' and 'on rixed' by the side of one another and under the same conditions, i. e. without any difference of meaning being perceptible. Thus the appearance of the periphrasis would seem to be rather arbitrary.

- V. a V. 59, 14. The extended tense might here, perhaps, be considered to imply a constancy, a frame of mind.
- 75, 22. It is possible that 'affluent' has been felt to be a verb of a marked progressive character, perhaps with some nuance of intensity also (note the addition 'swiðe'), and thus the extended form has been considered as the most apt to convey this idea.
  - 95, 23. Here I consider the participles to be of an adjectival nature (note also that they are coordinated with real adjectives): the periphrasis denotes a habit, almost verging on a quality.
  - 133, 24. Observe the alternating occurrence of periphrastic and simple forms: 'bien — — gawrinde', 'hlesten'.

## 2. The Past Tense.

(i) **Defined.** This tense occurs more often with definitions of time than without. These may consist of temporal adverbs or adverbial expressions, indicating either point or length of time.

As examples of the former category, which might be termed *actuality*, we may take Chr. D. 1052 ('þa'),

O. E. H. I, 225 ('þa'), O. E. H. II, 3 ('on elche of þese þrie times').

For the latter, which rather represents an action or a state of things as going on for a certain time, and might be called *qualified duration*, we have many more examples, of which I mention Chr. A. 871 ('oþ niht'), Chr. C. 1066 ('lange on dæg'), Chr. E. 1100 ('æfre'), Ae. L. XX, 125 ('ðrittig geara'), Ae. L. XXIII, 493 ('æfre'), Ae. L. XXIII B, 577 ('lange'), V. a V. 51, 5 ('þrie and þrihti wintre and an half'). The complements, as may be seen above, may denote *perpetuity* ('æfre'), or *limited duration*<sup>1</sup>, either in more general terms ('lange on dæg', 'lange') or else by distinct statements ('ðrittig geara', 'þrie and þrihti wintre and an half').

Occasionally, according to the nature of the complements, it is hardly possible to decide whether point or length of time is meant, as, for instance, in Chr. E. 1104, where 'to þysan timan' may be rendered either by 'at this time' or 'during this time'.

Often enough the definition lies in a separate clause, more or less connected with the clause where we have the periphrasis. Here, at least in many cases, we can distinguish between *actuality* and *limited duration*. The former category I find represented in Ae. L. XVIII, 421; Ae. L. XXIII, 584; O. E. H. I, 89; V. a V. 149, 12; the latter in Chr. A. 755; Ae. L. XXXVII, 4; O. E. H. II, 33 and 131. In all these cases, we have to do with an 'oððæt'-or a 'forte þat'-clause, and here the action is sometimes, as in

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<sup>1</sup> The terms I employ to designate the main uses of the definite tenses are these: 1. *actuality*, e. g. and decius se casere is *nu gyt smeagende hwæt we gefaran habban*. (Ae. L. XXIII, 452.). 2. *qualified duration*, comprising: (a) *perpetuity*, e. g. *Godd is haure fastinde*. (V. a V. 137, 17.); (b) *limited duration*, e. g. *þa wæs he seofon monðas wunigende swa blind*. (Ae. L. XXI, 270.).

Chr. A. 755, represented as going on until a certain result is reached.

In some instances we find a combination of adverbial and clause to strengthen the force of the periphrasis, as in Chr. A. 755 (p. 48, 9); Chr. A. 855; Ae. L. XXI, 270; Ae. L. XXIII B, 45 and 803.

On the whole, it may be said that, where the definition is an adverb or an adverbial expression, the periphrasis implies *qualified duration* in by far the greatest number of the instances found, but that, when the definition is a clause, the two categories *actuality* and *limited duration* are on a balance with each other.

### Examples.

- Chr. A. 755 (p. 48, 4). and hie alle on þone Cyning *wærun feohtende* oþ þæt hie hine ofslægenne hæfdon;  
[E: and he ealle on ðone cining *feohtende wæron*. oð þet hig hine ofslægen hæfdon.]
- A. 755 (p. 48, 9). Ac hie simle *feohtende wæran* oþ hie alle lægon butan anum Bryttiscum gisle,
- A. 755 (p. 48, 26). and hie þa ymb þa gatu *feohtende wæron* oþ þæt hie þær inne fulgon,
- A. 855 (p. 66, 8). and þy ilcan geare ferde to Rome mid micelre weorþnesse, and þær was .Xii. monaþ *wuniende*, and þa him ham weard fôr,  
[E: And þy ilcan geare ferde to Rome mid mycclum wurðscipe. and þær *wunade* .Xii. monað. and he feng to Karles dohter Franca cining þa he hamweard wæs.]
- A. 871 (p. 70, 28). and *onfeohtende wæron* oþ niht.
- C. 918 (p. 105, 25). Ac swiðe hrædlice pæs ðe hi pæs geworden hæfde heo gefôr .Xii. nihtun ær middan sumera. binnan Tama weorþige ðy eahtoþan geare pæs ðe heo Myrcna anweald mid riht hlaforddome *healdende wæs*.
- C. 1066 (p. 198, 23). and hi þær togædere fengon. and swyðe heardlice lange on dæg *feohtende wæron*.
- D. 1052 (p. 175, 15). þa wæs Eadward cyng on Gleawcestre *sittende*.
- E. 1085 (p. 215, 33). Da Willelm Englalandes cyng þe þa wæs *sittende* on Normandige. forðig he ahte ægðer ge

- Englaland ge Normandige. þis geaxode. he ferde into Englalande — —
- Chr. E. 1098. Toforan s̄ce Michaelēs mæssan ætywde seo heofon swilce heo for neah ealle þa niht *byrnende* wære.
- E. 1100 (p. 235, 21). and þurh yfelra manna rædas þe him æfre gecweme wæran. and þurh his agene gitsunga. he æfre þas leode mid here and mid ungyldre *tyrwigende* wæs.
- E. 1104 (p. 239, 21). Nis eade to asecgenne þises landes earmða þe hit to þysan timan *dreogende* wæs.
- Ae. L. XIII, 147. Wel we magon gedencan hu wel hit ferde mid ús.
- þaða þis igland wæs *wunigende* on sibbe.
- XVIII, 421. Isaias se witega wæs awæg *farande*.  
ac god hine gecyrde þus him eft secgende.  
Gecyr to ezechian — —
- XX, 125. þry suna he gestrynde. and hi siððan buta ðrittig geara wæron *wunigende* butan hæmede.  
and fela ælmyssan worhton. oð þæt se wer ferde  
to munuclicere drohtnunge. — —
- XXI, 1. ON EADGARES DAGUM DÆS ÆDELAN CYNINCSES.  
þADA se cristendom wæs wel *ðeonde* þurh god  
on angel-cynne — —  
þa geswutelode god — —
- 270. þa wæs he seofon monðas *wunigende* swa blind.  
and his hlyst næfde. oþþæt he mid geleafan ferde to þam halgan swyðune. — —
- XXIII, 220. and swa oft swa he into ðære byrig eode. he hine on wæðlan hywe æteowde. and dearnunga wæs *smeagende* hu hit on ðæs caseres hirede ferde.
- 493. and æfre he him wæs *onsittende* þæt hine sum man gecneowe.
- 584. Ða he þus wæs to heom *sprecende*. and swa hreowlice his ceap gedrifan hæfde. hí sóna ealle up stodon.
- 621. and æfre wæs his uneadnys *wexende*.
- 717. Ða malchus þas word gehyrde þe se portgerefa him swá hetelice wæs *tosprecende*. he ofdræd sloh adún þærrihte.
- 801. he arás þa of þære flora. and of þam wacan sæcce þe he lange on-uppan dreorig wæs *sittende*. and he þan-code gode ælmihtigum.

- Ae. L. XXIII B, 45. swá hé sylf sæde Zosimus. þæt hé sylf wære fram þam modorlicum beordrum on þæt mynster befæst. and of þæt þreo and fiftigðe gear he wæs þær on þam regole *drohtnigende*. and æfter þysum he wæs gecnyssed fram sinnum geþancum.
- 50. and he wæs þus *spreccende*. hwæder ænig munuc on eordan sy. — — Ðas and þysum gelicium him þencendum. him æt-stód sum engel. and him to cwæð. — —
- 415. Ac swilce me hwile strang menin ongean stode. þæt me þone ingang beluce. swa me seo færlice godes wracu þa duru bewerede; Oddðe ic eft *standende* on þæs temples cafertune wæs.
- 562. and þus ic seofontyne geare rynom on mænig-fealdum ficednyssum swá swá ic ær cwæð. *winnende* wæs on eallum þingum of þisne andweardan dæg and me on fultume wæs. and mine wisan *reccende* seo halige godes cennestre.
- 577. þus ic wæs lange on mænig-fealdum. and mislicum nyðþearfnysum. and on unmætum costnungum *winnende*. and *wraxligende*.
- 803. and | Zosimus on þam mynstre wæs *drohtnigende*. an hund wintra. and þa to drihtne hleorde.
- XXV, 72S. Ionathas wunode on wurðmynte ða lange. and cynegas hine wurðodon mid wordum and gifum.  
and he sige geferde on manegum gefeohtum. and æfre wæs *winnende* embe godes willan.
- XXXI, 28. His mod wæs swa-peah æfre embe mynstru *smeagende*.
- XXXVII, 4. — — & he on cristes lāre wel þeonde wæs. oddæt he wearð ge-hádoð to halgum diácone.
- O. E. H. I, 89. Ðat halie hired cristes apostles weren *wuniende* edmodliche on heore ibeoden on ane upflore — — þa on þisse deie — — com ferliche muchel swei of heofne
- 225. Adam þa wes *wniende* on þeses life mid gēswince.
- II, 3. Men þe waren *wunende* on elche of þese þrie times wisten gerne after ure lauere ihesu cristes tocume also we doð.
- 31. On þe niht and on þe time. þe ure lafdi seinte marie kennede of holie lichame ure lauere ihesu crist. were herdes *wakiende* bi side þe buregh and *wittende* here oref.
- 33. Al mankin was *wunende* on muchele wowe. — —

- forte þat ilke time : þat ure louerd ihesu crist hem þarof aredde.
- O. E. H. II, 51. þat israelisshc folc was *walkende* toward ierusalem on swinche. and on drede. and on wanrede and þo wile was hersum godes hese.
- 51. Ac efter þan þe hie weren *wuniende* in ierusalem. — —. þo hie forleten godes lore.
- 131. for he nolde noht turnen ut of þe hege weie. ne of þe rihte pades. — —. and was þer-one *werchende*. and *farende*. for to þat he [com] to ðe ende þat is eche lif.
- 147. and on þis reuliche wei hie weren *walkinde* forte þat hie comen to þe lichamliche deade.
- V. a V. 51, 5. Ðies ilke hlauerd lesus Crist, he was her on dese liue *wuniende* þrie and þrihti wintre and an half mang senfulle mannen,
- 55, 1. On ða time ðe hie was hier on liue *libbende*, hit was iwriten: Maledicta sterilis, — —
- 67, 25. an riche iungman cam to Crist be ðo daizen ðe he hier lichamliche was *wuniende*, and seide: Quid faciam, — —
- 149, 12. Hit seið in Vitas patrum ðat at sume sal waren ðe hali faderes to-gedere igadered, and waren *spekinde* bitwen hem on (h)williche wise me mihte rihtist and sikerest to gode cumen. Sum sade: — — Ða sade on of ða eldest — —

### Remarks.

- Ae. L. XXIII, 220. 'wæs smeagende' marks what he was actually engaged in at each of his visits to the town. Here the sense of incompleteness is especially prominent: no definite result is thought of. The periphrasis might also be considered to involve a slight shade of iteration: a comprehension of several single acts. Compare the simple form 'æteowde', which denotes a single act completed.
- 801. 'wæs sittende' = Modern English 'had been sitting'.
- XXIII B, 415. 'standende wæs' may perhaps be



correctly rendered by 'found myself standing'. The extended tense seems to indicate that the idea of result should be linked together with that of duration.

- V. a V. 149, 12. This example might, in some way, be compared with Ae. L. XXIII, 220: 'waren spekinde' comprehends the utterances of each speaker ('Sum sade: — —', which appears more than once.) The discussion is represented as brought to a kind of close by 'Da sade — —'.

(ii) **Undefined.** When undefined, the periphrasis is in some cases very vague in meaning according to modern notions: that is to say, we should here sooner expect the indefinite tense nowadays: Chr. E. 1086; Ae. L. III, 566; Ae. L. VI, 131; Ae. L. XXV, 276; V. a V. 41, 17; L. o St. K. 64; G. a E. 2741. It may be observed that the verb in all these instances is 'wunigende'.

In other cases the participle partakes of an adjectival nature, as in Ae. L. XXIII, 702; Ae. L. XXIII B, 90; O. E. H. II, 119 and L. o St. K. 1353.

Apart from these two groups, however, one may certainly hold that the past periphrastic, even when it occurs without definitions, has, to a considerable extent, the same functions as in Modern English: it expresses that an action or a state of things was going on under special circumstances, these being indicated, more or less directly, in the context. The following may be considered as especially good examples: Ae. L. VII, 67 and 421, Ae. L. XXIII B, 187; Ae. L. XXV, 423; O. E. H. I, 41 and 93.

### Examples.

Beow. 159. (ac sē) æglæca *çhtende* wæs,  
 dēorc deap-scau duguþe ond gēogoþe;

- Beow. 3028. Swā sē secg hwata *secgende* wæs  
laðra spella;
- Chr. E. 994. and æt nyxtan naman heom hors. and ridon swa  
wide swa hi woldon. and unasecgendlice yfel *wircende*  
wæron.
- E. 1086. Eala reowlic and wependlic tid wæs þæs geares.  
þe swa manig ungelimp wæs *forðbringende*.
- Ae. L. III, 566. AN æþele læce wæs *wunigende* on þære byrig.  
IOSEP gehaten.
- VI, 131. Se þegn wæs *wunigende* butan wifes neawiste.
- VII, 67. þa cunnodan læcas hwi he *licgende* wære.
- 421. and cristen-dom wæs *þeonde*. and þa halgan wurdon  
gecydde.
- XVI, 161. forðan þe he mid soðfæstnyse ne sohte þone  
hælend.  
ac foxunga wæron *wunigende* on him.
- XXI, 444. — — se tima wæs gesælig  
and wynsum on angel-cynne. þa ða eadgar  
cynincg  
þone cristen-dom ge-fyrðrode. and fela  
munuclifa arærde.  
and his cynerice wæs *wunigende* on sibbe.
- XXIII, 702. syððan ðyllic feoh wæs *farende* on eorðan.
- 823. and for þære micelan blysse synderlice he weop  
ofer ælcne. and his heorte wæs *fægnigende*.
- XXIII B, 32. Ðás wisan he ealle on him *hæbbende* wæs.  
and he næfre fram þam smeagungum haligra gewrita his  
mód awenda
- 90. ac þæt án wæs swiðost fram heom eallum geefst.  
þæt heora ælc wære on lichaman déad. and on gaste  
*libbende*;
- 141. æghwile on his agenum ingehyde mid him sylfum  
*habbende* wæs. his agenes geswince gewitnyse hwæt he  
*wyrcende* wæs. and hwilcra geswinca sæde *sawende*.
- 177. Ða wisan Zosimus georne *behealdende* wæs.
- 187. Hé witodlice hire wæs *ehtende*. and heo wæs *fleonde*;
- XXV, 276. and his feower gebroðra him fylston anrædlice  
and ealle ða þe wæron *wunigende* mid his  
fæder.
- 423. — — and sloh ða hæðenan  
oð þæt hi oncneowon þæt se cena iudas  
him *wið-feohtende* wæs.
- XXX, 8. Nacode he scrydde. and swa ic soðlice secge. ealle  
nyd-behæfnysse he wæs *dælende*. þam þe þæs behofodon.

- Ae. L. XXX, 445. forþam ge wæron *winnende* on godan life.  
and ge wæron *for-þyldiende* mænig-fealde cos[t]nunga.  
and swa-þeah næron ofer-swipde. Cumað nu on sybbe.  
XXXI, 622. cwæð eac þæt nan man nære fram him  
ofslagen  
buton þam anum þe him *onfeohende* wæron.  
1283. — ac he ne ablan na swa-þeah.  
mid seofon-nihte fæstene him fore to-þingi-  
ende.  
oð-þæt he beget fæs þe he *biddende* wæs.  
XXXIII, 7. and heo þa dæghwamlice hire speda þearfen-  
dum dælde. and gelomlice heo cyrcan sohte. and mid  
halsungum god wæs *biddende* þæt — —  
XXXIV, 76. þa cyne-helmas wæron wundorlice *scinende*  
on rosan readnysse. and on lilian hwitnysse.  
XXXV, 84. Polemius þa sona sende his frynd  
to þam mædene darian and micclum wæs  
*biddende*  
þæt — —
- O. E. H. I, 41. Mihhal eode bi-foren — — and þa scawede mihhal  
to sancte paul þa wrecche sunfulle þe þer were *wuniende*  
93. Nu eft on þisse deie þurh þes halie gastes to-cume ;  
weren alle ispechen a<sub>z</sub>ein inumen. and isome ; forðon þæt  
cristes apostlas weren *specende* mid alle spechen.  
95. forðon þæt he wes *dreihninde* on þissere worlde mid  
bilehwitnesse. and — —. for he ne remde ne of bitere  
speche nes.  
95. forðon þe he dude þæt heo weren *birnende* on godes  
willan. and *bodiende* umbe godes riche.  
11, 119. ec hie him segen on fures hewe al ich er seide.  
and weren þerof *wallinde* on soðere luue godes and  
mannen.
- V. a V. 41, 17. ðu aust te folgin ðane riht[*t*]wise and onfald  
lob, ðe was *wuniende* on ðare world mid wiue and  
mid children,
- L. o St. K. 64. In þis ilke burh wes  
*wuniende* a meiden  
1353. ‘t *berninde* as he wes  
of grome ‘t of teone,  
bed bringen o brune  
an ad amidden þe burh;
- G. a E. 2741. Raguel letro ðat riche man,  
Was *wuniende* in madian,  
He hadde seuene dowtres bi-ge<sub>t</sub>en;

**Remarks.**

- Beow. 3028. This occurs after a rather lengthy harangue, and it may be that the periphrasis can be ascribed to a certain idea of duration, viz. with a view to the time the warrior took to deliver his speech.
- Ae. L. XXI, 444. The translation given in the edition used, 'and his kingdom continued in peace' exactly renders the meaning.
- XXIII, 702. The translation of the edition is 'since the like money was *current* on the earth'.
  - XXIII B, 32. 'hæbbende wæs' is indirectly defined by 'næfre' in the next clause.
  - XXX, 8. The context shows that 'wæs dælende' applies to several occasions: 'he used to — —', 'it was his habit to — —'.
  - XXXI, 622. The translation given here: '— — no man had been slain by him save those only who *were fighting* against him' is not quite accurate. The context leads me to prefer: 'who *had been fighting*' (on a certain occasion or perhaps rather on several different occasions during his former life).
  - XXXIII, 7. The periphrasis seems to imply a certain idea of intensity: note the complement 'mid halsungum', and the coordination with the iterative expressions 'dæghwamlice — — dælde' and 'gelomlice — — sohte'.
  - XXXV, 84. Here also an intensive meaning seems to be intended: 'micclum'.
- O. E. H. I, 93. There is an indirect definition in 'Nu eft on þisse deie' in the first clause.
- 95. 'driehninde'. The complement 'on þissere

worlde' is here equivalent to an adverbial of time: 'during his whole life'.

O. E. H. I. 95. 'birnende', 'bodiende'. The first participle is here adjectival (= burning, zealous), and 'bodiende' may be considered to share in this idea in so far that it denotes a constant habit.

L. o St. K. 64. [H]ac in urbe Alexandrinorum erat quedam puella, — — Thus 'erat' is rendered by 'wes wuniende'.

— 1353. 'berninde as he wes — —'. The Latin has: *furiis agitatus accenso in medio civitatis vehementissimo igne. jussit — —*.

#### Additional Remark.

In *Aelfric's Lives of Saints* a few instances of the past periphrastic occur, where we should now use either the perfect or the pluperfect.

These compound tenses were not fully developed in Old English, nor in the earlier part of the Middle English period, and they did not occur at all in the periphrastic conjugation. Thus it may be explained that, in case the idea of duration or progression was attached to the meaning of an expression, or if the verb in question was felt to possess this character, the past periphrastic might occasionally be chosen.

We have already noted two instances; he arás þa of þære flora. and of þam wacan sæcce þe he lange on-uppan dreorig wæs sittende. and he þancode gode ælmihtigum. (Ae. L. XXIII, 801), and: cwæð eac þæt nan man nære fram him ofslagen buton þam anum þe him onfeohende wæron. (Ae. L. XXXI, 622). In the first of these two instances, at least, the extended past corresponds exactly to a definite pluperfect in Modern English.

In the following examples, however, Modern English would sooner prefer an indefinite perfect or pluperfect.

- III, 113. þa stód se hælend sylf. æt þam halgan weofode.  
and mid his halgum handum. husel senode.  
and þam bisceope tæhte. þæs þe hé *biddende*  
wæs.
- XII, 177. Eft ne mot nan mann ne ne sceal secgan on hine  
sylfne þæs ðe he *wyrcende* næs.
- XII, 243. Nu ge habbað gehyred þæt ge forhelen ne sceolan  
eowre agenne synne ne eac secgan na mare  
þonne ge *wyrcende* wæron.
- XXIII, 210. Ða hi ðus *sprecende* wæron seofon ða gecorenan  
halgan. þa sealdon hi heom fæstnunge betweenan. þæt  
hi ealle þis woldon healdan.
- XXIII, 386. Ðyllice halige word. and ungerime oðre ðe on  
halgum bocum synd awritene. þæt god ælmihtig mænig-  
fealdlice. ge ðurh his witegan. ge þurh hine sylfne. and  
be ðæra martyra æriste wæs *sprecende*.

The translations of these examples given in the edition — which I consider to be perfectly correct — are the following:

- III, 113. 'and instructed the bishop in that for which *he had prayed*'.
- XII, 177. 'nor ought he to say, respecting himself, such [things] as *he hath not done*.'
- XII, 243. 'neither say any more than *ye have done*.'
- XXIII, 210. 'When *they had thus spoken*, — —, they gave each other — —'
- XXIII, 386. 'Such [are the] holy words and numberless others which are written in holy books, which God Almighty, in many ways, both by His prophets and by Himself, and concerning the resurrection of the martyrs, *had spoken*.'

### 3. The Imperative and the Infinitive.

In these two forms of the periphrastic conjugation we note a strong durative force, occasionally further emphasized by such an adverb as 'symble' in Ae. L. XII, 268.

In most cases they express a habit or a frame of mind, the participle thus assuming a more or less adjectival meaning, although the context may clearly show that it retains its full verbal force, as in Ae. L. XXXIII, 314 and V. a V. 121, 9, where there are objects attached to 'forgitende' and 'rewsende' respectively.

(i) **Examples of the Periphrastic Imperative.**

- Ae. L. XXXIII, 314. ne beo þu *forgitende* þinra efenþeowa.  
 O. E. H. II, 5. Uigilate quia -- — þat is beð *wakiende*. and forletoð gure synne.  
 V. a V. 75, 9. 'Ðarhwile ðe ðu art mid þine wiðerwine on ða weiȝe, bie him *teidiude* ðat ðe he wile hauen idon, læste he ðe nime -- —  
 — 113, 4. Estote mi(sericordes), 'Bieð *mildciende*, al swo ȝeuer fader is on heuene!'

(ii) **Examples of the Periphrastic Infinitive.**

- Ae. L. XII, 268. We sceolan beon *þeonde* symble on godnyse.  
 V. a V. 37, 6. þat he and his fader hine scolden luuiȝen and mid him *wuniende* b(i)en.  
 — 97, 17. Ic hit wat well ðat godd ne mai bien *wuniȝende* on none saule ðat unfrið is of sennes.  
 — 107, 15. ne he ne scall resten ne slapen to michel, ne to litel; ne he ne scal to michel bien *spekende*, ne to michel *swi(g)ende*;  
 — 121. 9. For ði us meneȝeð allre þinge arst ure lauerde of ðesre eadi mihte, þat we scolden beon *rewsende* ure sennen,  
 — 23. Mann ðe wel wile bien *riwsinde*, ne rewe him nauht ane hise sennes.

**Remark.**

V. a V. 107, 15. This instance clearly shows how the indefinite form and the adjective converge towards the same idea of *absolute duration* in Modern English: the translation of the edition



is: 'nor shall he *speak* too much, nor *be* too much *silent*'; one might here very well substitute an adjective for 'spekende' as well: 'nor shall he *be* too *talkative*'.

## B. Futurity.

Sometimes the periphrasis occurs in expressions which involve a futural meaning. In the majority of these instances, however, this is not its chief function, the idea of duration or progression being the predominant one. Thus one can by no means hold that the periphrasis serves as a 'future-equivalent', but only that it has an implied under-meaning of futurity.

### 1. The Present.

- Ae. L. XXI, 295. — — and ic wille þæt ge beran  
 eower leoht to me. and licgað on cneowum  
 and ic eow forgife þæt þæt ge *gyrnende* beoð.  
 — XXIII B, 667. Eala hwæðer heo hider *cumende* syo. and  
 me ne gyme.  
 O. E. H. I, 119. Ða þe butan godes laze and godes isetnesse  
 libbeð : þa beoð butan gode efre *wuniende*.  
 V. a V. 103, 20. Ne biest ðu naht hier lange *wunizende*; forlat  
 ðine sennen!

### Remarks.

- Ae. L. XXI, 295. Kühn (Die Syntax des Verbums in  
 Aelfric's «Heiligenleben». Leipzig-Reudnitz 1889,  
 p. 40): '21,297 [this example] könnte man futu-  
 risch nennen. (cf. Koch II § 18).' — 'gyrnende  
 beoð' implies a supposed actuality.  
 — XXIII B, 667. 'cumende syo' denotes indefinite  
 futurity, an eventuality.

- O. E. H. I, 119. I should prefer: 'shall for ever be dwelling' to the 'are ever dwelling' given in the edition.
- V. a V. 103, 20. The futural meaning is obvious: 'thou wilt not long be dwelling' (translation of the edition).

## 2. The Past.

Beow. 1102. 'ðeah hie hira beag-gyfan banan folgedon  
 'ðeoden-lease, þā him swā geþearfod wæs:  
 'gyf þonne Frȳsna hwylc frēcnon sprāce  
 'ðæs morþor-hetes *myndgiend* wære,  
 'þonne hit swēordes ecg syððan scolde  
 [ — — — — — — — — — — ]

Ae. L. VI, 268. ac wære þæt getél. *wunigende* æfre.

O. E. H. I, 217. Gif non hine ne lufede. non to him ne cōme.  
 ne *delende* nēre óf his eádinēsse.

### Remarks.

Beow. 1102. 'myndgian' means 'remind of' (Holthausen: erinnern an). Thus: 'if then — — should remind of — —'. The idea of hypothetical futurity appears, in fact, to be the essential element of the periphrasis: a durative force seems scarcely admissible.

Ae. L. VI, 268. Rendered in the translation by:  
 '— — but that the tale should always continue'.

O. E. H. I, 217. 'if none loved him, none would come to him, nor would participate of his bliss.'  
 (translation of the edition).

### C. The Inchoative.

In the *Chronicle* and in *Aelfric's Lives of Saints* we meet with several interesting instances where the periphrasis has, besides its primary and chief function, an additional inchoative meaning of a secondary character: the periphrasis is here *inchoative-durative*, and the latter element predominates so much that the former has not even got its own linguistical expression, but is involved in the durative. We have to do with a sort of anticipation, or 'logical hiatus', as Erdmann (p. 13) very aptly terms it: 'Instead of simply stating that such and such an action begins, by a liveliness of expression it anticipates time, and passing over the opening moment, represents the action as already in progress. This logical hiatus is more or less felt, according to the different degree of weight attached to the commencement of the action'. As regards the *Chronicle* it may be observed that the expression 'and feohtende wæron' is a set phrase, so to speak, for rendering the idea which in Modern English may be expressed by 'and then they started fighting'. Occasionally this scantiness of language, or as Erdmann has it, 'liveliness of expression', gives way to a more logical, but less vivid and pregnant style: and hi þær togædere fengon and swyðe heardlice — — feohtende wæron. C. 1066 (p. 198, 23). Here the two elements have got each its special expression in the language.

#### Examples.

- Chr. A. 835. Her com micel sciphære on West Walas, and hie to anum gecierdon, and wip Ecgbyrht West Seaxna cyning *winnende* wæron; þa he þæt hierde, and mid fierde ferde, and him wip feaht æt Hengest dune, — —  
 [ E: *winnende*. MS. *wuniende*; and so D. ]

- Chr. A. 867. and hie late on geare to þam gecirdon þæt hie wif þone here *winnende* wærun, and hie þeah micle fierd gegadrodon, and þone here solton æt Eoforwic ceastre, and on þa ceastre bræcon, and hie sume inne wurdon, and þær was ungemetlic wæl geslægen —
- A. 876. [p. 74]. and þy geare Healfdene Norþanhymbra lond gedælde. and *ergende* wæron and hiera *tilgende*. [B: þ hie syþþan ergende. E: hergende.]
- A. 878. [p. 76, 2]. and þæs on Eastron worhte Aelfred cyning lytle werede geweorc æt Aepelinga eigge, and of þam geweorce was *winnende* wif þone here,
- E. 994. Her on þisum geare com Anlaf and Swegen to Lundenbyrig — and hi ða on ða burh festlice *feohtende* wæron. and eac hi mid fyre outendan woldon. ac hi þar gefeordon maran hearm and yfel þonne hi æfre wendon. [F: and fæstlice on þa burh *fuhton*. and hi — —]
- E. 1001. Her com se here to Exan mudan. and úp ða eodan to ðere byrig. and þær fæstlice *feohtende* wæron. ac him man swyðe fæstlice wiðstod. and heardlice. Ða gewendon hi — —
- Ae. L. XXIII, 775. and þa þa hí fæt gewrit ræddon. hí ealle *wundrigende* wæron. and god ælmihtigne ánon móde wuldredon.
- XXIII B, 231. Ðas word witodlice gebrohton on Zosime micelne ege. and fyrhtu. and he wæs *byfigende*; And hé wæs geondgoten mid þæs swates dropum; Ða ongan hé sworetan — —
- 669. and biterlice weop. and his eagen up to þam heofone hæbbende. and eadmodlice god wæs *biddende* þus cwæðende.
- XXV, 490. Hwæt ða færlice comon fíf englas of heofonum.  
     ridinge on horsum mid gyldenum gerædum.  
     and twægen þæra engla on twa healfes iudan *feohtende* wæron. and hine eac beweredon.
- XXXI, 220. þa æfter twam tidum astyrode se deada eallum limum. and *lociende* wæs.
- 1123. þa wæs se ele *wexende* ofer ealne fone weg.  
     swa þæt he ofer-fleow. — —
- 1202. and þa deofol-seocan sona mid swiðlicre grymetunge *forhtigende* wæron. — —

**Remarks.**

Chr. A. 878. Here the hiatus is very little felt: it is even possible that no inchoative idea is intended.

Ae. L. XXV, 490. The context shows clearly that the expression ought to be rendered by 'began to fight' — or, better, 'started fighting' — rather than by 'were fighting', which is the translation of the edition.

- XXXI, 1202. 'sona' shows that the inchoative element is more stressed than the durative.

**Additional Remark.**

In Aelfric's *Lives of Saints* we have some curious cases, which seem to have something in common with the inchoative use of the periphrasis, in so far that they imply an anticipation, at least the last two of them. It may be that Latin influence has been at work here, to judge from an analogous instance in the Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People, quoted by Püttmann (p. 5): þa somninga se min latteow gestod and butan eldenne wæs eft his gong cerrende 430, 25 (repente ductor substitit; nec mora, gressum torquens \*208, 16).

— XXXI, 250. — — and he sona ge-edcucode.

and mid geornfulre elnunge up *arisende* wæs.

— XXIII B, 639. and *eft-cyrrende* wæs herigende. and blætsigende úrne drihten hælendne crist;

— 641. And he wæs *eft-cyrrende* þurh þone ylcan siðfiat þæs westenes þe hé ær þyder becom.

## D. Survey.

Sweet remarks (§ 2208) that 'The analogy of the adjectival construction<sup>1</sup> would make us expect to find the periphrastic forms used mainly to express rest, and passive rather than active phenomena. But, on the contrary, they are especially favoured by verbs of motion and fighting — *wæs winnende*, *wæron feohtende* — either with or without the idea of continuity'.

Here Sweet no doubt has had in mind the frequent occurrence of 'feohtende' in the *Chronicle*, but his remark does not hold good for the great bulk of Anglo-Saxon literature: verbs expressing rest and other passive phenomena are very freely employed in the periphrastic conjugation. Püttman has found that verbs of saying are very often met with: this is true as regards the *Blickling Homilies*, for instance, and other works of the same kind, especially if translated from the Latin. Püttmann — speaking about cases where the periphrasis seems to be devoid of any progressive force — is inclined to attribute, even to these verbs, at least in many cases, a slight shade of the sense of duration, in others he takes into account the possibility of Latin influence: 'Zu den ebenfalls häufig mit der bedeutung eines historischen tempus vorkommenden verben des sagens ist zu bemerken, dass es sich in vielen fällen vielleicht doch um eine leise schattierung des begriffes der dauer handeln könnte, in anderen vielleicht lateinischer einfluss anzunehmen ist' (p. 48). He may be right in both

<sup>1</sup> In § 2204 he ventures the following conjecture: 'They were no doubt originally formed on the analogy of the combination of the verb 'be' with adjectives, so that such a paraphrase as *h̄te wæron blissiende* 'they were rejoicing' was felt to be intermediate between *h̄te blissodon* 'they rejoiced' and *h̄te wæron blīþe* 'they were glad'.'

suggestions, especially, it seems to me, as regards the Latin influence. As to the verbs which most often take the periphrasis, it should be kept in mind that this depends, to a great degree, on the nature of the texts: this is especially clear in the case of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; one can safely say, however, that verbs that are of a durative or progressive character — such as verbs of rest, motion and also mental states or proceedings — are in the majority.

The chief functions of the periphrasis during these periods are to mark that an action or a state of things is going on at a certain point of time, *actuality*, or else for a certain length of time, *qualified duration*<sup>1</sup>. It is hardly possible to decide in every case whether *actuality* or *limited duration* is the function of an extended tense: even where there are definitions one may find examples lying on the borderland between the two categories. On the whole, however, one can say that during these periods the latter is somewhat more frequently represented than the former.

The meaning of the periphrasis is most clearly brought out when it is defined by adverbs, adverbial expressions generally, or by another clause, which directly mark the point or the length of time. Here we have a type which may be worth some special attention, I mean where the complement consists of adverbs of perpetuity, such as 'æfre', 'symble'. If the verb in question is also durative, then, of course, the whole expression involves the idea of perpetual duration: *Godd is haure fastinde* (V. a V. 137, 17), and *æfre wæs his uneaðnys wexende*. (Ae. L. XXIII, 621);

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<sup>1</sup> Generally speaking, then, it implies progression or duration. If this idea is limited to a special moment, and thus the meaning of incompleteness prevails over that of duration properly taken, then it is that the periphrasis is used to form the actual tenses, describing the actual goings-on, a situation or the like.



but if the verb is a 'point-verb' we get a meaning of recurrence: *Symbles he bið gyfende* (Ae. L. I, 45). Of course, according as the same verb may be felt as more or less durative, an expression may be interpreted as either durative or iterative, as in: and *æfre he him wæs onsittende þæt hine sum man gecneowe* (Ae. L. XXIII, 493). Here we may either regard 'wæs onsittende' as applying to a series of several different occasions, or else as a mental state of a certain constancy.

But the meaning may also lie, more or less perceptibly, in the context only, especially for the past tense, where a certain point or length of time is, in most cases, to be understood. Not infrequently, however — and this mostly as regards the present tense, which always tends to become more neutral in meaning, where the idea of *actuality* is not quite clear — the periphrasis is either very vague, hardly differentiated in function from the indefinite form — these cases are, however, not so very many — or else, where the idea of duration is distinctly prominent, tending towards the meaning of *absolute duration*, the participle assuming a nearly adjectival character, which is the case in several instances. As regards the former group, Püttmann holds that, in a great number of instances, the periphrasis has the same meaning as the simple forms: 'Schliesslich bezeichnet die umschreibung in einer grossen anzahl fälle das historische tempus, d. h. sie weicht in ihrer bedeutung nicht von derjenigen der formen der einfachen zeiten ab.' (p. 48). Here, however, it must be borne in mind that this is mostly the case in works translated from the Latin — and this is more emphasized by Pessels<sup>1</sup> than

<sup>1</sup> Pessels has (p. 82) the following remark: 'The influence of the Latin has tended to greatly increase the employment of the periphrasis, but it has, at the same time, greatly obscured the progressive force.'

by Püttmann — such as *Bede*, and also the *Blickling Homilies*, which latter Püttmann incorrectly classes among the more original works ('selbständigere prosa') as well as Pessels, who groups it with 'the original works'. In the *Old English Homilies*, for instance, Püttmann ascribes only 6 instances to this category, two of which are quite out of place, as they have not the present, but the perfect, participle. These are 1, 81: *gode men weren þurh þet ho weren itende of þan halie gast*, and 95: *Alswa scal þe larðeu don þe ðet bið mid þen halia gast itend*.

Together with the primary idea of the periphrasis we note, sometimes, a more or less marked under-meaning, so that we may be justified in ascribing to it an additional character of futurity or ingression.

We get the futural meaning especially when the present tense is defined by adverbs denoting time-length as 'lange', 'æfre' — thus we find that the 'æfre-type' falls into three sub-types, namely one durative, one iterative and one futural-durative; but in other cases also this meaning may be, more or less distinctly, felt.

The inchoative or ingressive meaning is very seldom predominant: otherwise it is only secondary, the durative idea being the primary and prevalent one.

To this general idea of duration or progression one might add that, at least in cases where *qualified duration* is implied, as when the periphrasis is defined by 'æfre', 'symble' etc. or followed by a result-clause, but also in many others, even those implying *actuality*, the periphrasis gives a stronger inner stress to the verb than the indefinite forms, so much so that one may say that the definite tenses have, in not a few cases, a pronounced intensive character: they are more pregnant as opposed to the more neutral simple forms.

## II. LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH.

### A. Midland and Southern Dialects.

**Occurrence.** In texts belonging to these dialects the periphrasis is, up to the 15th century, sparingly used.

*Havelok the Dane* (3000 short lines) has only one case on record; and so too has *Joseph of Arimathie*, which is a rather short text. *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*, and the *Early English Alliterative Poems*, although both of them fairly long texts, exhibit likewise one each. From an investigation of *Piers the Plowman*, comprising *Prologus* and *Passus* I—XII (about 200 pages), I have gathered 4 instances. The extended tenses seem to be totally absent from *The English Works of Wyclif*: I have gone through about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the volume, which counts 450 pages, without being able to hunt out a single specimen. This, however, is not at all surprising if we take into consideration the nature of the work: a collection of sermons or tracts in a philosophical-religious vein, altogether lacking the vividness of narration. *Sir Ferumbas* has contributed about half a dozen instances, which must be regarded as a comparatively scanty number, considering the epic character and the not inconsiderable size of the work. Also Chaucer must be pronounced to make a rather limited use of the construction: *The Canterbury Tales* and the *Troilus and Criseyde*

together hold only some 30 cases. The same remark may be applied to Gower (in the prologue and the first two books of his *Confessio Amantis* I have only found half a dozen instances) and also to Lydgate, to judge from the *Temple of Glas* with two or three: this last text, however, is rather short.

Towards the latter part of the 15th century the periphrasis seems to have got more freely used: George Ashby's: *A Prisoner's Reflections, Active Policy of a Prince, Dicta & opiniones diversorum philosophorum* contain together 16 examples. In the *Generydes* they amount to about a dozen. Caxton's translations show a very uneven occurrence: while his *Blanchardyn and Eglantine* abounds in instances of the periphrastic tenses, they are very seldom met with in the *Godeffroy of Boloynes*.

## 1. The Present Tense.

(i) **Defined.** In some cases the tense is accompanied by time-distinctions, usually adverbs, either implying point of time ('now'), as in Gaw. 2214; Fer. 766 and Caxt. Bl. 189, 16, or else length of time: Ashby, Pr. R. 218 ('euer-more'), P. Pr. 870 ('euer').

In one or two cases the definition takes the form of a clause, as in Ch. Troil. IV, 31, where *actuality* is the function of the periphrasis, and in Ashby, Pr. R. 220, where 'whyle' might as well suggest a durative meaning.

### Examples.

Gaw. 2214. For now is gode Gawayn *goande* ryȝt here,

Fer. 766. I ȝylde me her to Charlis kyng ! þe beste knyȝt y-core  
þat is owar now *lyuyng* ! oþer euer was her  
be-fore.

Ch. Troil. IV, 31. Bifel that, whan that Phebus *shyning* is

- Up-on the brest of Hercules Lyoun,  
That Ector, — —
- Lydg. T. o. Gl. 3 b, 1. [p. 14]. I pleyne also vp-on Jelusy, e,  
The vile serpent, the snake tortyvous,  
That is so crabbit & fronnyng of his ye,  
And euere *grochyng* & suspecyous,
- 3 c, 1. [p. 14]. Thus is he fryed in his owene gres,  
To-rent & torn with his owene rage,  
And euere froward & *frounyng* causeles,
- Ashby, Pr. R. 218. Thynke that worldes welth and felycyte  
Ys nat euermore in oone *abydyng*,
- 220. But transitory ys prosperyte,  
And no certeynte whyle thow art *lyuyng*.
- P. Pr. 870. Put no ful truste in the Comonalte,  
Thai be euer *wauering* in variance,
- Caxt. Bl. 129, 12. The sayd kynge Alymodes is alway *kepyng*  
his siege before her cyte of Tourmaday, & wasteth &  
distroyeth al the contrey about,
- 189, 16. this daye I doo praye you & commaunde / that  
ouer all the best knyghtes that are now *reynyng* in the  
wyde worlde / ye woil socoure the comforte of my Joye,

### Remarks.

- Ch. Troil. IV, 31. 'Bifel that — —,' in the past, but  
'shyning is — —'. The 'whan'-clause marks  
the time of day.
- Ashby, Pr. R. 218. With a suggestion of futurity:  
'shall not always be abiding'.
- Caxt. Bl. 129, 12. Denotes both protracted duration  
and actuality; we may also note the occurrence  
of the simple forms 'wasteth & distroyeth', which  
seem to single out something of the different  
proceedings contained in the comprehensive 'ke-  
pyng his siege', or they may be regarded more  
as a supplement to this expression, dispensing  
with the periphrasis mostly in order to avoid  
clumsiness of language.

(ii) **Undefined.** Somewhat more frequently the tense occurs without special complements. It then expresses the present actual, 'now' being understood, as in Piers Pl. Pass. VIII, 18; Fer. 2735; Ch. C. T. Cl. T. 744; C. Y. Prol. 67 and Gow. C. Am. II, 1804.

In Caxt. Bl. 215, 17 the periphrasis does not so much emphasize an actual moment: its chief function is rather to denote progression by itself, the idea of time, whether as a point or a length, being less prominent and only of a secondary importance.

This is decidedly the case in the following examples, where the inherent progressive or durative nature of the verbs has called the periphrasis into use: Gow. C. Am. II, 2151; Rom. R. 1563; Ashby, P. Pr. 751.

Sometimes the periphrastic present seems rather vague in meaning: Ashby, D & o 739 and Caxt. Bl. 112, 24 and 192, 3.

In one case the tense has a futural meaning: Piers Pl. Prol. 66.

### Examples.

Piers Pl. Prol. 66. But holychirche and hij. holde better togideres,  
The moste my[s]chief on molde. is *mountyng*  
wel faste.

— Pass. VIII, 18. «Amonges vs», quod þe Menours. «þat man  
is *dwellynge*,  
And euere hath, as I hope. and euere shal  
here-after».

Fer. 2735. þan cam Clarioun þe sturne kyng : & loude hem  
gan ascrye:  
«Falleþ on hem þai buþ *fleoynge* : we schulleþ  
hem haue an hye».

Ch. C. T. Cl. T. 744. My peple me constreyneth for to take  
Aanother wyf, and cryen day by day;

— —

And troweliche thus muche I wol yow seye,  
My newe wyf is *coming* by the weye.

- Ch. C. T. C. Y. Prol. 67. I seye, my lord can swich subtilitee —  
 ———  
 That al this ground on which we been *ryding*,  
 Til that we come to Canterbury toun,  
 He coude al clene turne it up-so-doun,  
 And pave it al of silver and of gold'.
- Gow. C. Am. I, 1379. That for I se no sped comende,  
 Ayein fortune *compleignende*  
 I am, as who seith, everemo:  
 — II, 1804. — — And thus forth he geth  
 Conforted of this evidence,  
 With the Romeins in his defence  
 Ayein the Greks that ben *comende*.
- 2151. And many a fraude of fals conseil  
 Ther ben *hangende* upon his Scil:
- Lydg. T. o Gl. 3 b, 1. [p. 14]. I pleyne also vp-on Ielusye,  
 The vile serpent, the snake tortyvous,  
 That is so crabbit & *frounyng* of his ye,
- Rom. R. 1563. Abonten it is gras *springing*,  
 For moiste so thikke and wel lyking,
- Ashby, P. Pr. 751. Looke þat your maters be with god *stand-  
 yng*,
- D & o. 739. If ye be to any man *licencyng*  
 To set his fote vpon youres areryng,  
 He wol after set his fote vppon your nekke.
- Caxt. Bl. 112, 24. 'we holden on the crysten feyth, & are *byleu-  
 yng* in Ihesu cryste'  
 — 192, 3. as ye shall vnderstond by the historye, whiche is  
*folowyng*  
 — 215, 17. as phisicke is naught worth where the pacient is  
*passing*;

### Remarks.

- Rom. R. 1563. 'Tout entour point l'erbe menue,  
 Qui vient por l'iaue espesse et drue'.  
 The periphrasis in the English version is due  
 to the progressive character of the verb. In fact,  
 the simple form would have been quite inappro-  
 priate in this connexion.
- Ashby, D & o. 739. 'licencyng'. In the List of Words



(by Furnivall) given as an adjective, meaning 'giving leave'. It is difficult to judge of the periphrasis in this instance, as indeed in several others from Ashby. This author seems to have a great predilection for the extended tenses: whether from a metrical point of view or not, I do not feel called upon to discuss.

- Caxt. Bl. 112, 24. Here the periphrasis might be employed to convey a meaning of duration or intensity, suggesting a constancy of mind, which could not have been brought about by the simple form, but it may also be inferred that 'are byleuyng' is chosen by way of contrast with the simple form 'holden', to avoid monotony.
- 192, 3. I may be conjectured that 'is folowyng' is due to a certain liveliness of conception, if not to the progressive nature of the verb only.

## 2. The Past Tense.

(i) **Defined.** The tense is, in most cases, found with definitions. These consist, in about half the number of instances, of adverbs or adverbials, implying either point or length of time, or, occasionally, recurrence: Hav. 945 ('ay'), A. P. Cl. 293 ('þenne'), Ch. C. T. Prol. 89 ('al the day'), M. T. 1 ('whylom'), Sh. T. 24 ('ever in oon'), Troil. V, 22 ('ever-more'), Gow. C. Am. II, 1645 ('ofte'), Gen. 2544 ('allway'), 3739 ('still'), Caxt. Bl. 85, 4 ('atte this owre'), 96, 29. ('yet'), 127, 11 ('the same tyme'), God. 21, 17 ('thenne yet').

In about as many cases, the complement consists of a clause, this especially towards the end of the period: here, for the first time, we note the occurrence of the

periphrasis in clauses beginning with 'as', so characteristic of Modern English: Fer. 3611; Ch. C. T. Sq. T. 401; P. Prol. 10; Troil. II, 555; Gen. 5069 and 5662; Caxt. Bl. 101, 17 and 101, 35; further 136, 6; 141, 7; 161, 31. Here the periphrastic past denotes *actuality*, as also in the other cases, where the definition is a clause: Rom. R. 1715; Gen. 3746; Caxt. God. 51, 32.

Occasionally both adverbials and clause are to be found, as in Caxt. Bl. 145, 2.

### Examples.

- Hav. 945. Of alle men was he mest meke,  
*Lauhwinde* ay, and bliþe of speke;
- A. P. Cl. 293. þenne in worlde watz a wyze *wonyande* on lyue,  
 Ful redy & ful ryȝtwys, & rewled hym fayre;
- Piers Pl. Pass. XI, 403. «Haddestow suffred», he seyde. «*slepyng*  
 þo þow were,  
 þow sholdest haue knowen þat clergy can.  
 and conceined more þorough resoun;
- Fer. 2140. þus wyle was he on halle *sittyng* with is puple atte  
 mete,  
 þan com þer an heþene kyng : rydyngte atte  
 ȝete;
- 3611. As he was *prykyng* ouer an hul A wykked cas þer  
 him byful  
 ys sted wax al ateynte:
- Ch. C. T. Prol. 89. Embrouded was he, as it were a mede  
 Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.  
*Synginge* he was, or *floytinge*, al the day;
- Kn. T. 507. And solitarie he was, and ever allone,  
 And *wailling* al the night, making his mone.
- 1840. For he was yet in memorie and alyve,  
 And alway *crying* after Emelye.
- M. T. 1. WHYLOM ther was *dwellinge* at Oxenford  
 A riche gnof, that gestes heeld to bord,  
 And of his craft he was a Carpenter.  
 With him ther was *dwellinge* a povre scoler,
- Sh. T. 24. Amonges alle his gestes, grete and smale,  
 Ther was a monk, a fair man and a bold,

- I trowe of thritty winter he was old,  
That ever in oon was *drawing* to that place.
- Ch. C. T. Sq. T. 401. Amidde a tree fordrye, as whyt as chalk,  
As Canacee was *plying* in hir walk,  
Ther sat a faucon over hir heed ful hye,  
That with a pitous voys so gan to crye
- P. Prol. 10. Ther-with the mones exaltacioun,  
I mene Libra, alwey gan ascende,  
As we were *entringe* at a thropes ende;
- Troil. II, 555. It fel that I com roming al allone  
Into his chaumbre, — —  
— — as I was *cominge*,  
Al sodeynly he lefte his compleynge.
- V, 22. This Troilus, with-ouen reed or lore,  
As man that hath his loyes eek forelore,  
Was *waytinge* on his lady ever-more
- Gow. C. Am. Prol. 552. For evere whil thei deden wel,  
Fortune was hem debonaire,  
And whan thei deden the contraire,  
Fortune was *contrariende*.
- II, 1477. And as fortune wolde tho,  
He was *duellende* at on of tho.
- 1645. Demetrius, which ofte aboute  
*Ridende* was, stod that time oute,
- Rom. R. 1715. The God of Love, with bowe bent,  
That al day set hadde his talent  
To pursuen and to spyen me,  
Was *stonding* by a fige-tree.  
And whan he sawe how that I  
— —  
He took an arowe ful sharply whet,
- Gen. 1674. Whille he was stille in prisone *a bideng*,  
his thought was all on Clarionas;
- 2544. ffor thei were allway *fightyng* still opece  
Ayenst Galad the kyng of Asirye;
- 3739. So still opece he was ther *abideng*,
- 3746. Vppon a tyme the Sowdon was alone,  
In a garden was *walkyng* to and fro,  
Ser luell Was ware therof anon,
- 5069. And as thei were *remevyng* fro the place,  
ffull sustely Sygrem callid lucydas,
- 5662. And as sche was *comyng* inward to his tent,  
Of hir he was full gladde in his entente,  
And seid, 'mayde Mirabell, benedicite;

- Caxt. Bl. 84, 30. Euyn atte the same oure that the two vasselles be foughte / eche other / the proude mayden in anours was *lenyng* at a wyndow, thorough whyche she sawe pleyntli the bataylle
- 85, 4. The doughter of Alymodes the kynge was atte this owre *settyng* byfore her pauillyon for to beholde þe batayll of þe two champions.
- 87, 20. Whan blanchardyn sawe the yong damoyzell that was there *syttyng* / he bowed hym self douneward vpon his hors necke, and toke the mayden by the myddes of her body,
- 96, 29. And that they sholde delynere hym in his hande / And telle hym that it was he that had slayne Rubyon, his brother, byfore Tourmaday, where his fader kynge Alymodes was yet *kepyng* the syege,
- 101, 17. Ryght thus as the kynge was *talkyng* so wyth blanchardyn / cam there a knyghte armed of al peces,
- 101, 35. and alre dy thou mayste see by me that they be not fer from hens, for as I was *commynge* towarde the / I dyde fynde thyn enmyes byfore me,
- 127, 11. And in especyall she was sore discomfited at her herte for the loue of her frende blanchardyn, that was the same tyme wyth his felawe sadoyne *sayllyng* vpon the see in grete gladnesse for the wynde & the see that were peasible.
- 136, 6. As she was thus *talkyng* wyth her maystres, and that the vessayls beganne to com nyghe, and made redy all thynges to take lande, a south wynd rose vp sodanly,
- 141, 7. he folowed daryus of so nyghe that he ouer reached hym with his swerde, as he was *fleyng* at the right syde of hym.
- 145, 2. It happed that one a day blanchardyn, Sadoyne, and his wyff the fayer Beatrix, were *sittyng* at the bord takyng their recreacyon / The same tyme herde blanchardyn a voyce of a man that full pyteously lamented hym self;
- 152, 19. and noo playsure she coude taken in no thyng / but was euer more *sorowyng* at the herte of her /
- 161, 31. & as he was *musyng* vpon þe werke, lokyng to & fro vpon the see, he perceyued a right myghty nauy,
- 193, 26. Whan sadoyne, that was the same tyme *lokyng* out at a wyndowe — — sawe the two oostes — — he gaf hymselfe gret meruayl,

- Caxt. God. 21, 17. a parte of the muraylles whiche were thenne yet *apperyng*  
 — 51, 32. pEter was *goyng* with the grete companye whan a messenger cam to hym rydyng,

### Remarks.

Ch. C. T. Sh. T. 24. The expression implies a habit.  
 Gow. C. Am. II, 1477. 'tho' in the first clause is, logically, a definition to 'was duellende'. The emperor had many houses, between which he spent his time.

- 1645. 'ofte — — Ridende was' comprehends a series of actualities.

Caxt. Bl. 84, 30. This example occurs, with slight alterations, several times in this work: it is a sort of set pattern.

(ii) **Undefined.** When no time-defining complements are attached to the periphrasis, the tense has none the less, in most cases, a very well marked meaning, viz., of *actuality*; this is clearly seen, for instance, in Fer. 4657; Ch. C. T. Kn. T. 560; Gow. C. Am. II, 1497; Caxt. Bl. 45, 31, where the periphrastic past, in indirect narration, corresponds to a present actual in the direct speech, and further in 118, 21 and 119, 7; etc.

Sometimes, however, though not very often, this meaning is either very slightly perceptible or hardly admissible. In such cases one might rather speak of a certain idea of duration, as in Gen. 1156 and Caxt. Bl. 62, 3; and also in the following examples, where the participle occasionally assumes an adjectival meaning: Caxt. Bl. 56, 4; 150, 20 and 152, 28.

## Examples.

- Jos. 18. Feole flowen for fert. out of heore cupþhe  
 in-to Augrippus lond. was heroudeis eir,  
 þere monye *lenginde* weore. forlet of heore  
 oune.
- Fer. 4657. Ys wyf was *lyggynge* on chylbedde For two  
 chyldren þat sche þo hedde  
 Wyp-inne þer-on a kaue.
- Ch. C. T. Kn. T. 560. He fil in office with a chamberleyn,  
 The which that *dwelling* was with Emelye.
- 1097. The statue of Venus, glorious for to see,  
 Was naked *fleting* in the large see,
- M. T. 4. With him ther was *dwellinge* a povre scoler,
- Troil. III, 687. So whan that she was in the closet leyd,  
 And alle hir wommen forth by ordenaunce  
 A-bedde weren, ther as I have seyde,  
 There was no more to skippen nor to traunce,  
 But boden go to bedde, with mischaunce,  
 If any wight was *steringe* any-where,  
 And late hem slepe that a-bedde were.
- Gow. C. Am. I, 2346. The body, which was ded *ligende*,  
 For pure pite that thei have  
 Under the grene thei begrave.
- II. 1497. On horse riden him ayein;  
 Till it befell, upon a plein  
 Thei sihen wher he was *comende*.
- Gen. 1156. And ther he was *purposing* to Abyde,  
 — 4775. And ser Amelok Anon he ganne hym dresse,  
 Whiche with a knyght was *playeng* Att  
 chesse.
- Caxt. Bl. 45, 31. The man answered hym, that wyth grete payne  
 he sholde be lodged / And that the men of armes of the  
 proude pucelle in amours were *comyng* in so grete nomb-  
 re — —
- 56, 4. And many penoncelles, baners, and standardes that  
 the wynde shok here and there, wherof the golde & the  
 azure was *glysteryng* tyl vnto her eyen / bycause of the  
 bryght bemes of the sonne that spred were vpon them.
- 62, 3. Blanchardin, whiche was sore *desyryng* for to  
 proue hym self and shewe his strengthe and vertue — —  
 dyde putte hym self in the fore front,
- 118, 21. And another of the capitayns had the charge

- of the foure thousand archers, fote men whiche yssued oute at a posterne that was nyghe the see, & lepte anon in to the medowe where the sayd bestes were *fedyng*
- Caxt. Bl. 119, 7. The fotemen thenne entred wythin the close medowe, where the bestes were *pasturyng*,
- 139, 24. ther were tenn thousand Cassydonyens — — that folowed hym, and yssued out of the towne wyth daryus, that was *rydyng* before hem all vpon a right myghty courser
- 143, 31. But by the comaundement of Blanchardyn the preeste of the crysten men that were *dwellynge* there assembled anone, and made redy many tubbys
- 150, 20. the nauy was apparelled & redy made, stored & garnyshed wyth good men of werre, & wyth artylarye as was *perteynyng* to suche a thyng,
- 152, 28. and as she dyde cast alwayes her syght toward the see, she trowed to haue seen a grete nombre of shippes that were *appyeryng* vpon the water and cam sayllynge
- 161, 18. kynge Alymodes, that was in grete affraye to knowe the cause and occasion wherfore they of the cyte were *makynge* suche a gladnesse, assembled his barons
- God. 91, 12. And sayde they wold drawe them to ward Nycene iffor to abyde there the other Barons that were *comyng* on the waye

### Remarks.

Gen. 1156. The periphrasis seems to give the impression of a set purpose, so to speak, which the simple form would perhaps have failed to suggest.

Caxt. Bl. 62, 3. 'desyryng'; with an under-meaning of intensity, further enforced by 'sore'.

### 3. The Imperative and the Infinitive.

These forms are strongly durative, very often implying a frame of mind or a habit.



**(i) Example of the Periphrastic Imperative.**

Ashby, D & o. 715. In your counsail be quick and ay *wakyng*.

**(ii) Examples of the Periphrastic Infinitive.**

Ch. Troil. III, 1138. But for the love of god sin ye be brought  
In thus good plyt, lat now non hevye thought  
Ben *hanginge* in the hertes of yow tweye:

Ashby, P. Pr. 285. Do youre selfe and all shall be *obeying*,  
Truste to no man is execucion,

— D & o. 594. A kyng sholde be fyrst *kepyng* his lawe;  
Al other must doo the same for his awe.

— 689. Showyng them semblance of love euery day,  
Corogeng them to be to you *lovyng*.

— 967. On erthe ther is no thing so vnsemyng  
As a kyng to be in predacioñ,  
Or by compulsio[n] to be *taking*,

1097. And who that to [un]nedy wolbe *graunting*,  
Is not accepted as for man witty,

**Remark.**

Ch. Troil. III, 1138. The periphrasis is, I take it, quite indispensable here: the simple form would altogether fail to convey the proper meaning.

**Additional Remark.**

The participle sometimes approaches in meaning to an adjective. In many cases it is nearly impossible to draw any line of distinction between the verbal and the adjectival character.

The latter is commonly to be inferred where the participle occurs in juxtaposition with a real adjective, or when the periphrasis is defined by adverbs of perpetuity, namely, in expressions involving the idea of a frame of mind or a habit, and also in cases where the finite verb

is not expressed. The following is a very illustrative example:

Lydg. T. o. Gl. 3 b, 1. [p. 14]. I pleyne also vp-on Jelusyē,  
The vile serpent, the snake tortyvous,  
That is so crabbit & *frounyngē* of his ye,  
And euerē *grochyngē* & suspecyous,

The French participles in *-aunt* have quite lost their verbal force and are to be looked upon as pure adjectives:

Caxt. Bl. 28, 12. the yron of my spere whiche is full sore *tren-  
chaunt*  
— 170, 10. he was so *dolaunt*, & so replenyshed wyth sorow

Also the 'wel syttyngē' of the following example, which is a direct translation of the French 'bien séant':

Caxt. Bl. 17, 14. a ryght goode & riche swerde, that longed  
vnto the kynge his fadre, whiche afterward was to hym  
wel *syttyngē*,

and, I suppose, the 'wel doand' in Rom. R. 2707:

They shal hir telle how they thee fand  
Curteis and wys, and wel *doand*.

## B. Northern Dialects.

**Occurrence.** In comparison with the Midland and Southern texts the Scottish works exhibit, with one or two exceptions, a fairly considerable frequency, although rather small as compared to modern usage.

In *Barbour's Bruce* we have not a few examples: thus in the five first books there are to be found not less than a score, and the same number is afforded by books I—V of the *Wallace*. Also in the works of Lyndesay and in the *Complaynt of Scotlande* the periphrasis has a comparatively frequent occurrence.

In the *Kingis Quair* and in Dunbar's poems, on the other hand, we note a more scanty use of it: in the former, which is, to be sure, only a small text (1400 short lines), only 4 instances are on record, and Dunbar's poems (about 280 pages) have not furnished more than 12 instances.

On the whole, however, one may safely say that the extended tenses were more in vogue in Scotland than in England. Also, in 'Lowland Scotch', they seem to have held their ground fairly well, as far as frequency goes, up to the present time: Krüger remarks (*Schwierigk. des Engl.* II, p. 172): 'In schottischen Romanen finde ich einen auffallend starken derartigen<sup>1</sup> Gebrauch der Form, z. B. I am hearing you are a poor man. There's more than one eligible girl in Shawbridge I could name, but it is not for me to be choosing for him. I will be hearing of you? (The Mischief-Maker, by Leslie Keith, *Times Weekly* Ed. Jan.—April 1898)'.

Alexander Bain, (*Higher Engl. Gr.* p. 187 a. f.), has some remarks to the same effect: «When, therefore, without wishing to signify continuance or occupation, we employ a progressive tense, we violate the best English usage. The expressions, 'The master *is calling* you', 'he *is speaking* to you', 'were you *ringing*?' 'I *was supposing*', 'he is not *intending*' are Scotticisms for 'the master *calls*', 'he *speaks* to you', — —»

Murray, questioning the possibility of Celtic influence on the Scottish dialects, ventures the following suggestion, (*The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland*, p. 54): 'Of *grammatical* changes, either in inflection or syntax, which can be attributed to Celtic influence, there are per-

<sup>1</sup> Speaking about certain verbs, which by their nature avoid the periphrasis, such as: like, love, be fond of, hate, please, dislike, scorn, etc. (p. 171.)

haps no traces in Scottish literature. Even in the modern dialects these are rare, though they are probably to be seen in the fondness for periphrastic verbal forms, such as «Ye'll be gaan',» «I'm sayan',» for You will go, I say; and a certain indirectness in the matter of tense, thus, «What was ye wantan'?» «I was wantan' to see you just for a minute,» etc., for «What do you want?» «I want to see you.»

### 1. The Present Tense.

(i) **Defined.** It expresses either *actuality*, enforced by the adverb 'now', as in Ly. Mon. 5354, and others, all from the same author, or else, where the definition is an adverb of *perpetuity*, it has this function, as in K. Qu. 173 ('ay') and Du. Man, sen thy lyfe etc. 1 ('evir').

In one instance we have a futural meaning, namely in Ly. Mon. 5502, where the adverbial 'in those dayis' applies to the future.

#### Examples.

- K. Qu. 173. From day to day so sore here artow drest,  
That with thy flesche ay *walking* art in  
trouble,  
And sleping eke;  
Du. Man, sen thy lyfe is ay in weir,  
And deid is evir *drawand* neir,  
[Man, sen thy lyfe etc. 1].  
Ly. Mon. 5354. Mony prelatis ar now *ryngand*,  
The quhilkis no more dois vnderstand  
— 5502. Quho that bene *leuand*, in those dayis,  
May tell of terrabyll affrayis:  
— 5890. Father, quod I, declare to me  
Quhare sall our Prelatis ordorit be,  
Quhilk now bene in the world *leuand*;

- Ly. Pap. 174. Now *cumyng* ar, said scho, the faitall houris;  
 Off bitter deth now mon I thole the schouris.  
 — 353. So, *ȝe*, that now bene *lansyng* vpe the ledder,  
 Tak tent in tyme, fassinnyng *ȝour* fingaris faste.

### Remark.

Ly. Mon. 5502. 'bene leuand' might be rendered by: '(those who) shall chance to live (then)'. The futural meaning is essential, the durative element being rather weak, and mainly to be inferred from the nature of the verb. — There is another instance of this same example in 5523.

(ii) **Undefined.** Without definitions it is employed to denote the present actual, in the same way as we have it in Modern English, especially in the instances furnished by Lyndesay and the Complaynt.

By virtue of the progressive sense of the verb it is used in B. Br. III, 681 ('rynnand'), and in Du. The petition etc. 40, 'ar spruning' ('are sticking out') denotes a passivity which naturally accounts for the construction. In these two cases Modern English would likewise have chosen the periphrasis.

### Examples.

- B. Br. III, 259. Tharfor men, that *werrayand* [ar],  
 Suld set thar etlyng euir-mar  
 To stand agayne thar fayis mycht,  
 Wmquhile with strenth, & quhile with slycht  
 — 681. That is ane Ile in[to] the Se;  
 And may weill in mydward be  
 Betrix kyntyr and Irland:  
 Quhar als gret stremys ar *rynnand*,  
 — IV, 226. For thai wat weill and wittirly,  
 That thai that weill ar *liffand* heir  
 Sall wyn the segis, — —

- W. Wa. IV, 745. Now haiff I lost the best man *leiffand* is;  
 Du. My beikis ar *sprunging* he and bauld.  
     [The petition of the gray horse, auld Dun-  
     bar, 40.]
- Ly. Mon. 4235. I se nocht ellis bot troubyll infinyte:  
     Quharefor, my Sonne, I mak it to the kend,  
     This warld, I wait, is *drawand* to ane end.
- 5312. So, be this compt, it may be kend,  
     The warld is *drawand* neir ane end:
- C. o. Sc. 60, 5. The thondir slais mony beystis on the feildis;  
 & quhen it slais ane man that is *sleipand*, he sal be fun-  
 din dede, and his ene close;  
 135, 16. mony of vs ar *beggand* our meit athourt the  
 cuntre,

### Remarks.

- B. Br. III, 259. It is not impossible that 'men, that  
 werrayand [ar]' ought to be interpreted: 'men  
 who use to war', 'war-faring men'. But the  
 ordinary idea (of actuality) is by no means ex-  
 cluded: 'when they are engaged in a war'.
- IV, 226. 'heir' might be regarded as a restric-  
 tion equivalent to an adverb of time, denoting  
 actuality.
- W. Wa. IV, 745. Modern English: 'the best man  
 living' or 'the best man that is now living'.
- C. o. Sc. 135, 16. This is from an exposition of  
 the bad state of affairs in Scotland at the time  
 when the Complaynt was written. The peri-  
 phrastic present is here aptly chosen to give  
 heightened colour to the passage.

## 2. The Past Tense.

(i) **Defined.** The definitions consist of adverbs or  
 adverbial expressions. These express either point of time,

as in B. Br. II, 540 ('then'), W. Wa. IV, 469 ('zeit'), 643 ('be this'), V, 964 ('be that'), C. o Sc. 76, 9 ('at that tyme'), or, somewhat more seldom, length of time, as in B. Br. II, 570 ('ay'), and others where *perpetuity* is implied, further in B. Br. XIX, 723 ('all that day'), Ly. Mon. 3542 ('fourtye zeris'), these being examples of *limited duration*.

The definition consists of a clause. Here the periphrasis serves to express *actuality* in almost all instances found: B. Br. III, 716; IV, 189; 632; W. Wa. V, 89; 145; 237; Du. Of a Dance in the quenis chalmer, 40; The wowing of the king, etc. 50; Ly. Mon. 764; 1539, in all of which the periphrasis has its place in an 'as'- or 'quhen'-clause; further in C. o Sc. 9, 27 and 76, 13.

In a rather limited number of examples an idea of duration is perhaps more prominent: B. Br. II, 167 and Ly Mon. 1215.

### Examples.

- B. Br. II, 167. Thusgat maid thai thar aquentance,  
That neur syne, for nakyn chance,  
Departyt quhill thai *lyffand* war.
- 540. Then war the wiffys *thyrland* the wall  
With pikkis, quhar the [assail<sub>z</sub>cours] all  
Entryt, and dystroyit the tour,
- 570. Bot worthy lames off dowglas  
Ay *trawailand*\* and besy was;  
For to purches the ladyis mete;  
[\*trauellde he H.]
- III, 670. Nocht-for-thi, on mony wyss,  
He wes *dredand* for tresoun ay:
- 716. Quhen thai the land wes rycht ner hand,  
And quhen Schippys war *sailand* ner,  
The Se wald ryss on sic maner,
- IV, 189. And as in-to northumbirland,  
He wes with his [gret] rowt *Rydand*,  
A Seiknes tuk him in the vay,
- 632. And as the king apon the land



- Wes *gangand* vp and doun, bydand  
 Till that his menzhe reddy war,  
 His hostes com rycht till hym thar.
- B. Br. V, 34. And he wes alsua *doutand* ay  
 That his lord suld pass the se.
- XIX, 723. All that day *caryand* thai war  
 With cartis, men that slayne war thar.
- XX, 431. So fer chassit the lord dowglass  
 With few folk, that he passit wes  
 All the folk that wes *chassand* then.
- W. Wa. IV, 469. *geitt feill* on fold was *fechtand* cruelly:  
 — 643. Be this the host *approchand* was full ner;  
 — V, 89. As thai war best *arayand* Butleris rout,  
 Betuex parteys than Wallace ischit out;  
 — 145. Kerle beheld on to the bauld Heroun,  
 Vpon Fawdoun as he was *lukand* doune,  
 A suttell straik wpwart him tuk that tide,  
 — 237. As he was thus *walkand* be him allayne  
 Apon Ern side, makand a pytuous mayne,  
 Schyr Jhone Butler, — —  
 Out fra his men of Wallace had a sicht.  
 — 317. Haldyn he was off wer the worthiast man,  
 In north Ingland with thaim was *leiffand* than.  
 — 964. Be that Wallace was *semland* with the laiff.  
 — 1024. The power than with Wallace wes *cummand*;  
 Thai entryt in, — —
- Du. Quhen scho was *danceand* bysselye,  
 Ane blast of wind soun fra hir slippis:  
 [Of a Dance in the quenis chalmer, 40.]  
 Quhen men dois fleit in joy maist far,  
 Sone cumis wo, or thay be war;  
 Quhen *carpand* wer thir two mostcrowss,  
 The wolf he ombesett the houss,  
 [The wowing of the king, etc. 50.]
- Ly. Mon. 764. And quhen Adam wes *slepand* sounde,  
 He tuke ane Rib furth of his syde,  
 — 1215. So lang as Adam wes *leueand*,  
 The peple did obserue command;  
 — 1539. And, quhen the Flude was *decessand*,  
 Thay wer left welteryng on the land.  
 — 3542. And quhow that peple *wandrand* wes  
 Fourtye *geris* in wyldernes.
- C. o Sc. 6, 16. The toune of sauerne baris vytnes of his del-  
 egent vailgeantnes, that he maid contrar the iniuent dan-

geir that vas *cummand* on the realme of France, at that tyme quhen ane multitude and infinit nummir of men of veyr, — —, *discendit* fra the hicht of germanye.

- C. o. Sc. 9, 27. ande quhen he aperit to be solitar, than he vas *speikand* vitht hym self anent his auen byssynes,  
 — 44, 2. the prudent *quintus cincinatus*, quha vas chosyn be the senat to be dictatur of rome, at that samyn tyme he vas *arand* the land vitht his auen hand at the pleuch.  
 — 76, 9. for al iherusalem ande mekil of iuda vas put tyl extreme desolatiōne. At that tyme, ane man of Israel callit *matathias*, — —, vas *sittand* on the hil of modin,  
 — —  
 — 76, 13. thir fiue bredir var soir *vepand* for the desolatiōne of iuda ande iherusalem. Than *matathias* there father said to them, — —

(ii) **Undefined.** The tense expresses what was going on at a certain time, or under certain circumstances (*actuality*), not directly stated or in close connexion with the periphrasis, but, as a rule, to be gathered from the context. The case where it is most independent of such indirect definitions is when it corresponds to the present actual, in indirect narration, of which we have some instances: B. Br. VI, 466; W. Wa. III, 104; V, 11; Ly. Mon. 2025. The verb used here is 'coming': by the bye, it might be worth mentioning that we have no less than 9 instances of this verb under this heading to only 1 for the defined past. As other good examples of this function of the periphrasis may be mentioned: B. Br. XVIII, 114; W. Wa. III, 377; Du. This nycht, etc. 1; Ly. Mon. 1531; C. o. Sc. 70, 19.

Chiefly implying progression or duration in a few cases, no special point or length of time being thought of: B. Br. I, 59 and 95, where the function of the extended form seems perhaps somewhat doubtful; further: IV, 416 and probably also in B. Br. III, 728 and W. Wa. III, 43.

## Examples.

- B. Br. I, 59. For thar mycht succed na female,  
 Qhill foundyn mycht by ony male  
 [That were in lyne] ewyn *descendand*;
- 79. This ordynance thaim thocht the best,  
 For at that tyme wes pess and rest  
 Betwyx Scotland and Ingland bath;  
 And thai couth nocht persawe the skaith  
 That towart thaim wes *apperand*;
- 95. Haid  $\zeta e$  tane keip how at that king  
 Always, for-owtyn soiournyng,  
 Trawayllyt for to wyn senzhory,  
 And throw his mycht till occupy  
 Landis, that war till him *marcheand*,  
 As walis was, and als Ireland;
- III, 379. The king saw how his folk wes stad,  
 And quhat anoyis that thai had;  
 And saw wynter wes *cummand* ner;
- 585. For all war *doand*, knycht and knawe;  
 Wes nane that euir disport mycht have  
 Fra steryng, and fra rowyng,
- 630. The thingis that thar *fletand* war  
 Thai tuk; and turnyt syne agayne,
- 728. Quhen the folk, that thar *wonnand* wer,  
 Saw menn off Armys in thar cuntre  
 Aryve in-to sic quantite,  
 Thai fled in hy, with thar catell,
- IV, 113. He tuk a culter hat glowand,  
 That het wes in a fyre *byrnand*,
- 416. The cry raiss hydwisly and hee,  
 For thai, that *dredand* war to de,  
 Rycht as bestis can rair and cry,
- VI, 466. And quhen he tald had that tithing,  
 How that schir amer wes *cumand*  
 For to hunt hym out of the land,  
 With hund and horn, — —
- XII, 15. And quhen the kyng wist at thai weir  
 In haill battale *cummand* so neir,  
 His battale gert he weill aray.
- XVIII, 114. For the laiff hass thair vayis tane  
 Till the erische kyngis, that ves thar,  
 That in haill battale *howand* war.
- XIX, 661. And with licht of the litill fyre,

- That in the luge wes *byrnan*d schyre,  
In-till the luge a fox he saw,
- W. Wa. III, 43. Schir Richart had thre sonnys as I yow tald.  
Adam, Rychart, and Symont that was bald.  
Adam, eldest, was *growand* in curage;
- 104. Bot thai rycht sone raturnde in agayne,  
To Wallace tald that thai war *cummand* fast.
- 377. Gret rowme he maid, his men war *fechtand* fast;
- IV, 115. The schirreffis court was *cumand* to the toune,  
And he as ane for Scot of most renoune.
- V, 11. Wallace thaim tauld that new wer wes on  
The Inglismen was off the toune *cummande*.
- 125. Sternys, be than, began for til apper,  
The Inglismen was *cummand* wondyr ner;
- 415. Als Kerle wyst, gyff Wallace *leyffand* war,
- 531. Fra tyme thai wyst that Wallace *leiffand* was,
- 987. The day was donne, and *prochand* wes the nycht;  
At Wallace thai askit his consaill rycht.
- Du. This nycht in my sleip I wes agast,  
Me thoct the Devill wes *tempand* fast  
The peple with aithis of crewaltie;  
[This nycht in my sleip, etc. 1.]
- Me thoct the Devillis, als blak as pik,  
*Solistand* wer as beis thik,  
Ay tempand folk with wayis sle;  
[This nycht in my sleip, etc. 101.]
- Quhen that I schawe to him *our* markis,  
He turnis to me again, and barkis,  
As he war *wirriand* ane hog:  
Madame, *ge* heff a dangerouss Dog!  
[Of James Dog etc. 5.]
- Quhen that I speik till him freindlyk,  
He barkis lyk ane midding tyk,  
War *chassand* cattell through a bog:  
Madame, *ge* heff a dangerouss Dog!  
[Of James Dog etc. 13.]
- Ly. Mon. 1488. Bot with the branche scho did returne,  
That Noye mycht cieirly vnderstand  
That fellonn Flude was *decressand*:
- 1531. Bot Noye had gretast displesouris,  
Behauldand the dede Creatouris,  
— —  
Seyng thame ly vpone the landis,  
And sum wer *fleityng* on the strandis:

- Ly. Mon. 1853. I fynd no man, in to that lande,  
 His tyrannie that durste ganestande,  
 Bot Habraham, and Aram his brother:  
 That disobeyit I fynd none vther,  
 Quhilk *dwelland* war in that cuntre,
- 2025. Quhen that the Babilonianis,  
 To gidther with the Caldianis,  
 Hard tell Kyng Nynus wes *cumand*,  
 Maid proclamationis through the land,
- 3327. And as ane woman he wes cled,  
 With wemen counsalit and led;  
 And schamefullye he wes *syttand*,  
 With Spindle and with Rock spinnand.
- C. o. Sc. 68, 18. sche vas in grite dout ande dreddour for  
 ane mair dolorus future ruuynne that vas *aperand* to suc-  
 cumb hyr haystlye,
- 70, 19. The eldest of them vas in harnes, traland ane  
 halbert behynd hym, — — The sycond of hyr sonnys vas  
*sittand* in ane chair, beand clethd in ane sydegoune,  
 kepannd grite grauite, — — hyr zongest sone vas *lyand*  
 plat on his syde on the cald eird,
- 88, 2. alcibiades persauand that lacedemonia vas *aperand*  
 to be superior of athenes, he said to the prouest of  
 kyng darius,

### Remarks.

- B. Br. I, 79. 'apperand' seems here to have the same  
 meaning as 'coming'.
- 95. 'Marchen' means 'border upon'.
- IV, 416. The expression 'dredand war to de'  
 is strongly adjectival in meaning, and the whole  
 that-clause with its antecedent might be regarded  
 as a circumlocution for 'cowards'.
- Ly. Mon. 3327. It appears from the context that  
 'wes syttand' applies to several different occa-  
 sions; hence, 'he used to sit'.
- C. o Sc. 68, 18. Cp. the remark to B. Br. I, 79.

- C. o. Sc. 70, 19. The passage describes the situation of 'Dame Scotia's' meeting with her sons.  
 — 88, 2. The occurrence of the periphrasis may be accounted for by the general sense of progression contained in the expression. Here we might also infer a slightly futural meaning: 'was about to — —', 'was going to — —'. Cp. also B. Br. I, 79 and C. o. Sc. 68, 18.

### 3. Examples of the Periphrastic Imperative.

- Du. Be amiable with humble face, as angellis apperand,  
 And with a terribil tail be *stangand* as  
 edderis;  
 [Tua mariit wemen etc. 265.]  
 — Turne to thy freynd, beleif nocht in thy fo,  
 Sen thou mon go, be *grathing* to thy gait;  
 [O Wreche, be war! 3.]

### 4. Examples of Cases where the Participle is of an Adjectival Nature:

- B. Br. III, 696. And by the mole thai passyt *zar*,  
 And entryt sone in-to the rase,  
 Quhar that the strem sa sturdy was,  
 That wawys wyd [that] *brekand\** war  
 Weltryt as hillys her and thar.  
 [\*bolning H.]  
 K. Qu. 161. And quhilum In hir chiere thus a lyte  
*Louring* sche was;  
 Ly. Mon. 223. Quhilkis bene to plesand Poetis *conforting*.  
 C. o. Sc. 34, 6. al thir seuyn elementis that this last varld is  
 creat of, ar ouer *abundand* vitth in oure affligit realme,

## C. Survey.

The Midland and Southern Dialects. The chief function of the definite tenses is to denote *actuality*.

The point of time may be directly expressed, for the present 'tense, as a rule, by 'now'; for the past tense, by various adverbs or adverbials of time, very often by a clause, especially towards the end of the period, the periphrasis then usually occurring in an 'as'-clause.

But even in the instances where no direct statements are given, this idea is felt strongly enough in most cases.

Some instances there are, indeed, where no special time is thought of (either as a point or as a length), the periphrasis then being due to the inherent durative or progressive meaning of the verb.

The definite tenses are also used to denote *qualified duration*, though this function is strongly on the decrease: it is now, almost exclusively, confined to the rather scanty number of instances where the complements are adverbs or adverbials of time-length, either denoting *perpetuity* or *limited duration*.

Very seldom has the periphrasis any additional meaning: I have only found one instance where it has a pronounced idea of *futurity*.

The verbs employed are mostly durative or progressive by themselves: more than half the number of the instances met with have a verb of rest or motion, and of these 'dwelling' and 'coming' are the most common.

**The Northern Dialects.** Things are very much the same here and do not call for many further comments. It may, however, be observed that the most common verbs are here 'coming' and 'living'.

Summing up: the definite tenses are now beginning to assume their modern functions. Usage is getting more and more settled: they are very seldom vague in meaning, i. e., encroaching on the domains of the indefi-



nite tenses; in fact, one can safely say that this use is quite discarded in favour of the idea of actual duration and progression, and the cases where the participle partakes rather more of an adjectival character than of a verbal, are likewise comparatively few in number.

### III. EARLY MODERN ENGLISH.

**Occurrence.** During this period also the periphrasis seems to be sparingly used in comparison with recent English.

This impression may, to a certain degree, be due to the nature of the works investigated: where the narrative style does not come in, the periphrasis is very seldom met with. Thus from the first 110 pages of *Fisher's Works* I have not gathered more than 4 instances, and the same small number from the first 140 pages of *Starkey's England*. I have likewise read a large part of Ascham's works without finding more than half a dozen examples.

An exception from the texts of this category is afforded by Latimer's sermons, where the construction is represented in a fairly great number of cases. Some of these, however, are stereotyped sermon-phrases or repeated quotations from the Bible.

The plays, which, on account of their form, afford no wide range to the narrating tenses, especially the past, have likewise only furnished a scanty amount of material. This holds good no less for the earlier than for the later part of the period, with the exception perhaps of Shakespeare. The periphrasis is very rare in Udall's *Roister Doister*, and it does not occur at all, so far as I can find, in the *Ferrex and Porrex* of Sackville and Norton.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Barring such a case as that quoted on p. 81.

contemporaries of Shakespeare — Marlowe, and still more Peele and Greene — are very sparing in their use of the extended tenses; in those plays of Marlowe which I have gone through they only amount to about a score.

Shakespeare has perhaps favoured the construction somewhat more than most of the authors belonging to the period; but still it must be said that the difference is great between the frequency in his works and in such as belong to our days, a fact which is also remarked by Franz (Sh. Gr. 2nd ed. Heidelberg 1909: p. 499, § 622): 'Von be und dem partizip des präsens, der sogenannten progressiven zeitform (he is coming), macht Sh. einen verhältnismässig spärlichen gebrauch, sie kommt erst später häufiger zur verwendung'. The occurrence is, in his works, somewhat uneven: thus the periphrasis is seldom met with in some of his plays, e. g. in *Mids.*, *Mu. Adoe*, and *Tw. N.*; in others it is somewhat more common, as in *Me. Wives*, *Jul. C.*, *Haml.*, *King L.*, *Temp.* and above all in *Taming, Cor.* and *Hy. VIII.*

### 1. The Present Tense.

(i) **Defined.** The periphrasis occurs comparatively seldom in the present tense with definitions. These may consist of adverbs, for the Pre-Shakespearean period chiefly 'ever', while Shakespeare has 'now' — in a great many cases — and 'still'.

In not a few instances the time-defining element lies in the connection with another clause, as in Fisher, *Works*, 60, 23, where the periphrasis denotes *limited duration*. In the other cases it has rather the function of *actuality*, as for instance in Sh. *Temp.* II, 1, 228.

## Examples.

Fisher, Works, 60, 23. To whome we anfwere that yf a dogge hauynge a grete ftone bounde aboute his necke be caft downe from an hygh toure, he feleth no weyght of that ftone as longe as he is *fallynge* downe,

Heyw. The Four P's. I, 11. *Pot.* Then tell me thys; are you perfyt in drynkyng?

*Ped.* Perfyt in drynkyng, as may be wysht by thynkyng.

*Pot.* Then, after your drynkyng, how fall ye to wyntyng?

*Ped.* Syr, after drynkyng, whyle the shot is *tynkyng*,  
Some hedes be *swymmyng*, but myne wyll  
be synkyng;

And, upon drynkyng, my eyse wil be  
pynkyng;

For wyntyng to drynkyng is alway lynkyng.

Lat. Sermon. Pl. [Sk. Sp. 246, 296] he is euer *applynge* his busynes, ye shal neuer fynde hym idle, I warraunte you.

— Sev. Sermon. 112. for the deuyll, the greate maieftrate, is verye busy nowe, he is euer *doynge*, he neuer ceafeth to go about to make them like hymselfe.

— 166. One of her neyghbours mette her in the ftreate, and fayed melfres whether go ye, Mary fayed she, I am goynge to S. Tomas of Acres to the fermon, I coulde not flepe al thys lafte nyght, and I am *goynge* now thether, I neuer fayled of a good nap there,

— 180. The fayethfull can not lacke, the vufaythfull is euer *lackynge*,

— 191. It is much like as if I oughte another man .XX. M. [thoufand] poundes, and fhulde paye it out of hande, or elles go to the dungen of ludgate, and when I am *goynge* to pryfon, one of my friendes fhould come, and afke, whether goeth thys man?

Lyly, Anat. 77. But alas Euphues, what truth can there be found in a trauailer? what ftay [trust] in a ft[r]aunger? whose words and bodyes both watch but for a winde, whose feete are euer *flecting*,

— 78. the Mirlin ftriketh at the Partridge, the Eagle often fnap-peth at the Fly, men are alwayes *laying* baites for women, which are the weaker velfels:

Marl. Ed. II; V, 1. For fuch outrageous passions cloy my foul,  
As with the wings of rancour and disdain,  
Full often am I *soaring* up to heaven,  
To plain me to the gods against them both.

- Marl. Tamb. 2. III, 5. *Tamb.* Well, now ye see he is a king:  
look to him, Theridamas, when we are *fighting*, lest he  
hide his crown as the foolish king of Persia did.
- Sh. Anth. I, 5, 29. — — Hee's *speaking* now,  
Or murmuring, where's my Serpent of old  
Nyle,  
(For so he cal's me:)  
III, 6, 73. — — He hath given his Empire  
Up to Whore, who now ar *levying*  
The Kings o'th'earth for Warre.
- IV, 15, 73. — — A Roman, by a Roman  
Valiantly vanquish'd. Now my Spirit is *going*,  
I can no more.
- As, III, 2, 51. *Clo.* Instance, briefly: come, instance.  
*Cor.* Why we are still *handling* our Ewes, and their  
Fels you know are greasie.
- Cor. II, 1, 74. When you are *hearing* a matter betweene  
party and party, if you chaunce to bee pinch'd with the  
Collicke, you make faces like Mummings,
- Ham I. III, 3, 80. *Ham.* Now might I do it pat, now he  
is *praying*,
- Hy. VIII; IV, 2, 209. Say his long trouble now is *passing*  
Out of this world.
- Jul. C. II, 1, 362. *Bru.* That must we also. What it is  
my Caius,  
I shall unfold to thee, as we are *going*,  
To whom it must be done.
- III, 1, 277. — — And you shall speake  
In the same Pulpit whereto I am *going*,  
After my speech is ended.
- King L. II, 1, 28. Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke  
of Cornwall?  
Hee's *comming* hither, now i'th' night, i'th'  
haste,
- Me. Wives, III, 3, 28. he gives her folly motion and  
advantage: and now she's *going* to my wife,
- Mu. Adoe, II, 3, 130. *Leo.* This saies shee now when  
shee is *beginning* to write to him,
- Oth. I, 1, 96. Even now, now, very now, an old blacke  
Ram  
Is *tupping* your white Ewe.
- Taming, II, 1, 402. That she shall have, besides an  
Argosie  
That now is *lying* in Marcellus roade:

- Sh. Taming, IV. 3, 198. *Pet.* It shall be seven ere I go to horse:  
 Looke what I speake, or do, or thinke to doe,  
 You are still *crossing* it,
- 4, 54. *Bap.* Not in my house Lucentio, for you know  
 Pitchers have eares, and I have manie  
 servants,  
 Besides old Gremio is *harkning* still,  
 And happilie we might be interrupted.
- Temp. I, 2, 206. *Mir.* Hevens thank you for't, And now  
 I pray you Sir,  
 For still 'tis *beating* in my minde; your  
 reason  
 For raysing this Sea-storme?
- II, 1, 228. *Ant.* Noble Sebastian,  
 Thou let'st thy fortune sleepe: die rather:  
 wink'st  
 Whiles thou art *waking*.

### Remarks.

Lat. Sev. Serm. 166. Note in this example, and also in 191, the occurrence of the periphrastic tense side by side with the simple form, the latter apparently being used in cases parallel to those in which the clause is introduced by 'here', 'there', of which I have given some examples below: in both these instances the indefinite present is employed in questions beginning with 'whether'.

- 191. The expression 'when I am goynge — —' refers to a supposed actuality, and thus has a slight suggestion of futurity.

Lyly, Anat. 78. 'are alwayes laying — —'. The expression involves the idea of iteration. — Compare Taming, IV, 3, 198. — This type is very frequent in recent English.

Marl. Tamb. 2. III, 5. The context shows that 'when we are fighting' refers to the future.

- Sh. Jul. C. III, 1, 277. The periphrasis here acts as a future-equivalent, as is clearly seen from the defining clause.
- Mu. Adoe, II, 3, 130. This is the first instance I have found of the Modern English use of the periphrasis with verbs denoting the beginning of an action.

(ii) **Undefined.** Apart from some few instances, from the earliest authors, where the periphrasis seems mostly due to the nature of the verb, with no regard paid to any ideas of time, namely in Fisher, Works 64, 12 and 93, 8 ('abydyngē') and further in Heyw. The Four P's I, 12, where the participle is perhaps more an adjective than a verb, one may say that the tense is employed in close conformity with modern usage.

The most salient feature is the remarkably great frequency of the verbs 'coming' and 'going', especially the former, the instances having one of these verbs amounting to rather more than half of the whole number.

In many cases the meaning is not quite that of actual present, but has a shade of futurity to it.

As regards 'coming', first, it seems natural to suppose such a meaning when there are no indications as to way, direction or point of arrival, in short, where the expression gets more abstract and generalized, as especially in questions, as for instance in Sh. Jul. C. III, 1, 316 and Taming IV, 1, 18.

On the other hand, where the context furnishes the periphrasis with certain complements, as in Ud. R. D. IV, 2 ('yonde'), Sh. Haml. II, 2, 347 ('hither'), Hy. V; III, 6, 84 ('hearke you'), King L. I, 3, 10 ('I heare him'), these may indicate that we have to do with the pure present<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This does not, of course, exclude the idea that sometimes



As examples of the real present with 'going' may be given Peele, *Old Wive's T.* 448: 2 and *Sh. Taming I.* 2, 165; for a decidedly futural meaning *Sh. King L. II.* 4, 326, and for a use which might be pronounced to be the intermediate link between them both, *Marl. Tamb.* 1, V, 2. — Here the interval between word and act is all but imperceptible.

Of the construction which Sweet terms the *immediate future* we have two instances, namely *Greene, Look.-Gl.* 140: 2<sup>1</sup> and *Sh. Me. Wives, IV.* 3, 3. — It is worth noting that in both these cases the idea of motion may still be attached to the verb 'going'.

### Examples.

Fisher, *Works*, 64, 12. The partes of my fleffhe wherin the nouryffhyng of fleffhely volupty be relydent & *abydyng*e, are replete & fulfilled with mockes & scornes.

— 93, 8. Heuen is about vs, wherin almyghty god is relydent & *abydyng*e,

Heyw. *The Four P's.* I, 12. For wyll or skyl what helpeth it, Where frowarde knaves be *lackyng*e wit?

Lat. Sev. *Serm.* 78. Wherefore we maye be fuer yat God bleffed thys Realme, althoughe he curffed ye realme, whofe ruler is a chyld, vnder whom the officers be *climbyng*e and *glenyng*e, *fturyng*e, *ferachyng*e, and *ferapyng*e, and — — go by walkes.

— 132. What is nowe behinde? we be *calyng*e and *drynkyng*e as they were in Noes tyme, and *Mariyng*e I thyncke as wyckedly as euer was. We be *buildyng*e, *purchachyng*e, *plantyng*e in the contempte of Goddes worde.

Asch. *Scholem.* [Sk. Sp. 305, 27]. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speake, kepe silence, sit, stand, or go, eate, drinke, be merie, or sad, be *sonnyng*, *plaiyng*, *dauncyng*, or *doyng* anie thing els, I must do it, as it were, in soch weight, mesure and number,

the context makes the futural meaning more prominent, as, for instance, in *Sh. Macb.* IV. 3, 215.

<sup>1</sup> Compare 'here will I speak' and 'I am going to speak'.

- Ud. R. D. III, 1. *M. Mery.* Nowe fay thys againe: he hath  
fomewhat to dooing  
Which followeth the trace of one that is  
*wowing*,
- IV, 2. But what two men are yonde *comming* hither-  
warde?
- Lyly, Alex. I, 3. But I must be gone, the philosophers are  
*coming*.
- I, 3. *Aris.* Here cometh Alexander.  
*Atex.* I see, Hephestion, that these philosophers are here  
*attending* for us.
- V, 4. *Alex.* But here cometh Apelles. Apelles, what piece  
of work have you now in hand?  
*Apel.* None in hand, if it like your majesty; but I am  
*devising* a platform in my head.
- Anat. 80. for you have given vnto me a true loue[r]s  
knot wrought of chaungeable Silke, and you deeme that  
I am *deuifing* how I might haue my coulours chaunge-  
able also,
- Marl. Ed. II; IV, 6. *Bald.* Spencer, I see our souls are *fleeting*  
hence;
- Faust. III, 4. Good Frederick, see the rooms be voided  
straight,  
His majesty is *coming* to the hall;
- Tamb. 1, V, 2. Pray for us, Bajazet; we are *going*.
- 2, III, 4. *Ther.* How now, madam, what are you *doing*?  
*Olymp.* *Killing* myself, as I have done my son,
- Peele, Old Wive's T. 448: 2. *Fan.* Gammer, what is he?  
*Madge.* O, this is one that is *going* to the  
conjurer:
- 457: 1. My blood is pierc'd, my breath *fleeting* away,  
Greene, Look.-Gl. 140: 2. *Adam.* This way he is, and here will  
I speak with him.  
*First Lord.* Fellow, whither pressest thou?  
*Adam.* I press nobody, sir; I am *going* to speak with a  
friend of mine.
- Sh. Anth. I, 3, 4. *Cleo.* See where he is,  
Whose with him, what he does:  
I did not send you. If you finde him sad,  
Say I am *dauncing*:
- III, 2, 2. *Agri.* What are the Brothers parted?  
*Eno.* They have dispatcht with Pompey, he is gone,  
The other three are *Sealing*.
- 5, 16. *Eros.* He's *walking* in the garden thus, and spurnes

- The rush that lies before him. Cries Foole  
Lepidus,  
And threats the throate of that his Officer,  
That mured Pompey.
- Sh. Anth. IV, 15. 27. *Ant.* I am *dying* Egypt, *dying*; onely  
I heere importune death a-while, untill  
Of many thousand kisses, the poore last  
I lay upon thy lippes.
- 55. *Ant.* I am *dying* Egypt, *dying*.  
Give me some Wine, and let me speake a  
little.
- V, 2, 392. *Dol.* Cæsar, thy thoughts  
Touch their effects in this: Thy selfe art  
*comming*  
To see perform'd the dreaded Act which thou  
So sought'st to hinder.
- As, I, 1, 32. *Oli.* Now Sir, what make you heere?  
*Orl.* Nothing: I am not taught to make any thing.  
*Oli.* What mar you then sir?  
*Orl.* Marry sir, I am *helping* you to mar that which God  
made, a poore unworthy brother of yours with idlenesse.
- 2, 109. *Le Beau.* I wil tell you the beginning: and if it  
please your Ladships, you may see the end, for the best  
is yet to doe, and heere where you are, they are *comming*  
to performe it.
- 138. *Le Beau.* You must if you stay heere, for heere is  
the place appointed for the wrastling, and they are ready  
to performe it.  
*Cel.* Yonder sure they are *comming*.
- Cor. I, 3, 55. *Val.* How do you both? You are manifest  
house-keepers. What are you *sowing* heere?
- III, 2, 158. *Corio.* Pray be content:  
Mother, I am *going* to the Market place:  
—  
— — Looke, I am *going*:  
3, 6. — — What, will he come?  
Enter an Edile.  
*Edile.* Hee's *comming*.  
*Bru.* How accompanied?  
IV, 6, 72. Enter a Messenger.  
*Mes.* The Nobles in great earnestnesse are *going*  
All to the Senate-house: some newes is  
*comming*  
That turnes their Countenances.

- Sh. Cor. V, 2, 72. O my Son, my Son! thou art *pre- / paring*  
 , fire for us: looke thee, heere's water to quench it.
- Haml. II, 2, 347. wee coated them on the way, and hitler  
 are they *comming* to offer you Service.
- III, 2, 95. Enter King, Queene, Polonius — —  
*Ham.* They are *comming* to the Play: I must  
 be idle.  
 Get you a place.
- Hy. V; I, 2, 297. But this lyes all within the wil of God,  
 To whom I do appeale, and in whose name  
 Tel you the Dolphin, I am *comming* on,  
 To venge me as I may,
- II, 4, 106. *King.* Or else what followes?  
*Exc.* Bloody constraint: for if you hide the  
 Crowne  
 Even in your hearts, there will he rake for it.  
 Therefore in fierce Tempest is he *comming*,  
 In Thunder and in Earth-quake, like a Jove:
- III, 6, 84. hearke you, the King is *comming*, and I must  
 speake with him from the Pridge.  
 — — Enter the King — —
- Hy. VIII; I, 4, 31. *Cham.* Sweet Ladies will it please  
 you sit; Sir Harry  
 Place you that side, Ile take the charge of  
 this:  
 His Grace is *entring*.
- II, 1, 124. *Vaux.* Prepare there,  
 The Duke is *comming*: See the Barge be  
 ready;
- 4, 252. — — that I committed  
 The daringst Counsaile which I had to  
 doubt,  
 And did entreate your Highnes to this course,  
 Which you are *running* heere.
- IV, 2, 132. *Grif.* She is *going* Wench. Pray, pray.  
*Pati.* Heaven comfort her.
- V, 1, 81. *King.* What say'st thou? Ha?  
 To pray for her? What, is she *crying* out?
- 4, 71. *Cham.* Mercy o'me: what a Multitude are heere?  
 They grow still too; from all Parts they are  
*comming*.  
 As if we kept a Faire heere?
- Jul. C. I, 2, 194. Enter Cæsar and his Traine.  
*Bru.* The Games are done,

- And Cæsar is *returning*.  
*Cassi.* As they passe by,  
 Plucke Caska by the Sleeve,  
 Sh. Jul. C. III. 1, 316. — — Is thy Master *comming*?  
*Ser.* He lies to night within seven Leagues  
 of Rome.
- 3, 7. 1. [*Cit.*] What is your name?  
 2. [*Cit.*] Whether are you *going*?
- 14. *Cin.* What is my name? Whether am I *going*?  
 — 21. *Cinna.* Directly I am *going* to Cæsars Funerall.
- King L. I, 1, 35. *Glou.* He hath bin out nine yeares,  
 and away he shall againe. The King is *comming*.  
*Sennet.* Enter King Lear, — —
- 2, 135. *Edg.* How now Brother Edmond, what serious  
 contemplation are you in?  
*Bast.* I am *thinking* Brother of a prediction I read this  
 other day, what should follow these Eclipses.
- 3, 10. — — When he returnes from hunting, I will not  
 speake with him,  
*Ste.* He's *comming* Madam, I heare him.
- II, 4. 69. and there's not a nose among twenty, but can  
 smell him that's *stinking*;
- 326. *Glo.* The King is in high rage.  
*Corn.* Whether is he *going*?  
*Glo.* He cals to Horse, but will I know not  
 whether.
- III, 1, 4. *Kent.* I know you: Where's the King?  
*Gent.* *Contending* with the fretfull Elements;  
 Bids the winde blow the Earth into the Sea,
- 7, 12. Advice the Duke where you are *going*, to a most  
 festivate preparation: we are bound to the like.
- IV, 4, 26. *Mes.* Newes Madam,  
 The Brittish Powres are *marching* hitherward.  
*Cor.* 'Tis knowne before. Our preparation  
 stands  
 In expectation of them.
- L. L. L. IV, 3, 2. *Bero.* The King he is *hunting* the  
 Deare,  
 I am *coursing* my selfe.  
 They have pitcht a Toyle, I am *toyling* in  
 a pytch, pitch that defiles;
- V, 2, 770. *Page.* Master, let me take you a button hole  
 lower: Do you not see Pompey is *uncasing* for the com-  
 bat: what meane you?

- Sh. Macb. 1, 5, 33. *Mess.* The King comes here to Night.  
*Lady.* Thou'rt mad to say it.  
 — —  
*Mess.* So please you, it is true: our Thane  
 is *comming*:  
 One of my fellowes had the speed of him;  
 Who almost dead for breath, had scarcely  
 more  
 Then would make up his Message.
75. — — He that's *comming*,  
 Must be provided for:
- IV, 3, 215. Now is the time of helpe: your eye in  
 Scotland  
 Would create Soldiours, make our women  
 fight,  
 To doffe their dire distresses.  
*Malc.* Bee't their comfort  
 We are *comming* thither: Gracious England  
 hath  
 Lent us good Seyward, and ten thousand men,
- Me. Wives, III, 1. 25. *Sim.* Yonder he is *comming*, this  
 way, Sir Hugh.
- 3, 93. *M. Ford.* Why (alas) what's the matter?  
*M. Page.* Your husband's *comming* hether (Woman) with  
 all the Officers in Windsor, — —  
*M. Ford.* 'Tis not so, I hope.  
*M. Page.* Pray heaven it be not so, that you have such  
 a man heere: but 'tis most certaine your husband's *com-*  
*ming*, with halfe Windsor at his heeles, — —
- IV, 2, 83. *Mist. Ford.* But is my husband *comming*?  
*Mist. Page.* I in good sadnesse is he, and talkes of the  
 basket too,
- 3, 3. *Bar.* Sir, the Germane desires to have three of your  
 horses: the Duke himselfe will be to morrow at Court,  
 and they are *going* to meet him.
- Mids. III, 2, 430. *Rob.* Thou coward, art thou *bragging*  
 to the stars,  
 Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,  
 And wilt not come?
- IV, 2, 17. *Snug.* Masters, the Duke is *comming* from  
 the Temple, and there is two or three Lords & Ladies  
 more married:
- Mu. Adoe, II, 1, 77. *Leon.* The revellers are *entring*  
 brother, make good roome. [All put on their masks.]

- Enter Prince, Pedro, — —
- Sh. Oth. III, 1, 48. The Generall and his wife are *talking* of it,  
And she speakes for you stoutly.
- Taming, I, 2, 165. *Gre.* And you are wel met, Signior Hortensio.  
Trow you whither I am *going*?
- III, 2, 37. *Bion.* Why, is it not newes to heard of Petruchio's *comming*?  
*Bap.* Is he come?  
*Bion.* Why no sir.  
*Bap.* What then?  
*Bion.* He is *comming*.  
*Bap.* When will he be heere?
- IV, 1, 18. *Cur.* Is my master and his wife *comming* Grumio?
- 181. Away, away, for he is *comming* hither. [Exeunt.]  
Enter Petruchio.
- Temp. II, 1, 16. *Seb.* Looke, hee's *winding* up the watch of his wit, By and by it will strike.
- III, 2, 157. *Trin.* The sound is *going* away,  
Lets follow it, and after do our worke.
- Tw. N. II, 5, 17. *Mar.* Get ye all three into the box tree: Malvolio's *comming* downe this walke, — — lye thou there: [Throws down a letter, for heere comes / the Trowt, that must be caught with tickling. Exit  
Enter Malvolio.
- III, 4, 9. *Mar.* He's *comming* Madame:  
But in very strange manner. He is sure possest Madam.

### Remarks.

- Heyw. The Four P's. I, 12. 'be lackynge wit', 'are stupid'.
- Asch. Scholem. [Sk. Sp. 305, 27]. Note the alternating occurrence of the simple and periphrastic forms in this instance. — There does not seem to exist any tangible difference between them.
- Lyly, Alex. V, 4. 'here cometh — —'. When preceded by 'here', 'there' or 'where', 'come', as a rule, does not take the periphrasis. — Among the numerous examples I pick out a few:



Marl. Ed. II; II, 1. Leave off this jesting, here my lady *comes*.  
 Peele, Dav. and Beths. 466: 1. See Where she *comes*: — —  
 Greene, Look.-Gl. 137: 2. O, here my young master *comes*.

Marl. Tamb. 1, V, 2. The words are uttered by Tamburlaine, and directly after 'going' we have the stage-direction: Exeunt Tamburlaine, Techelles,  
 — —.

Sh. Anth. V, 2, 392. The meaning is: 'You have come yourself and now find that — — is performed'.

— As, I, 2, 109. One might at first be tempted to regard 'comming to performe it' as an example of an immediate future with 'come', the expression thus being on a par with 'going to perform it'. But on a closer examination it will appear, I take it, that the verb retains its full original meaning, and that it cannot be considered to act as an auxiliary. Compare also Anth. V, 2, 392 and Haml. II, 2, 347. — 'Come', then, had not yet developed any parallel construction to the nowadays very common 'be going to'.

— Cor. III, 2, 158. This is a very interesting example: the first 'I am going' is decidedly futural in meaning (I have made up my mind to go directly), the second 'I am going' may either be regarded as actuality ('Looke — —') or as an anticipated actuality, in this case with a very short interval between the moment of the utterance and the actual departing. That such an interval exists, however slightly felt, is shown by the words which follow: 'commend me to my wife', which, of course, must be spoken just before parting.

Sh. Cor. III, 3, 6. If, taking into consideration that 'coming' often implies an anticipation, we suppose that the person in question had not yet actually started, but was only just about to, one is led to conclude that Shakespeare has made the speaker use the definite tense to give the impression of a very near and sure futurity as opposed to the more vague and uncertain 'will — — come?' In such a case we have, then, to do with a sharpening, admirably brought about by the periphrasis, of the futural meaning lying in the question. — In all probability, however, the extended tense is here used to denote actuality: 'he is already on his way', and in that case, of course, the gap between the meaning in 'will — — come' and 'is coming' is much wider.

- Tw. N. III, 4, 9. After one or two speeches: Enter [Maria, with] Malvolio.

## 2. The Past Tense.

(i) **Defined.** Only in one instance is the definition an adverb, namely in Sh. Hy. VIII; III, 2, 182, where 'now' denotes what had recently taken place. In Sh. Macb. II, 3, 25 the periphrasis is defined by an adverbial, marking duration up to a special time, and in two more examples we have likewise adverbials, namely in Lat. Sev. Serm. 127 ('In the tyme of Noe') and Sh. Oth. IV, 1, 150 ('the other day'), but it may be questioned whether it is not rather the following clause that has called the periphrasis into use in these two cases than the adverbials.

The great bulk of the instances show the periphrasis defined by another clause; especially it occurs in clauses

introduced by 'as', 'when', or 'whilest' to denote what was taking place, when something else happened (simultaneousness); this idea is, though very seldom, further sharpened by such an adverb as 'yet': Lyly, *Anat.* 52 and 71.

### Examples.

Hawes, *Passet.* of Pl. XXXIII, 16. [Sk. Sp. 122.] And as he was  
his stroke *discharginge*,

— —  
I lept asyde from hym full quickly,

Lat. Sev. Sermon. 108. For as I was *goynge* to hys Sermon, I remembred me that I had neither layed maffe, nor mattens.

— 127. In the tyme of Noe, they were *eatynge* and *drynkynge*, *buyldynge plantynge* and fodaynely the water came vpon them, and drowned them:

In the tyme of Lothe alfo, they weare *eatynge* and *drynkynge*. etc. And fodenlye the fyre came vpon them, and deuoured them. . And nowe we are *eatynge* and *drinkynge*.

— 152. Ther was a farcher in london, which executynge his office displeased a marchaunt man, in so much that when he was *doynge* his office, they were at wordes,

Sp. F. Q. VI, 2, 9. Where, as this day I was *enraunging* it,  
I chaunst to meete this Knight — —

— 3, 25. The Beast, — —  
Into the wood was *bearing* her apace  
— — when Calidore,

— —  
Him overtooke

— 5, 35. And therein he likewise was *praying* now,  
Whenas these Knights arriv'd,

— 6, 30. At last he up into the chamber came  
Whereas his Love was *sitting* all alone,

— 6, 37. There whilest he thus was *setting* things above,

— —  
He gan bethinke him

— 7, 23. Thus whilest they were *debating* diverslie,  
The Salvage forth out of the wood issew'd

— 10, 39. It fortun'd one day, when Calidore  
Was *hunting* in the woods, as was his trade,  
A lawlesse people,

— —  
The dwelling of these shepheards did invade;

- Sp. F. Q. VI, 12, 15. Who in a morning, when this Maiden faire  
Was *dighting* her, — —  
— —  
Chaunst to espy upon her yvory chest  
The rosie marke,
- Lyly, Anat. 52. As she was yet *talking*, supper was set on the  
bord, then Philautus spake thus vnto Lucilla.
- 71. But whilest he was yet *speakinge*, Ferardo entered,  
whome they all duetifully welcommed home,
- 82. As they wer thus pleasauntly *conferring* the one  
with the other, Liuia (— —) entered into the Parlour,
- Marl. Ed. II; V, 4. *Sol.* He would have taken the king away  
perforce,  
As we were *bringing* him to Killingworth.
- Faust. IV, 6. *Cart.* I'll tell you how he served me: as  
I was *going* to Wittenberg t'other day — — he met me
- Greene, Look.-Gl. 141: 1. Sir, as I was *coming* amongst the  
port-royal of Niniveh, there appeared to me a great devil,
- Sh. As, III, 2, 279. *Jaq.* By my troth, I was *seeking* for a  
Foole, when I found you.
- Haml. II, 1, 86. *Ophe.* My Lord, as I was *sowing* in my  
Camber,  
Lord Hamlet — —  
— — he comes before me.
- Hy. V; V, 2, 229. Now beshrew my Fathers Ambition,  
hee was *thinking* of Civill Warres when hee got me,
- Hy. VIII; III, 2, 182. *King.* Good my Lord,  
You are full of Heavenly stuffe, and beare  
the Inventory  
Of your best Graces, in your minde; the  
which  
You were now *running* o're:
- Macb. I, 7, 65. I would, while it was *smyling* in my Face,  
Have pluckt my Nipple from his Bonelesse  
Gummes,
- II, 3, 25. *Macd.* Was it so late, friend, ere you went  
to Bed,  
That you doe lye so late?  
*Port.* Faith Sir, we were *carowsing* till the  
second Cock:
- IV, 3, 148. — — What I am truly  
Is thine, and my poore Countries to command:  
Whither indeed, before they heere approach  
Old Seyward with ten thousand warlike men

Already at a point, was *setting forth*:

Now wee'l together,

Sh. Mil. Adoe, II, 3, 136. *Leon*. O when she had writ it, & was *reading* it over, she found Benedicke and Beatrice betwene the sheete.

— Oth. IV, 1, 150. *Cassio*. She was heere even now: she haunts me in every place. I was the other day *talking* on the Seabanke with certaine Venetians, and thither comes the Bawble,

— Taming, III, 2, 169. and threw the sops all in the Sextons face: having no other reason, but that his beard grew thinne and hungerly, and seem'd to aske him sops as hee was *drinking*:

(ii) **Undefined.** With the exceptions of Starkey, Engl. I, 3, 887, where 'floryschyng' is to be regarded as rather more adjectival than verbal, Sp. F. Q. VI, 12, 3, and Sh. Jul. C. III, 2, 22, where the periphrasis is chiefly due to the character of the verb, the undefined tense is used, just as in recent English, to mark the state of things at a certain time or under certain circumstances, these being indicated in the context in a more or less direct way. — We find here several interesting examples where the periphrasis is chosen in order to depict, in a lively way, a given situation, even in the works from the earlier part of the period, as in Heyw. The Four P's. I, 18; Lat. Sev. Serm. 119; Asch. Scholem. I; Tox. 157, and Sackv. Mirr. for Mag. Ind. 3.

### Examples.

Starkey, Engl. I, 3, 887. when thys land was more *floryschyng* then hyt ys now.

Heyw. The Four P's. I, 18. I never sawe devylls so well appoynted.

The master devyll sat in his jacket;

And all the soules were *playinge* at racket.

Lat. Sev. Serm. 119. and there was fyr Roberte Cunftable, the Lorde Huffye, the Lord Darfy. And the Lorde Darfy,

- was *tellynge* me of the fayethfull seruice that he hadde done the kynges maieste
- Lat. Sev. Ser. 183. For Iudas the twelfte was a bouthe his bu-  
fines, he was occupied aboute his marchaundise, and was  
*proudyng* among the bylhoppes and preiites,
- Asch. Scholem. I. [Sk. Sp. 305.] Hir parentes, the Duke and  
the Duches, with all the houshould, Gentlemen and Gent-  
lewomen, were *huntinge* in the Parke: I founde her in her  
Chamber, readinge Phædon Platonis
- Tox. 26. kept my mynde so occupied, that it had no  
leifure to loke to my feete. For I was *reding* howe some  
foules being well fethered, flewe alwayes about heauen
- 145. Some make a face with writhing theyr monthe and  
countenance so, as though they were *doynge* you wotte  
what:
- 157. The feeldes on bothe sides were playne and laye  
almost yeaerde depe with snowe, — — That morning the  
sun shone bright and clere, the winde was *whiftelinge*  
a lofte,
- Sackv. Mirr. for Mag. Ind. 3. [Sk. Sp. 284.] Hawthorne had  
lost his motley lyverye,  
The naked twigges were *shivering* all for  
colde:
- Sp. F. Q. VI, 12, 3. And had endured many a dreadfull stoure  
In bloody battell for a Ladie deare,  
The fayrest Ladie then of all that *living* were:
- Sh. Haml. II, 2, 501. — — For loe, his Sword  
Which was *declining* on the Milkie head  
Of Reverend Priam, seem'd i' th' Ayre to  
sticke:
- Hy. VIII; II, 3, 64. *L. Cham.* Good morrow Ladies;  
what wer't worth to know  
The secret of your conference?  
*An.* My good Lord,  
Not your demand; it values not your asking:  
Our Mistris Sorrowes we were *pitying*.
- Jul. C. III, 2, 22. Had you rather Cæsar were *living*,  
and dye all Slaves; then that Cæsar were dead, to live  
all Free-men?
- King L. I, 2, 32. *Glou.* Why so earnestly seeke you to  
put up that Letter?  
*Bast.* I know no newes, my Lord.  
*Glou.* What Paper were you *reading*?
- IV, 2, 6. I told him of the Army that was Landed:

He smil'd at it. I told him you were  
*comming*,

His answer was, the worse.

Sh. Me. Wives, II, 1, 29. *Mis Ford*. Mistris Page, trust me, I  
was *going* to your house.

*Mis. Page*. And trust me, I was *comming* to you: you  
looke very ill.

— Oth. III, 4. 172. — — Beshrew me much, *Æmilia*,

I was (unhandsome Warrior, as I am)

*Arraigning* his unkindnesse with my soule:

But now I finde, I had suborn'd the Witnessse,

And he's Indited falsely.

— 193. *Cassio*. What make you from home?

How is't with you, my most faire Bianca?

Indeed (sweet Love) I was *comming* to your  
house.

*Bian*. And I was *going* to your Lodging,  
Cassio.

— Temp. II, 1, 96. *Gon*. Sir, we were *talking*, that our  
garments seeme now as fresh as when we were at Tunis  
at the marriage of your daughter,

### 3. Examples of the Periphrastic Infinitive.

Heyw. The Four P's. I, 22. But, where ye dout, the truthe nat  
knowynge,

Belevynge the beste, good may be *growynge*.

In judgyng the beste, no harme at the leste;

In judgyng the worste, no good at the beste.

Lat. Serm. Pl. [Sk. Sp. 239.] Therefore preache and teach and  
let your ploughe be *doynge*; — — let your plough ther-  
fore be *going* & not cease, that the ground maye brynge  
foorth fruite.

— [Sk. Sp. 242.] so diligently muste the prelates and ministers  
labour for the fedynge of the soule: boeth the ploughes  
muste styll be *doynge*, as mooste necessarye for man.

### 4. The Adjectival Meaning.

Represented in not a few cases, most of them, how-  
ever, occurring in Shakespeare, and thus the frequency



might partly be attributed to the comparatively considerable mass of material collected from this author.

The most notable are 'waving' (fickle, inconstant), 'living' (in the sense of alive), 'loving', 'fitting' and 'stirring'. — Note also the curious instance of a participle in *-ant* (Lat. Serm. Pl. Sk. Sp. 241).

### Examples.

- Lat. Serm. Pl. [Sk. Sp. 241.] I knowe them, and haue bene  
*conuersant* wyth some of them.
- Ud. R. D. II, 1. Yea and extempore will he dities compofe,  
Foolifhe Marlias nere made the like I  
suppofe,  
Yet muft we fing them, as good ftuffe I  
vndertake,  
As for fuch a pen man is well *fittyng* to  
make.
- Sackv. & Nort. Ferr. and Porr. V, 1. So giddy are the common  
people's mindes,  
So glad of chaunge, more *wavering* than  
the fea.
- Lyly, Anat. 59. if he finde thee wanton before thou be wo[o]led,  
he wil geffe thou wilt be *wauering* when thou art wed-  
ded.
- Marl. Ed. II; II, 1. *Y. Spen.* Our lady's first love is not  
*wavering*;  
My life for thine ſhe will have Gaveston.
- Sh. Cor. II, 3, 216. *Brut.* Did you perceive,  
He did ſollicite you in free Contempt,  
When he did need your Loves: and doe you  
thinke,  
That his Contempt ſhall not be *bruſing* to  
you.  
When he hath power to crush?
- Haml. I, 1, 14. *Baru.* Have you had quiet Guard?  
*Fran.* Not a Mouſe *ſtirring*.
- 2, 149. So excellent a King, that was to this  
Hiperion to a Satyre: ſo *loving* to my Mother,  
That he might not beteene the windes of  
heaven  
Visit her face too roughly.

- Sh. Hy. VIII; III, 1, 109. *Camp.* Put your maine cause into the  
Kings protection,  
Hee's *loving* and most gracious.
- Macb. II, 3, 45. *Macd.* Is thy Master *stirring*?  
Our knocking ha's awak'd him: here he comes.
- *Lenox.* Good morrow, Noble Sir.
- *Macb.* Good morrow both.
- *Macd.* Is the King *stirring*, worthy Thane?
- *Macb.* Not yet.
- Me. Wives, III, 1, 14. *Evan.* 'Plesse my soule: how full  
of Chollors I am, and *trempling* of minde:
- Oth. III, 1, 26. *Cassio.* Prythee keepe up thy Quillets,  
ther's a poor peece of Gold for thee: if the Gentlewo-  
man that attends the Generall be *stirring*, tell her — —
- *Clo.* She is *stirring* sir: if she will stirre hither, I shall  
seeme to notifie unto her.
- Temp. II, 1, 220. *Seb.* What? art thou *waking*?
- *Ant.* Do you not heare me speake?
- 2, 115. *Tri.* I tooke him to be kil'd with a thunder-  
strok; but art thou not dround Stephano: — — And art  
thou *living* Stephano?

## 5. The Periphrasis Expressing a Subjective Feeling.

In some cases, especially from the latter part of the period, we find the periphrasis used to suggest a subjective feeling on the part of the speaker, sometimes implying a certain softening of the expression, but sometimes also conveying a meaning of quite an opposite nature. — In all cases the essential function is to throw in a degree of personal interest, which could not have manifested itself in the indefinite tenses on account of their more neutral and matter-of-fact character.

### Examples.

- Lat. Sev. Serm. 179. Yea, on the hollye day, they can not fynde in their hertes to come to the Temple, to the bleffed communion, they must be *working* at home.

- Lyly, Anat. 68. I will omitte that, and feing that we had both rather be *talking* with them, then *tattling* of them, we will immediately goe to them.
- Marl. Ed. II; IV, 6. *Rice*. My lord, be *going*; care not for these,
- Sh. As, IV, 1, 87. Am not I your Rosalind?  
*Orl*. I take some joy to say you are, because I would be *talking* of her.
- Cor. II, 1, 87. It is not woorth the wagging of your Beards, and your Beards deserve not so honourable a grave, as to stuffe a Botchers Cushion, or to be intomb'd in an Asses Packe-saddle; yet you must bee *saying*, Martius is proud: who in cheape estimation, is worth all your predecessors,
- Hy. VIII; V, 4, 11. Ile scratch your heads; you must be *seeing* Christenings? Do you looke for Ale, and Cakes heere, you rude Raskalls?
- Taming, II, 1, 78. *Gre*. Saving your tale Petruchio, I pray let us that are poore petitioners speake too? Bacare, you are mervaylous forward.  
*Pet*. Oh, Pardon me signior Gremio, I would faine be *doing*.  
*Gre*. I doubt it not sir. But you will curse  
 Your wooing neighbors:
- III, 2, 207. *Kate*. Nay then,  
 Doe what thou canst, I will not goe to day,  
 No, nor to morrow, not till I please my selfe,  
 The dore is open sir, there lies your way,  
 You may be *jogging* whiles your bootes are  
 greene:
- V, 1, 92. Carrie this mad knave to / the Jaile: father  
 Baptista, I charge you see that hee be / forth *comming*.

### Remarks.

- Lat. Sev. Serm. 179. 'must be working' expresses indignation and disapproval. The simple form 'must work' would mean a bare and objective statement that such a necessity really existed. — Compare the similar instances of Sh. Cor. II, 1, 87 and Hy. VIII; V, 4, 11.

Lyly, Anat. 68. The durative element lying in the periphrasis seems to be introduced to show that the occupation in itself, and not its results, is the interest of the persons in question. — Compare Sh. As, IV, 1, 87, where the periphrasis also serves to make the wish more modestly expressed.

Marl. Ed. II; IV, 6. The extended tense is certainly chosen here to make the demand more polite; the simple form 'go' would be too abrupt in its shortness. — But that it is not mainly the greater length that produces the impression sought for will be seen from a comparison with 'be gone', which is not much shorter but sounds decidedly curt and harsh: evidently the chief thing is the idea of gradual progression lying in the periphrasis. — Compare the interesting instance in Sh. Taming, III, 2, 207, where the periphrasis is used by way of irony.

## IV. THE COMPOUND TENSES.

### 1. The Perfect and the Pluperfect.

These tenses do not occur in Old English, nor in the earlier part of the subsequent period.

Later on, they creep slowly into existence — even as late as Shakespeare they are strikingly scarce; but they are now employed frequently enough.

(i) **Defined.** When defined, by adverbs, adverbials, or the context, they express either *qualified duration* or, more seldom, *actuality*.

The former category is represented by Sh. Hy. VIII; III, 2, 226 ('ever'), where *perpetuity* is implied, and further by Ch. C. T. Kn. T. 69 ('al this fourteenight'), Asch. Tox. 82 ('longe'), Sp. F. Q. VI, 7, 38 ('two whole yeares'), Sh. Hy. VIII; II, 3, 101 ('sixteene yeares'), Milt P. L. II, 933 ('to this hour'), IX, 135 ('who knows how long Before'), Pep. 68 [62—63] ('long'), Bun. Pilgr. 124, 7 ('this twenty years'), Congr. Bach. I, 1 ('all the morning'), Def. Rob. 194 ('a Fortnight'), Mont. III, 71 ('long'), Joh. Rass. 50 ('long') and St. S. J. 302 ('all this while'), which all are examples of *limited duration*.

The latter category, *actuality*, comprises, more or less decidedly, Congr. W. W. I, 2; Spect. 39 [Add.]; Def. Rob. 221 and Mont. III, 179.

In Def. Rob. 112 'often' marks an iterated occupation.

## Examples.

- Ch. C. T. Kn. T. 69. And certes, lord, to abyden your presence,  
Here in the temple of the goddesse Clemence  
We *han* ben *waytinge* al this fourtenight;
- Asch. Tox. 82. But as for the Turkes I am werie to talke of  
them partlye becaufe I hate them, and partlye bycaufe  
I am now affectioned even as it were a man that *had*  
bene longe *wanderyng* in fraunge contries and would  
fayne be at home
- Sp. F. Q. VI, 7, 38. So now she *had* bene *wandring* two whole  
yeares  
— —  
Yet had she not in all these two yeares space  
Saved but two;
- Sh. Hy. VIII; II, 3, 101. Why this it is: See, see,  
I *have* bene *begging* sixteene yeares in Court  
(Am yet a Courtier beggerly) — —
- III, 2, 226. — — I  
Can nothing render but Allegiant thanks,  
My Prayres to heaven for you; my Loyaltie  
Which ever *ha's*, and ever shall be *growing*,  
Till death (that Winter) kill it.
- Milt. P. L. II, 933. Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb-down  
he drops  
Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour  
Down *had* been *falling*, had not, by ill  
chance,  
The strong rebuff — —
- IX, 135. To me shall be the glory sole among  
The Infernal Powers, in one day to have  
marred  
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days  
Continued making, and who knows how long  
Before *had* been *contriving*?
- Pep. 68 [62—63]. I *have* long been *building*, and my house to  
my great content is now almost done.
- Bun. Pilgr. 124, 7. When I was at home in mine own Country  
I heard as you now affirm, and, from that hearing went  
out to see, and *have* been *seeking* this City this twenty  
yeares: but find no more of it, than I did the first day I  
set out.
- Congr. Bach. I, 1. What fine lady hast thou been putting out

- of conceit with herself, and persuading that the face she *had* been *making* all the morning was none of her own?
- Congr. W. W. 1, 2. Mean! why he would slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you *had* been *talking* to him — as soon as your back was turned — whip he was gone!
- Spect. 39 [Add.]. As I *have* been *walking* in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge,
- Def. Rob. 112. I had a great mind to bring it Home if I could; for I *had* often been *musng*, Whether it might not be possible to get a Kid or two,
- 194. I gave him a Cake of my Bread, and he eat it like a ravenous Wolf, that *had* been *starving* a Fortnight in the Snow:
221. After this I *had* been *telling* him how the Devil was God's enemy — —. Well, says Friday,
- Mont. III, 71. The confounding of all ranks, and making a jest of order, *has* long been *growing* in England
- 179. I am inclined to be of the opinion that nobody makes their own marriage or their own will: it is what I have often said to the Duchess of Marlborough, when she *has* been *telling* me her last intentions,
- Joh. Rass. 50. I *have* been long *comparing* the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow.
- St. S. J. 302. Then I solemnly declare, said the lady, blushing, you *have* been *making* love to me all this while.

(ii) **Undefined.** When not accompanied by any temporal complements, they denote that such and such an action or state of things has lasted for some time in the past, either somewhat indefinitely, as in Piers Pl. Pass. V, 129 (where the verb is the durative 'dwellynge'), or else — and this may be regarded as the rule — the tense is defined by itself, representing the action as bordering, more or less closely, on the present: Sher. Riv. III, 1, where 'lately' is understood and Sh. Oth. III, 3, 49, meaning 'I was just now talking' (Je viens de parler) may be picked out as specimens for the two main types.

Not infrequently, in instances belonging to the 'just'-



type, the inner stress glides from the idea of occupation over to this idea of 'just-now-being-done', insomuch that the sense of duration is, strictly considered, thrown into the background, sometimes more, sometimes less. Compare Joh. Rass. 66, where the idea of duration is still admissible, in so far that it certainly took some space of time to deliver and thus also of listening to 'the dismal history', with Spect. 138 [Budg.] and above all St. S. J. 336, in which last example not a trace of duration is left.

In cases like these the periphrasis is chosen to give a fresher and livelier colour to the expression, to bring out the idea of time, not as a length but as a point: in short, its function is here that of *actuality*.

### Examples.

- Piers Pl. Pass. V, 129. Amonges Burgeyses *haue* I be. *dwellynge*  
At Londoun,  
And gert bakbitinge be a brocoure. to blame  
mennes ware.
- Lyly, Alex. II, 2. *Alex.* — — How now, Apelles, is Venus's  
face yet finish'd?  
*Apel.* Not yet: — —  
*Alex.* Well, let it rest unperfect; and come you with me,  
where I will shew you that finish'd by nature, that you  
*have* been *trifling* about by art.
- Greene, Look.-Gl. 138: 1. *Adam.* By my troth, sir, I cry you  
mercy; your face is so changed that I had quite forgotten  
you: well, master devil, ve have tossed over many a pot  
of ale together.  
— —  
*Adam.* Faith, sir, my old friend, and now good-man de-  
vil, you know you and I *have* been *tossing* many a good  
cup of ale: — —
- Sh. Oth. III, 3, 49. *Des.* How now my Lord?  
I *have* bin *talking* with a Suitor heere,  
A man that languishes in your displeasure.
- Spect. 44 [Add.]. the bell rung to dinner, where the gentleman  
I *have* been *speaking* of had the pleasure of seeing the  
huge jack

- Spect. 86 [Add.]. My friend Sir Roger de Coverley told me the other night, that he *had* been *reading* my paper upon Westminster Abbey, in which, says he, there are a great many ingenious fancies.
- 138 [Budg.]. he had just received a letter from his steward, which acquainted him that his old rival and antagonist in the country, Sir David Dundrum, *had* been *making* a visit to the widow.
- 214 [Add.]. Or, if we believe, as many wise and good men have done, that there are such phantoms and apparitions as those I *have* been *speaking* of, let us endeavour — —
- Def. Rob. 38. told me they *had* been *musng* very much upon what I had discoursed with them of, the last Night, and they came to make a secret Proposal to me;
- Sw. Gull. 242. he said, he *had* been very seriously *considering* my whole story,
- Mont. II, 137. I *have* been *running* about Paris at a strange rate with my sister, and strange sights have we seen.
- Joh. Rass. 66. Here Imlac entered and interrupted them. «Imlac», said Rasselas, «I *have* been *taking* from the Princess the dismal history of private life,
- St. S. J. 336. I was a small tribute, I told her, which I could not avoid paying to virtue, and would not be mistaken in the person I *had* been *rendering* it to for the world
- Sher. Riv. II, 1. I *have* been *considering* that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.
- 2. *Sir L.* Hah! my little ambadress — upon my conscience, I *have* been *looking* for you;  
*Lucy.* O gemini! and I have been *waiting* for your worship here on the North.
- III, 1. *C. Abs.* I *have* been *revolving*, and *reflecting*, and *considering* on your past goodness, — —  
*A. Abs.* Well, sir?  
*C. Abs.* I *have* been likewise *weighing* and *balancing* what you were pleased to mention concerning duty, — —
- IV, 3. *C. Abs.* To what fine purpose I *have* been *plotting*!

### Remarks.

Greene, Look.-Gl. 138: 1. It is somewhat difficult to recognize any decided difference in function be-

tween the simple form on one hand and the periphrastic on the other in this instance. — It might be conjectured, however, that in his last speech Adam recalls with more liveliness, and also, I am tempted to say, tenderness, the many merry occasions referred to. — Mark, by the bye, the much more affectionate terms in the last speech as opposed to the rather cold-sounding statements in the first. — This, then, would account for the periphrasis here, but the change may also be due to a desire to avoid monotony of expression.

Spect. 86 [Add.] The expression does not necessarily imply that he had read the whole of the paper but only that he had just been engaged in reading it: perhaps he had perused but a small part of it. — The choice of the periphrasis here might be ascribed to Sir Roger having aimed at a very cautious statement; and if this is really the case, one must say that he has couched his meaning in a very happy turn.

#### Additional Remarks.

(i) In some cases the verb 'be' seems to retain, to a certain degree, its own meaning, the inner stress being divided between that and the participle, which latter forms a sort of supplement, expressing the occupation or the errand: 'as he had been at G. to take his leave' (Pep. 52), 'where the King himself had been and gathered' (Pep. 169), 'where I had been before and had been peering' (Def. Rob. 79).

Pep. 52 [60—61]. he was then drunk, having been *taking* his leave at Gravesend the night before, and so could not remember what it was that he said.

- Pep. 169 [62—63]. I eat some of the first cherries I have eat this year, off the tree where the King himself had been *gathering* some this morning.
- Def. Rob. 79. I went all over that part of the Island, where I had been before *peering* in every Corner, and under every Rock, to see for more of it,
- St. S. J. 338. When La Fleur told me the Lieutenant de Police had been *enquiring* after me, — the thing instantly recurred;
- 359. When I alighted at the hotel, the porter told me a young woman with a handbox had been that moment *enquiring* for me

(ii) As I have mentioned before, the periphrasis has, in later times, been chosen where a certain liveliness of style is aimed at, or particularly to express a personal interest, or the like.

The compound tenses offer many examples of this use of the periphrasis. — Onions, in *An Advanced Engl. Syntax*, § 134 c, p. 113, has a remark to the following effect: 'The Continuous forms are sometimes used idiomatically without implying anything 'continuous', e. g. 'What *have you been doing* to that picture?', 'Someone *has been tampering* with this lock'. These are different from *have you done*, *has tampered*; they give an emotional colouring to the sentence and express surprise, disgust, impatience, or the like'. — It is clear that such cases as these may offer many difficulties in the way of a correct interpretation. To my mind, however, most of them seem to imply rather a softening of the expression, than the contrary. In Pep. 42 [63—64], for instance, 'he had not been drinking' might be regarded as a euphemism for 'he was not drunk'<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Fearenside holds that this is 'a common enough phrase', and adds: 'to me it suggests a recent and continuous action which would naturally end in the state described in the past participle'.

- Pep. 42 [63—64]. This day, W. Bowyer told me, that his father is dead lately, and died by being drowned in the river, coming over in the night; but he says he had not been *drinking*.
- Congr. Bach. I, 1. How now, George, where hast thou been *snarling* odious truths, and *entertaining* company like a physician, — — What fine lady hast thou been *putting* out of conceit with herself, and *persuading* that the face she had been making all the morning was none of her own?
- D.—D. I, 3. *Mask*. You have already been *tampering* with my Lady Plyant?
- Lady Touch*. I have; she is ready for any impression I think fit.
- Sher. Riv. III, 1. — damn your demure face! — come, confess, Jack — you have been *lying* — ha'n't you? You have been *playing* the hypocrite, hey? I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.
- IV, 2. What, you have been *treating me* like a child!
- V, 1. You have been *crying*! I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been *tormenting* you!
- 3. What's going on here? — So you have been *quarrelling* too, I warrant.

## 2. Examples of the Future and the Preterite Future.

Above (in sections I—III) I have already dealt with several cases of combinations of 'shall' and 'will' and the periphrastic infinitive, viz., where I have considered the participle to be chiefly of an adjectival nature, or generally where this combination does not seem to constitute a real tense. The line of difference may be very difficult to draw, however, and therefore I think it best to recall attention to all the instances before given<sup>1</sup>, and to expand the list

<sup>1</sup> These are: Ae. L. XII, 268; V. a V. 37, 6; 107, 15; 121, 9; 121, 23 (*p.* 24); Ashby, P. Pr. 285; D & o. 594; 1097 (*p.* 46); Lyly, Anat. 59; Sh. Cor. II, 3, 216 (*p.* 81); Sh. As. IV, 1, 87; Taming, II, 1, 78 (*p.* 83).

by giving some additional examples. As for the instances quoted here, I do not make any distinctions at all, but simply give the forms below, although I readily admit that the heading is rather sweeping.

- Lydy. T. o Gl. 53 [p. 36]. And eke my sone Cupide, þat is so  
blind,  
He *shal* ben *helping*, fulli to perfourme  
ʒour hole desire, þat noþing behind  
Ne shal be left: — —
- Ashby, D & o. 691. Thus your glorious fame *shal* be *springing*  
To high & lowe, — —
- Caxt. Bl. 151, 20. Duryng the tyme that the goode kyng of  
fryse, Blanchardyn and Sadoyne, and their folke *shall* be  
thus *saylynge* towarde Tourmaday / We shall retorne to  
speke of the tyraunte,
- Heyw. The Four P's. I, 11. *Ped.* Syr, after drynkyng, whyle  
the shot is tynkyng,  
Some hedes be swymmyng, but myne *wyll*  
be *synkyng*;  
And, upon drynkyng, my eyse *wil* be  
*pynkyng*;
- Sh. Hy. V; III, 7, 100. *Orleance.* He is simply the most active  
Gentleman of France.  
*Const.* Doing is activitie, and he *will* still be *doing*.
- King L. I, 4, 151. *Foole.* No faith, Lords and great men  
will not let me, if I had / a monopolie out, the would  
have part an't, and Ladies too, they / will not let my  
have all the foole to my selfe, they'l be *snatching*;
- Mu. Adoe, I, 1, 113. *Beat.* I wonder that you *will* still  
be *talking*, signior Benedicke, no body markes you.
- III, 5, 34. *Con. Dog.* A good old man sir, hee *will* be  
*talking* as they say, when the age is in, the wit is out,  
God helpe us,
- Oth. III, 2, 2. *Othe.* These Letters give (Jago) to the  
Pylot,  
And by him do my duties to the Senate:  
That done, I *will* be *walking* on the Workes,  
Repaire there to mee.
- Taming, III, 1, 52. *Bian.* [Luc.] Mistrust it not, for — —  
*Hort.* [Bian.] I must beleeve my master, else I promise  
you,

- I *should* be *arguing* still upon that doubt,  
But let it rest, — —
- Sh. Temp. II, 1, 27. *Gon.* Therefore my Lord.  
*Ant.* Fie, what a spend-thrift is he of his tongue.  
*Alon.* I pre-thee spare.  
*Gon.* Well, I have done: But yet  
*Seb.* He *will* be *talking*.
- Mass. O. D. II, 2. *Will* you still be *babbling*  
Till your meat freeze on the table?
- Pep. 106 [60—61]. Met with Mr. Spong, who still *would* be  
*giving* me counsel of getting my patent out,  
— 156 [63—64]. Their fleet for Guinea is now, they say,  
ready and abroad, and *will* be *going* this week.
- Bun. Pilgr. 40, 14. Also he *would* be often *reading* in the Roll  
that one of the shining ones gave him,  
— 60, 1. Thus he went on a great while, yet still the flames  
*would* be *reaching* towards him;
- Congr. D.-D. III, 2. Sir Paul, what a phrase was there! You  
*will* be *making* answers, and *taking* that upon you which  
ought to lie upon me!
- Spect. 51 [Add.]. Sometimes he *will* be *lengthening* out a verse  
in the singing psalms, half a minute after the rest of the  
congregation have done with it;  
— 64 [Add.]. Sir Roger told me, — — that the country  
people *would* be *tossing* her into a pond and *trying* ex-  
periments with her every day, if it was not for him and  
his chaplain.
- Mont. III, 251. — — I have not tasted a drop of punch since  
we parted; I cannot bear the sight of it; it would recall too  
tender ideas, and I *should* be *quarrelling* with Fortune  
for our separation, — —

### Remarks.

- Caxt. Bl. 151, 20. This is a very interesting passage.  
The course of events is suddenly cut off, and  
the reader is requested to keep in mind a given  
situation, until the narration is taken up again.
- Sh. Mu. Adoe, III, 5, 34. Here the periphrasis has  
an intensive character (closely allied to the idea  
of repetition). — Compare Temp. II, 1, 27.



Sh. Oth. III, 2, 2. In this case, as also in Caxt. Bl. 151, 20, the tense is defined by the context. One might hold that in both these instances *actuality* is the main function of the periphrasis: the durative element, however, is also very prominent.

Congr. D.-D. III, 2. A clear instance of the 'emotional colouring'. — Compare Spect. 64 [Add], where the periphrasis represents the actions referred to as never really undertaken but always on the verge of it, or sooner, only expresses that the persons in question 'had a great mind to do it' (would be for tossing — —). — In several of the above examples a faint shade of this subjective feeling may also be inferred, although these things are so very little tangible that it would be next to impossible to fix the respective meanings in words.

### General Remark.

Roughly taken, the function of the periphrastic future and preterite future is to express duration in the future, but this idea is seldom very strong unless in any way enforced by definitions. Otherwise it is, in most cases, very little prominent. — Compare Western (§ 17): 'Disse tider betegner, når de omskrives, egentlig, hvad der vil eller vilde gå for sig i en nærmere bestemt fremtid, f. eks. I should be quarrelling with him all the time (Ward, Grieve II, 17); men da begrebet varighed gjerne træder tilbage, når talen er om fremtiden, får de ialmindelighed blot betydningen af noget, som vil (vilde) indtræffe engang i fremtiden, — —'

## CONCLUDING SURVEY.

The main functions of the definite tenses have, through all periods, been the same, namely *actuality* and *qualified duration*.

These have been treated in detail above, and I shall only mention here one or two things concerning their mutual relations during the development of the periphrasis.

The most striking fact is a very interesting displacement that has taken place in the range of action, so to say, of these two categories: In Old and Early Middle English qualified duration is comparatively more represented than actuality, while in Late Middle and Early Modern English this latter function is decidedly preponderant and must be looked upon as the chief one. In this connection it may be brought to mind that the later developed compound tenses have, to a certain degree, their part in this change. Thus in Modern English the function of qualified duration has, to a great extent, been taken over by the definite perfect and pluperfect: especially when defined, these tenses nearly always imply *limited duration*.

Western (see §§ 9, 10) and Sweet (New Engl. Gr. §§ 2213, 2221, 2222) both deny that the definite tenses can express *repetition*, this being reserved for the indefinite tenses, as for instance in: *he writes a letter every day* (Western), or: *he goes to Germany once a year* (Sweet).

— ‘When’, says Sweet, ‘a definite tense is used in a context implying repetition, the definite tense does not share in this meaning (for repetition is expressed by indefinite tenses, § 2213), but keeps its own; thus *his temper only failed him when he was being nursed* means ‘on each occasion when he was being nursed’ — that is, the definite tense applies to each of the repeated phenomena singly’.

— Or as Western has it: ‘Derimod kan selve den situation, hvorunder noget sker, gjenta sig. Siger jeg således: Yesterday, when I came, he was writing, and the day before yesterday, when I came, he was also writing, and the day before that, when I came, he was also writing etc., så kan alt dette samles till det ene udtryk: *Whenever he was writing, I came*’<sup>1</sup>.

Expressions like these imply what I would term *iterated actuality*.

It is clear that the periphrasis is quite out of question in such cases as those first spoken of, namely: *he writes a letter every day; he goes to Germany once a year*; but we have a type of the definite tenses, where, at least in particular cases, I should not hesitate to ascribe to them an iterative function, namely, where a ‘point-verb’ is defined by a perpetuative adverb or the like. — I quote an illustrative example from Western’s collections: The great swing-door into the street *was for ever opening and shutting*, or: I remember his wife a great many years ago, when she *was always having* children.

There exists, however, a marked difference between this category of iteration and that first spoken of. In *he writes a letter every day* the iterated phenomena are directly stated as having intervals: this iteration might be described as *distributive* or *analyzing iteration*. The latter category,

<sup>1</sup> I should prefer: *Whenever I came, he was writing*.

represented by 'was for ever opening and shutting' and 'was always having children' I would term *comprising* or *generalizing iteration*. The intervals are not dwelt upon: on the contrary, by using the durative form one is brought to ignore them, to feel them as little as possible: such expressions tend rather to convey the meaning of uninterrupted action — in other words, duration. But this is a generalizing on the part of the speaker, an emotional way of putting things: logically seen, we have to do with a series of repeated actions.

On the other hand, we have not, or need not have, to do with iterated actuality here: this instant the swing-door *opened*, next instant it *shut* again, and so on; she *had* a child that year and the year after she *had* another, etc.

Such cases are not foreign to previous stages of the language. They originate in Old English and occur, though sparingly, also in Middle and Early Modern English.

Sweet (New Engl. Gr. II, § 2232) has this remark: 'The definite present is also used in a future sense, but only in combination with verbs of motion'. — It is however, not only such verbs that occur with this meaning; compare Krüger (Schwierigk. des Engl. II, p. 171) and the examples given there: 'Zuweilen behauptet der Sprechende, er sei schon bei etwas begriffen, das er thatsächlich noch nicht angefangen hat, um den andern des unmittelbar bevorstehenden Erfolgens der Handlung zu versichern; auf diesem Wege wird die progressive Form eine Form, die nahe Zukunft auszudrücken. *I really must be getting home. I'll be going my ways now* (schottisch). *I am coming*, ich komme schon, gleich! *I must be going now*, ich muss jetzt wirklich gehen. *What is going to be the upshot of this China affair? She is getting a good husband. We are having a ball next month*'. — I can add another example: And Banghurst had given ten thousand pounds, and

further, Banghurst *was giving* five thousand pounds. — —. (Twelve Stories and a Dream, by H. G. Wells, Macmillan's Sixpenny Series, London, 1904, p. 5). — As a rule, however, the verbs employed are verbs of motion.

This use of the periphrasis originated in Early Modern English, where verbs of motion, especially *come* and *go*, are, so far as I can ascertain, the only verbs to take the periphrasis in this sense of a near futurity.

Of the construction 'to be going to do something', the *immediate future*, the first examples found are in Greene and Shakespeare. — See besides p. 67<sup>1</sup>. — I can add here that I have really found two examples with 'come': when as I thought I saw him pursued by the whole Body; and now I expected that Part of my Dream *was coming to pass*, and that he would certainly take Shelter in my Grove; (Def. Rob. 205) and: Ay, master thought another fit of the gout *was coming to make* him a visit (Sher. Riv. I, 1).

During this period also we find the first cases of that use of the definite tenses which I have termed 'the subjective feeling'.

The *inchoative* meaning (see p. 27) has died out with Old English.

In close relation to the character of the definite tenses stands the fact that they cannot, as a rule, be employed with certain verbs which are quite devoid of a durative or progressive element and thus ordinarily serve as timeless copulas, unless they are specially sentence-stressed, so that the idea of time becomes prominent, when they admit of the periphrasis, as well as other verbs under similar circumstances. I shall quote some authors on this point.

Sweet (New Engl. Gr. II, § 2218): 'There are some

<sup>1</sup> And the remark to Sh. As, I, 2, 109 (p. 74).

verbs which occur only in the indefinite tenses. This is especially the case with verbs which express feelings, physical and mental perceptions etc., such as *feel, like, think: I feel ill; he likes being here; I think so*. But as soon as the element of volition or action becomes prominent, the definite tenses re-assert their rights: compare *it hurts* with *he is hurting him; he doesn't see it* with *he is seeing the sights; I hear a noise* with *I am hearing lectures*'.

Krüger (Schwierigk. des Engl. II, p. 171 f.): 'Zeitwörter, die einmalige schnelle Akte bezeichnen, wie *to accept, decline, refuse, reject, pardon, forgive, see, apprehend, obtain, convince, infer, grant, mean*, oder solche äussere Zustände schlechthin wie *to own* besitzen, *possess, surround, inclose*, oder innere Vorgänge, welche mehr etwas Zuständliches als sich Entwickelndes an sich haben, wie *to like, love, be fond of, hate, please, dislike, scorn, detest, abhor, contemn, condemn, envy, grudge, consider* (für etwas halten), *understand, comprehend, believe*, erlauben sie demnach<sup>1</sup> nicht. Das schliesst nicht aus, dass im gewissen Zusammenhang auch solche Verben sie haben: *I can hate; I remember once lying sleepless, when I was hating my enemy the whole night*. Sodann findet sie sich noch in folgender Gestalt: *By declining the offer you are declining your fortune*; hier scheint mir das vorangehende Gerundium die ähnliche Form herbeigeführt zu haben. Doch ist eine Neigung bemerkbar, sie zu gebrauchen, wo wir sie ihrer ursprünglichen Natur nach kaum erwarten: *Mr Robertson is offering substantial reward for any information that may be given in regard to the missing boat. But I am forgetting; you will let me order some fresh coffee for you?* (Aber ich vergesse ja ganz.) *Mother will be wondering where we are*'.


<sup>1</sup> Mögen es nun äussere oder innere Vorgänge sein, die sie bezeichnenden Verba können die progressive Form haben, sofern der allmähliche Verlauf derselben ausgedrückt werden soll.



Compare also Murray (The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland, p. 220): 'The Present Actual is formed by prefixing the present tense of the verb *be* to the present participle, as «hey's gaan' thruw the wud». But in verbs expressive of sensuous or mental impressions, as *sey*, *heir*, *fynd*, *fancie*, *leyke*, *heate*, also *bey*, *hæ*, there is only one form for these two senses, as *wey sey* them een-nuw, an' *wey sey* them at aa teymes; with which contrast, *thay're syngan't* een-nuw, an *thay syng'd* at aa teymes'.

On the other hand, it is only natural that the periphrasis should be specially favoured by verbs possessing a durative or progressive meaning, and this has also been the case throughout all the periods of the language.

Thus, although it cannot be denied that the Old English and the Modern English definite tenses exhibit some differences as to their respective syntactical functions, yet it must also be admitted that not only is the fundamental idea the same, but also the main uses in Modern English can be traced back to the Old English period, through an uninterrupted existence during the stages lying between these two extremes. Wherefore, it may be safely inferred that the Modern English periphrasis is really identical with its Old English counterpart.





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