CHAPTER 2.

SCANSION.

1. The word taqta is derived from قطع and means, literally, "cutting into pieces."

The basic principle of Urdu scansion is the distinction between "movent" مسکن and "quiescent" متنصرف letters.

2. The three short vowels are collectively called حركات and are written thus: $\ddot{a}$; $\dot{a}$; $\dot{e}$. In Arabic they are called fatha, kasra and zamma and in Persian and generally in Urdu: zabar, zer and pesh, and a letter accompanied by one of them is termed حركات mutaharik or movent, e.g. the $\ddot{a}$ in the word كاف is movent as it is accompanied by the حركة fatheh or zabr.

3. When a consonant is unaccompanied by a حركة, that is to say when it occurs at the end of a shut syllable it is termed مسکن, sakin = quiescent, e.g. the صجد in masjid is quiescent as is the $\ddot{a}$ but both the $\ddot{e}$ and the $\ddot{e}$ are movent being accompanied by the حركة zabr and zer respectively.

4. This distinction is so vital that before proceeding further the student would be well advised to scan the following few words into movent and quiescent letters, using as he will find used throughout this work, the $\ddot{a}$ sign for movent and $\ddot{e}$ for quiescent letters, as in the example given above

5. وزن = measure. If the وزن of one word agrees with that of another word then it means that the حركات and سکین حركات of the one agree with the حركات and سکین of the other, i.e. there are the same number of mutaharik and sakin letters in both the words and that they occur in the same order but not necessarily that the حركة is the same i.e., zabr in both words. Hence we say that بابل is of the same measure as مسجد meaning that each contains four letters, two mutaharik and two sakin and occurring in the same order, i.e. mutaharik, sakin, mutaharik, sakin; but not that the حركات are the same for, as will be seen from this example the حركات of بابل are pesh, pesh, while of مسجد zabr, zer.

6. بحر = metre. Metre is the rhythmical arrangement of mutaharik and sakin letters into lines. The system of notation in Urdu is much more complicated than in English, taking into consideration, as it does, letters and not only syllables. Consequently, where in English certain prosodians give as the formula of an Iambic Tetrameter the signs ax, ax, ax, ax (counting "a" as an unaccented and "x" as an accented syllable) the Urdu prosodians, having to account for every letter, have standard words as the models, e.g. تعلیم and تعلیم, with which the line will have to agree i.e., to contain 20 letters which must occur in the following order mutaharik, mutaharik, sakin, mutaharik, sakin.
The various kinds of metre Arabic, Persian, common and uncommon, regular and irregular, simple and compound will be treated of in the chapters devoted to metre and catalexis.

7. Arkan (plural of ḥarak) = feet into which a line of poetry is divided. They are, but infrequently, also termed ارکان or تفافیل. The parts into which Arkan are divided are known as اصل.

8. If an asul is composed of two letters it is called سبب; if of three letters ورد.

The سبب is of two kinds:

(a) سبب خفیف when the first letter is mutaharík and the second sakin as in the word دل where the د is mutaharík and the ل sakin.

(b) سبب تقلی when both the letters are mutaharík.

There is no word in the Urdu language which may be cited as a pure example of a sabab-i-saqil but a noun in the "halat-i-izafat" of the Persian may scan as such, e.g. دل من where, in certain cases, the ل is mutaharík.

9. Similarly ورد is of two kinds:

(a) ورد مجوع when of the three letters the 1st and 2nd are mutaharík and the last sakin e.g. جان.

(b) ورد مفرق when the first letter is mutaharík, the second sakin and the third mutaharík.

Here again the remark about the sabab-i-saqil applies. The Persian izafat alone will supply an example, e.g. دل من.

10. Some prosodians have further extended this classification to include an asul containing four, five and even six letters. These further divisions are as follows:

(a) فصلة صفروة, of four letters of which the first three are mutaharík and the last sakin e.g. حکا صرفی "literary."

(b) فصلة كبری, of five letters, the first four being "mutaharík" and the fifth "sakin"—of which I doubt if any example exist unless the shortened form of the negative be compounded with a verb: as تکذیب.

(c) فصلة عظمی, of six letters, the first five "mutaharík" and the sixth "sakin."

It is unnecessary for the student to worry his head over these three last "asules" the فصلة كبری and the فصلة عظمی. Nor is it quite clear why the prosodians sought to classify these since each of them can be subdivided into a and سبب.

For example مَبَتَبَتَمْ and مَبَتَتَبَمْ are the only two standard feet (excluding those affected by catalexis) in which three consecutive vowel letters occur and they can be divided easily enough without the employment of the فصلة at all as follows:

مَبَتَبَتَمْ = Sabab saqil
مَبَتَبَتَمْ = khaff
مَبَتَمْ = Watan-i-majmua.

11. Bait-plur. ابیات, (not بیت which is the form reserved for the meaning "house") = a line of poetry which is composed of two مصاعب, مصاعب and مصاعب are the only two standard feet (excluding those affected by catalexis) in which three consecutive vowel letters occur and they can be divided easily enough without the employment of the فصلة at all as follows:

مَبَتَبَتَمْ = Sabab saqil
مَبَتَبَتَمْ = khaff
مَبَتَمْ = Watan-i-majmua.

12. A line of eight feet (4 per hemistich) is termed مَبَتَمْ. A line of six feet (3 per hemistich) is termed مَبَتَمْ.
13. Feet are named as follows:—
   The first foot مصِدر
   The second foot حَشْور
   The third foot حَشْور
   The fourth foot عَوْض
   The fifth foot اِبْدَاد
   The sixth foot حَشْور
   The seventh foot حَشْور
   The eighth foot صَبَر or شَبَر

Having grasped the meaning of the technical terms given above, the student is now in a position to study the rules of scansion.

14. The first and most important rule is that only those letters which are pronounced are taken into account and not those which though written are not vocalized. For example بالكْ which contains five letters; but, because it is pronounced as though it were written بالكْ in scansion only these four articulate letters are taken into account. The following are the letters most commonly dropped in scansion.

   (a) Aliph in Arabic words such as في الواقع which is scanned as if spelt في الواقع.

   (b) H in aspirated consonants (e.g. كُهَمْ which is scanned as كُهِمْ.

   (c) A in kya meaning what? which is scanned as كِا.

   (d) واَر مُؤَدَلَة (e.g. خَوْص; خَوْص which are scanned as if spelt خَوْص; خَوْص.

   (e) The nasal “n” if preceded by حَرَف عَلَيِّ, i.e. حُرَف كا which is scanned as if spelt كا for the dropping of “a” see “b” above.

   N.B.—If not preceded by اس; i or u this ك will not be dropped e.g. زَرْگ rang is scanned as written, i.e. of 3 letters.

   (f) Final اد in دوره is not counted.

   (g) ! of كَر or كَر of or كَر or كِي in مُجَبِل occurring at the end of Hindi words are usually dropped but serve to make the preceding consonant mutahar in by depositing on it its harakat as كِر ≠ كَر.

The second rule (of letters counting double)—

   (a) دوْلْت (doubled) letters are of course counted as two e.g. دُوّلْت = دوْلْت دوْلْت.

   (b) اللف سَمْدَدْ concludes as two: the first being mutahar in the second sakin as ك常务 to come ك常务.

   (c) hamzated رَوْف and زَرْف counts as two as in the word رَوْف which is scanned as زَرْف.

   (d) The Persian Iṣafat is counted in scansion, e.g. إِوس أَيْنَ.

   In this case it will be seen that the “i” of the Iṣafat is made “sakin”; but in some cases it is scanned as having made the preceding letter, otherwise “sakin,” “mutahar” e.g., مُشاَفِلْيْ. The same applies to the conjunction “و” e.g. “و."

The third rule.—If two “sakin” letters occur together except at the end of a line (in which case they are both scanned as “sakin”) the first is counted “sakin” and the second “mutaharik.”
The fourth rule.—If three “sakin” letters occur together—as in the word سوخت (but not at the end of a line for such a position is impossible for them) the first remains “sakin” and the fate of the other two is governed by poetic licence. If the second and third sakin letters are preceded by ي or و; (as in the examples given above) the second “sakin” is not counted and the third becomes “mutaharik,” i.e., سوخت will scan as سوخت.

But, if the standard foot in the line requires two “mutaharik” letters, then the two “sakin” letters (provided that they are not preceded by ي or و;) become “mutaharik.”

The fifth rule.—Sometimes a “sakin” letter is made “mutaharik” (the reverse never) for metrical purposes—an indefensible piece of poetic license which might be termed a prosodical nibble to get the poet out of a bad lie.

Any further attempt to regularize scansion or to enumerate the exceptions to such rules would, at this juncture only serve to perplex the student.

Any peculiarities that may appear will be readily understood when the student has gained a little practice in scansion.

15. The following simple example (taken from the Taqwimul aruz wali qafia) will serve to illustrate the principles of scansion enumerated above.

مره خوين ناحيق كي ديكي جواهي

Let us take this hemistich letter by letter and scan it.

م “mutaharik
ر “mutaharik
ي “sakin

Let us now write the line, with every letter marked, thus:

م ره خوين ناحيق كي ديكي جواهي

and we see that the line divides itself into four portions each scanning alike, e.g. م ره ره for which the standard foot is . Hence we can now write the line in this way

مره خوين ناحيق كي ديكي جواهي

and that is the way (shown in all its stages) in which scansion is done in Urdu Verse.

Recalling my own difficulties when I arrived at this stage leads me to sum up the information contained in this and
the preceding chapters and to endeavour to dispel those doubts (at whose existence and nature I can make a fairly accurate guess) by a system of question and answer or, more naturally, I think, by an imaginary dialogue between the Teacher and the Student.

**Student:** From a perusal of this book I have, so far, realized that scansion depends on "mutaharik" and "sakin" letters and that the Urdu prosodians compose their feet of "wataad" and "sabab" where we would call them iambus or trochees or dactyl or spondees.

I can, with difficulty, scan any word and say which letter is "mutaharik" and which "sakin" but my real difficulty is this: in the specimen line given above I see why certain letters are "sakin" and others "mutaharik" but when it comes to scanning the line as a whole, i.e. grouping the various "mutahariks" and "sakin," I fail to see how the author knew where to divide his dividing lines. He says it is فعولین - faulun, four times. He knew it was faulun (or whatever the metre is called) and therefore chopped off the feet to fit the metre. That is, in my opinion, begging the question. It is like "cribbing" at school—looking up the answer to a sum and then working it out always keeping an eye on the answer to make sure one is not going wrong.

**Teacher:** He knew how to divide it into feet because he saw that فعولین, four times over, fitted the line. That metre is called . . . . .

**Student:** I don't see what it is called—he will explain all that in the chapter on metres, and you are evading the question. Why shouldn't I draw the lines and divide it up differently?
it over again and again \textit{مفتلاً مفتلاً مفتلاً مفتلاً مفتلاً}. While it yet echoes in your ears, work through the specimen lines in the appendix (this metre is given first) and, when you can fit this metre on to the words in a line without hesitation, work through any book of poetry trying to fit this measure tanan tan tan tan on to every line. Don’t stop if you are doubtful—haste is everything at this stage—but mark every line you suspect of being in this metre, and check them over next day going carefully and if necessary employing your old, discarded, laborious method to settle the question finally.

CHAPTER 3.

METRE.

1. Metre, the rhythmical arrangement of syllables into lines, is called in Urdu بحر plural بحر.

All metres in Urdu are compounded of one or more of the following eight standard feet of which two are known as خماسی (five lettered) and six as سباعی (seven lettered):

(i) فصول. Example, حرامست. The bacchus of Latin prosody.

(ii) فاصلی. Example, منحصر. The amphimacer of Latin prosody.

(iii) مفتلاً. Example, سباعی. The epithritus primus of Latin prosody.

(iv) فاصلی. Example, اصفهانی. The epithritus secundus of Latin prosody.

(v) مفتلاً. Example, کےار تر. The epithritus tertius of Latin prosody.

(vi) مفتلاً. Example, علمانی. The epithritus quartus of Latin prosody.

(vii) مفتلاً. Example, بیری بدنی. iambus + anapaest.

(viii) مفتلاً. Example, كے خوران. anapaest + iambus.