

With this passage contrast the following lines, in which the greatest variety is shown in the nature and place of the caesura.

But through the blackness || I saw Rome again,
 And where a solitary villa stood
 In a lone garden-quarter: || it was eve,
 The second of the year, || and oh so cold!
 Ever and anon || there flittered through the air
 A snow flake, || and a scanty couch of snow
 Crusted the grass-walk || and the garden-mould.
 All was grave, silent, sinister, || when, ha!
 Glimmeringly || did a pack of werewolves pad
 The snow, || those flames were Guido's eyes in front,
 And a, five found and footed it, || the track,
 To where a threshold streak || of warmth and light
 Betrayed the villa door || with life inside.

(*The Ring and the Book*, I, 603-615.)

In these thirteen lines there are examples of the feminine caesura after the first, second and third feet, and of the masculine caesura after the first, second and fourth accents. Besides, there is an example of what is a somewhat frequent occurrence in Browning — a line without a caesura. In this way the variety of cadences is carried to the widest possible limits.

His poetry, on the whole, shows a preference for the feminine caesura after the second foot, and for the masculine caesura after the second accent. This gives the *norm* of his verse, and makes all departures from it significant of artistic design on the part of the poet. Indications of this artistic design are not wanting in the poem, the several speakers showing a preference for the caesura which seems to be most appropriate to them. This is true of both the *nature* and *place* of the caesura.

(1) The masculine caesura, coming after an accented syllable, does not disturb the flow of the verse, as the pause naturally follows an accent. This arrangement of the caesura gives to the verse a smooth and equable movement. The feminine caesura, on the other hand, coming after an unaccented syllable, gives to the verse a more agitated and