

Replied 1/12/89

McLAREN - DRAWER 2 - DOC 38



History Dept.,
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
ARMIDALE, N.S.W. 2351.

14-81.89

REF.

Dear John,

I've just read the current Overland and enjoyed your article on John Bray; but please forgive me for pointing out what Sir Thomas Browne 3½ centuries ago would have called a vulgar (scilicet popular) error. My aim is to forestall enemy critics who might like to do it publicly.

Nine out of ten people nowadays spell the past tense of the verb to 'lead' just like that instead of 'led' and the daily papers perpetrate similar & worse solecisms. Nine tenths too, like you, use 'blank verse' as a ~~synonym~~ synonym for unrhymed or free verse, but it ain't so.

The confusion probably arises because, before the present century, blank verse ^{well} ~~practically~~ was the ^{only} kind of unrhymed verse ^{anyway} ever written in English — like nearly



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all of Shakespeare's plays. And
blank verse means ~~poetry~~ unrhymed
poetry written in lines of ~~the~~ iambic
pentameters ~~like e.g.~~ or with 5 strong
beats each like - e.g.

O that | this too | too, solid flesh | would melt,
Thaw | and | dissolve | itself | into | a dew.
+ +

It would make Stephen happy to know
that Overland continues with scarcely a
hicough.

Best wishes as ever,
Russel