group or system, of the six concluding lines. Again, the first
eight lines should only have two rhymes between them ; and these
rhymes distributed in a fixed order and succession. Let A stand
for one rhyme and B for the other and the succession may be
clearly indicated by the following diagram :

A-B-B-A--A-B-B-A.

The first, fourth, fifth and eight lines should all rhyme with
one another, and the second, third, sixth an seventh lines should
also rhyme identically. There should then be a pause in the sense
and the six concluding lines, or minor system, should similarly
contain only two rhymes ; these in the most finished specimens of
the sonnet, alternating with one another. Resorting again to the
diagram, and supposing the letters different sounds, or rhymes,
this alternation may be clearly shown as follows :

A-B-A-B-A-B.

Or, again, as there is a certain freedom allowed in the rhyming
of the sextets :

A-B-B-A-A-B.

All other things being equal, a sonnet may be considered as
nearest to perfection in its outward form. Other rules, both num-
erous and trying, have been laid down, as, for example, that no
terminal should also occur in any portion of any other line in the
same system, that the rhyme sounds of the octave should be har-
moniously at variance, that the rhyme-sounds of the sextet should
be entirely distinct in intonation from those of the octave, that the
continuity of the thought, idea or emotion must be unbroken
throughout, and that—but this rule is regarded by many as merely
capricious—the same word should never recur twice in the same
sonnet. All the minor rules may well be left for the delectation of
the sonnet student. Enough has, I venture to think, been said to
show what a good sonnet should be in spirit and form, and the
task that remains for me is to apply the rules of sonnet structure
to the sonnet work performed by Aubery de Vere, to bring for-
ward certain striking examples of his method, and to strive, ac-
cording to the best of my poor skill, to determine his status among
the sonneteers of our language.

(To be Concluded.)

MAURICE CASEY.