

ATREY DE VERE

In the course of an interesting biographical sketch by the New Era says: "The century now rapidly drawing to its close has witnessed many remarkable advances in human knowledge and in the arts and pursuits of civilized life, but yet we cannot boast that the spirit of our day is conducive to poetry. The materialism with which we are replete is but too predominant. Yet on this account should we value all the more that poetry is nature's pleasure and the world's and the soul's. It is the chief duty of the poet to reveal that nobility and grace which though often concealed must ever exist in the world. No other aim has been more inseparably associated with the ideal and the beautiful than that of Aubrey de Vere.

The third son of Sir Aubrey de Vere, the poet was born at Curragh Castle, County Limerick, in 1811. His father was second baronet of a line descended through a grand-daughter from the ninth Earl of Oxford. His mother was sister of Mr. Spring Rice, afterwards Lord Monteagle of Brandon. Both his parents were highly cultivated in intellect and taste.

Aubrey de Vere's earliest years were spent in his Irish home, the picturesque surroundings of which had a lasting effect on his naturally imaginative mind. In the year following the death of George III. the family went to London and passed the summer at Richmond Hill. The poet tells us that it was at this time, when he was ten years of age, that he first felt the delight of contemplating beautiful scenery.

The education of the poet, together with that of his brothers, seems to have been entrusted altogether to the care of tutors, which must in a small measure have been a conducive to the development of those native talents that the routine of college life would probably have checked. One of his first instructors was William St. George, Poetaster, the descendant of a French family exiled by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He was a fine classical scholar and also a powerful dramatic reader. The readings of Shakespeare, Aubrey de Vere says, were among the most stimulating part of their education. Four or five years after their return to Ireland passed away in the quiet routine of studies and reading about which some book was generally chosen, which combined instruction as well as amusement, such as travels and biographies— seldom a novel, save now and then one of Sir Walter Scott's delightful romances.

At Christmas the de Veres were accustomed to spend their holidays at Adare Manor, the seat of the Earl of Dunraven, where they wandered by the Malaga, or visited the ruins of the castle that at one time belonged to the Kildares, though situated in a territory almost all of which belonged to the Desmond branch of the same Geraldine race. Adare then, as now, a peculiarly picturesque village, had seen many battles and been more than once burned down. But it was principally famous for its monastic institutions which are still represented by the ruins of the White Abbey of the Trinitarians, the Black Abbey of the Augustinians, and the "Passer Abbey," or Franciscan House and Church.

The system of education adopted by his father was not without its influence in broadening the sympathy of the poet and in giving him a greater knowledge of and interest in human affairs. Aubrey de Vere tells us that at the passing of O'Connor's Bill for Catholic Emancipation when he was but fifteen years old, he remembered climbing to the top of a neighboring hill and in the gathering darkness waving a lighted torch round his head. Though a member of the Church of England he had already a deep sympathy with the Irish Catholics who suffered so long from the disabilities imposed by the Penal Code.

His first attempts at poetry were made when he was about fifteen years of age. The subject of these was sometimes descriptive, sometimes meditative, and sometimes political, but cast in sonnet form, probably owing to his great admiration for Wordsworth, in an ode addressed to whom we can clearly trace the influence exercised by the poet of Nature upon the youthful poet. At this period also Aubrey de Vere became acquainted with the poetry of Coleridge, Keats, Shelley and Landor.

In 1836, when Cardinal Newman, at the command of Pope Plus IX., had opened the Catholic University in Dublin, Aubrey de Vere was requested by him to give a series of lectures there on literature. Having consented to comply with his wish, the poet took up his residence for the time at the University and delivered about twelve lectures, some of which have passed into print.

Aubrey de Vere had also taken a deep interest, as we have said, in the

political movements of his country. In 1838 (Dublin) introduced a measure for the creation of a national university in Ireland. In such a measure Aubrey de Vere had previously looked forward as the bringing of better times for Ireland and had written much on the subject. He now advocated the policy in four separate pamphlets, and again before the introduction of the Land Act of 1881 he noted down and showed to a few political friends a brief list of such changes as seemed to meet the real needs of Ireland at the time. Thus it is evident that he was never unmindful of the social and political needs of his country.

Aubrey de Vere's most remarkable poem is an "Imaginary St. Thomas of Canterbury," modeled on the "Prayer of Queen Meave," "Legends of St. Patrick," "Legends and Records of the Church and Empire," and "St. Patrick's Claims," "Imaginary," which was published in 1841. An illustration of Irish legends during the sixteenth century from the Norman conquest of Ireland to the reign of the Penal Laws. Irish history had at ways had a strong interest in the history of his country, and that some of his poems were written more interestingly from his heart than "Imaginary," which was addressed as much to English statesmen as to Irish patriots. Another of his "great" and "St. Thomas of Canterbury" are as yet composed in pictures both by an eye and by a pen. Each is at once a philosophical poem and a drama, the interest of which rests mainly on the spiritual content of a character and the contrast of two utterly dissimilar states of human society. Probably no poet has a more complete sympathy with the Middle Ages than Aubrey de Vere. In his "Legends and Records of the Church and Empire" each separate story is full of a soft and charming, each being soothed in that about old world air that encompasses the most striking scenes of the world which treat the contemporary situation of the continent and the monastery.

"The Prayer of Queen Meave" presents in poetic form the greatest of the early Irish Epics, whilst the "Legends of St. Patrick" betray a deep and true patriotism blended with a pervading spirituality. In many of his poems Aubrey de Vere makes use of blank verse, success in the handling of which is perhaps the rarest gift and the true touchstone of the poet. His poetry is free from all taint of artificiality, and seems to be the natural outcome of a mind imbued with a religious faith and with a creative imagination. In reading these poems we must always feel that the poetry whose source is very near the heart and whose appeal needs not, therefore, to be couched in the language of exaggeration, so simple, direct and winning are the truth and beauty of the natural elements of the Browning. Aubrey de Vere's poetry shows the fullest vitality, resumes the largest sphere of ideas, covers the broadest intellectual field since the poetry of Wordsworth. Without instituting any comparison between them as poets we may at least say that Aubrey de Vere's Catholicism has lifted him into a sphere infinitely higher than that of Wordsworth. Looking back over those columns which have been the outcome of years of unintermitted literary labor one thought is ever present in countless forms and expressions of beauty—the thought of the Creator's work in the realms of grace. It was Aubrey de Vere's belief that the path in which true happiness as well as usefulness lies, and to tread it with serene perseverance even to the threshold of old age, and we can never take up a volume of his poems without a feeling that that expressed in the beautiful line of Virgil— "Et aequa quies et necula fallere vita"

STORIES OF PIOUS VII.

Reminiscences of Pius VII. are still fresh and numerous in Rome. He was a sort of cousin of Pius IX., and the latter used often to repeat to persons who were in his confidence, by word of mouth of Pius VII's forcible removal to France, by order of Napoleon I. General Radet, charged with this mission, accomplished it in thoroughly medieval style. He himself headed the way of the Quirina garden shortly after midnight, surprised the guards of the aged Pontiff, and succeeded in reaching his bedroom before any alarm had been given. The Pope was obliged to rise, dress and enter a carriage, accompanied only by Cardinal Pecci, and was carried rapidly north, without Rome having the least suspicion. It was not unlike Pius IX's own flight to Gaeta many years later. When Pius VII and his companion had received a safe from their agitation the Pope asked the Cardinal if he had brought any money. "Not a bajocco," (half-penny), he exclaimed: "and you?" whereupon the Pontiff put his hand in his pocket and brought out a few loose coins. "Look," he said, bitterly, "all that is left of my kingdom."

COMPENSATION.

There's a boy I know at school Who sets up to be a "toff," Just because his parents are More than comfortable off. He has got a silver watch, And a silver chain as well— My watch is a simple one, Plated like a cycle bell. And he has an air-gun, too, With a walnut stock, you know— Such a beauty!—and he says: "Some day he will shoot a crow!" Pocket money? His papa Ought, I think, to have more sense. For each copper I can spend He can lay out eighteen-pence. In his play-box he's a heap Of good things to drink and eat— Oranges and ginger-wine, Lemonade and potted meat. But I do not envy him At his riches I can see; For his name is "Jacob Bloggs," While mine is "Reginald Herbert." Bloggs is a simple-minded fellow, Reginald is a simple-minded fellow, Reginald is a simple-minded fellow, Reginald is a simple-minded fellow.

shorter. With such a shoulder the horse's neck is not so light as the collar, but his neck is short, heavy and lumpy. There are intermediate differences between the oblique and the upright shoulder. Besides the shoulder the proportions of the several parts of the horse vary in the different breeds. The following are the measurements of an average typical blood horse—Height at withers and crop, 63 inches; length from the shoulder point to quarter, 60 inches; from the hump of the neck to the ground, 44 inches; from the elbow point to the ground, 39 inches; from the withers to the poll, but behind the ears in a straight line, 30 inches; the slope of the neck above the ground, 22 inches; the length of the head, 22 inches; the length of the forehead, 9.12 inches; from the withers to the hip, 22 inches; from the withers to the point of the hock, 28 inches; from the point of the hock to the ground, 42 inches; the length of the arm from the elbow to the point of the hock, 19.12 inches; from the hock to the ground, 19.12 inches; from the hock to the ground, 19.12 inches; from the hock to the ground, 19.12 inches. This would make the standard height of the racer or hunter 16.12 inches, that of the Arab somewhat smaller, seldom exceeding 14 hands 2 inches. It is from the Arab that all our thoroughbreds are derived. Mr. Willford Blount has always kept a splendid Arab stallion, and has many many horses for sale to replenish his collection. The Persian horse is derived from the Arab, but is generally taller. The Turkish horse is still larger and heavier, but has the general points of the Arab. He is very dark in color, has a thick neck and long legs, which partake of the character of ponies. They are elegantly shaped, but a hardy and enduring. In Asia the Arab, or horse of Barbary, is in some respects equal to the Arab, and has originated many of the present English thoroughbreds, as well as to the horses of Spain. The Spanish horses were imported into North America, where their descendants have multiplied into millions. They were introduced into the South American, where the native gaucho has only to throw his lasso to provide himself with a horse. The Mustang, or wild horse of North America, is also of Spanish blood. From it originated the Indian pony, which is about 13 hands high. The ancestors of the Canadian horse were imported from Normandy by the first French settlers. He is generally 14 or 15 hands high, and partakes of some of the characteristics of the draught horse. The American has developed a trotting horse used in trotting matches. In their country, too, there are two or three breeds of cart horses having peculiarities of their own. The artist, Rosa Bonheur, has made the Norman charger or trotter familiar to the persons who have seen her paintings or engraved copies of them. The Norman charger is a large, powerful animal, hardy, and with very sound feet and legs. The Flemish horse, and the Hanoverian, are very large, heavy animals. The Hanoverians furnish a great many of the large black carriage horses, as well as of the hearse horses used in these countries. The Russian horse is small, active, and hardy, and the Hungarian is distinguished for his showy action. Among hunters the Irish hunter stands pre-eminent, the only drawback being that he is often of rather an uncertain temper. This, we think, is due more to his being bred in the hands of unskillful agricultural horsemen than to any fault of his nature. Among the Lincolnshire dray horse. Then there are the Norfolk Trotter and Hackney.

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