

Thrilled as a dew-drop; and each passing cloud
Expanded, whitening like the ocean foam."

Although de Vere entertained none of his friend Wordsworth's pantheistic conceptions of nature, he could, to use a phrase of Thomas Campbell, "muse on nature with a poet's eye." The intellectual vivacity implied in the marvellously neat workmanship of his "A Winter Night in the Woods" will repay attention :

"When first the Spring her glimmering chaplets wove
This way and that way 'mid the boughs high hung,
We watched the hourly work, while thrushes sung
A song that shook with joy their bowered alcove :
Summer came next : she roofed with greer the grove,
And deepening shades to flower-sweet alleys clung :
Then last—one dirge from many a golden tongue—
The chiding leaves with chiding Autumn strove.
These were but Nature's preludes. Last is first !
Winter, uplifting high both flail and fan,
With the great forest dealt as Death with man ;
And therefore through their desolate roofs hath burst
This splendor veiled no more by earthly bars ;
Infinite heaven, and the fire-breathing stars !"

In all his nature studies, the poet follows the method of the idealist as contradistinguished from that of the realist, and the sentiment is given without the minute statement of fact. In these productions, as almost everywhere within the spacious bounds of his works, we are amazed by sudden forked-flashes of wisdom, a characteristic of genius to be met with only in the productions of the very princes and kings of literature.

We have seen that the thoughts of Aubrey de Vere on Ireland and her ancient heroes are possessed alike of those melancholy graces which, by blending sympathy with admiration, give to worth and truth additional power. We can easily imagine how a heart as Catholic as his would be thrilled by the associations awakened by a visit to the City of Rome. His sonnets on Roman subjects, under the general title of "Urbs Roma" are very numerous and fine. He feels about Rome and her great men, as the artist does about the picture over which his soul has brooded with love, and which has for him a tender meaning and a chastened grace it can speak to no other one. The sonnets challenge multiplied quota-