XII

R. L. S. AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Few authors of note have seen so many and frank judgments of their work from the pens of their contemporaries as Stevenson saw. He was a 'persona grata' with the whole world of letters, and some of his most admiring critics were they of his own craft—poets, novelists, essayists. In the following pages the object in view has been to garner a sheaf of memories and criticisms written—before and after his death—for the most part by eminent contemporaries of the novelist, and interesting, apart from intrinsic worth, by reason of their writers.

Mr. Henry James, in his 'Partial Portraits,' devotes a long and brilliant essay to Stevenson. Although written seven years prior to Stevenson's death, and thus before some of the most remarkable productions of his genius had appeared, there is but little in Mr. James's paper which would require modification to-day. Himself the wielder of a literary style more elusive, more tricksy than Stevenson's, it is difficult to take single passages from his paper, the whole galaxy of thought and suggestion being so cleverly meshed about by the dainty frippery of his manner.

Henry James.

Mr. James begins by regretting the 'extinction of the pleasant fashion of the literary portrait,' and while deciding that no individual can bring it back, he goes on to say:

It is sufficient to note, in passing, that if Mr. Stevenson had

presented himself in an age, or in a country, of portraiture, the painters would certainly each have had a turn at him. The easels and benches would have bristled, the circle would have been close, and quick, from the canvas to the sitter, the rising and falling of heads. It has happened to all of us to have gone into a studio, a studio of pupils, and seen the thick cluster of bent backs and the conscious model in the midst. It has happened to us to be struck, or not to be struck, with the beauty or the symmetry of this personage, and to have made some remark which, whether expressing admiration or disappointment, has elicited from one of the attentive workers the exclamation, 'Character, character is what he has!' These words may be applied to Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson; in the language of that art which depends most on direct observation, character, character is what he has. He is essentially a model, in the sense of a sitter; I do not mean, of course, in the sense of a pattern or a guiding light. And if the figures who have a life in literature may also be divided into two great classes, we may add that he is conspicuously one of the draped: he would never, if I may be allowed the expression, pose for the nude. There are writers who present themselves before the critic with just the amount of drapery that is necessary for decency; but Mr. Stevenson is not one of these—he makes his appearance in an amplitude of costume. His costume is part of the character of which I just now spoke; it never occurs to us to ask how he would look without it. Before all things he is a writer with a style—a model with a complexity of curious and picturesque garments. It is by the cut and the colour of this rich and becoming frippery—I use the term endearingly, as a painter might—that he arrests the eye and solicits the brush.

That is, frankly, half the charm he has for us, that he wears a dress and wears it with courage, with a certain cock of the hat and tinkle of the supererogatory sword; or in other words, that he is curious of expression and regards the literary form not simply as a code of signals, but as the keyboard of a piano, and as so much plastic material. He has that voice deplored, if we mistake not, by Mr. Herbert Spencer, a manner—a manner for manner's sake, it may sometimes doubtless be said. He is as different as possible from the sort of writer who regards words

as numbers, and a page as the mere addition of them; much more, to carry out our image, the dictionary stands for him as a wardrobe, and a proposition as a button for his coat.

Mr. James next touches upon the objection that Stevenson has too much manner for his matter, and observes, 'The main thing he demonstrates, to our own perception, is that it is a delight to read him, and that he renews this delight by a constant variety of experiment.' He describes that class of literary workers who, acquiring reputation for a speciality, 'turn out an article for which there is a demand,' but: 'It is just because he has no speciality that Mr. Stevenson is an individual, and because his curiosity is the only receipt by which he produces. Each of his books is an independent effort —a window opened to a different view.' He adds: 'Though Mr. Stevenson cares greatly for his phrase, as every writer should who respects himself and his art, it takes no very attentive reading of his volumes to show that it is not what he cares for most, and that he regards an expressive style only, after all, as a means.'

Mr. James then proceeds to deal at length and individually with Stevenson's works as they then stood; but it will be sufficient to quote only his notes on the leading characteristics of his subject as these appealed to him at the time of his writing:

> What makes him (Stevenson) so is the singular maturity of the expression that he has given to young sentiments: he judges them, measures them, sees them from the outside, as well as entertains them. He describes credulity with all the resources of experience, and represents a crude stage with infinite ripeness. In a word, he is an artist accomplished even to sophistication, whose constant theme is the unsophisticated.

Reference to the 'Child's Garden' suggests this reflection on its author's knowledge of childhood:

> What is peculiar to Mr. Stevenson is that it is his own

childhood he appears to delight in, and not the personal presence of little darlings. Oddly enough, there is no strong implication that he is fond of babies; he doesn't speak as a parent, or an uncle, or an educator—he speaks as a contemporary absorbed in his own game. That game is almost always a vision of dangers and triumphs, and if emotion, with him, infallibly resolves itself into memory, so memory is an evocation of throbs and thrills and suspense. He has given to the world the romance of boyhood, as others have produced that of the peerage and the police and the medical profession.

In the second part of his study Mr. James has this to say of one of the most striking features in the life and art of Stevenson:

His appreciation of the active side of life has such a note of its own that we are surprised to find that it proceeds in a considerable measure from an intimate acquaintance with the passive. It seems too anomalous that the writer who has most cherished the idea of a certain free exposure should also be the one who has been reduced most to looking for it within, and that the figures of adventurers who, at least in our literature of to-day, are the most vivid, should be the most vicarious. The truth is, of course, that as the 'Travels with a Donkey' and 'An Inland Voyage' abundantly show, the author has a fund of reminiscences. He did not spend his younger years 'in a parlour with a regulated temperature.' A reader who happens to be aware of how much it has been his later fate to do so may be excused for finding an added source of interest—something indeed deeply and constantly touching—in this association of peculiarly restrictive conditions with the vision of high spirits and romantic accidents, of a kind of honourably picaresque career.

Mr. James concludes with the opinion that 'Kidnapped' represented the best work of Stevenson up to that time (1887)—'the episode of the quarrel and the two men (David and Alan) on the mountain-side is a real stroke of genius, and has the very logic and rhythm of life.'

He suspects that Stevenson's ideal of the delightful work of fiction would have been 'the adventures of Monte Cristo by the author of "Richard Feverel."'

Writing from Davos on March 1, 1886, to Stevenson, the late John Addington Symonds makes the following reference to 'Jekyll and Hyde' (the quotation is from Mr. Horatio F. Brown's biography of Symonds):

John Addington Symonds.

I doubt whether any one has the right so to scrutinise 'the abysmal deeps of personality.' You see I have been reading Dr. Jekyll. At least I think he ought to bring more of distinct belief in the resources of human nature, more faith, more sympathy with our frailty, into the matter than you have done. The art is burning and intense. The Peau de Chagrin disappears, and Poe's work is water. Also, one discerns at once that this is an allegory of all twy-natured souls who yield consciously to evil. Most of us are on the brink of educating a Mr. Hyde at some epoch of our being. But the scientific cast of the allegory will only act as an incentive to moral self-murder with those who perceive the allegory's profundity. Louis, how had you the 'ilia dura, ferro et ære triplici duriora' to write Dr. Jekyll? I know now what was meant when you were called a sprite.

You see I am trembling under the magician's wand of your fancy, and rebelling against it with the scorn of a soul that hates to be contaminated with the mere picture of victorious evil. Our only chance seems to me to be to maintain, against all appearances, that evil can never and in no way be victorious

I would that you would tell me whether you only used your terrible *motif* as a good groundwork for a ghastly tale, or whether you meant it to have a moral purpose. But I suppose you won't tell me.

I seem to have lost you so utterly that I can afford to fling truth of the crudest in your face. And yet I love you and think of you daily, and have Dew Smith's portrait of you in front of me.

The suicide end of Dr. Jekyll is too commonplace. Dr. Jekyll ought to have given Mr. Hyde up to justice. This

would have vindicated the sense of human dignity which is so horribly outraged in your book.

Reviewing Sir Leslie Stephen's 'Studies of a Biographer' (second series), the *Literary World*, December 19, 1902, says:

Sir Leslie Stephen.

He is not an out-and-out admirer of Robert Louis Stevenson, and this gives his opinion more value than that of the blind enthusiast who professes to find in this artist of rare but limited powers every quality that goes to the perfecting of the highest romance. If we select a passage in which the criticism is adverse, it is not in order to make our readers think that Mr. Leslie Stephen is insensible to the strong and fascinating qualities of Stevenson's novels, but to show that while he perceives and fully appreciates these, he can still preserve an even judgment:

'I do not think, to speak frankly, that any novelist of power comparable to his has created so few living and attractive characters. Mr. Sidney Colvin confesses to having been for a time blinded to the imaginative force of "The Ebb-Tide" by his dislike to the three wretched heroes. One is deservedly shot, and the two others, credited with some redeeming points, lose whatever interest they possessed when they accept conversion to avoid death from a missionary's revolver. However vivid the scenery, I cannot follow the fate of such wretches with a pretence of sympathy. There is a similar drawback about the "Master of Ballantrae." The younger brother, who is blackmailed by the utterly reprobate Master, ought surely to be interesting instead of being simply sullen and dogged. In the later adventures we are invited to forgive him on the ground that his brain has been affected; but the impression upon me is that he is sacrificed throughout to the interests of the story. He is cramped in character because a man of any real strength would have broken the meshes upon which the adventure depends. The curious exclusion of women is natural in the purely boyish stories, since to a boy woman is simply an incumbrance upon reasonable modes of life. When in "Catriona" Stevenson introduces a love-story, it is still unsatisfactory because David

Balfour is so much of the undeveloped animal that his passion is clumsy, and his charm for the girl unintelligible. I cannot feel, to say the truth, that in any of these stories I am really living among human beings with whom, apart from their adventures, I can feel any very lively affection or antipathy.'

Many will agree with this estimate of Stevenson's literary limitations. Yet the author is fully sensible of the immense energy and courage of the man, of his extraordinary youthfulness, and of the chivalry which made him so beloved among his friends. Here is a passage which sets forth his appreciation of the physically frail, but spiritually ardent nature of the novelist:

'The philosophy is the man. It is the development of the old boyish sentiment. Disease and trouble might do their worst; the career of the "pirate," or even more creditable forms of the adventurous, might be impracticable; but at least he could meet life gallantly, find inexhaustible interest even in trifling occupations when thrown upon his back by ill-health, and cheer himself against temptations to pessimistic melancholy by sympathy with every human being who showed a touch of the heroic spirit. His essay upon the old "Admirals" is characteristic. His heart goes out to Nelson, with his "peerage or Westminster Abbey," and even more to the four marines of the *Wager*, abandoned of necessity to a certain death, but who yet, as they watched their comrades pulling away, gave three cheers and cried, "God bless the King!" In "*Æs triplex*" he gives the same moral with a closer application to himself:

'"It is best [he says] to begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push, see what can be finished in a week. . . . All who have meant good work with their whole heart have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. . . . Life goes down with a better grace foaming in full tide over a precipice, than miserably struggling to an end in sandy deltas."

'That, he explains, is the true meaning of the saying about those whom the gods love. At whatever age death may come, the man who does so dies young.'

'Robert Louis Stevenson' is one of the subjects on which Mr. J. M. Barrie writes in 'An Edinburgh Eleven,' published six years before the death of the romancer.

J. M. Barrie. I.

The author of 'A Window in Thrums,' though always a whole-hearted admirer of his great contemporary and countryman, was far from blind to his failings at that time, and writes very frankly of Stevenson's 'going-to-do' condition. His essay was a plea for 'the great book he is going to write by-and-by when the little books are finished':

The keynote of all Mr. Stevenson's writings is his indifference, so far as his books are concerned, to the affairs of life and death on which other minds are chiefly set. Whether man has an immortal soul interests him as an artist not a whit: what is to come of man troubles him as little as where man came from. He is a warm, genial writer, yet this is so strange as to seem inhuman. His philosophy is that we are but as the light-hearted birds. This is our moment of being; let us play the intoxicating game of life beautifully, artistically, before we fall dead from the tree. We all know it is only in his books that Mr. Stevenson can live this life. The cry is to arms; spears glisten in the sun; see the brave bark riding joyously on the waves, the black flag, the dash of red colour twisting round a mountain-side. Alas! the drummer lies on a couch beating his drum. It is a pathetic picture, less true to fact now, one rejoices to know, than it was recently. A common theory is that Mr. Stevenson dreams an ideal life to escape from his own sufferings. This sentimental plea suits very well. The noticeable thing, however, is that the grotesque, the uncanny, holds his soul; his brain will only follow a coloured clue. The result is that he is chiefly picturesque, and to those who want more than art for art's sake, never satisfying. Fascinating as his verses are, artless in the perfection of art, they take no reader a step forward. The children of whom he sings so sweetly are cherubs without souls. . . .

Some think Mr. Stevenson's essays equal to Lamb's, or greater. To that I say No. The name of Lamb will for many a year bring proud tears to English eyes. Here was a man,

weak like the rest of us, who kept his sorrows to himself. Life to him was not among the trees. He had loved and lost. Grief laid a heavy hand on his brave brow. Dark were his nights; horrid shadows in the house; sudden terrors; the heart stops beating waiting for a footstep. At that door comes Tragedy, knocking at all hours. Was Lamb dismayed? The tragedy of his life was not drear to him. It was wound round those who were dearest to him; it let him know that life has a glory even at its saddest, that humour and pathos clasp hands, that loved ones are drawn nearer, and the soul strengthened in the presence of anguish, pain, and death. When Lamb sat down to write he did not pull down his blind on all that is greatest, if most awful, in human life. He was gentle, kindly; but he did not play at pretending that there is no cemetery round the corner. In Mr. Stevenson's exquisite essays one looks in vain for the great heart that palpitates through the pages of Charles Lamb.

J. M. Barrie. II.

One of the most beautiful chapters in that beautiful book, 'Margaret Ogilvy,' is headed simply 'R. L. S.' Therein Mr. J. M. Barrie describes in his inimitable way how his mother, out of loving jealousy for the fame of her son, used to pretend that she could never 'thole' Stevenson's books—although she had not yet read any of them. By practising many wiles, her son at length beguiled her into an acquaintance with the 'Master of Ballantrae.' She forthwith succumbed to the Master's charm, but her reading of the romance was done covertly, in all sorts of secret ways, to the delight of Mr. Barrie, who writes:

She had come down to sit beside me while I wrote, and sometimes, when I looked up, her eye was not on me, but on the shelf where the 'Master of Ballantrae' stood inviting her. Mr. Stevenson's books are not for the shelf, they are for the hand; even when you lay them down, let it be on the table for the next comer. Being the most sociable that man has penned in our time, they feel very lonely up there in a stately row. I

think their eye is on you the moment you enter the room, and so you are drawn to look at them, and you take a volume down with the impulse that induces one to unchain the dog. And the result is not dissimilar, for in another moment you two are at play. Is there any other modern writer who gets round you in this way? Well, he had given my mother the look which in the ballroom means, 'Ask me for this waltz,' and she ettled to do it, but felt that her more dutiful course was to sit out the dance with this other less entertaining partner. I wrote on doggedly, but could hear the whispering.

'Am I to be a wall-flower?' asked James Durie reproachfully. (It must have been leap-year.)

'Speak lower,' replied my mother, with an uneasy look at me.

'Pooh!' said James contemptuously, 'that kail-runtle!'

'I winna have him miscalled,' said my mother, frowning.

'I am done with him,' said James (wiping his cane with his cambric handkerchief), and his sword clattered deliciously (I cannot think this was accidental), which made my mother sigh. Like the man he was, he followed up his advantage with a comparison that made me dip viciously.

'A prettier sound that,' said he, clanking his sword again, 'than the clack-clack of your young friend's shuttle.'

'Whist!' cried my mother, who had seen me dip.

'Then give me your arm,' said James, lowering his voice.

'I dare not,' answered my mother. 'He's so touchy about you.'

'Come, come,' he pressed her, 'you are certain to do it sooner or later, so why not now?'

'Wait till he has gone for his walk,' said my mother; 'and, forby that, I'm ower old to dance with you.'

'How old are you?' he inquired.

'You're gey and pert!' cried my mother.

'Are you seventy?'

'Off and on,' she admitted.

'Pooh,' he said, 'a mere girl!'

She replied instantly, 'I'm no to be catched with chaff'; but she smiled and rose, as if he had stretched out his hand and got her by the finger-tip.

After that they whispered so low (which they could do as they

were now much nearer each other) that I could catch only one remark. It came from James, and seems to show the tenor of their whisperings, for his words were, 'Easily enough, if you slip me beneath your shawl.'

That is what she did, and furthermore she left the room guiltily, muttering something about redding up the drawers. I suppose I smiled wanly to myself, or conscience must have been nibbling at my mother, for in less than five minutes she was back, carrying her accomplice openly, and she thrust him with positive viciousness into the place where my Stevenson had lost a tooth (as the writer whom he most resembled would have said). And then, like a good mother, she took up one of her son's books and read it most determinedly. It had become a touching incident to me, and I remember how we there and then agreed upon a compromise: she was to read the enticing thing just to convince herself of its inferiority.

'The Master of Ballantrae' is not the best. Conceive the glory, which was my mother's, of knowing from a trustworthy source that there are at least three better awaiting you on the same shelf. She did not know Alan Breck yet, and he was as anxious to step down as Mr. Bally himself. John Silver was there, getting into his leg, so that she should not have to wait a moment, and roaring, 'I'll lay to that!' when she told me consolingly that she could not thole pirate stories. Not to know these gentlemen, what is it like? It is like never having been in love. But they are in the house! That is like knowing that you will fall in love to-morrow morning. With one word, by drawing one mournful face, I could have got my mother to abjure the jam-shelf—nay, I might have managed it by merely saying that she had enjoyed the 'Master of Ballantrae.' For you must remember that she only read it to persuade herself (and me) of its unworthiness, and that the reason she wanted to read the others was to get further proof. All this she made plain to me, eyeing me a little anxiously the while, and of course I accepted the explanation. Alan is the biggest child of them all, and I doubt not that she thought so, but curiously enough her views of him are among the things I have forgotten. But how enamoured she was of 'Treasure Island,' and how faithful she tried to be to me all the time she was reading it!

The concluding paragraph of Mr. Barrie's delightful chapter must be quoted:

Vailima was the one spot on earth I had any great craving to visit, but . . . in the meantime that happened which put an end for ever to my scheme of travel. I shall never go up the Road of Loving Hearts now, on 'a wonderful clear night of stars,' to meet the man coming toward me on a horse. It is still a wonderful clear night of stars, but the road is empty. So I never saw the dear king of us all. But before he had written books he was in my part of the country with a fishing wand in his hand, and I like to think that I was the boy who met him that day by Queen Margaret's burn, where the rowans are, and busked a fly for him, and stood watching, while his lithe figure rose and fell as he cast and hinted back from the crystal waters of Noran-side.

Mr. Barrie's Speech at Edinburgh.

Mr. J. M. Barrie's speech at the memorial meeting in Edinburgh would seem to have been the most attractive feature of the gathering, even with Lord Rosebery in the chair. One of the many correspondents who described the scene states that the greatest applause was reserved for the author of 'A Window in Thrums.' His speech does not lend itself to reproduction as a whole, but the following passages should be included here:

Louis Stevenson was loved far more than any other writer of his time. One or two of his contemporaries no doubt were greater than he, but those of them who were Stevensonians—a form of Freemasonry—those who made almost an idol of the man, were quite willing to admit his imperfections, and so he was only human. But they had read in novels that when a man was really in love he hated to have his lady make an idol and worship it. He wanted her to know him as he really was. He told her all that was to be told against himself—what his failings were—and said to her that now she could not love him so much. Then he turned upon her in a passion when she admitted that she did not. That was how they regarded Louis

Stevenson. They knew he had his imperfections, but they were all willing to turn themselves into Alan Brecks and become braw fighters. There was only one other novelist of modern times who had called forth such a passion of devotion—a woman, a darker spirit than he, one who died at a very much younger age than he, the author of 'Wuthering Heights.' He thought every one who had come under the spell of Robert Louis Stevenson or Emily Brontë would fight for them till he dropped. It was no single class that loved Stevenson. All classes did. . . .

It had been said that he cared little about his old university in Edinburgh, but this was not true. The other day he had heard of a letter Stevenson had written to one of his oldest friends. It was written from the South Seas. He said he was in a boat as he wrote, and while he had been lying there he had been thinking of his old days at Edinburgh University, the dreams he had dreamt in those days, and how little he had thought at that time that they would be realised now; and now they had been realised, and it had occurred to him that out of gratitude he might have put at the corner of Lothian Street a tablet in which that little story might be inscribed, so that students who had grown down-hearted might perchance look up and be cheered. He (Mr. Barrie) did not know whether that tablet would ever be put up, but he dared say many students would seem to see it there, and would take comfort. He knew another body of young men—younger men a little than Mr. Stevenson at all events—who took him as their model, who looked up to him as their example—he meant the younger writers of to-day of all classes, not merely the romancers, the realists as they were called, the idealists as they were called, the pessimists as they were called—they all saw with different eyes, but they were all agreed that Stevenson, beyond all other writers of his time, was the man who showed them how to put their houses in order before they began to write, and in what spirit they should write, and with what aim, and with what clean tools, and with what honesty of toil. They knew from him that however poor their books might be they were not disgraced if they had done their best, and, however popular, if they were not written with some of his aims they were only cumberers of the

ground. They were only soldiers in the ranks, but they were proud to claim him as their leader, and when he called his muster-roll they would hear them all answer to their names, 'Here, here, here.' He was dead, but he still carried their flag, and because of him the most worthy of us were more worthy, and the meanest of us were a little less mean.

Lord Rosebery.

The Earl of Rosebery presided over the great meeting held in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, on December 10, 1896, to consider the question of a public memorial to Robert Louis Stevenson. The project had originated in a letter written to the press by Lord Rosebery, who in the course of his speech paid this graceful tribute to the memory of his fellow-countryman (the report used is that of the *Daily News*):

How then, can I, in her[1] presence, and in the presence of those friends who knew him so well, pretend to take a prominent part on this occasion? My part was a perfectly simple one. I wrote to the papers a genuine inquiry. I could not but believe that in this age of memorials and testimonials some stone or cairn had been put up to the memory of Robert Louis Stevenson. I should have been confident that such a memorial had been put up but for one trifling, though capital, circumstance—I had never been asked for a subscription; and therefore I came to the conclusion that there were grave doubts as to whether any such movement had taken place.

To-day is not the moment—we have not the time, and it would require a literary capacity to which I make no pretence—to-day is not the opportunity to enter into any review of the works of Stevenson. But there are two or three points to which, as an outside reader, I must call your attention before I sit down. The first is the style of the man himself—it was a tool carefully finished and prepared by himself in order the better to work out the business to which his genius led him. I dare say many of you may think that style is a light, accidental art of inspiration

[1] The reference is to Stevenson's mother, who with difficulty managed to get into the crowded meeting.

which comes easily to a gifted writer. But what does Stevenson say himself? 'Whenever a book or a passage particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and I knew it; and tried again, and was again unsuccessful, and always unsuccessful. But at least in these vain bouts I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction, and in the co-ordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, and to Obermann.' And to these he adds afterwards, in a later passage, Ruskin, Browning, Morris, Keats, Swinburne, Chaucer, Webster, Congreve, and Thackeray; and he sums it all up by saying, '*that*, like it or not, is the way to write.' If a dullard were to pursue that practice which Stevenson enjoins, he would at the end of it be probably only, as at the beginning, a 'sedulous ape.' But with Stevenson there was the genius to mould what he had acquired by this painful practice. Mr. Fox said of Mr. Pitt that he himself (Mr. Fox) had always a command of words, but that Mr. Pitt had always a command of the right words; and that is a quality which strikes us so in the style of Stevenson.

I do not know whether his method was easy or laborious. I strongly suspect it may have been laborious; but, which ever it was, he never was satisfied with any word which did not fully embody the idea that he had in his mind, and therefore you have in his style something suggestive, something musical, something pregnant, a splendid vehicle for whatever he had to say. He was not satisfied with style; he infused into his style a spirit which, for want of a better word, I can only call a spirit of irony of the most exquisite kind. He, as you know, adopted a style of diction which reminds us sometimes more of Addison's *Spectator* or Steele's *Tatler* than of the easier and more emotional language of these later days. But as he put into these dignified sentences this spirit which, for want of a better word, I must call irony, he relieved what otherwise might have been heavy. Now, I think you will all recognise what I mean when I speak of this spirit of irony. You will find it in, I think, every page of his

works. I do not mean that of the savage and gruesome parable which has added a household word to the English language, and which is called 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' or 'Mr. Hyde and Dr. Jekyll'; but I will take one instance from one of the works of his highest imagination, 'The New Arabian Nights.' He takes Rudolf out of 'The Mysteries of Paris' and puts him down in London as a plump and respectable Prince of Bohemia, bent on adventure, but comfortably situated, hovering always between the sublime and the ridiculous, till the author at last makes up his mind for the ridiculous and settles him down in a cigar divan. But no one can read the account of Florizel, Prince of Bohemia, without recognising the essential quality of irony which makes Stevenson's style so potent. In some of his books he develops an even more bitter power of the same kind. In 'The Dynamiter' you will find that in a form sometimes in which neither Swift nor Thackeray could have excelled. The picture of the scheming dynamiter, full of the high impulse of his mission, and constantly baffled by the cruel fate of circumstances in his efforts for an exhaustive explosion, is perhaps one of the most powerful instances of sardonic treatment to be met with in the whole history of English literature.

There are two places in the world where Stevenson might fitly be commemorated: one is Edinburgh, and one is Samoa. I suppose that in Samoa some sort of memorial is sure to be raised. But, gathering as I do Stevenson's tastes only from a perusal of his works, there seem to me to have been two passions in his life—one for Scotland—and in Scotland for Edinburgh—and one for the sea. It seems to me that, if some memorial could be raised which should appeal to the passion both for Edinburgh and the sea, we should have done the best thing in carrying out what might have been his wishes in such a connection. But whether that be so or not, of one thing I am certain,—than none of us here, if I may judge from the crowding of this hall and the attitude of this audience, are willing that the time shall pass without some adequate memorial being raised. That is, after all, the materially important point for which we are met—that we should not go down to posterity as a generation that was unaware of the treasure in our midst; and I trust that before long it will be our happiness in Edinburgh to see some

memorial of Robert Louis Stevenson which shall add to the historical interest of our city and to the many shrines of learning and of genius by which it is adorned.

Sir Conan Doyle.

Dr. A. Conan Doyle (to give him the title he bore at that time), in a careful and finely written essay, published in the *National Review*, January 1890, examined with considerable detail 'Mr. Stevenson's Methods in Fiction.' At the outset he spoke of the difficulty of contemporary criticism so far as defining a genuine masterpiece of literature was concerned. But quoting Stevenson's playful remark from the preface of 'Prince Otto,' 'I still purpose by hook or crook, this book or the next, to launch a masterpiece,' Dr. Doyle goes on with fortitude to declare that in 'The Pavilion on the Links' Stevenson had already achieved that worthy ambition:

> 'The Pavilion on the Links' marks the high-water mark of his genius, and is enough in itself, without another line, to give a man a permanent place among the great story-tellers of the race. Mr. Stevenson's style is always most pure, and his imagination is usually vivid, but in this one tale the very happiest use of words is wedded to the most thrilling, most concentrated interest. It would be difficult to name any tale of equal length in which four characters, those of Northmour, Cassilis, the absconding banker and his daughter, stand out so strongly and so clearly—the more Titanic for the lurid background against which they move.

Dr. Doyle also specifies 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' as a masterpiece which will stand almost any test, but thinks that the stories of the three series of 'The New Arabian Nights' are very unequal, many being 'slight and inconsequent to an exasperating extent.'

Proceeding to discuss the radical difference between the art of writing a good novel and that of writing a first-class short tale, he sets it down as 'a very rare thing to find an author who can excel in either art; as rare, probably, as

to find a sculptor who could cut a first-rate cameo, and yet was equally expert at hewing out Titanic groups of figures':

Now Mr. Stevenson has done this. He can claim to have mastered the whole gamut of fiction. His short stories are good, and his long ones are good. On the whole, however, the short ones are the more characteristic, and the more certain to retain their position in English literature. The shorter effort suits his genius. With some choice authors, as with some rare vintages, a sip gives the real flavour better than a draught. It is eminently so with Mr. Stevenson. His novels have all conspicuous virtues, but they have usually some flaw, some drawback, which may weaken their permanent value. In the tales, or at least in the best of the tales, the virtues are as conspicuous as ever, but the flaws have disappeared. The merits of his short stories are more readily assessed, too, as his serious rivals in that field are few indeed. Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Stevenson: those are the three, put them in what order you will, who are the greatest exponents of the short story in our language.

In 'Prince Otto' Dr. Doyle finds Stevenson 'strongly under the influence of George Meredith,' but he proceeds:

A very singular mental reaction took Mr. Stevenson from one pole to the other of imaginative work, from the subtle, dainty lines of 'Prince Otto' to the direct, matter-of-fact, eminently practical and Defoe-like narratives of 'Treasure Island' and of 'Kidnapped.' Both are admirable pieces of English, well conceived, well told, striking the reader at every turn with some novel situation, some new combination of words which just fits the sense as a cap fits a nipple. 'Treasure Island' is perhaps the better story, while 'Kidnapped' may have the longer lease of life as being an excellent and graphic sketch of the state of the Highlands after the last Jacobite insurrection. Each contains one novel and admirable character, Alan Breck in the one, and Long John in the other. Surely John Silver, with his face the size of a ham, and his little gleaming eyes like crumbs of glass in the centre of it, is the king of all seafaring desperadoes.

Observe how the strong effect is produced in his case, seldom by direct assertion on the part of the story-teller, but usually by comparison, innuendo, or indirect reference. The objectionable Billy Bones is haunted by the dread of 'a seafaring man with one leg.' Captain Flint, we are told, was a brave man: 'He was afraid of none, not he, only Silver—*Silver was that genteel.*' Or again, where John himself says, 'There was some that was feared of Pew, and some that was feared of Flint; but Flint his own self was feared of me. Feared he was and proud. They was the roughest crew afloat, was Flint's. The devil himself would have been feared to go to sea with them. Well, now, I tell you, I'm not a boasting man, and you seen yourself how easy I keep company; but when I was quartermaster, *lambs* wasn't the word for Flint's old buccaneers.' So by a touch here and a hint there, there grows upon us the individuality of this smooth-tongued, ruthless, masterful, one-legged devil. He is to us not a creation of fiction, but an organic living reality with whom we have come into contact; such is the effect of the fine suggestive strokes with which he is drawn.

The lack of female interest in these books is pointed out, of course, and while Dr. Doyle can still discern in them 'a touch of the Meredithian manner,' he confesses that we cannot help regarding them as 'an apotheosis of the boy's story—the penny number of our youth *in excelsis.*' He is one of those, however, who admire Stevenson for the very fact of the paucity of his love interest, and regards him as the father of 'the modern masculine novel.' 'In British fiction,' says Dr. Doyle, 'nine books out of ten have held up love and marriage as the be-all and end-all of life. Yet we know, in actual practice, that this is not so.' Of 'The Master of Ballantrae,' he remarks: 'It aims high, and falls very little short of the point aimed at. It may, perhaps, be less graphic than "Kidnapped," and lack the continuous stir of "Treasure Island," but it is broader in its scope, and freer in its handling than either of its predecessors. It contains one carefully elaborated and delicately drawn female figure in Alison Graeme,

whose whole character, in its length and in its perversity, is admirably natural and original. The male characters, too, are a stronger group than he has ever before brought together.'

With the experienced eye of the practised novelist, Dr. Doyle points out one of Stevenson's greatest qualities as a master of fiction, and curiously enough one which his appreciative critics have seldom signalised:

Mr. Stevenson, like one of his own characters, has an excellent gift of silence. He invariably sticks to his story, and is not to be diverted off to discourse upon views of life or theories of the universe. A story-teller's business is to tell his story. If he wishes to air his views upon other matters he can embody them in small independent works, as Mr. Stevenson has done. Where a character gives vent to opinions which throw a light upon his own individuality, that is a different thing, but it is surely intolerable that an author should stop the action of his story to give his own private views upon things in general. Unfortunately, our greatest authors are the worst sinners in this respect. What would be thought of a dramatist who brought his piece to a standstill, while he came in person to the footlights and discoursed upon social inequality or the nebular hypothesis? Mr. Stevenson is too true an artist to fall into this error, with the result that he never loses his hold upon his reader's attention. He has shown that a man may be terse and plain, and yet free himself from all suspicion of being shallow and superficial. No man has a more marked individuality, and yet no man effaces himself more completely when he sets himself to tell a tale.

The methods of Stevenson's prose style are next considered by Dr. Doyle, and many illustrative passages quoted. 'The use of novel and piquant forms of speech is one of the most obvious of his devices,' he says, and 'next in order is his extraordinary faculty for the use of pithy similes, which arrest the attention and stimulate the imagination.' His last word on this side of Stevenson's craftsmanship is:

After all, however, the main characteristic of Stevenson is his

curious instinct for saying in the briefest space just those few words which stamp the impression upon the reader's mind. He will make you see a thing more clearly than you would probably have done had your eyes actually rested upon it.

Mr. S. R. Crockett, for whose Scots stories Stevenson had a warm admiration, had written a paper on the 'Edinburgh Edition'—only one volume of which appeared before Stevenson's death—and this was designed for the *Bookman*, January 1895. But before the magazine was ready for press, R. L. S. had crossed the bar. Mr. Crockett 'tried and failed to revise it in the gloom of the night that came so swiftly to those who loved him.' Thus the article was printed as it originally stood, prefaced by an introduction, from which this paragraph should be quoted as evidence of Stevenson's unfailing interest and sympathy in his fellows of the pen:

S. R. Crockett.—I.

It is true also that I have small right to speak of him. I was little to him; but then he was very much to me. He alone of mankind saw what pleased him in a little book of boyish verses.

Seven years ago he wrote to tell me so. He had a habit of quoting stray lines from it in successive letters to let me see that he remembered what he had praised. Yet he was ever as modest and brotherly as if I had been the great author and he the lad writing love-verses to his sweetheart.

The following paragraphs are selected from the article:

To me the most interesting thing in Mr. Stevenson's books is always Mr. Stevenson himself. Some authors (perhaps the greatest) severely sit with the more ancient gods, and serenely keep themselves out of their books. Most of these authors are dead now. Others put their personalities in, indeed; but would do much better to keep them out. Their futilities and pomposities, pose as they may, are no more interesting than those of the chairman of a prosperous limited company. But there are a

chosen few who cannot light a cigarette or part their hair in a new place without being interesting. Upon such in this life, interviewers bear down in shoals with pencils pointed like spears; and about them as soon as they are dead—lo! begins at once the 'chatter about Harriet.'

Mr. Stevenson is of this company. Rarest of all, his friends have loved and praised him so judiciously that he has no enemies. He might have been the spoiled child of letters. He is only 'all the world's Louis.' The one unforgivable thing in a checkered past is that at one time he wore a black shirt, to which we refuse to be reconciled on any terms.

But when he writes of himself, how supremely excellent is the reading. It is good even when he does it intentionally, as in 'Memories and Portraits.' It is better still when he sings it, as in his 'Child's Garden.' He is irresistible to every lonely child who reads and thrills, and reads again to find his past recovered for him with effortless ease. It is a book never long out of my hands, for only in it and in my dreams, when I am touched with fever, do I grasp the long, long thoughts of a lonely child and a hill-wandering boy—thoughts I never told to any; yet which Mr. Stevenson tells over again to me as if he read them off a printed page. . . .

Mr. Stevenson writes the fascination of his personality into all his most attractive creations, and whenever I miss the incarnation, I miss most of the magic as well. Jim Hawkins is only 'the Lantern-Bearer' of North Berwick links translated into the language of adventure on the high seas—the healthier also for the change. I love Jim Hawkins. On my soul I love him more even than Alan Breck. He is the boy we should all like to have been, though no doubt David Balfour is much more like the boys we were—without the piety and the adventures. I read Stevenson in every line of 'Treasure Island.' It is of course mixed of Erraid and the island discovered by Mr. Daniel Defoe. But we love anything of such excellent breed, and the crossing only improves it. Our hearts dance when Mr. Stevenson lands his cut-throats, with one part of himself as hero and the other as villain. John Silver is an admirable villain, for he is just the author genially cutting throats. Even when he pants three times as he sends the knife home, we do

not entirely believe in his villainy. We expect to see the murdered seaman about again and hearty at his meals in the course of a chapter or two. John is a villain at great expense and trouble to himself; but we like him personally, and are prepared to sit down and suck an apple with him, even when he threatens to stove in our 'thundering old blockhouse, and them as dies will be the lucky ones.' In our hearts we think the captain was a little hard on him. We know that it is Mr. Stevenson all the time, and are terrified exactly like a three-year-old who sees his father take a rug over his head and 'be a bear.' The thrill is delicious, for there is just an off chance that after all the thing may turn out to be a bear; but still we are pretty easy that at the play's end the bearskin will be tossed aside, the villain repent, and John Silver get off with a comfortable tale of pieces of eight.

No book has charted more authentically the topographical features of the kingdom of Romance than 'Treasure Island.' Is that island in the South or in the North Atlantic? Is it in the 'Spanish main'? What *is* the Spanish main? Is it in the Atlantic at all? Or is it a jewel somewhere in the wide Pacific, or strung on some fringe of the Indian Ocean? Who knows or cares? Jim Hawkins is there. His luck, it is true, is something remarkable. His chances are phenomenal. His imagination, like ours, is running free, and we could go on for ever hearing about Jim. We can trust Jim Hawkins, and void of care we follow his star. . . .

Again, Alan Breck is ever Alan, and bright shines his sword; but he is never quite Jim Hawkins to me. Nor does he seem even so point-device in 'Catriona' as he was in the round-house or with his foot on the heather. But wherever Alan Breck goes or David Balfour follows, thither I am ready to fare forth, unquestioning and all-believing.

Five years after penning the above, Mr. S. R. Crockett again wrote in the *Bookman* (London), December 1899, the following deeply interesting paper on the two volumes of Stevenson's 'Letters' which had been published just then:

Out of these noble volumes of Stevenson letters two things come to me of new, of which the first is the more important. Before and above all else, these books (with their appendage, the Vailima correspondence) are the record of as noble a friendship as I know of in letters. And perhaps, as following from this, we have here a Stevenson without shadows. Not even a full statue, but rather a medallion in low relief—as it were, the St. Gaudens bust done into printer's ink.

S. R. Crockett.—II.

It is difficult to say precisely what one feels, with Mr. Colvin (and long may he be spared) still in the midst of us. And yet I cannot help putting it on record that what impresses me most in these volumes, wherein are so many things lovely and of good report, is the way in which, in order that one friend may shine like a city set on a hill, the other friend consistently retires himself into deepest shade. Yet all the same Mr. Colvin is ever on the spot. You can trace him on every page—emergent only when an explanation must be made, never saying a word too much, obviously in possession of all the facts, but desirous of no reward or fame or glory to himself if only Tusitala continue to shine the first among his peers. Truly there is a love not perhaps *sur*passing the love of women, but certainly *passing* it, in that it is different in kind and degree.

Obviously, however, Mr. Colvin often wounded with the faithful wounds of a friend, and sometimes in return he was blessed, and sometimes he was banned. But always the next letter made it all right.

To those outside of his family and familiars, Stevenson was always a charming and sometimes a regular correspondent. To myself, with no claim upon him save that of a certain instinctive mutual liking, he wrote with the utmost punctuality every two months from 1888 to the week of his death.

It is the irony of fate that about thirty of these letters lie buried somewhere beneath, above, or behind an impenetrable barrier of twenty-five thousand books. In a certain great 'flitting' conducted by village workmen, these manuscripts disappeared, and have so far eluded all research. But at the next upturning of the Universe, I doubt not they will come to light and be available for Mr. Colvin's twentieth

edition. It was a great grief to me that I had no more to contribute besides those few but precious documents which appear in their places in the second volume of 'Letters to Family and Friends.'

Albeit, in spite of every such blank, here is such richness as has not been in any man's correspondence since Horace Walpole's—yet never, like his, acidly-based, never razor-edged; never, for all Stevenson's Edinburgh extraction, either west-endy or east-windy. Here in brief are two books, solid, sane, packed with wit and kindliness, and filled full of the very height of living.

Not all of Stevenson is here—it seems to me, not even the greater part of Stevenson. Considered from one point of view, there is more of the depths of the real Stevenson in a single chapter of Miss Eve Simpson's 'Edinburgh Days,' especially in the chapter entitled 'Life at Twenty-five,' than in any of these seven hundred and fifty fair pages. But with such a friend as Mr. Colvin this was inevitable. He has carried out that finest of the maxims of amity, 'Censure your friend in private, praise him in public!' And, indeed, if ever man deserved to be praised, it was Stevenson. So generous was he, so ready to be pleased with other men's matters, so hard to satisfy with his own, a child among children, a man among men, a king among princes. Yet, all the same, anything of the nature of a play stirred him to the shoe soles, down to that last tragic bowl of salad and bottle of old Burgundy on the night before he died. He was a fairy prince and a peasant boy in one. Aladdin with an old lamp under his arm always ready to be rubbed, while outside his window Jack's beanstalk went clambering heavenward a foot every five minutes.

All the same, it gives one a heartache—even those of us who knew him least—to think that no more of these wide sheets, close written and many times folded, will ever come to us through the post. And what the want must be to those who knew him longer and better, to Mr. Colvin, Mr. Gosse, Mr. Henley, only they know.

For myself, I am grateful for every word set down here. It is all sweet, and true, and gracious. The heaven seems kinder to the earth while we read, and in the new portrait Tusitala's large

dark eyes gleam at us from beneath the penthouse of his brows with a gipsy-like and transitory suggestion.

'The Sprite,' some one called him. And it was a true word. For here he had no continuing city. Doubtless, though, he lightens some Farther Lands with his bright wit, and such ministering spirits as he may cross on his journeying are finding him good company. *Talofa, Tusitala;* do not go very far away. We too would follow you down the 'Road of Loving Hearts.'

Mr. S. R. Crockett dedicates 'The Stickit Minister's Wooing,' published in 1900, to 'the well-beloved memory of R. L. S.' In a notable preface, headed 'A Look Behind —and Forward,' Mr. Crockett writes:

S. R. Crockett.—III.

Mr. Stevenson and I had been in occasional communication since about the year 1886, when, in a small volume of verse issued during the early part of that year, the fragment of a 'Transcript from the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's,' chanced to attract his attention. He wrote immediately, with that beautiful natural generosity of appreciation of his, to ask the author to finish his translation in verse, and to proceed to other dramatic passages, some of which, chiefly from Isaiah and Job, he specified. I remember that 'When the morning stars sang together' was one of those indicated, and 'O, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted,' another. 'I have tried my hand at them myself,' he added kindly; 'but they were not so good as your Shulamite.'

After this he made me more than once the channel of his practical charity to certain poor miner-folk, whom disaster had rendered homeless and penniless on the outskirts of his beloved Glencorse.

A year or two afterwards, having in the intervals of other work written down certain countryside stories, which managed to struggle into print in rather obscure corners, I collected these into a volume, under the title of 'The Stickit Minister and Some Common Men.' Then after the volume was through the

press, in a sudden gulp of venturesomeness I penned a dedication.

TO

Robert Louis Stevenson

OF SCOTLAND AND SAMOA,
I DEDICATE THESE STORIES OF THAT
GREY GALLOWAY LAND
WHERE
ABOUT THE GRAVES OF THE MARTYRS
THE WHAUPS ARE CRYING—
HIS HEART REMEMBERS HOW.

Still much fearing and trembling, how needlessly I guessed not then, I packed up and despatched a copy to Samoa. Whereupon, after due interval, there came back to these shores a letter—the sense of which reached me deviously—not to myself but to his friend, Mr. Sidney Colvin. 'If I could only be buried in the hills, under the heather, and a table tombstone like the martyrs; "where the whaups and plovers are crying!" Did you see a man who wrote "The Stickit Minister," and dedicated it to me, in words that brought the tears to my eyes every time I looked at them? "Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying—his heart remembers how." Ah, by God, it does! Singular that I should fulfil the Scots destiny throughout, and live a voluntary exile and have my head filled with the blessed, beastly place all the time!' . . .

Curiously enough, it was not from Samoa, but from Honolulu, that I first received tidings that my little volume had not miscarried. It was quite characteristic of Mr. Stevenson not to answer at once: 'I let my letters accumulate till I am leaving a place,' he said to me more than once; 'then I lock myself in with them, and my cries of penitence can be heard a mile!'

In a San Francisco paper there appeared a report of a speech he had made to some kindly Scots who entertained him in Honolulu. In it he spoke affectionately of 'The Stickit Minister.' I have, alas! lost the reference now, but at the time it took me by the throat. I could not get over the sheer kindness of the thing.

Then came a letter and a poem, both very precious to me: 'Thank you from my heart, and see with what dull pedantry I have been tempted to extend your beautiful phrase of prose into three indifferent stanzas:

'Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain are flying;
Blows the wind on the moors to-day and now,
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying—
My heart remembers how!

Grey recumbent tombs of the dead in desert places,
Standing Stones on the vacant wine-red moor;
Hills of sheep, and the howes of the silent vanished races,
And winds austere and pure!

Be it granted me to behold you again in dying,
Hills of home! and to hear again the call—
Hear about the graves of the martyrs the pee-wees crying,
And hear no more at all!'

To me, in the all too brief days that remained to him, he wrote letter after letter of criticism, encouragement, and praise (in which last, as was his wont, he let his kind heart run far ahead of his judgment). It goes to my heart now not to quote from these, for they are in some wise my poor patent of nobility. But, perhaps with more wisdom, I keep them by me, to hearten myself withal when the days of darkness grow too many and too dark.

So much for bush to this second draught of countryside vintage—the more easily forgiven that it tells of the generosity of a dead man whom I loved. But and if in any fields Elysian or grey twilight of shades, I chance to meet with Robert Louis Stevenson, I know that I shall find him in act to help over some ghostly stile the halt, the maimed, and the faint of heart—even as in these late earthly years he did for me—and for many another.

For the *Bookman*, February 1895, 'Ian Maclaren' wrote a little article entitled 'In Memoriam: R. L. S.,' the opening paragraphs of which may be fitly quoted here:

When one came in with omens of sadness on his face and

told us that Stevenson was dead, each man had a sense of personal bereavement. None of us had ever seen him, save one—and that was long ago; none of us had ever read a letter of his writing, save one, and he ransacked his memory for the least word. We had no 'eagle's feather' to show; there was nothing between this man and us save the mystical tie that binds a writer and his readers in the kingdom of letters. He had led us in through the ivory gate, and shown us things eye had not seen; and all his service had been given at a great cost of suffering. Filled with the enthusiasm of his art, he beat back death time after time, and only succumbed, like J. R. Green and Symonds, his brethren in letters and affliction, after he had achieved imperishable fame. '*Monumentum ære perennius.*'

'Ian Maclaren.'

Mr. Stevenson had not to complain, with Sir Thomas More, that readers of books were so 'unkind and ungenial that though they take great pleasure and delectation in the work, yet, for all that, they cannot find in their hearts to love the author thereof'; for though he was exiled from his native land, yet he lived in the heart of every reading man, not only because he was a great writer, but also because he was a good man with faith in God and man.

Mr. David Christie Murray published in 1897 a volume containing a series of literary studies under the general title of 'My Contemporaries in Fiction.' The third of the series was devoted to R. L. Stevenson. Mr. Murray writes:

I have special and private reasons for thinking warmly of Robert Louis Stevenson, the man; and these reasons seem to give me some added warrant for an attempt to do justice to Robert Louis Stevenson, the writer. With the solitary exception of the unfortunate cancelled letters from Samoa, which were written whilst he was in ill-health, and suffered a complete momentary eclipse of style, he has scarcely published a line which may not afford the most captious reader pleasure. With that sole exception he was always an artist in his work, and always showed

David Christie Murray.

himself alive to the finger-tips. He was in constant, conscious search of felicities in expression, and his taste was exquisitely just. His discernment in the use of words kept equal pace with his invention—he knew at once how to be fastidious and daring. It is to be doubted if any writer has laboured with more constancy to enrich and harden the texture of his style, and at the last a page of his was like cloth of gold for purity and solidity.

This is the praise which the future critics of English literature will award him. But in the age of critical hysteria it is not enough to yield a man the palm for his own qualities. With regard to Stevenson our professional guides have gone fairly demented, and it is worth while to make an effort to give him the place he has honestly earned before the inevitable reaction sets in, and unmerited laudations have brought about an unmerited neglect. His life was arduous. His meagre physical means and his fervent spirit were pathetically ill-mated. It was impossible to survey his career without a sympathy which trembled from admiration to pity. Certain, in spite of all precaution, to die young, and in the face of that stern fact genially and unconquerably brave, he exhorted love. Let the whole virtue of this truth be acknowledged, and let it stand in excuse for praises which have been carried beyond the limits of absurdity. It is hard to exercise a sober judgment where the emotions are brought strongly into play. The inevitable tragedy of Stevenson's fate, the unescapable assurance that he would not live to do all which such a spirit in a sounder frame would have done for an art he loved so fondly, the magnetism of his friendship, his downright incapacity for envy, his genuine humility with regard to his own work and reputation, his unboastful and untiring courage, made a profound impression upon many of his contemporaries. It is, perhaps, small wonder if critical opinion were in part moulded by such influences as these. Errors of judgment thus induced are easily condoned. They are at least a million times more respectable than the mendacities of the publisher's tout, or the ecstasies of the rollers of logs and the grinders of axes.

Mr. Murray then proceeds to discuss the folly of com-

paring not only Stevenson but half a dozen writers of the day with Sir Walter Scott. He submits a just and unquestionable estimate of Scott's greatness, and condemns the comparison between Scott and Stevenson as 'absurd and damaging.' He says:

The comparison, which has been urged so often, will not stand a moment's examination. Stevenson is not a great creative artist. He is not an epoch-maker. He cannot be set shoulder to shoulder with any of the giants. It is no defect in him which prompts this protest. Except in the sense in which his example of purity, delicacy, and finish in verbal work will inspire other artists, Stevenson will have no imitators, as original men always have. He has 'done delicious things,' but he has done nothing new. He has with astonishing labour and felicity built a composite style out of the style of every good writer of English. Even in a single page he sometimes reflects many manners. He is the embodiment of the literary as distinguished from the originating intellect. His method is almost perfect, but it is devoid of personality. He says countless things which are the very echo of Sir Walter's epistolary manner. He says things like Lamb, and sometimes they are as good as the original could have made them. He says things like Defoe, like Montaigne, like Rochefoucauld. His bouquet is culled in every garden, and set in leaves which have grown in all forests of literature. He is deft, apt, sprightly, and always sincerely a man. He is just and brave, and essentially a gentleman. He has the right imitative romance, and he can so blend Defoe and Dickens with a something of himself which is almost, but not quite, creative, that he can present you with a blind old Pew or a John Silver. He is a *littérateur* born—and made. A verbal invention is meat and drink to him. There are places where you see him actively in pursuit of one, as when Markheim stops the clock with 'an interjected finger,' or when John Silver's half-shut, cunning, and cruel eye sparkles 'like a crumb of glass.' Stevenson has run across the channel for that crumb, and it is worth the journey.

Stevenson certainly had that share of genius which belongs to the man who can take infinite pains. Add to this a beautiful

personal character, and an almost perfect receptivity. Add again the power of sympathetic realisation in a purely literary sense, and you have the man. Let me make my last addition clear. It is a common habit of his to think as his literary favourites would have thought. He could think like Lamb. He could think like Defoe. He could even fuse two minds in this way, and make, as it were, a composite mind for himself to think with. His intellect was of a rare and delicate sort, and whilst he was essentially a reproducer, he was in no sense an imitator, or even for a single second a plagiarist. He had an alembic of his own which made old things new. His best possession was that very real sense of proportion which was at the root of all his humour. 'Why doesn't God explain these things to a gentleman like me?' There, a profound habitual reverence of mind suddenly encounters with a ludicrous perception of his own momentary self-importance. The two electric opposites meet, and emit that flash of summer lightning.

Stevenson gave rare honour to his work, and the artist who shows his self-respect in that best of ways will always be respected by the world. He has fairly won our affection and esteem, and we give them ungrudgingly. In seeming to belittle him I have taken an ungrateful piece of work in hand. But in the long run a moderately just estimate of a good man's work is of more service to his reputation than a strained laudation can be.

Mr. Israel Zangwill, in a contribution to the *Critic* (New York), February 1895, writes thus of the author whose death had so recently thrown a shadow on the world of letters:

Israel Zangwill.

'Upwards—towards the peaks. Towards the stars. And towards the great silence.' These words might have been prophetic of the end of Stevenson. Thus did they bear him towards his grave on the Samoan mountain-top—upwards, towards the peaks and the stars and the great silence. If a writer is, as Stevenson contended, the writer who writes finely on a broomstick, then we have lost our greatest writer. Nor, since Elia was laid in the

little churchyard at Edmonton, have we had a more lovable figure than the dainty, whimsical essayist who travelled with a donkey in the Cevennes, or discoursed in delicate English 'for lads and virgins.' It was not only weakness of lungs that drove him to Samoa. It was a natural aversion from civilisation. He was, indeed, something of an anarchist, this genial author of 'The Dynamiters'; and 'this business of living in towns,' as he put it, was counter to the vagabond instincts that preferred a sack in the woods to a bed in a grand hotel. He loved savagery, the elemental simplicity of woods and waters, with that passion which it takes the highest culture to develop. And far from the grinding of printing-presses, by reef and palm, he wove his cunning web of magic phrase for the delectation of Princes Street and the Strand. He mistrusted the garnered sciences of the schools, had conceptions of a great open encyclopædia of experience, so that to con the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid and to hear the band play in the gardens were equally studious.

It was this strain of Bohemianism, this pervasive sense of the romantic and the picaresque, that gave him an interest in rogues, set him writing an essay on Villon, and probing in many a creation the psychology of the scoundrel, for whose virtues he had a tender, anxious eye. That women did not cut any figure in his books springs from this same interest in the elemental. Women are not born, but made. They are a social product of infinite complexity and delicacy. For a like reason Stevenson was no interpreter of the modern. His one contribution to fiction in this aspect is his sense of the romantic possibilities lurking beneath the surface prose of great cities: for him London was Babylon in more than the preacher's meaning. He could make-believe that Rupert Street was in Arabia, and that Haroun al Raschid was supping at the Criterion. A child to the end, always playing at 'make-believe,' dying young as those whom the gods love, and as he would have died had he achieved his centenary, he was the natural exponent in literature of the child. His nursery rhymes are literature for men, and his essay, 'The Lantern-Bearers,' his imaginative interpretation of childhood, opens out into a wonderful exposure of the fallacy of 'realistic' fiction. That and 'Pulvis et Umbra' constitute his highest

flights in the emotional essay, for to the lucent graces of the style there is added here an answering dignity of vital matter.

As a rule his essays lack that power of abstract thinking which gives body to Hazlitt's. To think in the abstract was indeed not his *métier*. He saw things in the concrete, through individual images luminously objective. When he went on his 'Inland Voyage' through French by-ways, he had no such reflections as befell the estimable Arthur Young. The wealth of nations is indifferent to him, statistics delight him not, nor sociology neither. The peasant proprietor draws for him no generalisation; he paddles his own canoe and thinks amiably of supper. He meets an impecunious vagrom actor, and all his latest Bohemianism swells in sympathy. The old mummer's cheerfulness reconciles him to life. Stevenson had, indeed, no philosophy of life except that it is worth living, and so he may claim to have avoided the fallacy which *latet in generalibus*. The concrete endures where philosophy fades. The same lack of general conceptions permeates his admirable novels. They are all amplified anecdotes, and all compact of those perils and adventures on which a sickly person naturally broods longingly, and he has set a whole school of disciples (with no such excuse of valetudinarianism) brooding on blood and writing in the reddest of inks. His Scotch romances have been as overpraised by the zealous Scotchmen who cry 'Genius' at the sight of a kilt, and who lose their heads at a waft from the heather, as his other books have been underpraised. The best of all, 'The Master of Ballantrae,' ends in a bog; and where the author aspires to exceptional subtlety of character-drawing, he befogs us or himself altogether. We are so long weighing the brothers Ballantrae in the balance, watching it incline now this way, now that, scrupulously removing a particle of our sympathy from the one brother to the other, to restore it again in the next chapter, that we end with a conception of them as confusing as Mr. Gilbert's description of Hamlet, who was 'idiotically sane with lucid intervals of lunacy.'

Stevenson's *leit-motifs* are few and persistent. A buried treasure; a boy on an island (note how *le bon Dieu* gave him an island to play with and die in); a brave but stockish young man who is ready to risk his life for a lady whose love for him he fails

to perceive (how this patent has been copied!); the companionability of rogues with honest men in their common peril; the fantastic possibilities of the modern—of such is his stock-in-trade. But what wonderful bits of colour in some of his romances! Who can ever forget Alan Breck's match at the pipes, or the auction-scene in 'The Wrecker'? In these later books of adventure Mr. Stevenson tries for a new thing, for which he has had scant credit. He seeks to combine the novel of character with the novel of adventure; to develop character through romantic action, and to bring out your hero at the end of the episode, not the fixed character he was at the beginning, as is the way of adventure books, but a modified creature. This is especially notable in 'The Ebb-Tide,' that marvellous study of the 'Macaberesque.' Still it is his essays and his personality, rather than his novels, that will count with posterity. On the whole, a great provincial writer. Whether he has that inherent grip which makes a man's provinciality the very source of his strength, so that, as with 'The Vicar of Wakefield' and 'The Arabian Nights,' the provincial merges in the universal, only the centuries can show.

Mr. A. T. Quiller-Couch ('Q.') was writing a weekly causerie in the *Speaker* at the time of Stevenson's death, and in the issue of December 22, 1894, his article took the shape of an 'In Memoriam' tribute to the author whose unexpected end had just been reported in a brief cablegram. The article is reprinted in Mr. Quiller-Couch's book, 'Adventures in Criticism,' from which we quote. He begins by mentioning the sense of personal loss which came home to the hearts of Stevenson's fellow-workers in the field of letters at news of his death, and goes on to say:

A. T. Quiller-Couch.

While he lived, he moved men to put their utmost even into writings that quite certainly would never meet his eye. Surely another age will wonder over this curiosity of letters—that for five years the needle of literary endeavour in Great Britain has

quivered towards a little island in the South Pacific, as to its magnetic pole.

Yet he founded no school, though most of us from time to time have poorly tried to copy him. He remained altogether inimitable, yet never seemed conscious of his greatness. It was native of him to rejoice in the successes of other men at least as much as in his own triumphs. One almost felt that, so long as good books were written, it was no great concern to him whether he or others wrote them. Born with an artist's craving for beauty of expression, he achieved that beauty with infinite pains. Confident in romance and in the beneficence of joy, he cherished the flame of joyous romance with more than Vestal fervour, and kept it ardent in a body which Nature, unkind from the beginning, seemed to delight in visiting with more unkindness—a 'soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed' almost from birth. And his books leave the impression that he did this chiefly from a sense of duty: that he laboured and kept the lamp alight chiefly because, for the time, other and stronger men did not.

Had there been another Scott, another Dumas—if I may change the image—to take up the torch of romance and run with it, I doubt if Stevenson would have offered himself. I almost think in that case he would have consigned with Nature and sat at ease, content to read of new Ivanhoes and new D'Artagnans: for—let it be said again—no man had less of the ignoble itch for merely personal success. Think, too, of what the struggle meant for him: how it drove him unquiet about the world, if somewhere he might meet with a climate to repair the constant drain upon his vitality; and how at last it flung him, as by a 'sudden freshet,' upon Samoa—to die 'far from Argos, dear land of home.'

And then consider the brave spirit that carried him—the last of a great race—along this far and difficult path; for it is the man we must consider now, not, for the moment, his writings. Fielding's voyage to Lisbon was long and tedious enough; but almost the whole of Stevenson's life has been a voyage to Lisbon, a voyage in the very penumbra of death. Yet Stevenson spoke always as gallantly as his great predecessor. Their 'cheerful stoicism,' which allies his books with the best British breeding, will keep them classical as long as our nation shall value

breeding. It shines to our dim eyes now, as we turn over the familiar pages of 'Virginibus Puerisque,' and from page after page —in sentences and fragments of sentences—'It is not altogether ill with the invalid after all.' . . . 'Who would project a serial novel after Thackeray and Dickens had each fallen in mid-course?' [*He* had two books at least in hand and uncompleted, the papers say.] 'Who would find heart enough to begin to live, if he dallied with the consideration of death?' . . . 'What sorry and pitiful quibbling all this is!' . . . 'It is better to live and be done with it, than to die daily in the sick-room. By all means, begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates over a month, make one brave push and see what can be accomplished in a week. . . . For surely, at whatever age it overtake the man, this is to die young. . . The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.'

As it was in 'Virginibus Puerisque,' so is it in the last essay in his last book of essays: 'And the Kingdom of Heaven is of the child-like, of those who are easy to please, who love and who give pleasure. Mighty men of their hands, the smiters, and the builders, and the judges, have lived long and done sternly, and yet preserved this lovely character; and among our carpet interests and twopenny concerns, the shame were indelible if *we* should lose it. *Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality; they are the perfect duties.*' . . .

I remember now (as one remembers little things at such times) that, when first I heard of his going to Samoa, there came into my head (Heaven knows why) a trivial, almost ludicrous passage from his favourite, Sir Thomas Browne: a passage beginning 'He was fruitlessly put in hope of advantage by change of Air, and imbibing the pure Aërial Nitre of those Parts; and therefore, being so far spent, he quickly found Sardinia in Tivoli, and the most healthful air of little effect, where Death had set her Broad Arrow.' . . . A statelier sentence of the same author occurs to me now—'To live, indeed, is to be again ourselves, which being not only a hope, but an evidence in noble believers, it is all one to lie in St. Innocent's Churchyard, as in the sands of Egypt. Ready

to be anything in the ecstacy of being ever, and as content with six foot as the *moles* of Adrianus.'

This one lies, we are told, on a mountain-top overlooking the Pacific. At first it seemed so much easier to distrust a news agency than to accept Stevenson's loss. 'O captain, my captain!' . . . One needs not be an excellent writer to feel that writing will be thankless work, now that Stevenson is gone. But the papers by this time leave no room for doubt. 'A grave was dug on the summit of Mount Vaea, thirteen hundred feet above the sea. The coffin was carried up the hill by Samoans with great difficulty, a track having to be cut through the thick bush which covers the side of the hill from the base to the peak.' For the good of man, his father and grandfather planted the high sea-lights upon the Inchcape and the Tyree coast. He, the last of their line, nursed another light and tended it. Their lamps still shine upon the Bell Rock and the Skerryvore; and—though in alien seas, upon a rock of exile—this other light shall continue, unquenchable by age, beneficent, serene.

In 1890 Mr. John A. Steuart published a series of 'Letters to Living Authors.' From the letter addressed to R. L. Stevenson we quote the following passages:

John A. Steuart.

Public men, it was not long ago observed, are public property; this is peculiarly the case with authors. I do not exceed my proprietary rights, then, in glancing briefly at what you have accomplished, and examining the ground whereon your fame rests. You have been active in many departments. According to your own statement, you have written innumerable dramas, which have never seen the light. Presumably they were not worth publishing; for it is not your habit to withhold anything that could be of any possible interest to your literary admirers. So considerate are you in this respect, indeed, that at an early age you have given the world personal memoirs such as most authors reserve either for posthumous publication, or for publication at the very close of their careers. But there is no valid reason in the world why an author should not publish his memoirs when it suits him; and the time is perhaps at hand when a writer will make his first appeal to the public with a volume of gossip about his

baby playmates and the troubles of teething-time. Your memoirs, though not without a touch of egotism, as some think, are so interesting that we shall be glad to have more when you have matter and leisure.

Your chief work, however, has been in the realms of poetry, criticism, and romance. I dare say you would yourself be readiest to acknowledge that, if you had not been first favourably known as a prose writer, your poetry would hardly have gained you recognition. You have publicly attributed your success to your dire industry; and it is in reading your poetry, rather than your prose, that we see how just is your estimate of your own endowments. 'An infinite capacity for taking trouble' does not always fitly take the place of inspiration. In your 'A Child's Garden of Verses' there are many neat, sweet, and happy little things suited to the tender age of childhood, but nothing, or very little, that would prove nutritious at a maturer period of life. . . .

In 'Underwoods' you take a more ambitious flight, and as ambition, while carrying a man triumphantly over many obstacles, exhibits his weakness no less than his strength, so in this book the limitations of your genius are sharply emphasised. Throughout the volume the mighty impress of Burns, to quote a phrase from Mr. Lowell, is distinctly visible. . . . In short, the work is imitative, and hardly takes high rank for originality. Perhaps it was merely a *tour de force*. If so, we may read it and enjoy it, and lay it aside, treating it in no more serious spirit than did the author.

In criticism you show to more advantage. To be sure, you are not absolutely without bias, and a biassed critic is not to be implicitly trusted. You have called 'Tom Jones' dull, and thereby drawn down on yourself the solemn admonitions of Mr. Augustine Birrell, and the sportful and partial anger of your friend, Mr. Andrew Lang. We cannot let you call the work of Henry Fielding dull and rank you as a great critic. But you have made amends for this little fantasy by being judicial in other directions.

Your judgments on Scott, and Dumas, and Victor Hugo, and Hawthorne are, in the main, just; you have sufficient perspicacity to see, and sufficient candour to acknowledge, that Zola is not

a blockhead; and you have courageously condemned the moral delinquencies of your poetic model, Burns. But while you have done something in verse, and given us one or two volumes of agreeable criticism, your true sphere is fiction. It is on your romances that you would yourself rest your claim to fame; and it is as a writer of romance that you are most widely known and most warmly admired.

When 'Kidnapped,' which, I understand, you consider your 'best, indeed your only good, story,' was published, one enthusiastic journal said it was as good as anything in Carlyle, and far truer. I confess the aptness of the remark did not strike me on perusing the book; but that is of little consequence. Another journal, equally generous, called it as good as 'Rob Roy.' This last was very high praise indeed, and must have been peculiarly gratifying to you for three reasons—first, because the journal which gave the verdict was one of weight and influence; second, because you place Scott at the head of all writers of romance; and third, because 'Rob Roy' is, on your own confession, an especial favourite of yours. That you could wholly agree with the verdict, however, is more than I believe, for you can hardly imagine yourself just yet entitled to share Sir Walter's pedestal.

For myself, on reading 'Kidnapped' I did not think it quite as good as 'Rob Roy.' But I thought that for a boy's book it was in many respects too good—that your fine gift of characterisation was virtually thrown away; for, as you once observed yourself, boys do not care much for the study of character. If they did, there would be but a poor chance for some books which are enjoying considerable popularity. It struck me, then, that your study of character was too fine, especially your study of the character of Alan Breck Stewart. But while thinking this, the manner in which that gentleman is drawn gave me the keenest delight. 'Here,' I said to myself, curiously enough anticipating Mr. Augustine Birrell,—'here we have another splendid portrait added to the gallery of Scottish heroes of fiction.' That was my first impression. Further reflection, however, brought an ugly suspicion that the portrait was not entirely original after all; that, in fact, it had merely been taken down and touched up according to the latest canons in art. I

felt as if I had met the redoubtable Alan Breck somewhere before; in other vestments, it is true, and engaged in other pursuits, but surely the same man. Where had I seen him? Was it in some previous state of existence, or only in a dream of the night? Sudden as a flash came the revelation. To be sure, I had either seen him or his double before,—once when he was surreptitiously lifting his neighbour's cattle, and again when he was holding complacent argument,—like the daring rascal that he was—with a magistrate in the Tolbooth of Glasgow. 'Ah, eh, oh!' I exclaimed, falling, in my surprise, into the manner and dialect of the worthy Bailie Nicol Jarvie. 'My conscience, it's impossible—and yet—no! conscience, it canna be; and yet again—Deil hae me! that I should say sae, ye robber, ye cateran—ye born deevil that ye are to a' bad ends and nae guid ane—can this be you?' and calmly came the laconic rejoinder, 'E'en as ye see.' I may be mistaken, but it certainly seems to me that the lineaments of Mr. Stewart too distinctly suggest those of Mr. Macgregor. However, while saying this, let me hasten to confess that I think 'Kidnapped' the most delightfully written boy's book which has appeared for at least a decade. It is the work of one who is an artist, and not a mere sensation-monger. . . .

Besides novels and tales you have written short stories, in which you have done yourself perfect justice. With the single exception of Mr. Thomas Hardy, no living British writer so well understands, or so well succeeds in, this extremely difficult branch of fiction as yourself. . . .

And now, just a word regarding your work in general. Mr. Andrew Lang has stated that, since Thackeray, no English man of letters has been gifted with, or has acquired, so charming or original a style as yours. That is substantially true. Your style is facile, quaint, and suggestive; often it is brilliant, and always distinctive. Moreover, it has that subtle charm which lures one on one knows not how. In drilling yourself in the art of the novelist you have studied widely, and one sees in your work the influence of many masters. You have borrowed something from Hugo, from Dumas, from Scott, from Poe, from Hawthorne, and many others. But in the matter of style you are chiefly indebted to Hawthorne—the best stylist, to my

mind, in the entire range of that huge mass of fiction which is widely styled English. . . .

Nor in the enumeration of your qualities should your humour be forgotten. Nothing is rarer in literature than true humour; and in these days of spasmodic and dreary jesting, when the Comic Muse so often presents the appearance of a draggled and broken-winded jade—when her skirts are so often foul with the mire of the slums, and her breath hot with the fumes of the pot-house, it is pleasant to meet her in her native state,—trim, light, graceful, and clean,—a shepherdess in her laughing robes. Your humour is genuine and spontaneous, and pervades all you write. It does not show itself in caricature, nor in horse-play, but rises naturally from the heart of the matter like a gushing spring from the hard rock to refresh the thirsty wayfarer. It is in your humour that you are most original, and perhaps most delicious.

In a short paper on 'Some Letters of Bret Harte,' contributed by Mrs. A. S. Boyd to *Harper's Magazine*, October 1902, the following occurs:

Bret Harte.

He (Bret Harte) was a constant buyer and reader of fiction, and while hypercritical regarding his own work, all that was worthy in the writings of other men roused him to enthusiasm. On its appearance in September 1893, 'Catriona' awoke his warmest admiration. Calling one day after reading the opening chapters, he spoke highly of his increasing interest in the story, and suggested lending us his copy when he had finished reading it.

Next day he hurried in, carrying a brand-new 'Catriona.'

'You must read this. I haven't read all mine yet, but I want you to read "Catriona" right away now, so I bought you a copy. It's simply delightful!'

In Mr. Coulson Kernahan's book of essays on literary subjects, 'Wise Men and a Fool,' published in 1901, the place of honour is given to 'The Soul of an Artist: Robert Louis Stevenson as revealed in his Letters.' The paper originally appeared in the *London Quarterly Review*.

What follows is the first and most noteworthy part of the study.

'There is but one art—to omit! Oh! if I knew how to omit, I would ask no other knowledge. A man who knew how to omit would make an "Iliad" of a daily paper.'

So wrote Stevenson to his cousin, Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson, in 1883. The passage is characteristic of him of whom it might be said that, although he loved his wife devotedly, and was devotedly loved by her in return, the very soul of him was celibate—celibate in the sense that his life was, from the outset, consecrated to his art.

Coulson Kernahan.

'I sleep upon my art for a pillow,' he wrote to Mr. Henley; 'I waken in my art; I am unready for death because I hate to leave it. I love my wife, I do not know how much, nor can, nor shall, unless I lost her; but while I can conceive my being widowed, I refuse the offering of life without my art. I *am* not but in my art; it is me; I am the body of it merely.'

That those who label him egoist are right in so doing I am by no means sure. It is true that he assumed each of his correspondents would be as interested in his art as he was himself, and that news of work done, work on hand, and work projected, fills no small space in his letters. But this does not argue egotism, else were it egotism for a lover to sing of his mistress, a devotee to speak of things sacred. The egotism would have been more apparent had Stevenson not spoken thus freely of his work, for your egotist is generally a *poseur*. And the very frankness of Stevenson's letters, the very *abandon* of them, should give pause to all who carry slings wherewith to cast stones at egotism, lest, in their haste, they make a target of an innocent man.

Considering the self-consciousness with which he wrote—though 'tis but fair to say that this self-consciousness was afterwards in a measure outgrown—the only cause for wonder is that he is never caught in a 'pose.'

To Stevenson—if only by virtue of his rare sense of humour and his even rarer capacity for self-criticism—the gentle art of attitudinising was an impossible accomplishment. Had one of the many Stevensons who were the tenants of his frail body

been caught by a brother-sprite and co-tenant in the act of tricking himself out and attitudinising before a mirror, we may be sure that the mannikin had been made to dance to the tune of a whip's lash.

That one of these many Stevensons—whether the angel or the animal (and he had not been the man he was but for a healthy dash of the brute), the moralist or the jest-maker, who shall say?—had a touch of vanity in him, there is no denying. But vanity is a spice that, provided it be used sparingly, brings out the flavour of the whole dish; and the man to whose making there went never a grain of vanity, would as a personality be as insipid as soup without salt. The writer who, like Stevenson, can make jest of his own folly, who can tell with relish a story against himself, will not easily become the prey of overweening vanity.

Unlike the proverbial 'little knowledge,' a little vanity is not always 'a dangerous thing.' To the children of Humour it is seldom more dangerous than some childish complaint; for Humour—careful old physicker that she is—knows what is best for her offspring; and lest in later years they fall victim to a more fell disease, she forgets not to inoculate them with as much of the virus as may be rubbed into a lancet-scratch. After that, they are not like to be troubled by the more serious malady.

The following is taken from the last volume of Mr. Justin M'Carthy's 'History of Our Own Times' (1880 to the Diamond Jubilee):

Justin M'Carthy, M.P.

The whole reading world felt a shock at the news that Robert Louis Stevenson was dead. He died on December 3, 1894. The death, indeed, was not unexpected, because Stevenson had long been in delicate and sinking health, and every one knew that he was not likely, as the Celtic phrase goes, 'to comb a grey head.' He had to leave Europe altogether, and was settled in one of the South Pacific Islands, where the soft and exquisite climate, the mild, ever-enduring summer, and the perfectly clear atmosphere, gave him the best chance that the world could give of a

prolonged existence. All these chances failed him in the end, and he died at the age of forty-four. He had endeared himself to the whole of the reading public of English-speaking countries. Perhaps since the great days of Dickens, and Thackeray, and George Eliot, and Charlotte Brontë, there was no novelist more popular in England. Indeed, at one time he got about him, certainly without any effort of his own, a school of enthusiasts and adorers who were prepared to put his name above that of any English novelist, living or dead. There were impassioned young writers who clamoured that some of his novels were beyond any ever written by Sir Walter Scott.

All this, of course, was absurd; but a man must have real genius in him who can create such a school of idolatry. There can be no doubt that many men and women of less rapturous and hyperbolic temperament were sometimes inclined to question Stevenson's merits, merely because of the wild trumpeting and drum-beating of his adorers. But Stevenson, judged impartially by his own work, was undoubtedly one of the greatest English writers during the later part of the nineteenth century. He stole quietly into the world of fame. Most of us heard of him, for the first time, a great many years ago, when a remarkable story, a short story, appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, called 'The Pavilion on the Links,' and signed with the initials 'R. L. S.' None of us then had the least idea as to the identity of the writer of the story, but some of us, at all events, felt satisfied that a new and fresh power had arisen in English literature.

All the rest of his career is, of course, the common possession of the reading public. He revived in 'Treasure Island' something that might be called the literature of Defoe, and in 'The Master of Ballantrae' he gave back to us the method of Walter Scott. But he was no imitator of Defoe or of Walter Scott. His work was always essentially his own, sprang from his own inspiration, and was carried out by his own mode of treatment. In the minds of many persons—of those, possibly, who have passed the romantic and the heroic days—his essays were still better than his novels. Some of us, who cannot admit for a moment that his novels were equal to those of Walter Scott, are quite willing to allow that his essays are equal to those of Charles

Lamb, or of François Coppée. Some of his studies of Edinburgh are perfectly captivating, at once by their realism and by their poetic beauty.

After his death it was proposed that there should be a public monument raised to him in this country. The original suggestion was made by Lord Rosebery, and, strange to say, some objection was started to it by a countryman of Stevenson and of Lord Rosebery. Better wait, it was urged, and see whether Stevenson's fame will hold out. This, as a piece of advice, was sensible enough. Monuments raised in a moment of national emotion are often apt to become unmeaning fabrics in course of time. Even a well-educated Englishman wandering about London to-day is sometimes apt to wonder, if he raises his eyes and looks at the things at all, who were the persons to whom this or that public monument was erected. It has been well said that if a man's fame needs a monument to preserve it, then he ought to have no monument at all. But in the case of Robert Louis Stevenson it surely might have been clear to any reasonable person that his was a literary fame which must endure, monument or no monument. The idea is not that we, the public, should erect a monument to a man who has captivated and controlled us by his genius, in order that we may tell posterity that there once was such a man, but in order to express our grateful appreciation of the man's genius and of his work. The monument to Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh, the monument to Robert Burns in Ayr, were never put up with the foolish notion that by such erections, and by such erections only, could the memory of the men be perpetuated. The monuments were simply the tribute of gratitude from the living to the dead. They were designed as an *immortelle* is cast upon some great man's grave. Nobody supposes that the *immortelle* will prolong the great man's fame: it only testifies to other men's admiration, homage, and gratitude. In this sense, of course, a monument was due, and is due, to Robert Louis Stevenson. Hyperbolical admiration apart, it cannot be doubted that he started a new chapter, or at least that he revived an old and brilliant chapter, of English fiction. He will probably rank in time, not with the very best, but immediately after the very best. He created situations rather than characters, but when he set about drawing

a character, he drew with the firm and steady hand of a master. There was nothing oblique or vague about him. What he saw, he saw; and what he saw he could describe. If that is not to be an artist, then we, at least, have no idea of what an artist is.

Dr. Robertson Nicoll, writing under his *nom de guerre* of 'Claudius Clear' in the *British Weekly*, October 24, 1901, made the appearance of the 'Life' by Mr. Graham Balfour the occasion to set down some 'Notes and Queries about Robert Louis Stevenson.' The following passages from Dr. Nicoll's article are quoted as best lending themselves to the scheme of the present work:

Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll.

There is still room for a chapter on Stevenson's difficult approach to popularity. I am inclined to think that it was slower and more difficult than Mr. Balfour quite realises. Several proofs might be adduced. I shall mention but one. Mr. Balfour tells us that in 1874 Stevenson was elected a member of the Savile Club, which for the next five years was the centre of his London life. He was of all men the most clubable, and made many important friends amongst the members. He already knew Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Andrew Lang, and he was soon introduced to Dr. Appleton, the founder and editor of the *Academy*, and Mr. Walter Pollock, then, or later on, editor of the *Saturday Review*. It might have been expected that these friends of the Savile Club would appreciate his work, and find pleasure in making it known. But it is fairly clear that they did not estimate Stevenson very highly. In 1885 Stevenson published his 'Prince Otto,' and, so far as I can discover, the *Saturday Review* did not review it. Later on it reviewed the 'Black Arrow' amongst a number of other novels. The criticism was not enthusiastic, but the book was pronounced to be 'lengths ahead of "Prince Otto."' It has been maintained by at least one very eminent critic that 'Prince Otto' is the best of Stevenson's books. In any case, I well remember its appearance, and while the fumes of chloral seemed to be about it, it stood out very distinctly among the books of its day. The affection felt for Stevenson by his friends was evident, but their

critical judgment was qualified and cautious. Of this Stevenson himself was conscious enough at the time. Even after he had published 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' and 'Kidnapped,' he was willing to write for very moderate prices.

The fact is, I believe, that Stevenson was discovered in America. When he was comparatively unknown in this country, the Americans had become enthusiastic about him, and they were offering prices which took away his breath. It is a decided defect of Mr. Balfour's bibliography that he gives no account of Stevenson's career in America. Long ago I remember my friend Mr. S. S. M'Clure telling me that Stevenson was the favourite author of the American people. The news amazed me. Stevensonians in this country were doing their best to sound his praises, but met with very little response. This is not the first time that the judgment of America has anticipated the judgment of this country.

In a study entitled 'The Apotheosis of the Novel under Queen Victoria,'[1] which he contributed to the *Nineteenth Century*, May 1897, Mr. Herbert Paul writes as follows on the work of R. L. S.:

Herbert Paul.

Louis Stevenson, that young Marcellus of our tongue, tried his genius on them [short stories]. But the 'New Arabian Nights,' though I am not ashamed to confess that I would rather read them than the old, do not reveal the author of 'Kidnapped' and the 'Master of Ballantrae.' Stevenson is one of the very few really exquisite and admirable writers who deliberately sat down to form a style. He was singularly frank about it. He has told the public what he read, and how he read it, and a very strange blend of authors it was. In nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand the result would have been a disastrous failure. In Mr. Stevenson's case it was a brilliant success. Of course, every critic thinks that he would have found out the secret for himself. Certainly Mr. Stevenson's books are the most studiously elaborate works of art. But the art is so good that, though it can hardly be said to conceal, it justifies and

[1] Reprinted in 'Men and Letters' by Herbert W. Paul.

commends itself. The reader feels as a personal compliment the immense pains which this humblest of geniuses has bestowed upon every chapter and every sentence of all the volumes he wrote entirely himself. It is said that his warmest champions belong to his own sex. For while he does, like Falstaff, in some sort handle women, and while Miss Barbara Grant, or the girl in 'The Dynamiter,' would have been the delight of any society it had pleased them to adorn, his writings teach that it is not the passion of love, but the spirit of adventure, which makes the world go round. The question whether the two influences can be altogether separated does not belong to a review of Victorian romance. There have been novels without women, even in French. Victor Hugo wrote one. Ferdinand Fabre has written another. But it is a dangerous experiment, or would be if it were likely to be repeated. 'Weir of Hermiston,' in which the eternal element of sex was revived, is surely one of the greatest tragedies in the history of literature. It is far sadder than 'Denis Duval' or 'Edwin Drood.' Thackeray and Dickens had done their work. We know the full extent of their marvellous powers. But that cannot be said of Stevenson. 'Weir of Hermiston' is a fragment, and a fragment it must remain. But there is enough of it to show beyond the possibility of doubt that the complete work would have been the greatest achievement of that wonderful mind. The sleepless soul has perished in his pride.

XIII

POEMS TO STEVENSON

The verses here collected are arranged as nearly as possible in accordance with the dates of their writing.

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Because the way is long, and we may never
  Meet face to face this side the shadowed land;
  Because—a thousand things!—because the hand
May seek in friendly, but in vain, endeavour
Some dreamed-of clasp; because, though seas may sever
  This kindred-seeking dust, there is no strand
  Too far for loving thoughts—spread wave or sand.
For evermore, thought scorneth them for ever:—
Therefore lest fate hold by her barrier still,
  No kindlier proving, hence, than in the past—
    Lest on that unknown bourn there is no meeting,—
For thee, upon the tide of good and ill
  Which floods with ceaseless flow this world, I cast
    This waif: for thee, brave heart, my soul's best greeting.

ROBERT BURNS WILSON.

The Critic (New York), Sept. 17, 1887.

TO PROSPERO IN SAMOA

A world away in dreams we roam—
  The tempest howls, the lightnings fall;
Slim rainbows span the leaping foam
  That shatters on your fortress wall;
Yet forth to shipwreck would we go
To be the guests of Prospero:

To join your court where glints the blue
  Through frets of lank banana fans—

Mirandas, but of warmer hue,
And other, lazier Calibans,
And beaded Ariel-eyes that glow
To list the tale of Prospero.

They stoop from sultry southern stars,
They rise from yonder Peaceful Sea,
The sprites you bind in mystic bars
On Fancy's page, your thralls, as we.
A dream!—we wake, and falling snow
Hides Treasure Isle and Prospero.

Then flash us tidings of your weal!
Bid Ariel tread the ocean floor,
And fire-fed dragons, ribbed with steel,
Rush treasure-freighted to our shore
With tales of mingled mirth and woe,
The magic scroll of Prospero!

The Bookman, May 1892. Y. Y.

ON A YOUTHFUL PORTRAIT OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON[1]

A face of youth mature; a mouth of tender,
Sad, human sympathy, yet something stoic
In clasp of lips: wide eyes of calmest splendour,
And brow serenely ample and heroic;—
The features—all—lit with a soul ideal. . . .
O visionary boy! what were you seeing,
What hearing, as you stood thus midst the real
Ere yet one master-work of yours had being

Is it a foolish fancy that we humour—
Investing daringly with life and spirit
This youthful portrait of you ere one rumour
Of your great future spoke that men might hear it?—
Is it a fancy, or your first of glories,
That you were listening, and the camera drew you
Hearing the voices of your untold stories
And all your lovely poems calling to you?

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

[1] See Frontispiece to this Volume.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF MR. STEVENSON'S 'CATRIONA'

Glorious Sir Walter, Shakespeare's brother brain,
Fortune's invincible victor-victim, Scott,
Mere lettered fame, 'tis said, esteeming not,
Save as it ministered to weightier gain,
Had yet his roseate dream, though dreamed in vain;
The dream that, crowning his terrestrial lot,
A race of great and splendid heirs, begot
Of his own loins, o'er Abbotsford should reign.

Fate spurned his wish, but promised, in amends,
One mighty scion of his heart and mind:
And where far isles the languid ocean fleck,—
Flying the cold kiss of our northern wind,—
Lo, the rare spirit through whom we hail as friends
The immortal Highland maid and Alan Breck!

WILLIAM WATSON.

'Odes and Other Poems,' 1894.

R. L. S.

Wondrous as though a star with twofold light
Should fill her lamp for either hemisphere,
Piercing cold skies with scintillation clear,
And glowing on the sultry Southern night;
Was miracle of him who could unite
Pine and the purple harbour of the deer
With palm-plumed islets that sequestered hear
The far-off wave their zoning coral smite.
Still roars the surf, still bounds the wave, but where
Is one to see and hear and tell again?
As dancers pause on an arrested air
Fail the fast-thronging figures of the brain;
And shapes unshapely huddle in dim lair,
Awaiting ripe vitality in vain.

RICHARD GARNETT.

Illustrated London News, January 1895; reprinted and altered in 'The Queen and Other Poems,' 1901.

HOME FROM THE HILL

Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.'—R. L. S.

Let the weary body lie
  Where he chose its grave,
'Neath the wide and starry sky,
  By the Southern wave;
While the island holds her trust
  And the hill keeps faith,
Through the watches that divide
  The long night of death.

But the spirit, free from thrall,
  Now goes forth of these
To its birthright, and inherits
  Other lands and seas:
We shall find him when we seek him
  In an older home,—
By the hills and streams of childhood
  'Tis his weird to roam.

In the fields and woods we hear him
  Laugh and sing and sigh;
Or where by the Northern breakers
  Sea-birds troop and cry;
Or where over lonely moorlands
  Winter winds fly fleet;
Or by sunny graves he hearkens
  Voices low and sweet.

We have lost him, we have found him:
  Mother, he was fain
Nimbly to retrace his footsteps;
  Take his life again
To the breast that first had warmed it,
  To the tried and true,—
He has come, our well belovèd,
  Scotland, back to you!

W. Robertson Nicoll.

Blackwood's Magazine, February 1895.

VALEDICTION (R. L. S. 1894)

When from the vista of the Book I shrink,
From lauded pens that earn ignoble wage
Begetting nothing joyous, nothing sage,
Nor keep with Shakespeare's use one golden link;
When heavily my sanguine spirits sink
To read too plain on each impostor page
Only of kings the broken lineage,
Well for my peace if then on thee I think,
Louis: our priest of letters and our knight
With whose familiar baldric hope is girt,
From whose young hands she bears the grail away
All glad, all great! Truer because thou wert
I am and must be, and in thy known light
Go down to dust, content with this my day.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.

Century Magazine, March 1895; reprinted as postlude to Miss Alice Brown's privately circulated study of R. L. S.; and also in 'England and Yesterday,' a book of verse, 1898.

IN MEMORIAM STEVENSON

Life's Angel shining sat in his high place
To view the lands and waters of his globe;
A leaning Shape came through the fields of Space
Stealthy, and touched the hem of his white robe.

The Angel turned: Brother, what ill brings thee
Like thieving night to trespass on my day?
Yonder, Death answered him, I cannot see;
Yonder I take this star to light my way.

OWEN WISTER.

Atlantic Monthly, April 1895.

FOR R. L. S. ON VAEA TOP

Days are drooping, thought is dumb,
Crept into a cave;
Winter terrors thickly come
On the haunted wave:
Light and delight have left
What in their stead,
Since the muses kneel about the bravely-fallen head?

Black the deadly clouds o'errush
All our heaven in him:
Power in many a boreal flush,
Play of starry whim.
Ere the king reed is cut,
Ere the full strain,
Lo, the fickle faun is gone; the woods are bare again

Who are truant to the North
Chiding, can restore?
Which of cities, leaning forth,
Touch him as before?
Where serried Cant effrays
Art, as of old,
Nevermore aloft that loved oriflamme of gold.

Would he might indeed delay
While the onset lowers,
Would he had not borne away
Ardour his and ours.
O song upon the march
Elsewhither blown!
The battle-dread is on us now, riding afield alone.

Wisdom, in the motley dressed,
Wholesome as sunshine,
Poesy, that from her breast
Strews the bay divine,
These in no natal earth
Fold him; exiled
With the wilder, gentler, he so gentle and so wild.

Aye asunder from his own
Though Samoa keep
One uplifted to her throne
Of pellucid sleep,
Winds that across the world
Ride the sea-swell,
Sign him with the tears of home, the chrism of farewell

Was it menace from the dark,
Was it body's fret,
Early taught a patient barque
Cruises sadder yet?
Or but some primal urge
Greatly obeyed,
Drew to the unfriended hearts the heart of mercy made?

Where from water's blue outpost
Lonely Beauty calls,
Calls, and down the glowing coast
Felt denial falls;
Where tern above the cloud
Trooping, have heard
From the Prince of Welcomes by, no glad saluting word;

Where the slanted glens unbar
Boldly to the gale,
And aromas, loosed afar,
Kiss the trader's sail;
Where over lava-fire
Dances the vine,
For a symbol perfected, thy sepulchre and shrine!

Memory like a rainbow stair
Painted on the morn,
Dearest name that on that prayer
Christianly is borne,
Soon to romance exhaled,
Linger and live:
Meed no purer unto man the childlike men can give.

Still the islands good to seek
Rule in wonted mode;
Let their bright surf-belted peak
Still be thine abode!
Grief of the loyal race
Time shall retrieve,
And all in airy legendry thy shining spirit weave.

To the bathers' wonder, oft
As the night is nigh,
And to babes beneath the soft
Wings of lullaby
(While we of dull unfaith,
Thrall to our sighs,
Dual dream to quicken thee and us may not devise),

There on summer's holy hills
In illumined calms,
Smile of TUSITALA thrills
Thro' a thousand palms;
There in a rapture breaks
Dawn on the seas,
When TUSITALA from his shoon unbinds the Pleiades.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.

Printed as prelude to the privately circulated brochure on Stevenson (Boston, U.S.A., Copeland and Day, May 1895), and revised for the present volume.

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

O sailor, sailing the Unfathomed Sea,
What wind now speeds thee, and what star's thy guide?
And what adventure worth thy bravery
Calls with the lifting tide?

For thee the new coasts, gleaming, gleaming still,
For us the hope, the plunge, the engulfing night.
Oh, land! and set thy beacon on the Hill,
Our pilot into Light!

BRUCE PORTER.

The Lark (San Francisco), June 1895.

AN ELEGY

High on his Patmos of the Southern Seas
Our northern dreamer sleeps,
Strange stars above him, and above his grave
Strange leaves and wings their tropic splendours wave,
While, far beneath, mile after shimmering mile,
The great Pacific, with its faery deeps,
Smiles all day long its silken, secret smile.

Son of a race nomadic, finding still
Its home in regions furthest from its home,
Ranging untired the borders of the world,
And resting but to roam;
Loved of his land, and making all his boast
The birthright of the blood from which he came,
Heir to those lights that guard the Scottish coast,
And caring only for a filial fame;
Proud, if a poet, he was Scotsman most,
And bore a Scottish name.

Death, that long sought our poet, finds at last,
Death, that pursued him over land and sea:
Not his the flight of fear, the heart aghast
With stony dread of immortality,
He fled 'not cowardly';
Fled, as some captain, in whose shaping hand
Lie the momentous fortunes of his land,
Sheds not vainglorious blood upon the field,
But dares to fly—yea! even dares to yield.

Death! why, at last he finds his treasure isle,
And he the pirate of its hidden hoard;
Life! 'twas the ship he sailed to seek it in,
And Death is but the pilot come aboard.
Methinks I see him smile a boy's glad smile
On maddened winds and waters, reefs unknown,
As thunders in the sail the dread typhoon,
And in the surf the shuddering timbers groan;
Horror ahead, and Death beside the wheel:
Then—spreading stillness of the broad lagoon,
And lap of waters round the resting keel.

. . . . . .

Virgil of prose! far distant is the day
When at the mention of your heartfelt name
Shall shake the head, and men, oblivious, say:
'We know him not, this master, nor his fame.'
Not for so swift forgetfulness you wrought,
Day upon day, with rapt, fastidious pen,
Turning, like precious stones, with anxious thought,
This word and that again and yet again,
Seeking to match its meaning with the world;
Nor to the morning stars gave ears attent,
That you, indeed, might ever dare to be
With other praise than immortality
Unworthily content.

Not while a boy still whistles on the earth,
Not while a single human heart beats true,
Not while Love lasts, and Honour, and the Brave,
Has earth a grave,
O well-beloved, for you!

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

'Robert Louis Stevenson and Other Poems' (John Lane, London, 1895).

A SEAMARK

A THRENODY FOR ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Cold, the dull cold! What ails the sun,
And takes the heart out of the day?
What makes the morning look so mean,
The Common so forlorn and grey?

The wintry city's granite heart
Beats on in iron mockery,
And like the roaming mountain rains,
I hear the thresh of feet go by.

It is the lonely human surf
Surging through alleys chill with grime,
The muttering churning ceaseless floe
Adrift out of the North of time.

Fades, it all fades! I only see
The poster with its reds and blues

Bidding the heart stand still to take
Its desolating stab of news.

That intimate and magic name:
'Dead in Samoa.' . . . Cry your cries,
O city of the golden dome,
Under the grey Atlantic skies!

But I have wander-biddings now.
Far down the latitudes of sun,
An island mountain of the sea,
Piercing the green and rosy zone,

Goes up into the wondrous day.
And there the brown-limbed island men
Are bearing up for burial,
Within the sun's departing ken,

The master of the roving kind.
And there where time will set no mark
For his irrevocable rest,
Under the spacious melting dark,

With all the nomad tented stars
About him, they have laid him down
Above the crumbling of the sea,
Beyond the turmoil of renown.

O all you hearts about the world
In whom the truant gipsy blood,
Under the frost of this pale time,
Sleeps like the daring sap and flood

That dream of April and reprieve!
You whom the haunted vision drives,
Incredulous of home and ease,
Perfection's lovers all your lives!

You whom the wander-spirit loves
To lead by some forgotten clue

For ever vanishing beyond
Horizon brinks for ever new;

The road, unmarked, ordained, whereby
Your brothers of the field and air
Before you, faithful, blind, and glad,
Emerged from chaos pair by pair;

The road whereby you too must come,
In the unvexed and fabled years
Into the country of your dream,
With all your knowledge in arrears!

You who can never quite forget
Your glimpse of Beauty as she passed,
The well-head where her knee was pressed,
The dew wherein her foot was cast;

O you who bid the paint and clay
Be glorious when you are dead,
And fit the plangent words in rhyme
Where the dark secret lurks unsaid;

You brethren of the light-heart guild,
The mystic fellowcraft of joy,
Who tarry for the news of truth,
And listen for some vast ahoy

Blown in from sea, who crowd the wharves
With eager eyes that wait the ship
Whose foreign tongue may fill the world
With wondrous tales from lip to lip;

Our restless loved adventurer,
On secret orders come to him,
Has slipped his cable, cleared the reef,
And melted on the white sea-rim.

O granite hills, go down in blue!
And like green clouds in opal calms,
You anchored islands of the main,
Float up your loom of feathery palms!

For deep within your dales, where lies
A valiant earthling stark and dumb,
This savage, undiscerning heart
Is with the silent chiefs who come

To mourn their kin and bear him gifts,—
Who kiss his hand, and take their place,
This last night he receives his friends,
The journey-wonder on his face.

He 'was not born for age.' Ah no,
For everlasting youth is his!
Part of the lyric of the earth
With spring and leaf and blade he is.

'Twill never more be April now
But there will lurk a thought of him
At the street corners, gay with flowers
From rainy valleys purple-dim.

O chiefs, you do not mourn alone!
In that stern North where mystery broods,
Our mother grief has many sons
Bred in those iron solitudes.

It does not help them, to have laid
Their coil of lightning under seas;
They are as impotent as you
To mend the loosened wrists and knees.

And yet how many a harvest night,
When the great luminous meteors flare
Along the trenches of the dusk,
The men who dwell beneath the Bear,

Seeing those vagrants of the sky
Float through the deep beyond their hark,
Like Arabs through the wastes of air,—
A flash, a dream, from dark to dark,—

Must feel the solemn large surmise:
By a dim, vast and perilous way
We sweep through undetermined time,
Illumining this quench of clay,

A moment staunched, then forth again.
Ah, not alone you climb the steep
To set your loving burden down
Against the mighty knees of sleep.

With you we hold the sombre faith
Where creeds are sown like rain at sea;
And leave the loveliest child of earth
To slumber where he longed to be.

His fathers lit the dangerous coast
To steer the daring merchant home;
His courage lights the darkling port
Where every sea-worn sail must come.

And since he was the type of all
That strain in us which still must fare,
The fleeting migrant of a day,
Heart-high, outbound for otherwhere,

Now therefore, where the passing ships
Hang on the edges of the noon,
And Northern liners trail their smoke
Across the rising yellow moon,

Bound for his home, with shuddering screw
That beats its strength out into speed,
Until the pacing watch descries
On the sea-line a scarlet seed

Smoulder and kindle and set fire
To the dark selvedge of the night,
The deep blue tapestry of stars,
Then sheet the dome in pearly light,

There in perpetual tides of day,
Where men may praise him and deplore,
The place of his lone grave shall be
A seamark set for evermore,

High on a peak adrift with mist,
And round whose bases, far beneath
The snow-white wheeling tropic birds,
The emerald dragon breaks his teeth.

BLISS CARMAN.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

Published separately in 1895, and included in 'By the Aurelian Wall and other Elegies' (L. C. Page and Co., Boston, 1898), and in 'Ballads and Lyrics' (A. H. Bullen, London, 1902).

THE WORD OF THE WATER

FOR THE UNVEILING OF THE STEVENSON FOUNTAIN IN SAN FRANCISCO

God made me simple from the first,
And good to quench your body's thirst.
Think you He has no ministers
To glad that wayworn soul of yours?

Here by the thronging Golden Gate
For thousands and for you I wait,
Seeing adventurous sails unfurled
For the four corners of the world.

Here passed one day, nor came again,
A prince among the tribes of men.
(For man, like me, is from his birth
A vagabond upon the earth.)

Be thankful, friend, as you pass on,
And pray for Louis Stevenson,
That by whatever trail he fare
He be refreshed in God's great care!

BLISS CARMAN.

'By the Aurelian Wall and other Elegies,' 1898.

STEVENSON OF THE LETTERS

Long, hatchet face, black hair, and haunting gaze,
That follows, as you move about the room,
Ah! that is he who trod the darkening ways,
And plucked the flowers upon the edge of doom.

The bright, sweet-scented flowers that star the road
To death's dim dwelling, others heed them not,
With sad eyes fixed upon that drear abode,
Weeping, and wailing their unhappy lot.

But he went laughing down the shadowed way,
The boy's heart leaping still within his breast,
Weaving his garlands when his mood was gay,
Mocking his sorrows with a solemn jest.

The high gods gave him wine to drink; a cup
Of strong desire, of knowledge, and of pain,
He set it to his lips and drank it up
Smiling, then turned unto his flowers again.

These are the flowers of that immortal strain,
Which, when the hand that plucked them drops and dies,
Still keep their radiant beauty free from stain,
And breathe their fragrance through the centuries.

B. PAUL NEUMAN.

The Spectator, January 27, 1900.

R. L. S.: IN MEMORIAM

These to his memory. May the age arriving,
As ours recall
That bravest heart, that gay and gallant striving,
That laurelled pall!

Blithe and rare spirit! We who later linger,
By bleaker seas,
Sigh for the touch of the Magician's finger,
His golden keys!

AUSTIN DOBSON.

Dedication of the New Century Number of *The Student* (issued by the Students' Representative Council, University of Edinburgh), January 1901.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

This portrait was first published, along with Mr Austin Dobson's verses, in the *Student* (Edinburgh) of January 1901

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XIV

MISCELLANEA

The pages which make up this section contain some curious and valuable matter relating to Stevenson, but not fitting aptly into any of the earlier chapters, or added too late for classifying. The items are arranged approximately to the dates of their first appearance among the ephemeræ of newspaper and magazine.

To the *British Weekly*, 13th May 1887, Stevenson contributed by invitation of the editor an article on 'Books which have Influenced Me,' which was reprinted in the volume of 'Later Essays' included in the Edinburgh Edition in 1895. The following brief passage may be quoted, since it relies less on the context than any other, and contains the pith of the article:

'Books which Influenced Me.'

The most influential books, and the truest in their influence, are works of fiction. They do not pin the reader to a dogma, which he must afterwards discover to be inexact; they do not teach him a lesson, which he must afterwards unlearn. They repeat, they arrange, they clarify the lesson of life; they disengage us from ourselves, they constrain us to the acquaintance of others; and they show us the web of experience, but with a singular change—that monstrous, consuming *ego* of ours being, for the nonce, struck out. To be so, they must be reasonably true to the human comedy; and any work that is so serves the turn of instruction. But the course of our education is answered best by those poems and romances where we breathe a magnanimous atmosphere of thought and meet generous and pious characters. Shakespeare has served me best. Few living

friends have had upon me an influence so strong for good as Hamlet or Rosalind. The last character, already well beloved in the reading, I had the good fortune to see, I must think, in an impressionable hour, played by Mrs. Scott Siddons. Nothing has ever more moved, more delighted, more refreshed me; nor has the influence quite passed away. The dying Lear had a great effect upon my mind, and was the burthen of my reflections for long, so profoundly, so touchingly generous did it appear in sense, so overpowering in expression. Perhaps my dearest and best friend outside of Shakespeare is D'Artagnan—the elderly D'Artagnan of the 'Vicomte de Bragelonne.' I know not a more human soul, nor, in his way, a finer; I shall be very sorry for the man who is so much of a pedant in morals that he cannot learn from the Captain of Musketeers. Lastly, I must name the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' a book that breathes of every beautiful and valuable emotion.

Stevenson mentions the following books, in the sequence here observed, as having influenced him more or less: 'The New Testament, and in particular the gospel according to St. John,' Whitman's 'Leaves of Grass,' the works of Herbert Spencer—'no more persuasive rabbi exists'—'Goethe's Life' by Lewes, adding, 'I know no one whom I less admire than Goethe'; Martial, Marcus Aurelius's 'Meditations,' Wordsworth, Meredith's 'The Egoist,' Thoreau, Hazlitt, and Mitford's 'Tales of Old Japan.'

To the *Academy*, after the appearance of 'Letters to his Family and Friends,' 'I. R.' contributed the subjoined note on Stevenson's projected biography of William Hazlitt:

A Dream-Book of R. L. S.

Of the many books which Robert Louis Stevenson planned and discussed with his friends in his correspondence there is none, perhaps, which would have been more valued than the biography of William Hazlitt. Whenever Stevenson refers to Hazlitt, whether in his essay on 'Walking Tours' or in his letters, he makes one wish he would say more. This is what he writes to Mr. P. G. Hamerton:

'I am in treaty with Bentley for a life of Hazlitt; I hope it will not fall through, as I love the subject, and appear to have found a publisher who loves it also. That, I think, makes things more pleasant. You know I am a fervent Hazlittite; I mean regarding him as the English writer who has had the scantiest justice. Besides which, I am anxious to write biography; really, if I understand myself in quest of profit, I think it must be good to live with another man from birth to death. You have tried it, and know.'

If the qualification of a biographer is to understand his subject, Stevenson may be said to have been well qualified to write on Hazlitt. Mr. Leslie Stephen has given us a fine critical estimate of Hazlitt the writer, and the late Mr. Ireland's prefatory memoir to his admirable selection from the Essays, with its enforced limitations, is an excellent piece of biographical condensation, but the life of the essayist has yet to be written. The subject has been tried by many others, but no one has quite captured the spirit of Hazlitt. Had the details of Hazlitt's life, with his passionate hates and loves, been told by himself in the manner of his beloved Rousseau, he might have produced a book which for interest would have rivalled the 'Confessions,' but failing such a work one must deplore that Stevenson was not encouraged to write on the subject.

Two American Favourites.

When Mr. Gosse was going to America in the winter of 1884 to lecture, Stevenson was particularly anxious that he should lay at the feet of the late Frank R. Stockton his homage, couched in the following lines:

> My Stockton if I failed to like
> It were a sheer depravity;
> For I went down with the 'Thomas Hyke,'
> And up with the 'Negative Gravity.'

In a magazine article quoted by the New York *Critic*, Professor Brander Matthews writes:

The precious memory of a single afternoon at the Savile Club. . . . We chiefly talked of the craft and the art of story-telling and of its technique. . . . Stevenson praised heartily

Mark Twain's 'Huckleberry Finn,' and it was his belief that it was greater, riper, and richer than its forerunner, 'Tom Sawyer.'

This report is reprinted from the New York *Critic*, January 12, 1895:

Memorial Meeting in New York.

The meeting at Carnegie Hall on Friday evening, January 4, 1895, in memory of Robert Louis Stevenson, proved in every way successful. It was held under the auspices of the Uncut Leaves Society, of which Mr. L. J. B. Lincoln is the director, and with the approval and co-operation of eminent men of letters, artists, publishers, and other men of light and leading. The gathering was a distinguished one; and the close heed given to every speaker demonstrated a sympathetic interest in all that concerns the romancer whose name had drawn together these hundreds of hearers.

Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman presided, and the list of Vice-Presidents included—to mention first the followers of Stevenson's own vocation as novelist—the names of William Dean Howells, Frank R. Stockton, George W. Cable, Rudyard Kipling, David Christie Murray, Professor H. H. Boyesen, Edward Eggleston, H. C. Bunner (editor of *Puck*), Judge Robert Grant, and Professor Brander Matthews; R. H. Stoddart, R. W. Gilder (editor of the *Century*), William Winter, Professor George E. Woodberry, Moncure D. Conway, Professor William M. Sloane, the Rev. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, the Rev. Dr. William S. Rainsford, Hamilton W. Mabie (editor of the *Outlook*), Mayor Strong, President Low of Columbia and President Gilman of John Hopkins, J. Pierpont Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, Laurence Hutton, Augustus St. Gaudens, Stanford White, Will H. Low, Professor Francis H. Stoddard, William Allen Butler, H. O. Houghton, J. Henry Harper, Charles Scribner, Frank H. Scott, Walter Damrosch, Henry Marquand, James Grant Wilson, T. Munson Coan, John Reid, Francis H. Williams, Daniel G. Thompson, E. L. Godkin (editor of the *Evening Post*), Charles A. Dana (editor of the *Sun*), Joseph Pulitzer (proprietor of the *World*), St. Clair M'Kelway (editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle*), Walter H. Page (editor of the *Forum*) and Joseph B. Gilder (editor of the *Critic*). Not included in this list, but seated on the platform, were W. W.

Appleton, General Horace Porter (President of the Union League Club), David Munro, and William H. Rideing (of the *North American Review*), Colonel W. C. Church (editor of the *Army and Navy Journal*), Ripley Hitchcock, and J. Cleveland Cady, the architect. Several other gentlemen and one lady occupied seats on the platform.

Among the box-holders were several of the Vice-Presidents, and also the following persons:—Dean Hole, G. C. Beaman, M. H. Malroy, Gilman H. Tucker, Thomas B. Connery, Walter S. Logan, S. P. Avery, Robert Bridges, S. S. M'Clure, Henry T. Thomas, James Thorne Harper, Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, Mrs. Ruth M'Enery Stuart, Mrs. Bayard Taylor, Mrs. Herman Melville, Mrs. D. M. Rollins, Mrs. Charles A. Clapp.

The programme comprehended addresses by Mr. Stedman, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, Mr. David Christie Murray, Mr. Edward Eggleston, Mr. G. W. Cable, and Mr. John Foord; Mr. Nelson Wheatcroft's reading of Stevenson's poems 'Ticonderoga' and 'Christmas at Sea'; and the singing by Mr. Leonard E. Auty of the coronach from 'The Lady of the Lake,' 'The Macgregors' Gathering,' and 'The Land o' the Leal.'

By Edmund Clarence Stedman

The President of the evening, who was gracefully introduced by Mr. Lincoln, spoke as follows:—

Such an assemblage—in the chief city of the western world—is impressive from the fact that we have not come together for any civic, or political, or academic purpose. I have been thinking, too, of its significance in view of considerations quite apart from the sorrowful cause of our gathering. But of these this is not the time to speak. On its face, this demonstration is a rare avowal of the worth of literary invention. It shows a profound regard for the career of a writer who delighted us, a sense of loss instantaneously awakened by the news of his taking off. For the moment we realise how thoroughly art and song and letters have become for us an essential part of life—a common ground whereupon we join our human love and laughter and tears, and at times forego all else to strew laurel and myrtle for one who has moved us to these signs and emotions.

Yes—we are brought together by tidings, almost from the Antipodes, of the death of a beloved writer in his early prime. The work of a romancer and poet, of a man of insight and feeling, which may be said to have begun but fifteen years ago, has ended, through fortune's sternest cynicism, just as it seemed entering upon even more splendid achievement. A star surely rising, as we thought, has suddenly gone out. A radiant invention shines no more; the voice is hushed of a creative mind, expressing its fine imaginings in this our peerless English tongue. His expression was so original and fresh from Nature's treasure-house—so prodigal and various its too brief flow,—so consummate, through an inborn gift made perfect by unsparing toil, that mastery of the art by which Robert Louis Stevenson conveyed those imaginings to us—so picturesque, yet wisely ordered, his own romantic life,—and now, at last, so pathetic a loss which renews

> 'The Virgilian cry,
> The sense of tears in mortal things,'—

that this assemblage has gathered, at the first summons, in tribute to the beautiful genius, and to avow that with the putting out of that bright intelligence the reading world experiences a more than wonted grief.

Stevenson was not of our own people, though he sojourned with us, and knew our continent from east to west as few of this large audience can know it. But a British author now, by statutory edict, is of our own. Certainly his fame is often made by the American people—yes, and sometimes unmade. Theirs is the great amphitheatrum. They are the ultimate court of review. All the more we are here 'for the honour of literature'; and so much the more it is manifest that the writer who lightens our hearts, who takes us into some new wonderland of his discovery, belongs, as I say, to the world. His name and fame are, indeed, a special glory of the country that bore him, and a vantage to his native tongue. But by just so much as his gift is absolute, and therefore universal, he belongs in the end to the world at large. Above all, it is the recounter—and the Greeks were clear-headed in deeming him a maker, whether his story be cast in prose or verse—who becomes the darling of mankind.

This has been so whether among the Grecian isles, or around the desert camp-fires, or in the gardens of Italy; and is so when he brings us his romance, as in our modern day, from our Pacific Eldorado, or from Indian barracks and jungle, or from the land of the Stuarts, or, like Stevenson and our own Melville before him, from the palm-fringed beaches of the Southern seas.

Judged by the sum of his interrupted work, Stevenson had his limitations. But the work was adjusted to the scale of a possibly long career. As it was, the good fairies brought all gifts, save that of health, to his cradle, and the art-spoiler wrapped them in a shroud. Thinking of what his art seemed leading to —for things that would be the crowning efforts of other men seemed 'prentice-work in his case—it is not safe to bound his limitations. And now it is as if Sir Walter, for example, had died at forty-four, with the 'Waverley Novels' just begun! In originality; in the conception of action and situation, which, however fantastic, are seemingly within reason, once we breathe the air of his Fancyland; in the union of bracing and heroic character and adventure; in all that belongs to tale-writing pure and simple, his gift was exhaustless. No other such charmer, in this wise, has appeared in his generation. We thought the stories, the fairy-tales, had all been told; but 'Once upon a time' meant for him our own time, and the grave and gay magic of Prince Florizel in dingy London or sunny France. All this is but one of his provinces, however distinctive. Besides, how he buttressed his romance with apparent truth! Since Defoe, none had a better right to say: 'There was one thing I determined to do when I began this long story, and that was to tell out everything as it befell.'

One or two points are made clear as we look at the shining calendar of Stevenson's productive years. It strengthens one in the faith that work of the first order cannot remain obscure. If put forth unheralded, it will be found out and will make its way. In respect of dramatic force, exuberant fancy, and ceaselessly varying imagination on the one hand, and on the other, of a style wrought in the purest, most virile, and most direct temper of English narrative prose, there has been no latter-day writing more effective than that of Stevenson's longer fictions—'Kidnapped,' with its sequel 'David Balfour,' 'The Master of

Ballantrae,' and that most poetic of absolute romances, 'Prince Otto.' But each of his shorter tales as well, and of his essays, charged with individuality, has a quality, an air of distinction, which, even though the thing appeared without signature, differentiated it from other people's best, set us to discovering its authorship, and made us quick to recognise that master-hand elsewhere.

Thus, I remember delighting in two fascinating stories of Paris in the time of François Villon, anonymously reprinted by a New York paper from a London magazine. They had all the quality, all the distinction, of which I speak. Shortly afterward I met Mr. Stevenson, then in his twenty-ninth year, at a London club, where we chanced to be the only loungers in an upper room. To my surprise he opened a conversation—you know there could be nothing more unexpected than that in London—and thereby I guessed that he was as much, if not as far, away from home as I was. He asked many questions concerning 'the States'; in fact, this was but a few months before he took his steerage-passage for our shores. I was drawn to the young Scotsman at once. He seemed much like a New Englander of Holmes's Brahmin caste, who might have come from Harvard or Yale. But, as he grew animated, I thought, as others have thought, and as one would suspect from his name, that he must have Scandinavian blood in his veins—that he was of the heroic, restless, strong, and tender Viking strain, and certainly from that day his works and wanderings have not belied the surmise. He told me that he was the author of that charming book of gipsying in the Cevennes, which just then had gained for him some attentions from the literary set. But if I had known that he had written those two stories of sixteenth-century Paris—as I learned afterwards when they reappeared in the 'New Arabian Nights'—I would not have bidden him good-bye as to an 'unfledged comrade,' but would have wished, indeed, to 'grapple him to my soul with hoops of steel.'

Another point is made clear as crystal by his life itself. He had the instinct, and he had the courage, to make it the servant, and not the master, of the faculty within him. I say he had the courage, but so potent was his birth-spell that doubtless he could not otherwise. Nothing commonplace sufficed him.

A regulation, stay-at-home life would have been fatal to his art. The ancient mandate, 'Follow thy Genius,' was well obeyed. Unshackled freedom of person and habit was a pre-requisite; as an imaginative artist he felt—Nature keeps her poets and story-tellers children to the last—he felt, if he never reasoned it out, that he must gang his own gait, whether it seemed promising or the reverse, to kith, kin, or alien. So his wanderings were not only in the most natural, but in the wisest, consonance with his creative dreams. Wherever he went he found something essential for his use, breathed upon it, and returned it fourfold in beauty and worth. The longing of the Norseman for the tropic, of the pine for the palm, took him to the South Seas. There, too, strange secrets were at once revealed to him, and every island became an 'Isle of Voices.' Yes, an additional proof of Stevenson's artistic mission lay in the careless, careful liberty of life; in that he was an artist no less than in his work. He trusted to the impulse which possessed him—that which so many of us have conscientiously disobeyed, and too late have found ourselves in reputable bondage to circumstance.

But those whom you are waiting to hear will speak more fully of all this—some of them with the interest of their personal remembrance,—with the strength of their affection for the man beloved by young and old. In the strange and sudden intimacy with an author's record which Death makes sure, we realise how notable is the list of Stevenson's works produced since 1878; more than a score of books—not fiction alone, but also essays, criticism, biography, drama, even history, and, as I need not remind you, that spontaneous poetry which comes only from the true poet. None can have failed to observe that, having recreated the story of adventure, he seems in his later fiction to interfuse a subtler purpose—the search for character, the analysis of mind and soul. Just here his summons came. Between the sunrise of one day and the sunset of the next, he exchanged the forest study for the mountain grave. There, as he had sung his own wish, he lies 'under the wide and starry sky.' If there was something of his own romance, so exquisitely capricious, in the life of Robert Louis Stevenson, so, also, the poetic conditions are satisfied in his death, and in the choice of his burial-place

upon the top of Pala. As for the splendour of that maturity upon which he counted, now never to be fulfilled on sea or land, I say, as once before, when the great New England romancer passed in the stillness of the night:

> What though his work unfinished lies? Half-bent
> The rainbow's arch fades out in upper air;
> The shining cataract half-way down the height
> Breaks into mist; the haunting strain, that fell
> On listeners unaware,
> Ends incomplete, but through the starry night
> The ear still waits for what it did not tell.

By Andrew Carnegie

It seems most fitting that the first words I have ever spoken in this hall should be a tribute to a fellow-countryman who was born, like myself, within sight of Edinburgh. This is neither the time nor the place to measure Stevenson the author, but to consider him as a man. He was one of the most lovable characters of whom we have knowledge. Everywhere he went rays of sunshine emanated from him. You may have read the other day some communications to the London *Times* which illustrate his character. I will trouble you with only one. One who calls himself a poor Scotch journalist writes:—'I was lying ill at San Francisco. Some one mentioned the fact to Stevenson as he passed through to Samoa. He searched me out, entered my little room, approached my bedside, saying: "Well, my fellow-countryman, you are ill. We knights of the pen never gather money. I come to make you a loan." And with that he threw down a roll of bank-notes, and rushed to catch the steamer.' This was no isolated case; it was only acting out the daily life of the man whose memory we honour by assembling here. Great as he was as an author, the author is dwarfed beside the man. Like Scott, he has never written a line which he could wish obliterated; he has dealt only with the pure, the ennobling, as the great masters do. He did not degrade literature; he did not grovel in the putrid filth of the modern novel and the woman with a past. I rejoice as a Scotsman that Scotland is entirely free from the writers of the modern popular fiction of this character. Farewell, Stevenson! No, not farewell.

To the earthly body, yes; to the spirit immortal, no. All that was precious of you remains still with us. You have lived a noble life; you have not degraded literature nor polluted its holy purpose. You have set us all an example, and we shall best honour you and elevate ourselves by emulating you.

By Edward Eggleston

I was staying once at a hotel here, when the landlord told me that Robert Louis Stevenson was upstairs, sick. I wrote on my card, 'Not to intrude, but to pay my respects' He sent word back, 'Oh, but you must come up.' We did not praise each other's books; did not burn any of that incense which we authors sometimes feel obliged to burn as a beginning of our acquaintance. And I never learned to love a man so much in so short a time. He had no fences. He had no secrecy. He gave me out of his heart. 'Oh,' said he, 'you have been on the frontier. You sail your boat every year, don't you? You take your life in your hands. You are rugged. To write novels a man has to take his life in his hand once a year at least. He does not know how it feels if he does not. You can't live in a city and write novels,'—meaning romances. And so he spoke, in his broad way, according to the enthusiasm of the moment. His was a sweet personality—a singularly unveiled soul. There were no hedges about him. He was a Scotsman in Scotland, an Englishman in England, an American in America, a Samoan in Samoa. He had no thought of remoulding America —of turning a new country into an old one. I can sound no note of pathos here to-night. Some lives are so brave and sweet and joyous and well-rounded that death does not leave them incomplete. Stevenson had no clap-trap in his stories, no great cause to advocate or exploit, no pruriency of the sort that came into fashion with Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant. He simply told his story, with no condescension, taking the reader into his heart and his confidence.

By George W. Cable

I feel as one who stands beside the filled grave. The moment has come for laying on the fresh sod, for placing a rose here

and a lily there. A passion-flower on the breast of the mound, and we are done. Though our eyes are dry, our hearts shed tender tears. He writes for us no more; we must look upon his uncompleted works as completed. It is left for me to speak the word of gratitude, joy, and praise in the name of his children. He wrote to the man in the child; to the child in the man. His main purpose was to conserve the child in the man and the man in the child. The great activities of the world are all tending, on one hand, to beat down the heroic conditions. On the other hand stands Romance, patiently, bravely endeavouring to preserve the heroic in our hearts. In our highly refined conditions we assume that refinement is the perfection of our lives. But at times, when we get true glimpses of ourselves, we find that the real task is to keep the Ten Commandments. What we need, first of all, is courage and truth. No romance ever filled with enthusiasm the heart of a boy or girl—whose hero was a liar. No romance ever made precious the hours whose hero was a coward. The purpose of the romance is to teach courage and truth without appearing to teach them. That is the task of the story-teller, and no one has told it better than he whom we lament with a new gratitude, with a fuller sweetness for him who has inspired our boys and girls to loftier ideals, to stronger resolutions for the great battle of life. He has gone, but his spirit still lives in his works—a preacher of sweet truths, teaching us to love our God and our neighbour.

By David Christie Murray

Mr. Murray's address included a discussion of literary art and fame, and an eloquent tribute to Dr. Holmes, Hawthorne, Irving, and other American authors.

The literary storehouse of the world is already so vast and so crowded that only the very best amongst the best of books can find a permanent place upon its shelves, and whether Stevenson's work can claim that rank is more than any man alive can say. That the problem should be generally accepted as one which awaits solution—that the question should hang at all in the balance—that he should be entered by the voice of common

acclaim for that race in which only the greatest of the great have won, is tribute enough for this hour, is a triumph which he would have valued dearly could his humility have permitted him to foresee it, and we are all assured that it cannot fail to be felt as a pride and a solace by those who were lately near and dear to him. . . .

Amongst our contemporaries there was none we loved better or prized more highly, or with sounder reason. And Stevenson had one especial faculty which made him very dear to his brethren in the craft of letters. He sought always with a settled passion of painstaking the very essence and perfection of the most difficult and most beautiful art in the world—the art of language. We know from his own printed confessions how he laboured in this way; but his printed confessions would all be worth nothing to us if they did not in themselves contain the proof and product of the constant severity of his struggles. . . .

Our lost Stevenson, above all men who have stepped over the horizon of English letters in my time, was appointed to this lovable task, and he followed it with a bright bravery which won the heart of every one of his co-workers. Some of us in the thought of his recent death feel a little ashamed—perhaps more than a little—at our own laxness, at the early decay of enthusiasm in the pursuit which was once so dear to us. Our dead friend wrote to me, in a letter which I shall cherish to my dying day, that my own works had sometimes been an encouragement to him, and sometimes a rebuke. God knows that I do not speak of this as a boast, for it strikes now keen as a reproach, and yet with a note of encouragement and helpful warning. I suppose all men of letters write more or less for a special circle, as a sweetheart adorns herself for a special admirer,

> 'And thinking, "this will please him best,"
> She takes a riband or a rose.'

And now my own little circle is less by one, and that one the dearest and the best and the kindest in his thoughts of me. . . .

And so our bright, quaint, beautiful Stevenson is yours for heritage as well as ours. All the Quaker-faced fun of those 'New Arabian Nights' of his, and the terror and human mystery of 'Ticonderoga,' and the grace and tenderness of his verse;

all his honest, loyal manhood, all the sweet severity and chaste riches of his style—yours for a heritage for ever if that should seem good to those who follow after us. Does it matter much to him whether his cold memorial bust shall shine in the lamp-light for a night or two, or a year or two? He is gathered back to the great motherly darkness. The buoyant heart and the suffering frame are wrapped in quiet. He was lovely and pleasant in his day; he charmed us, and bewitched us, and is gone. He rests on his lonely mountain top among the far-off Southern seas, and thousands of hearts turn thither and will yet turn there for a year or two of our poor human time.

Reminiscences at Dundee Memorial Meeting.

On the 29th July 1897 a public meeting was held in Dundee to appoint a committee to co-operate with the Edinburgh Memorial Committee in raising the fund for a monument to Stevenson. The platform was occupied entirely by men of local reputation—if we except the Rev. David Macrae, whose name is at least national—and Lord Provost M'Grady presided. The purpose of the meeting was effected; but of the speeches delivered the only one that supplies matter for quotation here was that of Mr. James Cunningham, who was able to give some personal recollections of the author:

Mr. Cunningham said (the quotation is from the *Dundee Advertiser*) that one element in Stevenson which undoubtedly predominated was his extraordinary power of sympathy for all sorts and conditions of men, good and bad alike. He had the capacity of making friends wherever he went with all sorts of people. He said somewhere in one of his books that 'we travel to make friends.' He collected friendships as other men collected curios, and very much for the same reason—that these were the things which he valued. Once Stevenson gave him a very humorous account of how he had been refused admission to the gaming-tables of Monte Carlo, a refusal probably due to his unorthodox costume. He spoke with a real feeling of chagrin that he should have been debarred from the association even of those polished scoundrels who frequented the gaming-saloons.

Every one knew what enormous pains he took to acquire his literary style, and his writings also cost him a very great effort. On one occasion, when he and Mrs. Stevenson were staying near Pitlochry, Mr. Cunningham paid them a visit, and found that the two had spent a whole forenoon in trying to discover the word or phrase that would best describe the position of a shadow on the floor.

That afternoon the novelist read to them a story he had just finished. The word 'jaw' occurred, and some one suggested that the old Scotch word 'chafts' might be substituted. He was very grateful for the suggestion. There was another element in Stevenson which formed certainly the deepest trait in his character, and that was the extraordinary courage with which he faced the ever near presence of death. It was just almost to a day twelve years ago since Mr. Cunningham saw him last on the shores of the Mediterranean. He was just recovering from a severe attack of illness, and what struck him was that he had still the same fresh interest in men and things. That attitude of his was not because he held life cheaply, or that his regard was not directed to what lay behind human existence; but because he felt it to be his duty all through life to play a man's part and play it cheerfully. In a letter he had from Stevenson not very long after he used the expression,—'I have come to the conclusion that health is a prejudice, and I am going to do without it.'

Melbourne Memorial Meeting.

On October 18, 1897, a largely attended meeting was held in the Town Hall, Melbourne, for the purpose of considering a memorial to 'the late Scottish writer, Robert Louis Stevenson.' Professor Morris, of Melbourne University, occupied the chair, and 'not a single Scotsman had been chosen as a speaker, as it was thought that gentlemen of that nationality would be apt to admire Stevenson just because he was a Scotsman' (*vide Melbourne Argus*). One of the speakers was the Rev. W. H. Fitchett, editor of the Australian *Review of Reviews*, and since famous as author of 'Fights for the Flag.' He said that the mother tongue of England would compare favourably with Greek, Latin,

or any other language in the world, and Robert Louis Stevenson had taught that tongue a new music, and had given the world a larger conception of the English language. He would differ from Mr. A. J. Balfour on certain points. He did not think that Stevenson would live as a thinker or as an historian or as a poet, but as a stylist the man had somehow learned the secret of our language and had acquired the art of shaping sentences lucid and clear as crystals of ice. For perfection of form and clearness of expression, where could they find a style like that of Stevenson? The three prose writers of the nineteenth century who have enlarged the bounds of the English language were De Quincey, Ruskin, and Stevenson. The story of how Stevenson achieved his style—for it was not born with him—would yet be one of the classic stories of our literature, and he was one of the few writers who had never written a line that he would have wished to blot out on his dying bed. He was a pure writer, and 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' was the most powerful sermon on the mischief of sin that had been delivered since the time of St. Paul the Apostle.

The only other speaker of more than local fame was 'Rolf Boldrewood' (the late Thomas Alexander Browne), who said that, added to the perfection of his work, Stevenson paid an attention to human interest and beauties. To his dying day in Samoa he never relaxed these, but strove for honour and justice and mercy to the inferior races. He had secured himself a monument of love and adoration from the people among whom he lived—a great and noble Englishman, using the term in its complete sense. Such a man was deserving of every honour on the part of Australia's leaders, and of the literary federation of the English-speaking writers.

The following excerpt from the *Daily News* of 20th December 1901 explains the delay which took place in

MEDALLION OF THE EDINBURGH MEMORIAL

By Augustus St Gaudens

From a bas-relief originally made in 1887, during Stevenson's illness in New York

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carrying out the purpose of the Memorial Meeting held at Edinburgh Music Hall in December 1896:

Five years have now elapsed since, at a great public meeting held in Edinburgh, it was remitted to an executive committee to take steps for the collection of funds and the erection of a memorial to Robert Louis Stevenson. It was in May 1898 that the executive were first in a position to estimate the sum likely to be available for the purposes of the memorial, and as this was not of a sufficient amount to warrant any attempt to erect an open-air memorial, it was finally agreed to seek permission from the Board of Saint Giles' High Kirk, Edinburgh—the Scottish national Valhalla—for the erection of a mural monument within its walls. It was further agreed to entrust the work to Mr. Augustus Saint Gaudens, 'the only sculptor of note who had studied Mr. Stevenson from the life.' All details having been satisfactorily adjusted, Mr. Saint Gaudens completed his model for the memorial, and was just about to have it cast in bronze, when, in July 1900, he became dangerously ill, and had to leave Paris for the United States, where he has since undergone several serious surgical operations.

The Edinburgh Memorial.

In the earlier months of the present year, however, letters from the sculptor indicated that the materials for the erection of the monument might be expected very shortly, and in point of fact the marble framework was actually received in Edinburgh in the month of May. But in June, Mr. Saint Gaudens wrote to say that he was so anxious that the *patine* (a surface-colouring obtained by chemical treatment and firing) should be to his satisfaction, that he had ordered the bronze cast to be forwarded to him in America for inspection, as he had found it impossible to come to Europe this year. From a letter from him, dated 24th November, it has just been ascertained that the patine did not satisfy him, and also that the completed bas-relief suggested to him the desirability of modifications which would improve its appearance. For these reasons, he intimates, he is remodelling the design, and intends to have a fresh cast made. This alteration involves a delay which in his opinion should now only postpone the completion of the memorial until the coming spring.

From the *Daily Graphic*, November 5, 1897. A picture of the memorial fountain accompanied the note:

San Francisco Memorial Fountain.

It is fitting, for many reasons, that San Francisco should be the first city in the United States to unveil a memorial to Robert Louis Stevenson. All cultured Americans are great admirers of the departed author, his works are widely read throughout the States, and the news of his death brought forth many keen expressions of regret from all parts of the country. Nowhere was the feeling stronger than in San Francisco, for Stevenson was well known there, and had paid frequent visits to the city. The memorial fountain, which was unveiled without ceremony on October 17th, stands in the old Plaza, an open space which, in the palmy days of gold fever, used to be the nucleus of the bustling life of that pioneer community. To-day the business centre of the town has shifted, and the Plaza is now the focus of the foreign and Chinese quarter. Stevenson when living there occupied a house within a stone's throw of the Plaza, and was never tired of studying the strange foreign life which ebbs and flows by night and by day through the streets of that Bohemian quarter. The fountain is of plain but tasteful design. The main granite shaft is thirteen feet high, and on top, executed in bronze, is a sixteenth century ship under full sail, emblematical of Stevenson's wandering and romantic tastes. The inscription, incised in plain lettering on the granite, consists of a passage from the author's 'Christmas Sermon' as follows:—

'To be honest, to be kind, to earn a little and spend a little less: to make, upon the whole, a family happier by his presence: to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered: to keep a few friends, but these without capitulation—above all, on the same grim conditions, to keep friends with himself—here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy.'

The following report of a most interesting ceremony in San Francisco last autumn is taken from the San Francisco *Chronicle*, November 14, 1902:

As though in aptest silent tribute to the memory of one whose

[*Photo lent by Mr Graham Balfour*

THE SAN FRANCISCO MEMORIAL

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versatile pen had always painted nature most beautifully, the heavens cleared for a few moments before nine o'clock last night just enough to let the full high moon shine clearly down from among drifting rain-clouds and flood with silvery light the Robert Louis Stevenson monument in Portsmouth Square and the large group of university professors, literary folk, and men and women admirers gathered there just then to place wreaths and garlands upon the memorial shaft, while the widow of the gifted Scotch author planted at the rear base of the column a bit of ivy from a house in Scotland, where Stevenson spent part of his boyhood, and afterwards made the place famous in one of his stories by the escape of the hero down the very wall against which this ivy had grown. Upon the front of the glistening white granite of that monument are the words, 'To Remember Robert Louis Stevenson.' It was for this purpose that the people came into historic old Portsmouth Square in the night-time upon the anniversary of his birth to do honour to one who used to live in San Francisco before he became famous as the creator of 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' 'Treasure Island,' and half a hundred other books that have given him first rank among the English writers of the last half-century. Like burnished gold the light bronze sails shone on the Spanish galleon atop the massive white granite. Slender, leafless little poplar-trees stood in weird silhouette beside the memorial. Broad, smooth lawns, moist earth paths, and the lantern-red lights of near-by Chinatown made up a strangely suggestive picture, while a giant weeping willow close by, the lofty windows from the City Prison across the street, and clanging electric cars, rounded out very appropriately the background for a memorial to a man who had written much of many things.

Birthday Celebration in San Francisco.

From the Plaza the little gathering went, in irregular procession, over into Bush Street to a small restaurant opposite the California Hotel, and there participated in an informal supper. Robert Louis Stevenson used to dine in that place, and that is why President Jordan, of Stanford University, led the people in and took his chair at the head of the table, with Stevenson's widow on his right, and next to her an aged Frenchman who had come all the way from Monterey for this disinterested tribute to

the great writer, whom he had nursed back to life in his critical illness in San Francisco.

About that table were people who had personal reminiscences to relate of Robert Louis Stevenson. Mrs. Virgil Williams, who, with her husband, had befriended the lonely young writer when he was here in poor health and without money or acquaintances, tearfully read some personal letters from Stevenson, one of whose books is dedicated to this Mrs. Williams and her husband. In these letters, sent from his later Samoan home, Stevenson referred very pathetically to his hardships in 'that, to me, dreary city; that town of sand and fog and deadly breezes,' where he spent the saddest days of his life, a sick man, in dire distress, without money and unknown. But he had a great fondness for San Francisco all the same, and referred to it as the place where he got his wife, for here, with the Williamses as witnesses, he married Mrs. Osbourne while he was yet a boyish man of twenty-nine. Something of the joyous and humorous elements of Stevenson's nature were shown in two other letters read by Miss Annie Ide, to whom Stevenson humorously bequeathed his own birthday because little Miss Ide had been carelessly born on Christmas, and, therefore, was cheated out of a real birthday and its perquisites.[1] In willing her his birthday, November 13, Stevenson was very funny, and in his reply to the little girl's acknowledgment, written eleven years ago, he was even more witty.

Professor Jordan spoke reminiscently of his own impressions of Samoa and the island people, of 'the photographic truthfulness of Stevenson's descriptive writing,' and of a small but beautiful brown and golden speckled Samoan fish which he means to name 'Bilima,' after a little Samoan creek, near where Stevenson lived.

A. M. Sutherland, a native Scotchman, was present at the assemblage, and spoke very entertainingly of Stevenson's personality and the influence of his writings, and Rev. Dr. Ernest E. Baker, of Oakland, dealt with the ethical and literary strength

[1] There would seem to be some confusion on this point, as the *British Weekly* had before this date reported the death in Samoa of 'Miss Adelaide M. Ide,' who, having been born on February 29th, did not have a birthday so often as other little girls, and to whom R. L. S. in a delightful letter bequeathed his own birthday.—Ed.

of Stevenson, whom others described as one of the most interesting and charming of conversationalists.

The meeting concluded with a general singing of 'Auld Lang Syne.'

In the *Overland Monthly* (San Francisco), December 1901, the following article on Mr. Graham Balfour's 'Life of Robert Louis Stevenson' was printed, as from the pen of an 'intimate friend of the late R. L. S.':

The 'Life' Reviewed by 'An Intimate Friend.'

There was published in October the authorised 'Life of Robert Louis Stevenson,' by Mr. Graham Balfour. It is in two volumes, uniform with the 'Letters to His Family and Friends' which appeared last year. No other person, with the exception of Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, was so well qualified to undertake the biography of Stevenson, and Mr. Osbourne declined the task, feeling that so intimate a thing as a 'Life' could be written with more freedom and better taste by one outside his immediate family. Mr. Balfour was Stevenson's cousin, and for the last two years and a half lived with him at Vailima. He enjoyed his confidence, in a degree increased by their common isolation from home, old friends, and associates. Mr. Balfour gained an insight into Stevenson's character, and a knowledge of his aims and ambitions, that perhaps none of his contemporaries possessed. He has used his knowledge with discretion, and has accomplished his task with care and appreciation.

Nothing can compare with a good biography in interest and inspiration, but few such have ever been written of men of letters. It is necessarily so, for most writers are wholly absorbed with their work, and their last moments present an outward picture of a man bent over his desk. Johnson, Scott, and Carlyle are notable exceptions to this rule, and to these we must now add the 'Life of Robert Louis Stevenson.' For we have in Mr. Balfour's 'Life' of this most lovable, brilliant, and fascinating man a biography worthy of the subject.

It may be objected that there was no need of a separate biography. The introduction to the 'Letters' is comprehensive and excellent. Stevenson himself, while never practising any of the arts of self-advertising, was extremely frank, open, and auto-

biographical. There is scarcely a period of his life that he has not at least touched upon in his writings. 'A Child's Garden of Verses' is his own childhood. Much of 'Archie' in 'Weir of Hermiston' is himself; the experience of the young man in 'Lay Morals' who would not spend an unnecessary penny of his father's money when he lay sick unto death, because nothing he had yet accomplished justified the expenditure, was his own experience. 'Ordered South' was his convalescence. And, more than these, we have the 'Vailima Letters' and his 'Letters to His Family and Friends.' And there have appeared several other biographies of Stevenson of greater or less merit. No new 'Life' could come as any sort of a revelation. It could give us no new conception of the man. It could only amplify and confirm that which we had before. And that is exactly what Mr. Balfour's 'Life' has done. Not a few passages have been taken bodily from unpublished diaries and bear the Stevenson touch, and sparingly he has quoted from Stevenson's works. But all have been most skilfully dove-tailed with Mr. Balfour's own narrative. The result is most praiseworthy, and the story, if familiar, is so animated and brave that it can never weary the readers in the retelling. Then the lovers of Stevenson are so many, and they are for ever demanding the one word more, and this is Mr. Balfour's justification. . . .

Stevenson's whole life was a brave battle against disease; but it was a splendid fight, conducted with manliness, frankness, and merriment, so that he was a delight and comfort to all about him. And it is none the less to his credit because sometimes he was weary at heart, as his letters to some of his friends reveal. Samoa, if most beautiful and full of much that appealed to Stevenson's romantic disposition, was still a land of exile. It was his friends and his country that he missed. 'The love of country which is in all Scots and beyond all others lies deepest in the Celtic heart,' flowed back upon him again and again with a wave of uncontrollable emotion. When the 'smell of the good wet earth' came to him, it came 'with a kind of Highland tone.' A tropic shower discovered in him 'a frame of mind and body that belonged to Scotland, and particularly to the neighbourhood of Callander.' When he turned to his grandfather's life, he was filled with this yearning, and the beautiful sentences in which he has described the old man's farewell to 'Sumburgh and the wild

crags of Skye' were his own valediction to those shores. . . . It is not to be wondered that his letters show moods of depression which his indomitable spirit prevented him from manifesting at the time to those around him, and which, perhaps, beset him most when he turned to his correspondence.

We have said that ill-health was Stevenson's always, but what he accomplished in the way of letters surpasses in amount and scope that which many a stronger man has done. It amounted to 'nearly four hundred pages a year for twenty years,' and of the conditions under which most of it was done he wrote to Mr. George Meredith in 1893:

'For fourteen years I have not had a day's real health; I have wakened sick and gone to bed weary; and I have done my day unflinchingly. I have written in bed and written out of it; written in hæmorrhages, written in sickness, written torn by coughing, written when my head swam for weakness; and for so long it seems to me I have won my wager and recovered my glove. I am better now, have been, rightly speaking, since first I came to the Pacific; and still few are the days when I am not in some physical distress. And the battle goes on—ill or well is a trifle, so as it goes. I was made for a contest, and the Powers have so willed that my battlefield should be this dingy, inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle.' . . .

Stevenson was most happy in his death, for he had long feared and dreaded a return to the sick-room. It took him unawares. 'In the hot fit of life, a tip-toe on the highest point of being, he passes at a bound on to the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.'

One of the most picturesque of the new friends Stevenson found in his South Sea wanderings was Ben Hird, of whom Mr. Graham Balfour wrote a character sketch in *Macmillan's Magazine*, November 1896, under the title 'A South Sea Trader.' A few excerpts are here given:

'To three old shipmates among the Islands, Harry Henderson, Ben Hird, Jack Buckland; their friend R. L. S.' So runs the dedication of the 'Island Nights' Entertainments.' In the

Samoa Times for April 4, 1896, appeared a notice of the death of Mr. B. Hird, 'the well-known supercargo of the *Archer*, who died at the island of Funafuti in the Ellices, and was buried the same day at the island.' Mr. Hird's death, it is added, will be deeply regretted throughout the Pacific Islands, where he was well known and esteemed for his kindly ways, and conscientious dealings with both traders and natives. Perhaps the most widely known figure in the Central Pacific has disappeared with the death of Peni, as Ben Hird was everywhere called by the natives. . . .

'A South Sea Trader.'

Hird was born in Aberdeen about the middle of the century, and after being educated in Scotland, he came to London as a lad to receive a commercial training. We have heard that he enlisted and served for a short time in the cavalry, but was soon bought out. At any rate he came to New Zealand more than five-and-twenty years ago, and took at once to trading in the South Seas. . . . Ultimately he became a partner in the well- known firm at Sydney for which he had worked, and most of his time was spent in visiting their stations.

Hird's tall and burly form was easily recognised; his name of Ben came easily to native tongues, stammering among the many consonants of the English speech; his easy and genial manners gained him many a point where men with less sense of humour, and less instinct for native ways of thought, would have failed. He spoke five or six dialects of Polynesian, and had a smattering of many other of the tongues of the Pacific. . .

Louis Stevenson made a trip of several months' duration in Hird's company, visiting the Ellices, Gilberts, and Marshalls, as well as a number of outlying islands, and to the friendship then commenced the dedication at the head of this article is due. In 'The Beach of Falesa,' also, Ben comes in once or twice without preface or explanation as part of the recognised machinery of island-existence. Well as Stevenson himself could tell a story, he was never tired of studying the methods of other men, and never failed to express his high appreciation of sailors' yarns. Even the bores of his acquaintance were carefully placed under examination lest he too should fall unawares into any of the ways of being tedious. 'I have taken a good deal of pains,' he said one day, 'in analysing ——'s anecdotes, and finding what it is

that makes them so wearisome. It is not mere detail, for *that* sailors of all people introduce in any quantity into their stories, and it is often that which makes them so good; but it is irrelevant detail about people who don't really come into the story.' No one's stories commanded more hearty admiration from Stevenson than those of Ben Hird.

From Mr. G. K. Chesterton's review of the 'Life' of R. L. S. in the *Daily News*, 18th October 1901:

G. K. Chesterton on the 'Life.'

When Robert Louis Stevenson was a little boy, Mr. Graham Balfour tells us, he once made the following remark to his mother: 'Mother, I've drawed a man. Shall I draw his soul now?' . . . The only biography that is really possible is autobiography. To recount the actions of another man is not biography, it is zoology, the noting down of the habits of a new and outlandish animal. It may fill ten volumes with anecdotes, without once touching upon his life. It has drawed a man, but it has not drawed his soul.

It seems to me, therefore, that there are only two kinds of books which can be, or should be, published about a man like Stevenson. The first is a biography constructed to serve chiefly as a framework to be filled with his own letters and observations. This is practically autobiography, and it cannot be false. . . . The other kind of book which could be satisfactorily written about Stevenson is the serious sketch or monograph composed by a man who is intellectually and spiritually capable of sketching such a character in the medium of language. To depict Stevenson in sepia and burnt sienna requires a painter; to depict him in adjectives and adverbs requires a novelist. . . . This second type of work, the artistic sketch of Stevenson, would be most valuable and fascinating, but to it one serious condition is attached. Into it, as into every work of art, the personality of the author is bound to creep. Mr. Henley might write an excellent study of Stevenson, but it would only be of the Henleyish part of Stevenson, and it would show a distinct divergence from the finished portrait of the Colvinesque part of Stevenson which would be given by Professor Colvin. The best man of all to write a book like this would be a professional novelist. A subtle and brilliant novelist who was a friend of Stevenson is ready

to our hand, but let us remember that the portrait would not be Stevenson, but a composite photograph of Stevenson and Mr. Henry James.

Since these are the two alternative courses for a biographer of Stevenson, it becomes apparent that Mr. Graham Balfour worked rather at a disadvantage. The essence of the first kind of book, the pile of correspondence amounting to an autobiography, had been already achieved by Professor Colvin's sumptuous and delightful collection of the Stevenson Letters. It is true that Mr. Graham Balfour is able to add to this a great many most interesting extracts from Stevenson's Diary, but these scarcely reach the same level. In the case of so sociable a soul as Stevenson, wit and truth poured out a hundred times quicker for human contact; his tipsiest jests and his most clamorous arguments were more true than the most secret soliloquy. On the other hand, though he writes with vividness and dignity, he makes no pretence, of course, to be the literary artist who should draw Stevenson as Stevenson drew Alan Breck. Thus handicapped for both purposes, his book, though packed with readable matter and genuine biographical ability, falls under one of the worst curses that can attaint a book, the curse which Stevenson himself would have regarded as peculiarly ruinous and final, the curse which leaves both author and reader in considerable doubt as to what kind of book it is meant to be. . . .

Professor Colvin's collection of the Letters was a thoroughly satisfactory representation, a representation marked with admirable tact and selection of Stevenson's own version of himself. If Mr. Graham Balfour is aiming at the same mark, he scarcely hits it so neatly. If, on the other hand, his work is conceived as a personal and independent study, the case is more complex. . . .

Stevenson is a peculiarly difficult man for any biographer to estimate fairly. The reason lies in the fact that his personality was, as it were, singularly light and slippery, and that this slipperiness and levity arose not from eccentricity, but from a swift and unconquerable common sense. We are so rooted in open and systematic morbidities, in inhuman prejudices, in respectable monomanias, that a sane man terrifies us all like a lunatic. To us sense seems as illusive as imagination; intellectual temperance seems something wilder than excess. Stevenson was peculiarly an

embodiment of this elfish sanity. He is continually startling us in his letters, not because his remarks are peculiar, but because they are a little more sensible than anything we had ever thought of. . . .

It is said in some quarters that Stevenson has been overpraised, that a reaction has set in against him, that he will not fascinate the next generation. It matters not one rap whether he does or not to any one who has perceived his absolute solidity and his eternal use to mankind. . . . Stevenson will win, not because he has friends or admirers or the approval of the public or the assent of the æsthetes. He will win because he is *right*—a word of great practical import which needs to be rediscovered. He may or may not be eclipsed for a time; it would be a truer way of putting it to say that the public may or may not be eclipsed for a time. . . . The idea that a great literary man who has said something novel and important to mankind can vanish suddenly and finally is ridiculous. The pessimists who believe it are people who could believe that the sun is destroyed for ever every time it sinks in the west. Nothing is lost in the magnificent economy of existence; the sun returns, the flowers return, the literary fashions return. If life is a continual parting, it is also a continual heaven of reconciliation. The old legends were right when they said that Arthur should come back, and Christ should rise again. All things return; the world uses all its forces, the return of the stars, the return of the seasons, the return of the heroes.

'The Body-Snatcher.'

The sale of the original manuscript of Stevenson's 'The Body-Snatcher' recalls several remarkable things in connection with that tale. One was that the author returned a portion of the honorarium, on the ground that it was excessive. The story was written to order for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. It wanted a Christmas story 'with a thrill in it,' and applied to Stevenson. It is an odd idea, by the way, and one which measures the distance travelled since Dickens, that merry Christmas had come to be just the time to read of ghouls and graveyards. It may be our growing love of contrasts. Anyhow, the *Pall Mall* requested Stevenson to give it something to make its readers' flesh creep, and he first sent a murder story, 'Markheim.' This, for some reason, did not sup full enough on

horrors, and, after some correspondence, Stevenson promised to send a tale which would 'freeze the blood of a Grenadier.' It was 'The Body-Snatcher.' The *Pall Mall* advertised it in the streets in a way as horrible as the story itself. 'Six plaster skulls were made by a theatrical property man. Six pairs of coffin-lids, painted dead black, with white skulls and cross-bones in the centre for relief, were supplied by a carpenter. Six long white surplices were purchased from a funeral establishment. Six sandwich-men were hired at double rates.' The rest can be guessed. But the police suppressed the nuisance.—*Current Literature* (New York).

From the London Letter by 'H. B'[1] in the New York *Critic*, May 21, 1887:

'Deacon Brodie.'

I have read—with very natural interest—some of the criticisms on Messrs. Henley and Stevenson's 'Deacon Brodie,' produced a week or two ago at Wallack's Theatre; and I have been struck by the unanimity with which their authors refer the origin of the piece to 'The House on the Marsh' and 'Jim the Penman,' or even to the career of the heroic Peace. It is hardly worth remarking, of course, but it is a fact that (as I have excellent means of knowing) 'Deacon Brodie' has existed, in one form or another, for a considerable number of years, and was seen in three dimensions before Miss Warden published her novel, I believe, and assuredly before Sir Charles Young produced his play. To this I may add that it has as little to do with the late Charles Peace as with his predecessor, the renowned Jack Sheppard. The principal character is historical. There really was a William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights; he was a master burglar by night, and by day a citizen whose influence was weighty and wide enough to turn (so it is said) the scale of a parliamentary election. Jean Watt, too, was a real person; and Humphrey Moore, George Smith, and Andrew Ainslie all existed, all served the Deacon, and were all in trouble with their master. He, I should note, experienced the fate of his kind. He escaped to Holland; revealed his whereabouts by an unwary inquiry as to the results of certain cock-fights; was pursued, captured (in a cupboard), brought back,

[1] 'H.B.' is generally understood to have been Mr. W. E. Henley.

tried, and finally hanged upon a drop into the construction of which, it is said, he had introduced, as a good carpenter might, a certain ingenious improvement. You may find the story of his life in Kay's 'Edinburgh,' and also in the record of his trial—the plethoric little volume which was printed and sold at the time of his translation. Both are embellished with etched portraits by the aforesaid Kay; and if Kay was not a libeller, then must Deacon Brodie—who in one is pictured in his prison-cell, seated at a table decorated with cards and dice—have been a gentleman of unpleasant aspect. For the rest, the *idée mère* of the play—the scene, that is to say, in which the Deacon is caught and unmasked in the act of breaking his friend's house—is to be found in Mr. Stevenson's 'Edinburgh,' in the shape of a tradition—or a fact, I forget which—still popular and still credible. In the version of his adventures which was produced (at a *matinée*) at the Prince's Theatre some three or four years ago, he 'cut up ugly' in the end, and died in a madness of denunciation and despair—a piece of 'realism' revolting to the human mind. In the new version produced at Wallack's, he takes (as I understand) another road, gives way to sentiment, and commits suicide by way of expiation. It is odd, though not unnatural, that both these solutions should have been condemned. The first was found disgusting; the second is set down as unveracious and conventional. I need hardly remark that, to my poor judgment, both sets of critics are right; or that a handsome reward will probably be his who will discover to the authors how to end their drama in any other fashion.

In Mr. Harry Quilter's *What's What* there appears this note on Stevenson's 'Bottle Imp':

'The Bottle Imp.'

We do not remember having seen it stated in any memoir of Robert Louis Stevenson, or in any critical estimate of his genius, that one of the most striking of his tales is, so far as the invention is concerned, borrowed from a popular German story. It seems hardly credible that the circumstance should have been unknown to the critics of Stevenson, the title of the story being already almost proverbial before he was born. Who has not heard of the 'Bottle Imp,' and who has not admired the ingenuity of the

invention by which the fiend must pass from hand to hand at a constantly decreasing price, until at length the lowest conceivable coin is reached, and the last possessor, unable to find any one to relieve him of his burden, becomes the demon's slave? If the failure to point out the absolute identity of Stevenson's central incident with that of his anonymous German predecessor is due to any fear of seeming to charge him with plagiarism, such apprehension is uncalled for. The more notorious the original, the less scruple would he or need he feel to avail himself of it. He might as well have been accused of plagiarising Bluebeard, had he, like Tieck, founded a romance upon the old popular tradition. In fact, he has added to his reputation by manifesting his power of enriching and embellishing material already excellent. The comparison of the comparatively simple 'Bottle Imp' of the popular German story-book with Stevenson's version of it in his 'Island Nights' Entertainments' is most instructive as an example of the transplantation of a literary growth to a new environment. The core of the old story remains; this is essential; were it to be tampered with, the tale would lose all point. But every external detail is utterly different; instead of Europeans we have South Sea Islanders, instead of the cities of the old world, ships, corals, and cocoa-nuts. While the demand on the imaginative faculty is thus much greater, the moral significance of the tale is rendered far deeper by the revelation of intellectual struggles, and of a psychology which never entered into the mind of the old writer. We could hardly have a stronger illustration of the complexity of modern thought than the development of the simple original thought in a modern mind. Man, it is clear, continues to bite at the fruit which bestows the knowledge of the difference between good and evil.

Apropos 'Vailima Letters.'

The account of an interview with Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, published in a San Francisco paper, is somewhat distressing reading. It raises over again the old question of the prudence of publishing a dead man's letters, when his widow is still alive, without her sanction. Mrs. Stevenson says that her late husband's friends —if such she still holds them to be—have hastened to make money out of the scraps and scrawls he sent them. The charge

reads as an ugly one. But a moment's reflection supplies its modifications. Has Mr. Henley rushed into the market-place with his dead friend's letters? Has Mr. Charles Baxter? That was the old trio renowned in song and famous in fable. Of the newer friends—friends such as those he made in Bournemouth, Lady Shelley and the Misses Ashworth Taylor, the most attached a man ever had—not one has brought out of his or her treasury the delightful letters of 'R. L. S.' We have the 'Vailima Letters,' it is true, but surely these must be published by the consent of Mrs. Stevenson and at her profit? We had also that letter which Mr. Gosse sent to the *Times*. And, as for that, it was obviously given and not 'sold.' In this particular letter, which was written in acknowledgment of a dedication of Mr. Gosse's poems to him, Stevenson congratulated his correspondent on the prospect of an old age mitigated by the society of his descendants. To heighten the picture, the man who had learned his craft so well, and could hardly elude it in his least-considered letters, introduced his own figure as a sort of foil—he was childless. That word, uttered with regret, has, perhaps, a pang which the heart of the widow might imagine she should be spared. Again, in one of the 'Vailima Letters,' Stevenson refers to having been happy only once in his life, and that, too, on the chance of its misinterpretation, may be ashes in Mrs. Stevenson's mouth. Yet who does not know 'R. L. S.' as a man of moods? He is that, and nothing else, in some of his letters. And no chance phrase of his will ever be read to the discredit of Mrs. Stevenson—she may take the English reader's oath on that.—*The Sketch.*

The following valuable chapter of Stevensoniana appeared in the *Bookbuyer* (New York), February 1895:

A most interesting article might be made by collecting the dedications which Robert Louis Stevenson printed at the beginning of his books, to Sidney Colvin, to William Ernest Henley, to Will H. Low, to Charles Baxter, to Mrs. Cunningham, to Paul Bourget, to 'the Critic on the Hearth,' and to others perhaps less widely known, but whose place in Stevenson's affections was not less certain and well-defined. It was characteristic

of the spontaneous kindliness of his nature to write with his own hand, also, in books which he gave to his friends, those familiar dedications which, when now re-read, seem to convey the very voice and gentle presence of the man. A number of such personal inscriptions are now counted among the treasured possessions of their owners.

The Trudeau Dedications.

Stevenson spent part of the years 1887 and 1888 at the home of Doctor E. L. Trudeau, at Saranac Lake, where he went in his quest of health. After leaving the Adirondacks, he commissioned Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, his publishers, to bind up a complete set of his books, in uniform size and style, for presentation to Dr. Trudeau; and wrote upon a fly-leaf, to be bound into each book, 'Doctor Trudeau's Complete Set, From the Author,' and in addition some characteristic scrap of verse or prose in dedication, in each instance signed 'R. L. S.' These dedications, hitherto unpublished, are printed below, with the courteous permission of Doctor Trudeau:

'A Child's Garden of Verses'

—To win your lady (it, alas! it may be),
Let's couple this one with the name of
Baby!

'Treasure Island'

I could not choose a patron for each one:
But *this* perhaps is chiefly for your son.

'Kidnapped'

—Here is the one sound page of all my writing,
The one I'm proud of, and that I delight in.

'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'

Trudeau was all the winter at my side:
I never spied the nose of Mr. Hyde.

'UNDERWOODS

Some day or other ('tis a general curse)
The wisest author stumbles into verse.

'THE DYNAMITER'

As both my wife and I composed the thing,
Let's place it under Mrs. Trudeau's wing.

'MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS'

Greeting to all your household, small and big,
In this one instance, not forgetting—Nig!

'THE MERRY MEN'

If just to read the tale you should be able,
I would not bother to make out the fable.

'TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY'

It blew, it rained, it thawed, it snowed, it thundered—
Which was the Donkey? I have often wondered!

'PRINCE OTTO'

This is my only love-tale, this Prince Otto,
Which some folks like to read and others *not* to.

'MEMOIR OF FLEEMING JENKIN'

The preface mighty happy to get back
To its inclement birth-place, Saranac!

'FAMILIAR STUDIES OF MEN AND BOOKS'

My other works are of a slighter kind:
Here is the party to improve your MIND!

'AN INLAND VOYAGE'

My dear Trudeau, there is not one
Other rhyme left in me, so please
Accept in prose the assurance of my
Gratitude and friendship.

'VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE'

I have no art to please a lady's mind.
Here's the least acid spot,
Miss Trudeau, of the lot.
If you 'd just *try* this volume, 'twould be kind

'NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS'

No need to put a verse on this; I dipped
Into it, and see p. 39.

[At page 39 the compositor has spelled devilry 'deviltry,' which the author objects to as follows:]

I will stand being misspelled; but not this *reveltry*
Of nonsense. Deviltry! ! ! ! ! ! O Devilry!

The set was composed of fifteen volumes, in the original covers of various sizes. When bound by Mr. Henry Blackwell, to whom the work was intrusted, the set was made of uniform size by stilting the boards of the smaller volumes to the size of the largest. Mr. Stevenson was particular to designate the exact style in which the volumes were to be bound, *i.e.* in half-white vellum, grey tint sides, white end-papers, edges absolutely uncut, showing white edges all around. All the volumes were lettered at the top of the back, in black ink, 'Dr. Trudeau's Set,' and in the centre of the back, in black ink, appeared a single word of the title, *e.g.* Kidnapped, Otto, Jenkin, Garden, Donkey, Treasure, Virginibus, Memories. This work was done in 1888.

Anecdote of Childhood by R.L.S.

Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson was the guest of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales at Sydney, on March 18th. In a felicitous speech, Mr. Stevenson said that his grandfather and great-grandfather were ministers—the latter being Dr. Smith of Galston, referred to by Robert Burns, 'Smith opens out his cauld harangues.' His great-uncle, John Smith, first of Glasgow, then of Helensburgh, was 'the most absolute child of the church that perhaps ever lived.' He appeared in the General Assembly as a ruling elder every year. Once,

when Mr. Stevenson was a very young and sickly child, Mr. Smith came up to the Assembly as usual. 'I was lying in bed at the time, but with his infinite good nature, before going to the Assembly he came up to see me. He had a little conversation with me, and then when it was time to go to the Assembly, I shook my finger at him and said, "Now, Uncle John, if you will take my advice you will have nothing to do with that man Lee." This picture of the infant monitor sitting up in bed and shaking his finger at his great-uncle, I think my unseen friend and most admired colleague, Mr. Barrie, might have ticketed "An Auld Licht Idyll."'—*British Weekly*, April 1893.

An Historic Inkstand.

With an inscription to attest its genuineness, Mr. Henley has contributed to the *Daily Mail* 'Absent-Minded Beggar Fund' the inkstand which was used by R. L. Stevenson during two years of his wanderings in the Pacific. It passed into Mr. Henley's hands at Stevenson's death. So far £15 has been bid for it.—*Academy*, 24th March 1900.

Stevenson's Delusion.

It is a strange delusion, which the telegram from New Zealand tells us of, in announcing the death of Robert Louis Stevenson, that of his idea that the popularity of his writings was waning. No fancy could be further from the fact than this. To illustrate what the truth is about the works of this great writer, let us relate an incident which occurred in a well-known bookstore in New York only a week before the death of Robert Louis Stevenson had been heard of in this part of the world. A lover and buyer of good books was talking with a bookseller of exceptional knowledge, experience, and literary taste in respect to the collector's success in the past in picking up books from time to time at reasonable prices, which subsequently advanced in value until many of them had come to be regarded as veritable book-buyers' prizes. 'I wish you could give me some advice as to what to buy now,' he continued, 'which would turn out as well as my own notions of fifteen or twenty years ago.'

'I do not feel sure about many things,' responded the book-

man, 'but I am quite confident that I am not mistaken about the books of one author. Buy first editions of Robert Louis Stevenson. He will rank as the first story-writer of our time. I see constant evidence of the increasing appreciation in which his works are held. That esteem will constantly increase, and the forms in which his writings were first given to the public will be valued more and more by book-collectors as time goes on. The man who buys first editions of Robert Louis Stevenson now, even at the prices at which some of them are held, will make no mistake.' If Robert Louis Stevenson had but known it, his distinction as a writer was never greater than just before his death, when he feared his popularity was waning.—*New York Sun*, December 17, 1894.

Some idea of the intense public interest in Stevenson's personality which continued in America for several years after his death may be gathered from the following article, entitled 'A Stevenson Shrine,' written by Mrs. Emily Soldene, the famous actress, turned journalist, and published in *The Sketch*, February 26, 1896:

A Stevenson Shrine in San Francisco.

In 1896 I strolled down Market Street, San Francisco, looking into the curio and other shops under the Palace Hotel, when my attention was attracted by a crowd of people round one particular shop-window. Now, a crowd in San Francisco (except on political occasions) is an uncommon sight. Naturally, with the curiosity of my sex and the perseverance of the Anglo-Saxon, I took my place in the surging mass, and patiently waited till the course of events, and the shoulders of my surroundings, brought me up close to the point of vantage. What came they out for to see? It was a bookseller's window. In the window was a shrine. 'THE WORKS AND PORTRAITS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON,' proclaimed a placard all illuminated and embossed with red and purple and green and gold. In the centre of the display was an odd-looking document. This, then, was the loadstone—a letter of Stevenson's, in Stevenson's own handwriting. Many people stood and read, then turned away, sad and sorrowful-looking. 'Poor fellow!' said one

woman. 'But he 's all right now. I guess he 's got more than he asked for.' I stood, too, and read. Before I had finished, my eyes, unknowingly, were full of tears. This is the document. When you have read, you will not wonder at the tears.

'I think now, this 5th or 6th of April 1873, that I can see my future life. I think it will run stiller and stiller year by year, a very quiet, desultorily studious existence. If God only gives me tolerable health, I think now I shall be very happy: work and science calm the mind, and stop gnawing in the brain; and as I am glad to say that I do now recognise that I shall never be a great man, I may set myself peacefully on a smaller journey, not without hope of coming to the inn before nightfall.

O dass mein leben
Nach diesem Ziel ein ewig Wandeln sey!'

I walked on a block or so, and after a few minutes, when I thought my voice was steady and under control, turned back, went into the bookstore, and asked the young man in attendance, 'Could I be allowed to take a copy of the letter in the window?' He told me it was not, as I thought, an original document, but the printed reproduction of a memorandum found among the dead Stevenson's papers. 'Then,' said I, 'can I not have one—can I not buy one?' And the young man shook his head. 'No; they are not for sale.' 'Oh, I am sorry!' said I. 'I would have given anything for one.' 'Well,' said he, in a grave voice, and with a grave smile, 'they are not, indeed, for sale; but have been printed for a particular purpose, and one will be *given* to all lovers of Stevenson.' He spoke in such a low, reverent, sympathetic tone, that I *knew* his eyes must be full, and so I would not look.

Next day I went to see Mr. Doxey himself, who is a Stevenson enthusiast, and has one window (the window of the crowd) devoted entirely to Stevenson. All his works, all his editions—including the Edinburgh Edition—are there; and he, with the greatest kindness, showed me the treasures he had collected. In the first place, the number of portraits was astonishing. Years and conditions and circumstances, all various and changing; but the face—the face always the same. The eyes, wonderful in their keenness, their interrogative, questioning, eager gaze; the

looking out, always looking out, always asking, looking ahead, far away into some distant land not given to *les autres* to perceive. That wonderful looking out was the first thing that impressed me when I met Mr. Stevenson in Sydney in '93. Unfortunately for us, he only stayed there a short time, would not visit, was very difficult of access, not at all well, and when he went seemed to disappear, not go. Mr. Doxey had pictures of him in every possible phase—in turn-down collar, in no collar at all; his hair long, short, and middling; in oils, in water-colour, in photos; in a smoking-cap and Imperial; with a moustache, without a moustache; young, youthful, dashing, Byronic; not so youthful, middle-aged; looking in *this* like a modern Manfred; in *that* like an epitome of the fashions, wearing a debonair demeanour and a *dégagé* tie; as a boy, as a barrister; on horseback, in a boat. There was a portrait taken by Mrs. Stevenson in 1885, and one lent by Virgil Williams; another, a water-colour, lent by Miss O'Hara; and a wonderful study of his wonderful hands. Then he was photographed in his home at Samoa, surrounded by his friends and his faithful, devoted band of young men, his Samoan followers; in the royal boat-house at Honolulu, seated side by side with his Majesty King Kalakaua; on board the *Casco*. Here, evidently anxious for a really good picture, he has taken off his hat, standing in the sun bareheaded. At a native banquet, surrounded by all the delicacies of the season, bowls of *kava*, *poi*, *palo-sami*, and much good company. Then the later ones at Vailima; in the clearing close to his house, in the verandah. Later still, writing in his bed. Coming to the 'inn' he talks about in 1873—coming so close, close, unexpectedly, but not unprepared—Robert Louis Stevenson has passed the veil. Not dead, but gone before, he lives in the hearts of all people. But not so palpably, so outwardly, so proudly, as in the hearts of these people of the Sunny Land, who, standing on the extreme verge of the Western world, shading their eyes from the shining glory, watch the sunshine go out through the Golden Gate, out on its way across the pearly Pacific to the lonely mountain of Samoa where lies the body of the man 'Tusitala,' whose songs and lessons and stories fill the earth, and the souls of the people thereof.

After the Etching by William Strang

After the Pencil Sketch by Percy F. S. Spence

TWO FAMILIAR PORTRAIT STUDIES OF R. L. STEVENSON

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Sir James Balfour Paul (a relation of R. L. S.), Lyon-King-of-Arms, contributed the following note on the portraits of Stevenson to *The Athenæum*, September 7, 1895. Sir James has kindly revised it for the present volume:

Note on Stevenson's Portraits.

It may be interesting, and not altogether without use, to put on record a note of the portraits of this author which have been made at different periods of his life. As he himself acknowledged, he was a difficult subject to paint, and the consequence is that there is not in existence any thoroughly satisfactory likeness of Stevenson. So far as I have been able to ascertain, there are only two finished portraits of him. One is a small full-length by J. S. Sargent, A.R.A., painted at Bournemouth in 1885, and now in the possession of Mrs. Fairchild, of Boston. This portrait is said to verge on caricature, to be 'a little more living than life,' and has been compared by one very competent to judge to a *Vanity Fair* cartoon. The other is a portrait by Signor Nerli painted in Samoa in 1892; there is a poor reproduction of it in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for last July. In addition to the above there is an unfinished oil portrait, not much more than laid on in two sittings, by W. B. Richmond, R.A. This was painted about 1885-6, and is now in the possession of the artist.

In sculpture there is a somewhat greater variety:

1. A large bronze medallion by Augustus St. Gaudens, executed in New York in 1888—a very characteristic work, representing Stevenson in bed propped up by pillows. The face is in profile, and is considered a pretty good likeness. The medallion is now in Mr. Sidney Colvin's possession.

2. A bust done at Honolulu comparatively recently by Allan Hutchinson. It was exhibited this season in the New Gallery, but cannot be considered a good specimen of the sculptor's art, being but a ghastly thing and disagreeable to look on.

3. A bust done at Sydney, believed to be by a French artist.

4. A medallion done at Honolulu.

The last two have not been seen in this country.

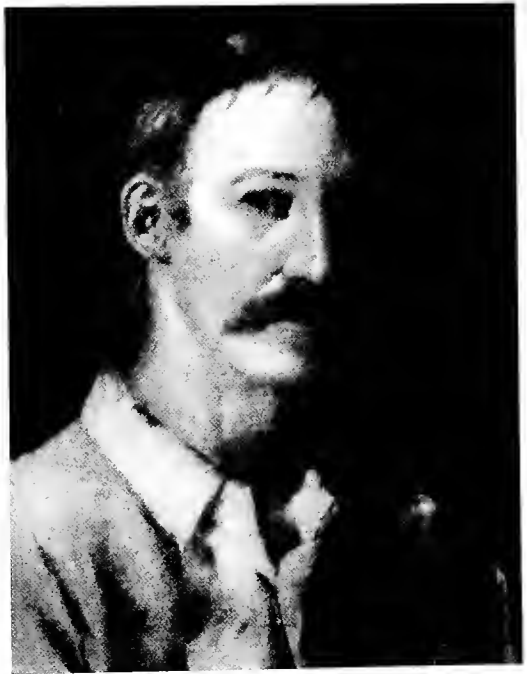
In addition to the above there are a few drawings. One by J. W. Alexander appeared in 1888 in the *Century Magazine*;

another was drawn by William Strang at Bournemouth, and from it an etching was executed.

There are, then, it may be said, three adequate representations of Stevenson—two portraits, one by Nerli and one by Sargent, and the St. Gaudens medallion. The Nerli portrait is apparently the better of the two former—at least Stevenson himself declared it to be the best likeness ever painted of him, and several of his friends who have seen it say that, though perhaps not altogether what may be termed a pleasant likeness, it is probably a faithful representation of him as he appeared towards the end of his life. There are others, however, who also knew Stevenson well, who hold a contrary opinion, and say that it is not a good likeness—a diversity of opinion which, as we all know, occurs in the case of the majority of portraits that are painted.

The history of the Nerli portrait is peculiar. After being exhibited for some time in New Zealand it was bought, in the course of this year, by a lady who was travelling there, for a hundred guineas. She then offered it for that sum to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; but the Trustees of Board of Manufactures—that oddly named body to which is entrusted the fostering care of art in Scotland, and, in consequence, the superintendence of the National Portrait Gallery—have not seen their way to accept the offer. Some surprise has been expressed at the action of the Trustees in thus declining to avail themselves of the opportunity of obtaining the portrait of one of the most distinguished Scotsmen of recent times. It can hardly be for want of money, for though the funds at the disposal of the Trustees for the purchase of ordinary works of art are but limited, it was no longer ago than last year that they were the recipients of a very handsome legacy from the late Mr. J. M. Gray, the accomplished and much lamented curator of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery—a legacy left them for the express purpose of acquiring portraits of distinguished Scotsmen, and the income of which was amply sufficient to have enabled them to purchase this portrait. One is therefore almost shut up to the conclusion that the Trustees were influenced in their decision by one of the two following reasons:—

1. That they did not consider Stevenson worthy of a place in



From "R. L. Stevenson: A Study," by H. Baildon

AFTER THE PORTRAIT PAINTED BY COUNT GIROLAMO NERLI AT SAMOA IN 1894

From "R. L. Stevenson: A Record and Memorial," by A. H. Japp

AFTER THE SKETCH IN OILS BY SIR WILLIAM B. RICHMOND, K.C.B., R.A.

The Nerli Portrait is reproduced here by special permission of Messrs Chatto & Windus

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the Gallery. This is a position so incomprehensible and so utterly opposed to public sentiment that one can hardly credit its having been the cause of their refusal. Whatever may be the place which Stevenson may ultimately take as an author, and however opinions may differ as to the merit of his work, no one can deny that he was one of the most popular writers of his day, and that as a mere master of style, if for nothing else, his works will be read so long as there are students of English literature. Surely the portrait of one for whom such a claim may legitimately be made cannot be considered altogether unworthy of a place in the national collection, as one of Scotland's most distinguished sons.

2. The only other reason which can be suggested as having weighed with the Trustees in their decision is one which in some cases might be held to be worthy of consideration. It is conceivable that in the case of some men the Trustees might be of opinion that there was plenty of time to consider the matter, and that in the meantime there was always the chance of some generous donor presenting them with a portrait. But, as has been shown above, the portraits of Stevenson are practically confined to two: one of these is in America, and there is not the least chance of its ever coming here; the other they have just refused. And as it is understood that the Trustees have a rule that they do not accept any portrait which has not been painted from the life, they preclude themselves from acquiring a copy of any existing picture, or even a portrait done from memory.

It is rumoured that the Nerli portrait may ultimately find a resting-place in the national collection of portraits in London. If this should prove to be the case, what a commentary on the old saying, 'A prophet is not without honour save in his own country!'

Another Sargent (probably a replica of the first[1]) is in the possession of Mrs. R. L. Stevenson.

The National Portrait Gallery (London) bought in 1899 a pencil sketch of his head by Percy Spence: *see* Illustrated Catalogue.

D. W. Stevenson, sculptor, had a full-length statuette in the Scottish Academy of 1902, but it was not from the life.

[1] Mr. Graham Balfour informs the editor that the two Sargent portraits are quite different.

Among the most recent additions to Stevensoniana is the following note on a privately printed budget of letters by R. L. S. It appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, May 1, 1903:

Stevenson's Letters to an Artist.

To all lovers of Robert Louis Stevenson, the news that a few more of their favourite's letters have been preserved within the printed page will be welcome. But it will be less welcome to them to learn that in all probability none but the favoured few will ever have an opportunity to read those epistles in their entirety. Five in number, they have been printed in New York, and two copies, with their daintily-tinted backs and exquisite type, are known to have reached English shores. One is in the possession of Mr. Edmund Gosse; the other is in the Ashley Library, where Mr. Wise has kindly permitted the following summary to be effected.

The letters were indited to Mr. Trevor Haddon, the painter, some twenty-three years ago, and if there was one thing more than another calculated to bring out the human inwardness of R. L. S., it was the inspiration provoked by the knowledge that the addressee was a young man just entering upon life, with all its potentialities and all its pitfalls.

'By your "fate" (he says) I believe I meant your marriage, or that love at least which may befall any one of us at the shortest notice, and overthrow the most settled habits and opinions. I call that your fate, because then, if not before, you can no longer hang back, but must stride out into life and act.'

Later we have a sermonette bristling with worldly wisdom:

'No man can settle another's life for him. It is the test of the nature and courage of each that he shall decide it for himself. Some things, however, I may say: Go not out of your way to make difficulties. Hang back from life while you are young. Shoulder no responsibilities. You do not know how far you can trust yourself; it will not be very far, or you are more fortunate than I am.'

The letter ends with: 'Wishing you well in life and art, and that you may long be young,' and that wish was the touching utterance of a heart ageing with disease. At a later date, writing

from Campagne Defli, he cries, 'I have been "the sheer hulk" to a degree almost outside of my experience.'

The fourth letter, written from Clermont Ferrand, in July 1893, on learning of the young aspirant's success in painting, is of brotherly kindness from a craftsman in kindred art. We cannot do less than print in full his 'Notes for the Student of any Art':

'1. Keep an intelligent eye upon *all* the others. It is only by doing so that you come to see what Art is. Art is the end common to them all; it is none of the points by which they differ.

'2. In this age beware of realism.

'3. In your own art, bow your head over technique. Think of technique when you rise and when you go to bed. Forget purposes in the meanwhile; get to love technical processes, to glory in technical successes; get to see the world entirely through technical spectacles, to see it entirely in terms of what you can do. Then when you have anything to say, the language will be apt and copious.

'4. See the good in other people's work; it will never be yours. See the bad in your own, and don't cry about it; it will be there always. Try to use your faults; at any rate, use your knowledge of them, and don't run your head against stone walls. Art is not like theology; nothing is forced. You have to represent with pleasure and effect, and the only way to find out what that is, is by technical exercise.'

In the last of the five there is a note of sadness: the author, his sight failing, is waiting for his wife's return that she may read aloud his correspondent's last letter. Meanwhile, his pen moves across the sheet. 'I wish I could read "Treasure Island"; I believe I should like it. But work done for the Artist is the Golden Goose killed: you sell its feathers and lament the eggs.' Then later:

'Please to recognise that you are unworthy of all that befalls you. . . . And if you know any man who believes himself to be worthy of a wife's love, a friend's affection, a mistress's caress, even if venal, you may rest assured he is worthy of nothing but a kicking. I fear men who have no open faults; what do they conceal? We are not meant to be good in this world, but to try to be, and fail, and keep on trying; and when we get a cake to say, "Thank God," and when we get a buffet to say, "Just so:

well hit!" . . . Pity sick children and the individual poor man, not the mass. Don't pity anybody else, and never pity fools.'

R. L. S. and Rodin.

M. Henry D. Davray contributed to *La Revue Hebdomadaire*, April 1903, a short paper on 'Robert Louis Stevenson in France.' It is of considerable value to Stevensonians, as the writer is able to print for the first time two letters written in French by Stevenson to Rodin, the sculptor for whose genius he had a lively admiration. M. Davray has also some noteworthy remarks on the French reading public's knowledge of Stevenson's works. He begins as follows:

'Il y a certains auteurs dont l'œuvre est d'une portée vraiment universelle, et Stevenson est de ceux-là, comme était Dickens avant lui,' dit M. Teodor de Wyzewa, dans un essai qu'il consacre 'au plus parfait conteur de la littérature contemporaine.' Et l'éminent critique se plaint de ce qu'on n'ait pas donné encore au public français une version intelligente des œuvres de R. L. Stevenson. 'Nous l'aurons lu tout entier sans nous douter de son génie; et le plaisir même que nous aurons eu à le lire, dans des traductions faites tout juste pour nous divertir un moment, ce plaisir même nous empêchera de reconnaître sa haute valeur littéraire: de sorte que nous continuerons à réclamer à tous les vents de nouveaux grands écrivains étrangers, et que nous admirerons de confiance tous ceux qu'on imaginera de nous exhiber, tandis que nous tiendrons pour un agréable auteur de romans-feuilletons le seul écrivain de notre temps, peut-être, qui, grâce à son génie d'enfant, ait exprimé des sentiments capables d'être universellement compris et goûtés.'

En conséquence, sans doute, de son admiration pour le génial conteur, M. de Wyzewa vient de publier une traduction de *Saint Yves*, œuvre posthume de R. L. Stevenson dans laquelle sont narrées les aventures d'un prisonnier français en Angleterre. On ne saurait trop conseiller aux amateurs de bonne littérature de rester *on the look out*, aux aguets, de crainte de laisser passer sans la lire la traduction de l'érudit transcripteur de la *Légende dorée*. Récemment a paru une version française de *Kidnapped*, sous ce titre : *les Aventures de David Balfour*; presque en même temps

un autre éditeur publiait *la Flèche noire*, un des romans les plus captivants de Stevenson, où revivent des personnages historiques qu'anima autrefois le génie de Shakespeare. A propos de ce dernier ouvrage, on trouve dans la *Correspondance* de Stevenson, qu'a publiée M. Sidney Colvin, quelques lettres adressées à M. Marcel Schwob, qui avait demandé à Stevenson l'autorisation de traduire *la Flèche noire*. Dans l'une d'elles, datée d'Union-Club, Sydney, 19 août 1890, l'auteur critique son œuvre de la façon la plus judicieuse et la plus amusante, et finalement M. Schwob renonça au travail qu'il se proposait pour se consacrer plus librement à ses recherches sur François Villon, dont il vient enfin d'écrire une *Vie* entièrement basée sur de nouveaux documents.

Une des causes pour lesquelles Stevenson reste ignoré du public français est assurément que les diverses traductions faites de ses ouvrages sont éparsées sur les catalogues de maisons d'éditions diverses. Quel lecteur sait qu'il peut lire en volume : *les Nouvelles Mille et une nuits*, *le Roman du prince Othon*, *le Cas étrange du Dr. Jekyll et de Mr. Hyde*, *le Dynamiteur*, *les Aventures de David Balfour*, *l'Ile au trésor*, *Suicide-Club*, *A la pagaie*, *la Flèche noire* ? Rien d'étonnant à ce que ces volumes passent inaperçus et que R. L. S., . . . comme on l'appelle communément en Angleterre, demeure ignoré dans cette France qu'il connaissait pourtant si bien.

M. Davray then proceeds to sketch out briefly and accurately Stevenson's life, noting especially his many visits to and periods of residence in France, and quoting his amusing half-French half-English letter written to his mother from Spring Grove School, in November 1863. M. Davray reminds us that, after settling at Bournemouth in 1884 on his return from Hyères, Stevenson made a short visit to Paris to see his friend Auguste Rodin, who had made a splendid bust of their common friend Mr. W. E. Henley, and who purposed also setting to work on a bust of R. L. S., a project unhappily never realised. M. Davray continues :

C'est dans les années 1885 et 1886 qu'il faut placer les deux

lettres suivantes adressées par Robert Louis Stevenson à Auguste Rodin et qui ne portent pas de date exacte. Elles ne figurent pas dans les deux énormes volumes de la correspondance de Stevenson et nous les publions ici pour la première fois, grâce à la généreuse obligeance de M. Rodin. Elles sont écrites en français, et, malgré les amusantes incorrections dont elles fourmillent, elles dénotent de réels progrès chez l'élève qui écrivait le billet que nous citons plus haut. M. Rodin avait envoyé à son ami une copie en plâtre de son groupe *le Printemps*, et Stevenson lui en accuse réception.

'SKERRYVORE, BOURNEMOUTH.

'MON CHER AMI,—Il y a bien longtemps déjà que je vous dois des lettres par dizaines, mais bien que je vais mieux, je ne vais toujours que doucement. Il a fallu faire le voyage à Bournemouth comme une fuite en Égypte par crainte des brouillards qui me tuaient et j'en ressentais beaucoup de fatigue. Mais maintenant cela commence à aller et je puis vous donner de mes nouvelles. Le printemps est arrivé, mais il avait le bras cassé et nous l'avons laissé lors de notre fuite aux soins d'un médecin-de-statues. Je l'attends de jour en jour et ma maisonnette en resplendira bientôt ; je regrette beaucoup le dédicace ; peut-être quand vous viendrez nous voir ne serait-il pas trop tard de l'ajouter ? Je n'en sais rien ; je l'espère. L'œuvre c'est pour tout le monde, le dédicace est pour moi. L'œuvre est un cadeau trop beau ; c'est le mot d'amitié qui me le donne pour de bon. Je suis si bête que je m'embrouille et me perd et vous me comprendriez, je pense.

'Je ne puis même pas m'exprimer en anglais, comment voudriez-vous que je le ferais en français ? Plus heureux que vous le Nemesis des arts ne me visite pas sous le masque du désenchantement ; elle me suce l'intelligence et me laisse bayant les corneilles, sans capacité, mais sans regret ; sans espérance, c'est vrai, mais aussi, cher merci, sans désespoir. Un doux étonnement me tient, je ne m'habitue pas à me trouver si bûche, mais je m'y résigne ; même si cela durait ce ne serait pas désagréable, mais comme je mourrais certainement de faim, ce serait tout au moins regrettable pour moi et ma famille.

'Je voudrais pouvoir vous écrire, mais ce n'est pas moi qui

tiens la plume, c'est l'autre, le bête, celui qui ne connaît pas le français, celui qui n'aime pas mes amis comme je les aime, qui ne goûte pas aux choses de l'art comme j'y goûte, celui que je renie, mais auquel je commande toujours assez pour le faire prendre la plume en main et écrire de tristes bavardages. Celui-là, mon cher Rodin, vous ne l'aimez pas; vous ne devez jamais le connaître. Votre ami qui dort à présent comme un ours au plus profond de mon être se réveillera sous peu : alors, il vous écrira de sa propre main. Attendez-lui. L'autre ne compte pas, ce n'est qu'un secrétaire infidèle et triste, à l'âme gelée, à la tête de bois.

'Celui qui dort est toujours, mon cher ami, bien à vous; celui qui écrit est chargé de vous en faire part et de signer de la raison sociale, ROBERT-LOUIS STEVENSON et TRIPLE-BRUTE.

(*per* T. B.)'

Il est intéressant de remarquer avec quelle insistance Stevenson dédouble dans cette lettre sa personnalité. C'est qu'à ce moment il achevait l'étrange histoire du Dr. Jekyll et de Mr. Hyde, et cela prouve jusqu'à quel point il se laissait empoigner par ses inventions, qu'il pétrissait, comme l'a dit M. de Wyzewa, de sa chair et de son sang. Dans la lettre suivante, on retrouve tout l'abandon et toute la tendresse avec lesquels il se gagnait des amis, et des plus fidèles. S'il fallait attribuer une date à cette lettre, on aurait le choix entre octobre 1885, mars ou avril 1886, et même février ou mars 1887. Si l'on retrouvait aussi le journal dans lequel parut le portrait mentionné, on pourrait fixer plus exactement l'une de ces trois dates.

'MON CHER AMI,—Je vous néglige et ce n'est véritablement pas de ma faute. J'ai fait encore une maladie et je puis dire que l'ai royalement bien fait. Que cela vous aide à me pardonner. Certes, je ne vous oublie pas et je puis dire que je ne vous oublierai jamais. Si je n'écris pas, dites que je suis malade—c'est trop souvent vrai; dites que je suis las d'écrivailler—ce sera toujours vrai; mais ne dites pas et ne pensez pas que je deviens indifférent. J'ai devant moi votre portrait tiré d'un journal anglais (et encadré à mes frais); et je le regarde avec amitié; je le regarde même avec une certaine complaisance—dirai-je de faux aloi?—comme un certificat de jeunesse. Je

me croyais trop vieux—au moins trop quarante ans—pour faire de nouveaux amis, et quand je regarde votre portrait et que je pense au plaisir de vous revoir, je sens que je m'étais trompé. Écrivez-moi donc un petit mot pour me dire que vous ne me gardez pas rancune de mon silence et que vous comptez bientôt venir en Angleterre. Si vous tardez beaucoup, ce serait moi qui irais vous relancer.

'Bien à vous, mon cher ami. R. L. STEVENSON.

'SKERRYVORE, BOURNEMOUTH.'

Est-ce avant ou après ces lettres que Stevenson vint à Paris voir le sculpteur? Après sans doute, comme il en manifeste l'intention, et dans ce cas cette lettre aurait été écrite avant septembre 1886. Mais on ne saurait rien affirmer.

M. Davray mentions in his concluding paragraph that the late Marcel Schwob visited Samoa in 1902 and suffered an eclipse of the romantic vision of these 'ultimate isles,' which his reading of Stevenson had created. Beyond the enchantment lent by distance, the islands are not particularly picturesque, the Samoans only moderately hospitable. The climate is not of the best, and one misses nearly everything that makes for comfort in civilised life; above all, water is scarce, except in the form of rain, and even that source is at best fortuitous.

This review of an important bibliography of Stevenson appeared in *The Bibliographer* (New York), February 1902, when that journal was edited by the late Paul Leicester Ford. It contains some information of value to collectors:

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF STEVENSON.—Catalogue of a Collection of the Books of Robert Louis Stevenson in the Library of George M. Williamson, Grand View on Hudson. The Marion Press, Jamaica, Queen's Borough, New York, 1901. 125 copies on plated paper, and 25 on Japan paper.

When the late Charles B. Foote sold his library in three sales, in 1894 and 1895, he retained the works of a few authors, in

which he had an especial personal interest. Chief among these was a set of the works of Robert Louis Stevenson, and he continued to add to them until his death. Mr. Foote's wonderful collection of the first edition of Stevenson's works forms the larger portion, though by no means the entirety, of the matchless collection now owned by Mr. Williamson, and described in this beautifully printed Catalogue.

Biblio-graphical.

Mr. Williamson was fortunate enough, a few years ago, to secure in one lot a series of volumes all given by Stevenson, or by his mother, to his old nurse, Alison Cunningham. Some items also were secured from the A. J. Morgan collection, and a few from the collection of the late P. G. Hamerton.

The collection includes all the early rarities, which may be called Stevenson's juvenilia:—

'The Pentland Rising,' 1866. The author's first book.

'The Charity Bazaar,' 1868.

'The Edinburgh University Magazine.' Stevenson was one of the editors of this little college magazine. Four numbers only were ever published.

'Notice of a New Form of Intermittent Light for Lighthouses.' A presentation copy with inscription.

'On the Thermal Influence of Forests.' This and the preceding are two scientific treatises, which are the only published results of the author's early training towards the trade of his forefathers, an engineer.

'An Appeal to the Clergy of the Church of Scotland.' The rarest of all published books by Stevenson. This is a presentation copy from Stevenson to Mr. Foote, with autograph inscription, and with a fine autograph letter inserted, in which the author says: 'I have always admired collectors, perhaps for their similitude to pirates.'

There are also all of the Davos Platz booklets and circulars printed by Lloyd Osbourne and Co., such as 'Black Canyon, 'Moral Emblems,' 'Not I,' and the rest, as well as a copy of an earlier piece of similar character, Vol. 1. No. 3 of *The Surprise*, 'edited and published semi-monthly by S. L. Osbourne and Co.' in San Francisco. This is the copy which was given by Stevenson to his mother, and sold at Sotheby's in April 1899

for £21, 5s. This is, we believe, the only record of sale. We do not know how many numbers were published; indeed, we believe this is the only reference to the item in print. We have ourselves seen only the half of one other number.

Of other little-known pieces, the following are perhaps the most interesting and the rarest:—

The 'Silverado Squatters,' one of a few copies put up for copyright in England. As a matter of fact, the book is nothing more or less than some leaves from the *Century Magazine*, with a specially printed cover. Mr. Williamson says that ten copies were prepared; but in Sotheby's catalogue of July 28, 1899, where this copy brought £20, 10s., it is stated that only six were printed. We know of no other record and never saw another copy.

'Kidnapped,' a twenty-seven page pamphlet, with the imprint 'Published for the Author by James Henderson,' etc., without date. This contains only the first ten chapters of the story as published in book-form. It was apparently issued for copyright purposes. The text differs in a few minor particulars from the published edition. This is the only copy known to us, being the one which sold at Sotheby's in April 1899, with the statement that it had been given by Stevenson to his mother. It brought £30 at that sale.

'The Master of Ballantrae,' dated 1888. This is one of only ten copies printed to secure copyright. Inserted is a letter from Mr. Charles Scribner, in which he says, 'This is the only copy which has gone out from this office to any one in this country.' The book contains only five of the twelve chapters included in the complete edition published in 1889.

'The South Seas.' Printed in 1890 to be cut up for distribution as 'copy' among a syndicate of newspapers. Only twenty-two copies were printed, of which fourteen were destroyed. This is a presentation copy from Mr. Edmund Gosse, with a letter inserted in which these particulars are given. The book was not published in England until 1900, though it appeared in the United States in 1896.

'Weir of Hermiston.' One of 'about six copies printed in three parts and issued from January to March 1896.' It contains one less chapter than the regular edition, and a comparison shows that the text varies in a number of minor particulars.

Some other privately printed items, of little less rarity or interest, are:—

'Ticonderoga,' 1887. Printed for copyright, in an edition of fifty copies. Also a second private edition, printed specially for his Hawaiian Majesty King Kalakaua, with a letter from the De Vinne Press saying that only two copies were printed.

'Father Damien.' The original Sydney edition, also the *Australian Star* of May 24, 1890, in which Stevenson's article first appeared, there having the title, 'In Defence of the Dead.'

'An Object of Pity.' Called by Mr. Gosse 'the most unattainable of all R. L. S.'s productions.' This was a series of short stories more or less connected, written by Stevenson and his friends in Samoa in 1892. It was privately printed, in a very small number, Mr. Gosse says, 'I think only thirty-five,' by Lady Jersey, one of the authors.

'R. L. S. Teuila.' A little volume of verses and inscriptions by Stevenson, privately printed.

The rarest first edition of Stevenson is without much question the preliminary issue of his first volume of poems, 'A Child's Garden of Verses.' This has the title 'Penny Whistles.' Mr. Williamson has included a description of this item in order to make his Bibliography complete. It is the only item of any importance as a first edition of Stevenson which he does not possess. This little volume contains only forty-eight pieces, whereas in the published volume there were seventy-four. Nine of the pieces in 'Penny Whistles,' however, were not reprinted in 'A Child's Garden of Verses,' and several of the poems which were reprinted are very much altered. We believe only two copies of the original issue are known.

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Printed by T. and A. CONSTABLE, Printers to His Majesty,
at the Edinburgh University Press

Some Press Opinions of 'Stevensoniana'

Dr. Robertson Nicoll in the 'British Weekly.'—A surprisingly useful and valuable book. . . . Mr. Hammerton has shown excellent judgment and good feeling as well as sound knowledge. What he has gathered together and judiciously arranged under headings is nearly all worth keeping and worth knowing. I am particularly glad that he has left so much alone, and that he has not tried to rekindle dead controversies which should never have been alive. The day will come when Robert Louis Stevenson's story can be told more completely, but twenty years should be allowed to pass first. In the meantime, Mr. Hammerton's book will be found a most useful supplement to the materials already existing . . . It would be very difficult to improve on Mr. Hammerton's well-advised and judicious labours.

Westminster Gazette.—Mr. J. A. Hammerton's method in compiling his volume 'Stevensoniana' may fairly be called biographical. It is something of more solid value, that is to say, than a mere collection of 'story and song and glory'—of matters recorded of Robert Louis Stevenson and his writings. . . . Between the 'appreciations' and other documents quoted he intersperses just sufficient commentary to knit the whole into narrative form . . . the work is skilfully done and on the whole very pleasant to read.

The Scotsman.—No one who is interested in that brilliant romancer will consider superfluous the publication of this carefully compiled book of 'Stevensoniana.' The miscellany does not claim any value as original biography or criticism. . . . But it justifies its existence by its supreme convenience; and, while it reprints many things that every Stevensonian worthy of the name must know backwards (Henley's sonnet for example), it is also so wide in its sweep as to bring in not a few things that the most erudite Stevensonian may have overlooked. . . . It is well to have so many and so widely scattered pieces of information collected with so scrupulous a literary piety, and the book will have a hearty welcome from every one the least interested in its subject.

Daily Chronicle.—It occurred to Mr. Hammerton that there were existing in scattered volumes of essays, and still more scattered magazines, very many interesting descriptions and criticisms of Stevenson which seemed to invite collocation, and to that end he has travelled far and wide with commendable industry and unusual impartiality. . . . The result is a book that contains, indeed, much that is really valuable and a good deal that is quite amusing in its way.

Glasgow Herald.—The result is a mass of diversified information and comment in which that large class of readers that seeks not only to enjoy a man's books, but to know 'all about him,' and what other people have said about him, will find what it desires.

Manchester Guardian.—Mr. J. A. Hammerton's volume will enable devout collectors of cuttings about R. L. Stevenson to clear out their drawers, for they are all here, except those already given by Mr. Graham Balfour in the 'Life,' which Mr. Hammerton judiciously decided to supplement and not to double. . . . Mr. Hammerton's book is full of reprinted good things.

The World.—The results of Mr. Hammerton's work have been admirably arranged. A third part makes a fairly complete biography by a score of writers, beginning with 'his forebears and inherited characteristics,' and ending with 'the grave by moonlight' at Vaëa. . . . We can find no fault with the way in which Mr. Hammerton has performed his task. . . . The book should long be entertaining, as giving the most vivid picture that we know of contemporary tastes and notions of criticism.

Dundee Advertiser.—Mr. Hammerton has no doubt done service to the many who properly appreciate the powers and the limitations of Stevenson. . . . He has devoted himself to the task of compilation, and his work has been faithfully and skilfully executed. The periodical literature of Britain and America has been ransacked for articles and poems relating to Stevenson; and these have been brought together so as to form a kind of Stevenson Encyclopædia.

People's Friend.—To the getting up of the book there must have been given an immense amount of time and labour, to say nothing of the discrimination required and the ability displayed, but we are sure Mr. Hammerton must have felt himself repaid by the praise which he has received on all hands, and also by the consciousness of having produced such a worthy piece of work.

New York Times.—Mr. Hammerton so satisfactorily explains his work and so justifies it by the interest and charm of his collection, that we are fain to bid all the other Stevenson books stand a little closer on our shelves and make a place for this new-comer. . . . Mr. Hammerton has mosaiced a fairly comprehensive memoir and valuable critical estimates of the man and the artist. . . . The lovers of Stevenson will feel, one and all, that he has done them a great service in bringing together so rich a collection of Stevensoniana.

The Lamp, New York.—Mr. J. A. Hammerton's 'Stevensoniana' in point of interest is irresistible. Every one who in the least cares about Stevenson (which, of course, means all) must needs, once opening the book anywhere, read on and on indefinitely.