

CHAPTER IV

BOYHOOD — 1859-67

“Not all roads lead to Rome — only that you have begun to travel.”
—R. L. S.

It was not till 1859 that the boy's continuous schooling began, but to his formal education little or no importance attaches. The changes of his teachers were frequent, his absences from school innumerable, but both were due almost entirely to his health, and especially his susceptibility to colds. In the autumn of 1857 he had gone to Mr. Henderson's preparatory school in India Street, in the near neighbourhood of his home, as all his day-schools were. After a few weeks he had to give it up, and did not return there till October, 1859. In 1861 he was transferred to the Edinburgh Academy, then, as now, the leading school of Edinburgh; there he spent a year and a half under Mr. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, author of *Day-Dreams of a School-master* and other works, a teacher with views far in advance of his day, and now for many years Professor of Greek in the Queen's College, Galway. Then for one term, his mother being abroad, he was sent to an English boarding-school at Spring Grove, Isleworth, in Middlesex. Finally, in 1864, he was again shifted — to a day-school kept by Mr. Thomson in Frederick Street, Edinburgh, which he attended with more or less regularity until he went to the University in 1867.

Besides his ordinary classes he had many tutors for

longer or shorter periods, in Edinburgh and elsewhere, both when he was unable to leave the house, and also in order to supplement and help his school-work, a custom prevalent in Scotland.

It is only of his experiences at his last two schools that anything definite seems to be remembered. The Spring Grove establishment has little interest for us beyond having been his only boarding-school and the source of his remarks on English schoolboys in "The Foreigner at Home."¹ He left home for Isleworth with mixed feelings, and of his breakdown before he went, and of "the benevolent cat" that "cumbered him with consolations" on a doorstep, he has told us in "Random Memories."² His misgivings were on the whole justified by the event, for the school seems to have been rather a nondescript place. A list given in one of his letters includes two parlour-boarders, three big boys, six of "midling size," of whom "Stevenson" was one, and the enumeration ends with "small-fry lots." For the only time in his life he joined in games, he collected coins, and he wrote letters to his parents full of drawings, eked out with fragments of Latin exercises and attempts at French. His aunt had left Colinton, and was now living at Spring Grove, in charge of other nephews who attended the same school, and to her house he was often allowed to go. But he had been told to let his father know if he were not happy, and although he stayed to the end of the quarter, he then secured a promise that he should not again be sent from home.

Of Mr. Thomson's school we have an account from

¹ The first paper in *Memories and Portraits*.

² *Ibid.*, p. 289.

Mr. H. Bellyse Baildon,¹ who was a pupil there during the same years.²

"I do not think there were at this little seminary more than a dozen boys, ranging in ages from nine or ten to fourteen or fifteen, and our intellectual calibre varied fully as much as our years. For some of us were sent there for reasons of health, and others because they had not made that progress with their studies which their fond parents had hoped. Others were there, I fancy, because the scheme of education upon which the proprietor, Mr. Robert Thomson, proceeded fell in with the views of our parents. The main feature of this system was, so far as I can recollect, that we had no home lessons, but learned, in the two or three hours of afternoon school, what we were expected to remember next day.

"Our freedom from home tasks gave us leisure for literary activities which would otherwise have been tabooed as waste of time. Perhaps with some of us they were, but not with Stevenson. For even then he had a fixed idea that literature was his calling, and a marvellously mature conception of the course of self-education through which he required to put himself in order to succeed. Among other things we were encouraged to make verse translations, and for some reason or other, I specially well remember a passage of Ovid, which he rendered in Scott-like octosyllabics, and I in heroic couplets, which I probably thought com-

¹ Sometime Lecturer on the English Language and Literature in the University of Vienna.

² *Temple Bar*, March, 1895; also *Robert Louis Stevenson: a Life Study in Criticism*, by H. Bellyse Baildon (Chatto and Windus, 1901).

mendably like those of Mr. Pope. But, even the Stevenson showed impatience of the trammels of verse and longed for the compass and ductility of prose."

The teachers who gave him private lessons spoke of his intelligence in high terms, but in large classes he evaded the eye of the master and drew on himself as little notice as possible. The Reverend Peter Ruthven, who taught him when he was at Mr. Henderson's school, says: "He was without exception the most delightful boy I ever knew; full of fun, full of tender feeling, ready for his lessons, ready for a story, ready for fun, and the master of the Burgh School at Peebles, who gave him lessons in 1864, found him the most intelligent and best-informed boy in all his experience. His glowing interest in any subject that took his fancy marked his earliest boyhood no less than his later years. But if he was bright and ready when he was interested, his attention was often short-lived, and to many of the subjects in his curriculum it never was given at all. In every language that he ever learned, the rules of grammar remained unknown to him, however correct he might use its idioms, and the spelling of his own tongue was dark to him to the very last. Latin, French, and mathematics seem to have been everywhere the staple of his education. German he began with a private tutor in 1865 at Torquay, where he also received his only lessons in ordinary drawing. The only prizes that ever fell to him was at Mr. Henderson's school for his reading, which was commended, as he tells us, with the criticism: "Robert's voice, though not strong, is impressive."¹

¹ *Juvenilia*, p. 308.

On the physical side of his education, dancing, despite the Covenanters, was persistently taught him with but scanty success: riding he learned chiefly in the summers of 1865 and 1866, though he first had a pony in 1856. In 1860 and 1864 he was bathing with great enjoyment, and in the latter year he was also rowing on the Tweed. But of games proper there is little mention. From Spring Grove he wrote: "Yesterday I was playing at football. I have never played at cricket, so papa may comfort himself with that. I like football very much." Against this we have to set his confession that even at football "I knew at least one little boy who was mightily exercised about the presence of the ball, and had to spirit himself up, whenever he came to play, with an elaborate story of enchantment, and take the missile as a sort of talisman bandied about in conflict between two Arabian nations."¹ And at North Berwick he says: "You might golf if you wanted, but I seem to have been better employed."²

But if his health were unequal to constant school-work or severe exercise, it greatly improved after 1863, and did not disable him from other boyish pursuits. Already, in 1857, his mother had written: "Louis is getting very wild and like a boy." In 1864 she records that "Whatever there was in him of 'Puck'³ came very much to the front this summer. He was the leader of a number of boys who went about playing tricks on all the neighbours on Springhill, tapping on their windows after nightfall," and all manner of wild freaks.

¹ "Child's Play," p. 168.

² *Additional Memories and Portraits*, p. 349.

³ See p. 376.

The following year at Peebles he became a reckless rider. A girl companion of those days recollects the time "when my brother Bob, Louis, and I used to ride together. Bob had a black pony, and Louis called it 'Hell'; his own was brown, and was called 'Purgatory'; while mine was named 'Heaven.' Once the two boys galloped right through the Tweed on the way to Innerleithen, and I had to follow in fear of my life—poor 'Heaven' had the worst of it on that occasion."

"In this year, too," says Louis himself, "at the ripe age of fourteen years, I bought a certain cudgel, got a friend to load it, and thenceforward walked the tame ways of the earth my own ideal, radiating pure romance—still but a puppet in the hand of Skelt."¹

Nor was another element wanting. He speaks of Neidpath Castle in the close vicinity of Peebles, "bosomed in hills on a green promontory: Tweed at its base running through the gamut of a busy river, from the pouring shallow to the brown pool. In the days when I was thereabouts, that part of the earth was made a heaven to me by many things now lost, by boats and bathing, and the fascination of streams, and the delights of comradeship and those (surely the prettiest and simplest) of a boy and girl romance."²

Earlier experiences belonging to North Berwick and the autumn of 1862 are described in *Memories and Portraits*;³ these included fishing, bathing, wading, and "crusoeing"—"a word that covers all extempore eating in the open air: digging, perhaps, a house under

¹ "A Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured," p. 212.

² *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1888, p. 125.

³ Pp. 349, 353.

the margin of the links, kindling a fire of the sea-ware and cooking apples there." But the crown of all was the business of the lantern-bearers, a sport which was afterwards to Stevenson the type of all that was anti-realist and romantic.

"Toward the end of September, when school-time was drawing near and the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. The thing was so well known that it had worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain; and the grocers, about the due time, began to garnish their windows with our particular brand of luminary. We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and over them, such was the rigour of the game, a buttoned top-coat. They smelled noisomely of blistered tin; they never burned aright, though they would always burn our fingers; their use was naught; the pleasure of them merely fanciful; and yet a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat asked for nothing more. The fishermen used lanterns about their boats, and it was from them, I suppose, that we had got the hint; but theirs were not bull's-eyes, nor did we ever play at being fishermen. The police carried them at their belts, and we had plainly copied them in that; yet we did not pretend to be policemen. Burglars, indeed, we may have had some haunting thoughts of; and we certainly had an eye to past ages when lanterns were more common, to certain story-books in which we had found them to figure very largely. But take it for all in all, the pleasure of the thing was substantive; and to be a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat was good enough for us.

“When two of these asses met, there would be an anxious ‘Have you got your lantern?’ and a gratified ‘Yes.’ That was the shibboleth, and very needful, too; for, as it was the rule to keep our glory contained, none could recognise a lantern-bearer, unless (like a polecat) by the smell. Four or five would sometimes climb into the belly of a ten-man lugger, with nothing but the thwarts above them—for the cabin was usually locked—or choose out some hollow of the links where the wind might whistle overhead. There the coats would be unbuttoned and the bull’s-eyes discovered; and in the chequering glimmer, under the huge windy hall of the night, and cheered by a rich steam of toasting tinware, these fortunate young gentlemen would crouch together in the cold sand of the links or on the scaly bilges of the fishing-boat, and delight themselves with inappropriate talk.

“Woe is me that I may not give some specimens—some of their foresights of life, or deep inquiries into the rudiments of man and nature—these were so fiery and so innocent, they were so richly silly, so romantically young. But the talk, at any rate, was but a condiment; and these gatherings themselves only accidents in the career of the lantern-bearer. The essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide shut, the top-coat buttoned; not a ray escaping, whether to conduct your footsteps or to make your glory public: a mere pillar of darkness in the dark; and all the while, deep down in the privacy of your fool’s heart, to know you had a bull’s-eye at your belt, and to exult and sing over the knowledge.”

Meanwhile, apart from his schools, the boy was gain-

ing a wider knowledge of the world and having his first experiences of travel. In Scotland his long summer holidays were spent in the country much as before, until the manse at Colinton began to "shield a stranger race." Now at some time he paid a visit to one of his uncles in the parish of Stow, on which, perhaps, he afterwards drew in *Weir of Hermiston* for his knowledge of the Lammermuirs. In 1857 he had crossed the Border with his parents for the first time, and visited the English Lakes. In 1862, the year of the second International Exhibition, his father's health brought the family to London and the South of England, and Louis saw not only the sights of the capital, but also Salisbury, Stonehenge, and the Isle of Wight. In July the same cause took them all for a month to Homburg, which Louis liked very well, though he wearied sorely for the company of other boys. But this was only the beginning of his wanderings: in the winter of the same year Mrs. Stevenson was ordered to Mentone, and it was decided that her husband, her son, and a niece of Mr. Stevenson should accompany her. Thither they went in January, and there they stayed two months. In March they made a tour through Genoa, Naples, Rome, Florence, Venice, and Innsbruck, returning home by the Rhine. His mother stayed behind in England, and Louis travelled from London by himself for the first time, reaching Edinburgh on the 29th of May.

In the autumn he accompanied his father on a brief tour of lighthouse inspection in Fife, and on one day they visited seventeen lights.

At Christmas, 1863, Mrs. Stevenson was again at Men-

tone; there Louis joined her from his boarding-school, and they remained in the Riviera till the beginning of May. The two next springs were passed by mother and son at Torquay, but after that it proved unnecessary for them to leave Scotland for any part of the winter. For the last three winters they were joined by Miss Jessie Warden, another niece of Mr. Stevenson, a clever and original girl, just grown to womanhood. In 1867, to their great grief, she died; she had filled an important part in their small circle, had been a delightful companion to Louis, and always held a bright place in his memory.

The curious point about the foreign journeys is that they seem to have had very little manifest influence upon Stevenson, and to have passed almost entirely out of his mind. A boy of twelve, even if backward in his education, is generally a good deal impressed by experiences of this nature, and remembers them more or less distinctly throughout his life.

His cousin Mrs. Napier, who was one of the party in 1863, kindly tells me that she recollects distinctly how much he developed at this period. "In some ways," she says, "he was more like a boy of sixteen. My uncle had a great belief (inherited from his father) in the educational value of travel, and to this end and for the benefit of Louis he devoted his whole energies in the five months abroad. In the hotel at Nice he began to take Louis to the smoking-room with him; there my uncle was always surrounded by a group of eager and amused listeners—English, American, and Russian—and every subject, political, artistic, and theological, was discussed and argued. Uncle Tom's genial man-

ner found friends wherever he went, and the same sort of thing went on during the whole journey. Then in regard to what we saw, his keen admiration of art and architecture seemed to be shared by Louis; they would go into raptures over a cathedral, or an old archway, or a picture. I still remember Louis' eager interest in Pompeii and in the Catacombs at Rome; Venice, too, he specially enjoyed. In some of his books there are touches which his mother and I both recognised as due to places and persons seen in that long-past journey. And in the Vailima prayers I seem to hear again an old melody that I know well—the echo of his father's words and daily devotions."

Yet nowhere, so far as I know, did Louis allude to any of the more famous towns he then visited, as if they had come within his personal ken. Mr. Horatio Brown frequently discussed Venice with him at Davos, but without even discovering that he had ever set foot in Italy. Rome meant to Stevenson in after-life a great deal: the Roman Empire was far more of a reality to him than to many better scholars and many frequenters of the city of Rome. Yet Mr. Lloyd Osbourne tells me that the only reference he ever heard his step-father make to this time was on one occasion when he recalled with delight the picturesque appearance of their military escort in horsemen's cloaks riding through the Papal States. Five years later his correspondence proves him already a keen observer, and yet half an hour with a guide-book would have furnished him with all the knowledge of Italian cities that he ever displayed.

With the country it was otherwise. "The Rhone

is the River of Angels," he wrote to Mr. Low; "I have adored it since I was twelve and first saw it from the train." And the scenery of *Will o' the Mill* was taken in part from the Brenner Pass, which he never saw again after 1863.

But if his stores of experience were but little increased by these changes of scene, at least the boy was learning to exercise the *savoir-faire* which came very naturally to his disposition. At hotels he used to go to the table d'hôte alone, if necessary, and made friends freely with strangers. On his return from Homburg, he made great friends on the steamer with a Dutchman, who kept saying over to himself, "I loike this booy." His French master at Mentone, on his second visit, gave him no regular lessons, but merely talked to him in French, teaching him piquet and card tricks, introducing him to various French people, and taking him to convents and other places. So his mother remarks of his other masters at home, "I think they found it pleasanter to talk to him than to teach him."

Of the other side of his character, of the solitary, dreamy, rather unhappy child, but little record survives, or little evidence which can be assigned with certainty to these years. He speaks in his essay on Pepys of the egotism of children and their delight in the anticipations of memory, as an experience of his own. "I can remember to have written in the fly-leaf of more than one book the date and the place where I then was--if, for instance, I was ill in bed or sitting in a certain garden; these were jottings for my future self; if I should chance on such a note in after-years, I thought it would cause me a partic-

ular thrill to recognise myself across the intervening distance."¹

In one of his books he touches a chord which thrills with a personal emotion as he describes "a malady most incident to only sons." "He flew his private signal and none heeded it; it seemed he was abroad in a world from which the very hope of intimacy was banished."² It was a slightly older lad of whom he was thinking at the moment, but the malady begins at an early age, and tends unfortunately to be chronic.

Of his appearance at this time Mr. Baidon says: "Stevenson calls himself 'ugly' in his student days, but I think this is a term that never at any time fitted him. Certainly to him as a boy of about fourteen (with the creed which he propounded to me that at sixteen one was a man) it would not apply. In body he was assuredly badly set up. His limbs were long, lean, and spidery, and his chest flat, so as almost to suggest some malnutrition, such sharp corners did his joints make under his clothes. But in his face this was belied. His brow was oval and full, over soft brown eyes that seemed already to have drunk the sunlight under Southern vines. The whole face had a tendency to an oval Madonna-like type. But about the mouth and in the mirthful mocking light of the eyes there lingered ever a ready Autolycus roguery that rather suggested sly Hermes masquerading as a mortal. The eyes were always genial, however gaily the lights danced in them, but about the mouth there was something a little tricky and mocking, as of a spirit that

¹ "Pepys," *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, p. 275.

² *Weir of Hermiston*, p. 155.

already peeped behind the scenes of life's pageant and more than guessed its unrealities."

His reading progressed: for the date of his first introduction to Shakespeare there seems to be no evidence, and but for the strength of its impression it may have belonged to the earlier period. "I never supposed that a book was to command me until, one disastrous day of storm, the heaven full of turbulent vapours, the street full of the squalling of the gale, the windows resounding under bucketfuls of rain, my mother read aloud to me *Macbeth*. I cannot say I thought the experience agreeable; I far preferred the ditch-water stories that a child could dip and skip and doze over, stealing at times materials for play; it was something new and shocking to be thus ravished by a giant, and I shrank under the brutal grasp. But the spot in memory is still sensitive; nor do I ever read that tragedy but I hear the gale howling up the valley of the Leith."¹

His first acquaintance with Dumas began in 1863 with the study of certain illustrated dessert plates in a hotel at Nice:² his first enthusiasm for Scott's novels belongs with certainty to the time when he had begun to select his books for himself.

"My father's library was a spot of some austerity; the proceedings of learned societies, some Latin divinity, cyclopædias, physical science, and, above all, optics, held the chief place upon the shelves, and it was only in holes and corners that anything really legible existed as by accident. The *Parent's Assistant*, *Rob Roy*, *Waverley*, and *Guy Mannering*, the *Voyages of*

¹ *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1888, p. 125.

² *Memories and Portraits*, p. 236.

Captain Woodes Rogers, Fuller's and Bunyan's *Holy Wars*, *The Reflections of Robinson Crusoe*,¹ *The Female Bluebeard*, G. Sand's *Mare au Diable* (how came it in that grave assembly!), Ainsworth's *Tower of London*, and four old volumes of *Punch*—these were the chief exceptions. In these latter, which made for years the chief of my diet, I very early fell in love (almost as soon as I could spell) with the Snob Papers. I knew them almost by heart, particularly the visit to the Pontos; and I remember my surprise when I found, long afterwards, that they were famous, and signed with a famous name; to me, as I read and admired them, they were the works of Mr. Punch. Time and again I tried to read *Rob Roy*, with whom, of course, I was acquainted from the *Tales of a Grandfather*; time and again the early part with Rashleigh and (think of it!) the adorable Diana choked me off; and I shall never forget the pleasure and surprise with which, lying on the floor one summer evening, I struck of a sudden into the first scene with Andrew Fairservice. 'The worthy Dr. Lightfoot'—'mistrusted with a bogle'—'a when green trash'—'Jenny, lass, I think I ha'e her'; from that day to this the phrases have been unforgotten. I read on, I need scarce say; I came to Glasgow, I bided tryst on Glasgow Bridge, I met Rob Roy and the Bailie in the Tolbooth, all with transporting pleasure; and then the clouds gathered once more about my path; and I dozed and skipped until I stumbled half asleep into the Clachan of Aberfoyle, and the voices of Iverach

¹ *Serious Reflections during the Life and Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. The third part of *Robinson Crusoe*, by DeLue, containing moral reflections only.

and Galbraith recalled me to myself. With that scene and the defeat of Captain Thornton the book concluded; Helen and her sons shocked even the little schoolboy of nine or ten with their unreality; I read no more, or I did not grasp what I was reading; and years elapsed before I consciously met Diana and her father among the hills, or saw Rashleigh dying in the chair. When I think of that novel and that evening, I am impatient with all others; they seem but shadows and impostors; they cannot satisfy the appetite which this awakened."¹

What neither instruction nor travel could do for him, was none the less coming about; the boy was educating himself; learning to write patiently, persistently, without brilliance or any apparent prospect of success. The History of Moses of 1856 had been followed the next year by a History of Joseph, after a brief interval devoted to a story "in slavish imitation of Mayne Reid." Two years later came an account (still dictated) of his travels in Perth. Before thirteen he wrote a description of the inhabitants of Peebles in the style of the *Book of Snobs*. When he was fourteen he developed a facility for extemporising doggerel rhymes, and composed the libretto of an opera called *The Baneful Potato*, of which only the names of two characters survive — "Dig-him-up-o," the gardener, and "Seek-him-out-o," the policeman, and the first line of an aria sung by the heroine, "My own dear casement window."

At his last school and in his home circle he was always starting magazines. These were all in manuscript, generally illustrated with profusion of colour,

¹ "Rosa quo Locorum," *Juvenilia*, p. 310.

and were sometimes circulated at a charge of one penny for reading. *The Schoolboys' Magazine* of 1863, of which one number survives, contained four stories, and its readers must have been hard to satisfy if they did not have their fill of horrors. In the first tale, "The Adventures of Jan van Steen," the hero is left hidden in a boiler under which a fire is lit. The second is "A Ghost Story" of robbers in a deserted castle in "one of those barren places called plains in the north of Norway." A traveller finds a man, "half killed with several wounds," hidden under the floor, who dresses up as a ghost. The third story is called, by a curious anticipation, "The Wreckers." On the shore at North Berwick "were two men. The older and stronger of the two was a tall, ill-looking man with grizzled hair and a red nose. He was dressed in a tarnished gold-laced blue coat, a red waistcoat, and leggings. The other, who might have been a fisherman except for the fact that from each of the pockets of his pea-jacket there projected a pistol. He was a more villainous-looking fellow than the other. 'Dan,' said the first, 'what is that clinging to that mast?' 'I think,' said the other, 'it is a sailor. You had better go and secure him.'" Last and not least terrible is "Creek Island, or Adventures in the South Seas." A line-of-battle ship called the *Shark* is wrecked in the Southern Ocean on its way to India, and two midshipmen fall into the hands of the Indians. "They had a council which pronounced death, but which death would we have to suffer? It was to be burned alive. . . . Next morning very early we had to get up and prepare to be burned alive. When we arrived at the place of execution, we

shuddered to think of being killed so soon. But I forgot to tell you that I had made love to [*sic*] beautiful girl even in one day, and from all I knew she loved me. The next thing they did was to build round us sticks and rubbish of all kinds till we could hardly see what they were doing. At last they finished. They then set fire to it, and after it had got hold well, they began to dance, which is called a war-dance. (To be continued.)”

“*I forgot to tell you that I had made love to beautiful girl.*” “Was ever woman in this humour wooed?” At least the author remembered his own boyish taste, when heroines were excluded from *Treasure Island*. And yet this was the hand that at the last drew Barbara Grant and the two Kirstie Elliotts.

The Schoolboys' Magazine is, to say the least, lively reading; not so much may be claimed for “*The Sunbeam Magazine*, an illustrated Miscellany of Fact, Fiction, and Fun, edited by R. L. Stevenson,” which expired in the middle of its third number in March, 1866. Each number contained several stories and articles, some evidently by other hands. The chief story, “The Banker's Ward, a modern tale,” is clearly by the editor, but is a dreary and unpromising narrative of middle-class life.

In these days he had endless talks with Mr. Baildon, who seems to have been the first of his friends in whom he found a kindred interest in letters, and at one of these discussions he produced a drama which was apparently the earliest draft of *Deacon Brodie*. The story was familiar to him from childhood, as a cabinet made by the Deacon himself formed part of the furni-

ture of his nursery. His deepest and most lasting interest was, however, centred in the Covenanters, of whom he had first learned from his nurse. He has told us how his attention was fixed on Hackston of Rathillet, who sat on horseback "with the cloak about his mouth," watching the assassination of Archbishop Sharp, in which he would take no part, lest it should be attributed to his private quarrel. Stevenson's first novel on the subject was attempted before he was fifteen, and "reams of paper," then and at a later date, were devoted to it in vain.¹

A similar fate attended a novel on the Pentland Rising — an episode well known to him from his infancy, as the Covenanters had spent the night before their defeat in the village of Colinton.

This last composition, however, was not wholly without result. Though the novel was destroyed, his studies issued in a small green pamphlet, entitled *The Pentland Rising: a Page of History, 1666*, published anonymously, in 1866, by Andrew Elliot in Edinburgh.²

Miss Jane Balfour writes: "I was at Heriot Row in 1866 from the 29th October to 23rd November, and Louis was busily altering the *Pentland Rising* then to please his father. He had made a story of it, and by so doing had, in his father's opinion, spoiled it. It was printed not long after in a small edition, and Mr. Stevenson very soon bought all the copies in, as far as was possible."

Thus the period closes somewhat surprisingly with Stevenson's first appearance as a printed author. The

¹ *Additional Memories*, p. 297.

² List of Stevenson's works, Appendix F.

foundations were being well laid, but the structure raised upon them was premature. The publication was probably due to his father's approval of the subject-matter rather than to any belief in the literary ripeness of the style. At the same time, it was the best work that he had yet done, and the plentiful quotations from the pages of Wodrow and Kirkton, and of their opponent, Sir James Turner, are interesting in view of Stevenson's confession in Samoa,¹ "My style is from the Covenanting writers."

¹ *Letters*, ii. 312.