

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON IN AMERICA

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES

BY
MARY HARRIS DILLARD, B. A.

DENTON, TEXAS

JULY 1968

Texas Woman's University

Denton, Texas

July 22 19 68

We hereby recommend that the Thesis prepared under
our supervision by Mary Harris Dillard
entitled Robert Louis Stevenson in America

be accepted as fulfilling this part of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Committee:

Antony Nell Wiley
Chairman
Edna James
Lavon B. Fulwiler
Agnes C. Trammell

Accepted:

L. L. Morrison
Dean of Graduate Studies

261040

PREFACE

The purpose of my study of Robert Louis Stevenson is to show that his works are worthy of study and analysis today and that the time he spent in America was instrumental in shaping his writing. Throughout his writing Stevenson manifested a belief in style and craftsmanship which would enable the writer to express more effectively the truths of his experience. Although Stevenson was not an American, he married an American, and the traumatic year he spent in the United States shaped much of the writing examined in this thesis. Influential critics believe that his experiences here became a turning point in his career--the beginning of a trend toward maturation in his personal life as well as in his writing. My study focused primarily on Stevenson's travel books and his fiction. I relied on primary sources including his letters edited by Sir Sidney Colvin and his works, both the Vailima Edition and the South Seas Edition.

The experience gained in writing this thesis has been valuable to me as a teacher of junior high school students of English. To Dr. Autrey Nell Wiley goes the credit for her scholarly direction, her endless patience and encouragement,

and her professional attitude in working with me. I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Eleanor James, whose interest in the subject of this thesis as well as in the writer has been inspiring. Mrs. Lavon Fulwiler and Miss Agnes C. Tramel also graciously consented to read the thesis and to serve on the Oral Examination Committee. Others in the Department of English have contributed to my understanding of our language and its literature. I am especially grateful to Mrs. Alleen Bounds for her cheerfulness and personal interest.

I feel a particular debt of gratitude to my family without whose understanding and patience this thesis could not have been completed. To my husband Weldon, who never complains, and to my daughters, Lyn and Laurie, who were forbearing, I am eternally grateful. To my parents I am deeply indebted for their love for and confidence in me throughout all the years of education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	iii
CHAPTER	PAGE
I. STEVENSON'S REPUTATION IN THE UNITED STATES	
Reports of His Death.	1
Uncertainty as to their validity	1
Factual evidence concerning them	2
Reassessment of His Works	3
Mixed reactions in England	4
Skepticism and disapproval.	4
Adulation and esteem.	4
General appreciation in America.	6
Travel books.	6
<u>Treasure Island</u>	7
Literary rivalry.	8
Tributes.	9
Memorial service	10
Statements by friends.	11
Literary people	12

CHAPTER	PAGE
Young writers	12
Common people	13
Prophetic Statements.	15
Sources.	15
Stevenson	15
Henry James	15
Periodicals	16
Fulfillment.	16
Current paperback editions.	16
Recently published volumes.	18
Literary listings	19
Present need of definitive work.	19

II. STEVENSON'S AMERICA

Emphasis in This Chapter.	21
Status of America in 1879	21
Promise of the West.	22
Optimistic outlook in America.	22

CHAPTER	PAGE
Stevenson's Interest in America	23
Challenge of the nation.	23
Class distinctions lacking	25
Restraint or tradition lacking	25
Stevenson's Impressions After 1879.	25
Weather.	25
Mode of travel	26
Landscape of states.	27
Pennsylvania.	28
Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa . .	29
Nebraska.	30
Wyoming.	31
California.	32
Sounds	34
Of names.	34
Of native speech.	36
Of idiomatic speech	37
Business	37
Conversation.	38
Manners	38
Disguised kindness.	39

CHAPTER	PAGE
Class distinctions	40
Emigrants	41
Negroes	42
Indians	44
Chinese	44
Jews.	44
Poor Whites	45
Stevenson's Image	46
Father's influence	46
Guarded image.	46
Stevenson's Introduction to the United States	46
Early knowledge of America	47
Acquaintance with an American	47
Writings about America	48
Residence in the United States	50
Stevenson's Maturation as a Writer.	50
Interest in Common People	51
Interest in Common Things	51
Weather.	51
Food	52

CHAPTER	PAGE
III. STEVENSON THE WRITER IN AMERICAN CRITICISM	
Evaluation According to Genre	54
Reasons for Variation in Reputation	55
Temporal	55
Biographical	55
Stevenson the Man in His Works.	56
Pessimism and optimism	57
Tired Europe.	57
Energetic America	57
Ambivalence.	58
Morality	60
Reconsideration of the Stevenson Myth	61
Attack and counterattack	61
Problems of evaluation	62
Triumph over difficulty	63
Prematurity and gusto	64
Need for fair evaluation	65
Critical Study of Fiction Justified	65
Plot	67
Incident and character.	67
<u>Treasure Island</u>	67

CHAPTER	PAGE
Point of view.	68
Novels in the first person.	69
Other novels not in the first person.	70
Setting.	72
Examples.	73
Characterization	75
Character subordinate to other elements	75
Love for characters	76
Vividness of description.	78
Omission of women	79
Primacy of theme	80
Romanticism vs. realism.	82
Precedent of the ancients	84
Promise of permanence	85
Method of Writing	85
Belief in craftsmanship.	85
Practice of self-discipline.	86
"Sedulous ape".	87
Struggling artist	88

CHAPTER	PAGE
Diction.	90
Selecting words	91
Striving for effect	92
Current use of his method	94
Evaluation	94

STEVENSON'S REPUTATION IN THE UNITED STATES

1894-1900

Robert Louis Stevenson died on December 3, 1894, at Apia, Samoa, at the age of forty-four. News of his death was announced in the following dispatch:

Apia, Samoa, December 5, via San Francisco, December 22--Robert Louis Stevenson, the novelist, died of apoplexy on Monday evening, December 3, at 8.10 o'clock. About 6 o'clock the same evening Lloyd Osbourne, Mr. Stevenson's stepson, was seen in Apia, hatless and coatless, anxiously inquiring for medical assistance. Fortunately, Dr. Anderson, of the British warship Wallaroo, was available, and Dr. Funk, the local physician was soon communicated with. Both doctors hastened to respond to Mr. Osbourne's request for assistance, Dr. Anderson being on the spot nearly half an hour before his fellow-practitioner. Mr. Stevenson was discovered insensible and breathing heavily and intermittently. Dr. Anderson recognized the symptoms of apoplexy and did all he could to afford relief, although aware the case was hopeless. On Dr. Funk's arrival further remedies were applied, but unsuccessfully, and the patient breathed his last at the hour above mentioned, never having regained consciousness.¹

Yet uncertainty and doubt prevailed. Had the writer, indeed, died? News stories which kept the public aware that Robert Louis Stevenson was in frail health had been so frequent and

¹"How the Romancer Died," Critic, XXV (December 29, 1894), 454.

denials had also been so frequent that the confirmed "intelligence of his death came as a surprise."¹

When the news first reached England by way of Auckland, "a few of his friends clung desperately to doubts of its truth, and among them was Henry James."² Some ten days later a telegram from Mrs. Stevenson, however, confirmed the fact. James wrote the widow, "For myself, how shall I tell how much poorer and shabbier the whole world seems, and how one of the closest and strongest reasons for going on, and trying and doing, for planning and dreaming of the future, has dropped in an instant out of life."³ And the account of Stevenson's death by his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, left no doubt as to its correctness:

It was just at sunset and time for dinner, and he and my mother were preparing some little delicacy together, a salad for the evening meal. . . . my mother caught him as he suddenly seemed to turn faint and giddy and asked her, "Do I look strange?" and she tried to reassure him. As she managed to get him into the great room and into the chair he showed her where the pain was in his head, and this was his last consciousness. There he lies now in the big room with the flag cast over him, his hands

¹"Extracts from a Private Letter Touching Robert Louis Stevenson's Death," Harper's Weekly, XXXIX (February 2, 1895), 113.

²Sir Sidney Colvin, "Robert Louis Stevenson and Henry James," Scribner's Magazine, LXXV (March, 1924), 315.

³Ibid.

joined together across his breast, and our poor people showing the last signs of respect within their power and watching the night out where he lies.¹

In a letter to Sidney Colvin published in the London Times of January 7, 1895, Lloyd Osbourne stated that on the day he died, Stevenson felt so well and strong that he and his amanuensis had put in an unusually long, hard day, later than he usually worked.² This state of happiness and productivity as well as the suddenness of death was "cause of thankfulness" to the family.³ In fact, "Mr. Stevenson's health of late had been so much improved that his relatives had hoped that his lung trouble was gradually ceasing to be absolutely dangerous. For a long time hemorrhages had not occurred, and all thought that the physicians' prediction that, the forty-fifth year being turned, the sensitiveness of the lung had disappeared might be verified. Apoplexy does not seem to have been contemplated."⁴

Very soon after a writer's death, his contemporaries begin their reassessment. So it was for Stevenson. In England his

¹"Stevensoniana," The Critic, XXVI (January 12, 1895), 32.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Critic, XXV (December 29, 1894), 454.

reputation was mixed. As early as 1888 J. M. Barrie had suspected that he depended too much on the future--on "the great work he is to write by and by when the little works are finished."¹ Barrie felt that it was quite time the "great work was begun."² But later he called "R. L. S." the "most beloved initials in the literature of their land."³ W. E. Henley, who had had a rift in friendship and collaboration with Stevenson, became very vindictive in his remarks, even after Stevenson's death, when he wrote:

Let this be said of him, once for all: "He was a good man, good at many things, and now this also he has attained to, to be at rest." That covers Sophocles and Shakespeare, Marlborough and Bonaparte. Let it serve for Stevenson; and for ourselves, let us live and die uninsulted, as we lived and died before his books began to sell and his personality was a marketable thing.⁴

On the other hand, by certain of his contemporaries Stevenson was granted "a measure of the reputation for which he seemed destined,"⁵ for Andrew Lang, Edmund Gosse, Sidney Colvin, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, and others were among his admirers. Edmund Gosse reflected over the twenty years in which he knew Stevenson and proclaimed, "I feel that, since he was eminently

¹An Edinburgh Eleven (New York, n. d.), p. 117.

²P. 120.

³G. B. Stern, Robert Louis Stevenson (New York, 1954), p. 20.

⁴F. M. Colby, "A Debated Charm," Bookman, XIV (February, 1902), 621.

⁵Edwin Eigner, Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition (Princeton, 1966), p. 3.

human, I ought to recall his faults, but I protest that I can remember none."¹ Gosse's eulogy continued, "Stevenson was the most exquisite English writer of this generation; but those who lived close to him are apt to think less of that than of the fact that he was the most unselfish and the most lovable of human beings."² Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, on hearing of Stevenson's death, commented that "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."³ His first reaction to the death was, "Put away books and paper and pen. Stevenson is dead. Stevenson is dead, and now there is nobody left to write for."⁴ Andrew Lang called Stevenson "the most ingenious and refined writer of his generation."⁵ W. B. Yeats assured Stevenson in 1890 that Treasure Island was about "the only book that his seafaring grandfather had ever found any satisfaction in reading, having read it 'upon his death-bed with infinite satisfaction.'"⁶ When Stevenson was

¹"Personal Memories of Robert Louis Stevenson," Critic, XXIV (July, 1895), 454.

²Ibid.

³Adventures in Criticism (London, 1896), p. 184.

⁴Robert Kiely, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure (Cambridge, 1964), p. 5.

⁵J. C. Furnas, Voyage to Windward (New York, 1951), p. 200.

⁶The Letters of W. B. Yeats, ed. Allan Wade (London, 1954), p. 96.

told that Gladstone, whom Stevenson detested, sat up all night to read Treasure Island and was recommending it on all sides, he said that the Grand Old Man "would do better to attend to the imperial affairs of England."¹ And Alfred Tennyson, on hearing his son read aloud The Merry Men, said, "Hallam, remember, we must have this book in the house."² Not all criticism in England was, however, so positive. Some of Stevenson's critics spoke "grudgingly of his wonderful skill, because, forsooth, he learned to write before he wrote for publication."³

Stevenson seems to have been more widely appreciated in the United States than in England. In an American publication, perhaps his first appearance before the American public was in November and December, 1883, when his Silverado Squatters was published serially in the Century Magazine. According to Lettice Cooper, his essays "at once struck the discerning critics as being the work of a new artist of great promise."⁴ And we are told by Commins that "nowhere else did he [Stevenson] enjoy such popularity in his lifetime."⁵ In England, his reputation

¹The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, ed. Sir Sidney Colvin (New York, 1925), II, 236.

²Furnas, p. 194.

³C. T. Copeland, "Robert Louis Stevenson," Atlantic Monthly, LXXV (April, 1895), 545.

⁴Robert Louis Stevenson (London, 1948), p. 106.

⁵Saxe Commins, ed., Selected Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson (New York, 1947), p. xv.

"was that of a comparatively light weight," said John Jay Chapman, "but his success here in the United States was immediate. We Americans hailed him as a classic--or something just as good."¹ Thomas Beer, a historian of the last decade of the nineteenth century, attributed this status to the fact that Stevenson was, in the United States, merely an emblem of the intellectual battles of the nineties.² Possibly it was a vying for superiority or at least equality of literary status between America and the mother country that caused the American press to "exploit" Stevenson; and exploitation such as this, according to Chapman, was "the severest ordeal which a writer of English can pass through."³ Copeland defended Stevenson against the London critics and called him "the most classic man of letters, in the favorable sense of the word, of contemporary England."⁴

Also in 1883 Treasure Island was published. His novel delighted Americans, their enthusiasm being reflected in such comments by critics as John A. Steuart gives in his biography

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson," Emerson and Other Essays (New York, 1898), p. 244.

²The Mauve Decade (New York, 1926), p. 183.

³"Robert Louis Stevenson," Emerson and Other Essays, p. 234.

⁴"Robert Louis Stevenson," Atlantic Monthly, LXXV (April, 1895), 545.

of Stevenson:

America was enthusiastic. To one important reviewer the tale had "the minuteness of Defoe." Another averred that "Mr. Stevenson's work is meritoriously high even in comparison with the immortal works of the author of "Waverley." And from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the reviews were plentifully sprinkled with the epithets "charming," "quaint," "delightful," "exciting," "fascinating," "irresistible." George Parsons Lathrop, an influence in the current criticism of the day, observed that "Mr. Stevenson is a master of language and cultivates assiduously those phrases which are known to be idiomatic, adding rather oddly, "There is a daintiness of touch, a dreamy freedom of intervention in his admirable fabrications which lend them a charm somewhat more ideal than that of Defoe."¹

Only eight years before, in 1876, snubbed by editors and the public, Stevenson was now "cockered up in luxurious hotels, solicitously entertained by millionaires, and offered private railroad cars."² On his return to the states a sculptor friend named St. Gaudens, whom Stevenson greatly liked, began a medallion of him, propped in bed, cigarette in hand.

It is not wholly true that the States discovered Stevenson, but, as one of his biographers points out, "it was the American public--rather, American publishers--who first paid him on something approaching a modern scale."³ Their eagerness did have something of what Chapman called a "Chicago making culture

¹Robert Louis Stevenson (Boston, 1924), p. 87.

²Furnas, p. 268.

³Ibid.

hum," like ordering Louis XV furniture for the latest hotel.¹ A magazine writer in the Critic in 1895 said, "Certainly his Stevenson's fame is often made by the American people--yes, and sometimes unmade. This is the great amphitheatrum. They are in the ultimate court of review."² It seemed to be with a measure of pride that another writer in this same periodical wrote, "Stevenson was not of our own people, though he sojourned with us, and knew our continent from east to west as few . . . can know it."³ A writer for Harper's Weekly rather satirically attributed Stevenson's affinity with America to his nationality: "Being a Scotsman, Stevenson was nearer to the American than the Englishman can be, and he had a quicker willingness to understand the American character. As a Scotsman, also, he had keener artistic perceptions than an Englishman is likely to have."⁴

Posthumously, a fountain was erected in Stevenson's memory at San Francisco, and a monument was proposed and later constructed at Saranac Lake. Further indication that Stevenson had

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson," Emerson and Other Essays, p. 245.

²The Critic, XXVI (January 12, 1895), 29.

³Ibid.

⁴Brander Matthews, "Robert Louis Stevenson," Harper's Weekly, XXXVIII (December 29, 1894), 1248.

endeared himself to the literary group in the United States is the memorial service held in his honor on January 4, 1895, at Carnegie Hall "under the auspices of the Uncut Leaves Society."¹ The gathering is described as "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."² In accepting the invitation to participate in this service, Rudyard Kipling referred to the uncertainty of Stevenson's death as it had been reported:

I am in receipt of your very courteous communication of the 20th inst. and shall, of course, feel honored if your committee sees fit to place my name on the list of Vice-Presidents for the meeting on the 4th proximo. I am hoping, however, that the suspiciously circumstantial death may turn out to be a piece of newspaper enterprise and shall remain in that way of thinking till I hear from well-informed quarters.³

One of the speakers on the program, Edmund Clarence Stedman, praised Stevenson's expression: "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

¹Critic, XXV (December 29, 1894), 453.

²Critic, XXVI (January 12, 1895), 29.

³Ibid., p. 32.

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."¹ Another said, "No other charmer, in this wise, appeared in his generation."² Commenting on Stevenson's dissatisfaction with the commonplace, still another speaker said, "It strengthens our faith that work of the first order cannot remain obscure."³ David Christie Murray added a somewhat conservative note to the occasion when he said: "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."⁴ He added a personal note, however, when he said, "Amongst our contemporaries there was none we loved better or prized more highly, or with sounder reason."⁵ Charles D. Lanier ventured to say, "But Robert Louis Stevenson and his stories we love and believe in more than enough to risk our

¹Critic, XXVI (January 12, 1895), 29.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 31.

⁵Ibid.

very little in the estimate of his final place."¹ Justin Huntly M'Carthy is quoted from the Tribune as saying of Stevenson's writing, "I can imagine no better example of what our English language is capable of."²

There were other reactions of sorrow at Stevenson's death. Henry James found that ". . . into Stevenson's place there has descended an avalanche of ice."³ Even five years later he commented, "I find myself, somehow, unable to think of Louis in these days without an emotion akin to tears."⁴ J. M. Barrie, S. R. Crockett, and Ian Maclaren formed a group "proud to acknowledge Stevenson as its forerunner and prophet."⁵ Just weeks before Stevenson's death, Crockett had written an article about him. His subsequent comment was, "How could one alter and amend the light sentences with the sense of loss in one's heart? How sit down to write a 'tribute' when one has slept, and started, and awaked all night with the dull ache that lies below Sleep, saying all the time 'Stevenson is dead! Stevenson is dead!'"⁶ Brander Matthews experienced a "sudden shock" along

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson," Review of Reviews, XI (February, 1895), 186.

²"Stevenson as an Essayist," Critic, XXVI (January 19, 1895), 51.

³The Letters of Henry James, ed. Percy Lubbock (New York, 1920), I, 223.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 332.

⁵"Robert Louis Stevenson," Review of Reviews, XI (February, 1895), 191.

⁶*Ibid.*

with "all who care for our lighter literature," and called Stevenson "a poet of high distinction, although not of high achievement."¹ Van Rennsselaer waxed poetic as he said, "For now that the throne of the prince is vacant in our little world of art, in our strenuous little world of oft-defrauded but perennial aspiration, I feel that there will never again be quite as much joy in the technical struggle, and I know that, even if I could ever write a page as he wrote hundreds, success would bring a pang of disappointment--now that the most foolish dreamer can no longer anticipate that happy hour in which Stevenson was to smile and say, 'Well done.'"² This sentiment echoes that of Henry James and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, whose works herein cited were published in America; both of them felt that Stevenson was someone to write for, someone whose approval they desired.

There were other Americans of high and low degree who found Stevenson eccentric but "extremely entertaining"³ and sometimes even "a crank."⁴ Dr. Henry Merritt retracted his statement that Stevenson was "one of those cranks who write books" when he later said to Mrs. Stevenson, "I thought your husband

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson," Harper's Weekly, XXXVIII (December 29, 1894), 1248.

²"Robert Louis Stevenson and His Writing," Century, LI (November, 1895), 128.

³Henry Adams and His Friends, compiled by Harold Dean Cater (Boston, 1947), p. 201.

⁴Issler, p. 161.

was a crank, but he's a plain sensible man who knows what he is talking about just as well as I do."¹ Henry R. Haxton, the Examiner's feature writer, commented, "It has been the fortune of but few writers to at once attain the book-stall notoriety and win the regard of men of letters enjoyed by Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson. None has plowed the soil more deeply nor garnered a more rich and varied harvest."² A San Francisco newspaper editor for twenty years, Bailey Millard, wrote these lines:

Yet they denied him bread-work--they the wise
Among us who refused his proffered creeds.
He would not cheaply write to suit their needs.
His worth such little minds could never prize.
When his great soul blazed through his fervid eyes
They could not see, nor sense his splendid deeds.³

Even Stevenson's landlady in San Francisco, Dora Williams, whose husband was a leading American painter, said, "Despite his eccentricities of dress--and he surely looked singular--there was a certain air about him that made you know unmistakably that he was a gentleman."⁴ She thought it would have been better if others had been more tender to him because of his extreme sensitivity and an excessive need of kindness.⁵ Jeannette

¹Issler, p. 161.

²Ibid., p. 160.

³Ibid., p. 91.

⁴Ibid., p. 45.

⁵Ibid., p. 55.

L. Gilder sought for some replacement or successor for Stevenson. Although she was convinced there was none, she considered Quiller-Couch as coming closest to Stevenson's model. She quotes Quiller-Couch as saying, "I began as a pupil and imitator of Mr. Stevenson and was lucky in my choice of a master. Stevenson was a pure, manly-minded man, and his influence in literature has only been good for me."¹

Some prophetic statements were made by Stevenson and his closest friends concerning his future reputation. Stevenson himself in talking with Mark Twain in New York said, "An author may have a reputation which is confined to the surface, and lose it and become pitied, then despised, then forgotten, entirely forgotten."² Henry James's statement was pointedly prophetic: "Stevenson superseded his books, and this last replacement of himself so en scène has killed the literary baggage."³ Stevenson became the modern personification of the wounded lord in a medieval romance, a figure later generations would "gag at."⁴ What Tennyson described in Morte d'Arthur

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson," Review of Reviews, XI (February, 1895), 190.

²Mark Twain's Autobiography (New York, 1925), I, 247.

³Letters, I, 384.

⁴Furnas, p. 439.

and Arnold in Tristram and Iseult Stevenson seemed to embody.

In 1895, Copeland predicted that Stevenson would "take the place proper to him without our help; it may be without theirs [the critics]".¹ In 1896, a writer in the Nation suggested that "to appreciate a writer of one's own time is undoubtedly, in most cases, to store up merriment for the time to come."² The Atlantic Monthly writer noted that it is "as impossible to forecast Stevenson's literary fate as it is to predict what he might have accomplished had not death claimed him at the very moment when his work was most rich with the promise of a new power."³ He added that the twentieth century would probably "select only a dozen essays, a half dozen short stories, and two or three longer ones," and that in doing so, it would "be very stupid in the twentieth century reader, but why should stupidity die with us?"⁴ This has very nearly been true. In 1967, Stevenson's works in paperback are as follows:

SHORT STORIES	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Publisher</u>
<u>"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde"</u>	Airmont Publishing Co. Popular Library, Inc.

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson," Atlantic Monthly, LXXV (April, 1895), 538.

²The Nation, LXII (January 9, 1896), 36.

³"The Real Stevenson," Atlantic Monthly, LXXXV (May, 1900), 705.

⁴Ibid.

"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "The Merry Men," and Other Tales

Great Short Stories

"The Suicide Club" and Other Stories

NOVELS

The Black Arrow

Kidnapped

Master of Ballantrae

Treasure Island

Dutton Everyman Paperbacks

Washington Square Press

Penguin Books, Inc.

Airmont Publishing Co.
Collier Books
Dell Publishing Co.
Scholastic Book Services

Airmont Publishing Co.
Collier Books
Dell Publishing Co.
Penguin Books, Inc.
Perennial Library
Pyramid Books
Scholastic Book Services
Signet Classics

Airmont Publishing Co.
Holt, Rinehart, & Winston
Popular Library

Airmont Publishing Co.
Collier Books
Dell Publishing Co.
Penguin Books, Inc.
Popular Library
Pyramid Books
Riverside Literature Series
Signet Classics
L. W. Singer Company
Washington Square Press

Two Major Novels: "Master of
Ballantrae" and "Weir of
Hermiston"

Bantam Books, Inc.

ESSAYS

Selected Essays

Gateway Editions

OTHER

Stevenson: A Laurel Reader
(David Daiches)

The Cumulative Book Index for 1966 lists the following
editions under "Stevenson":

NOVELS

Kidnapped

Blackie and Son

Treasure Island

Ginn and Company

Master of Ballantrae

Heritage

ESSAYS

Lantern Bearers

Pantheon Books

Travels With a Donkey in the
Cevennes

Blackie and Son

Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson
(Malcolm Elwin, ed.)

Ginn and Company

From Scotland to Silverado

Harvard U. Press

OTHER

McKay: To Remember Robert Louis Stevenson

Burns and MacEachern: The Young Robert Louis Stevenson

D. Butts: R. L. Stevenson

Swinnerton: R. L. Stevenson

Additions to this list in the 1967 Cumulative Book Index follow:

SHORT STORIES

Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and
Mr. Hyde

Ambassador

NOVELS

Kidnapped

London Rylee

Treasure Island

Scribner

In March, 1968, the following appeared:

The Black Arrow

St. Martin's

Treasure Island

Blackie and Son
Ginn and Co.

A Footnote to History

Dawson of Pall Mall

In Albert C. Baugh's Literary History of England (1948), Samuel C. Chew lists two editions of Stevenson's works published during the first two decades of the twentieth century: the Pentland edition, edited by Edmund Gosse, in twenty volumes published in 1906 and 1907, and the Vailima edition, edited by Lloyd Osbourne and Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson, in twenty-six volumes published in 1922 and 1923.¹ Yet the world awaits a definitive edition of Stevenson's works. Will such attention come from some leading scholars of today already known for

¹ A Literary History of England (New York, 1948), p. 1498.

their work on Stevenson? Will it come from David Daiches, for instance, a Scotsman, who has taught in America, and who has written on Stevenson? Or will it be forthcoming from Stevenson's biographers, J. C. Furnas and Malcolm Elwin? The time toward which that fin de siecle writer in the Nation looked is a present reality. He said in 1896, "By the middle of the next century, men may perhaps look at both writers Scott and Stevenson, from a sufficient distance of time to measure their comparative eminence."¹ It is to be hoped that these judges will agree, in some measure, with the writer who predicted of Stevenson in 1900, "There can be little doubt that what he wrote will stand the test of time, and that hereafter he will hold a place in the goodly fellowship of the immortals, with Balzac and Defoe, and Cervantes, and the rest."²

¹Nation, LXII (January 9, 1896), 38.

²The North American Review, CLXXI (September, 1900), 358.

STEVENSON'S AMERICA

In stating and discussing a man's views of a country--its land, its customs, and its people--one tends to concentrate upon the biography of the man rather than the subject that he discusses. I present some biographical information in this chapter, but I stress observations and literary works with the intention of avoiding biographical overemphasis which characterizes studies of Stevenson. Because much of what Stevenson has to say about the United States is printed in his works The Amateur Emigrant (1895), Across the Plains (1892), and The Silverado Squatters (1883),¹ I rely almost exclusively on these and some of his letters as sources in which we see and hear America through his eyes and ears, we consider his opinions of America, and we observe his maturation as a writer.

At the time of Stevenson's first visit to America in 1879, says Malcolm Elwin, the new country had survived "a century of

¹All references to these works will be from the South Seas edition, published in New York in 1925 and edited by Sidney Colvin, unless otherwise specified.

nationalism and the miraculous growth of a mushroom civilization."¹ It was, in fact, still growing. Oklahoma was mapped as "Indian Territory," and "within living memory there had been bloody wars against the Indians, such as the campaign against the Seminoles of the extreme south."² Nevertheless, this was a period of optimism, for the Great American West was just opening up, a "West, with its limitless opportunities, its violent contrasts, and its seething mixture of old American settlers with immigrants from many lands, a social democracy developed that was new in the history of mankind."³ The era was one of challenge, an era in which Walt Whitman claimed "for each man the prerogative of his manhood; the right to have an initiative, an experience of his own; the right to develop will and character by using them; the right to know that his sufferings, his failures if necessary, are in part at least of his own making; the right to come into unmediated touch with circumstance and be a man among men, mixing in the clash and mêlée; the right to begin to be."⁴ As Whitman expressed it, "One sees [the performance of the poet] must indeed

¹The Strange Case of Robert Louis Stevenson (London, 1950), p. 139.

²P. 140.

³The American Tradition in Literature, Third Edition, eds. Sculley Bradley, Richmond Croom Beatty, E. Hudson Long (New York, 1967), II, 8.

⁴Basil De Selincourt, Walt Whitman: A Critical Study (New York, 1965), p. 225.

own the riches of the summer and winter, and need never be bankrupt while corn grows from the ground or the orchards drop apples or the bays contain fish or men beget children upon women."¹

Stevenson arrived in America full of optimism, believing in the progress of America as well as its future. In a letter to Sidney Colvin in August, 1879, at the beginning of his "amateur emigration," he wrote, "No man is any use until he has dared everything; I feel just now as if I had, and so might become a man."² This sentiment reflects one of Whitman's:

O to struggle against great odds, to meet enemies
undaunted!
To be entirely alone with them, to find how much
one can stand!³

Stevenson's letter concluded, "At least if I fail in my great purpose, I shall see some wild life in the West and visit both Florida and Labrador ere my return."⁴ Mrs. Stevenson stated in the preface to the South Seas edition of his works, "Naturally, his first visit to America, a land without class distinctions, was to him an event of extraordinary interest."⁵

¹Preface to 1855 edition, Leaves of Grass, The American Tradition of Literature, II, 18.

²Letters, I, 284.

³De Selincourt, p. 222.

⁴Letters, I, 351.

⁵P. xvi.

And Stevenson himself said, "For many years America was to me a sort of promised land. 'Westward the march of empire holds its way.'"¹ He held that the race is for the young, that what has been and what is we know imperfectly, and what is yet to be lies beyond the flight of our imaginations. "Greece, Rome and Judaea are gone by for ever," he lamented, "leaving to generations the legacy of their accomplished work; China still endures, an old-inhabited house in the brand-new city of nations; England has already declined, since she has lost the States; and to these States, therefore yet undeveloped, full of dark possibilities, and grown, like another Eve, from one rib out of the side of their own old land, the minds of young men in England turn naturally at a certain hopeful period of their age."² His wife noted that in the beginning he encountered many rude shocks, but that "he soon readjusted his point of view though he never ceased regretting that this great country should have been lost to England."³ Feeling that it would be very difficult for Americans to understand the keen anticipation of an emigrant coming to America, Stevenson drew

¹P. 81.

²Ibid.

³P. xvii.

the analogy of

. . . a young man, who shall have grown up in an old and rigid circle, following bygone fashions and taught to distrust his own fresh instincts, and who now suddenly hears of a family of cousins, all about his own age, who keep house together by themselves and live far from restraint and tradition; let him imagine this, and he will have some imperfect notion of the sentiment with which spirited English youths turn to the thought of the American republic.¹

This youth, Stevenson maintained, "would rather be homeless than denied a pass-key; rather go without food than partake of a stalled ox in a stiff, respectable society; rather be shot out of hand than direct his life according to the dictates of the world."² The young man whom Stevenson portrayed knew or thought "nothing of the Maine laws, the Puritan sourness, the fierce, sordid appetite for dollars, or the dreary existence of country towns."³

Stevenson's first impressions of America were ambivalent but consisted mainly of precipitation. In a letter to Sidney Colvin written on board the S.S. Devonia an hour or two out of New York in August, 1879, Stevenson wrote, "I go on my way to-night, if I can; if not, to-morrow; emigrant train ten to fourteen days' journey; warranted extreme discomfort. The only American institution which has yet won my respect is the rain."⁴

¹P. 81.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Letters, p. 282.

A biographer commented that there was much in the American life and scenery Stevenson admired, much he detested.¹ Mrs. Stevenson remarked, "Of New York, at this time, he saw very little, but on a later visit grew to love it as he would not have thought possible when he first arrived in America."² We know that Washington Square was a particularly attractive spot to him. He spent many hours sitting on the benches under the trees, talking with children, and on one occasion conversed at length with Mark Twain.³ At least part of the explanation of his mixed reactions was the method of travel which inevitably tempered responses to what he saw. As Stevenson made his way across the continent from New York to California, he traveled almost the cheapest way; "the rising author found his market value in America low-priced, and his curiosity as to how it felt to be ill and penniless was satisfied."⁴ Always he carried "a small valise, a knapsack, which I carried on my shoulders, and in the bag of my railway rug, the whole of Bancroft's History of the United States, in six fat volumes."⁵ He

¹Francis Watt, R. L. S. (New York, 1913), pp. 203-204.

²P. xvi.

³The Autobiography of Mark Twain, I, 247.

⁴E. Blantyre Simpson, Robert Louis Stevenson (Boston, 1906), p. 50.

⁵Letters, I, p. 300.

referred to these volumes as he crossed New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Wyoming, but he commented, "Bancroft's History of the United States, even in a centenary edition, is essentially heavy fare; a little goes a long way," and then, in a comment reminiscent of the balanced rhetoric of Dryden's statement about Jonson and Shakespeare in his Essay on Dramatic Poesy, continued, "I respect Bancroft, but I do not love him."¹

As Stevenson crossed the continent on board an emigrant train, he began to record his impressions of the American landscape, the vegetation, and the trees. His observations of the geography of the country are vivid to the mid-twentieth century reader, and even to a contemporary of Stevenson, who said:

". . . always he presented a person or a thing in a new light, discovering even to an old San Franciscan like myself odd points I had failed to see or had seen but faintly."² This friend of Stevenson's added, "Ah, but he had an eye in his head!"³ It was this eye together with his keen interest in and appreciation for this continent that makes his account so interesting.

¹Letters, I, p. 282.

²Anne Roller Issler, Happier for His Presence (Stanford, 1949), p. 165.

³Ibid.

This observant eye of Stevenson's took in much that he admired in Pennsylvania, ostensibly because the terrain reminded him of other places he had visited, both of England and of France, yet not quite either one:

We were near no station, nor even, as far as I could see, within reach of any signal. A green, open, undulating country stretched away upon all sides. Locust trees and a single field of Indian corn gave it a foreign grace and interest; but the contours of the land were soft and English. It was not quite England, neither was it quite France; yet, like enough either to seem natural in my eyes.¹

In addition to the green countryside, the locust trees, and the field of corn, Stevenson recorded a particular aspect of the scene which was significantly different from his own country:

And it was in the sky, and not upon the earth, that I was surprised to find a change. Explain it how you may, and for my part I cannot explain it at all, the sun rises with a different splendour in America and Europe. There is more clear gold and scarlet in our old country mornings; more purple, brown, and smoky orange in those of the new. It may be from habit, but to me the coming of day is less fresh and inspiring in the latter; it has a duskier glory, and more nearly resembles sunset; it seems to fit some subsequential, evening epoch of the world, as though America were in fact, and not merely in fancy, farther from the orient of Aurora and the springs of day.²

¹P. 99.

²P. 100.

He added that this thought which occurred by the railroad in Pennsylvania had recurred a dozen times in far distant parts of the continent. "If it be an illusion," he contended, "it is one very deeply rooted, and in which my eyesight is accomplice."¹

Ohio and Nebraska disappointed Stevenson somewhat in their landscape. Ohio reminded him of Holland, and Nebraska reminded him of the sea. "But Ohio was not at all as I had pictured it. We were now on those great plains which stretch unbroken to the Rocky Mountains. The country was flat like Holland, but far from being dull."² All of Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, or "as much as I saw of them from the train and in my waking moments,"³ was rich and various, and "breathed an elegance peculiar to itself."⁴ Here again the corn and the trees impressed him, as did the rural atmosphere:

The tall corn pleased the eye; the trees were graceful in themselves, and framed the plain into long, aerial vistas; and the clean, bright gardened townships spoke of country fare and pleasant evenings on the stoop. It was a sort of flat paradise.⁵

¹P. 100.

²P. 101.

³P. 103.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

This picturesque panorama was broken by the fences along the line which "bore but two descriptions of advertisement; one to recommend tobaccos, and the other to vaunt remedies against the ague."¹ A native whom Stevenson observed getting on at some way-station pronounced with a doctoral air that the morning was "a fever and ague morning."²

Nebraska was not one of the highlights of his journey. He reflected, "We were at sea--there is no other adequate expression--on the plains of Nebraska."³ The sea itself was not distasteful to Stevenson; in fact, he loved it, perhaps moreso because his family before him had been designers of lighthouses. But the "huge sameness" of the plain seemed like miles to Stevenson, and "either end of it within but a step of the horizon."⁴ He noticed the "dead green waste under foot, and the mocking, fugitive horizon," and he said "the most varied spectacle" one could hope for was "a sky full of stars."⁵ In Nebraska the traveler might "walk five miles and see nothing; ten, and it is as though he has not moved; twenty, and still he is in the midst of the same great level, and has approached

¹P. 104.

²Ibid.

³P. 120.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

no nearer to the one object within view, the flat horizon which keeps pace with his advance."¹ Still the foliage and grazing cattle proved delightful:

Along the track innumerable wild sunflowers, no bigger than a crownpiece, bloomed in a continuous flower-bed; grazing beasts were seen upon the prairie at all degrees of distance and diminution; and now and again we might perceive a few dots beside the railroad which grew more and more distinct as we drew nearer till they turned into wooden cabins, and then dwindled and dwindled in our wake until they melted into their surroundings, and we were once more alone upon the billiard-board.²

In a letter to W. E. Henley dated August 23, 1879, he complained, "I can see the track straight before and straight behind me to either horizon."³ At that time he was sitting on top of the cars, watching the desolate flat prairie.⁴ Additionally, he observed, "Here and there a herd of cattle, a yellow butterfly or two; a patch of wild sunflowers; a wooden house or two; then a wooden church alone in miles of waste; and then a wind-mill to pump water."⁵

Even more desolate was the state of Wyoming, "a homely and unkindly world about the onward path."⁶ Stevenson disliked the

¹P. 120.

²Ibid.

³Letters, I, 285.

⁴Ibid.

⁵P. 284.

⁶P. 120.

barrenness with "tumbled boulders, cliffs that drearily imitate the shape of monuments and fortifications--how drearily, how tamely, none can tell who has not seen them."¹ And here, the absence of vegetation and animal life impressed him: "not a tree, not a patch of sward, not one shapely or commanding mountain form; sage-brush, eternal sage-brush; over all, the same weariful and gloomy colouring, greys warming into brown, greys darkening toward black; and for sole sign of life, here and there a few fleeting antelopes; here and there, but at incredible intervals, a creek running in a cañon."² The only redeeming circumstance he found was the air which was "light and stimulating."³

But it was a different story when Stevenson reached California where the scenery reminded him of his own home. Looking over the California landscape, he wrote, "While I am usually very calm over the displays of nature, you will scarce believe how my heart leaped at this."⁴ His view included "a huge pine-forested ravine upon my left, a foaming river and a sky already coloured with the fires of dawn."⁵ He felt a

¹
P. 120.

²Ibid.

³P. 124.

⁴P. 143.

⁵Ibid.

blood kinship with the very landscape. "Every spire of pine along the hill-top, every trouty pool along that mountain river, was more dear to me than a blood relation,"¹ he wrote, thinking perhaps of Fanny Osbourne waiting for him in San Francisco. He felt that he "had come home again--home from unsightly deserts to the green and habitable corners of the earth."² Inspired and uplifted, he wrote, ". . . few people have praised God more happily than I did."³ Stevenson recorded his view of the coast:

The coast is rough and barren. On the south, the loud music of the Pacific sounds along beaches and cliffs and among broken reefs, the sporting-place of the sea-lion. Dismal, shifting sandhills, wrinkled by the wind, appear behind. Perhaps, too, in the days of Drake, Tamalpais would be clothed to its peak with majestic redwoods.⁴

The promise of a pioneer country that Stevenson had expected came to reality, he felt, as he looked at the countryside:

The very hills of California have an unfinished look; the rains and streams have not yet carved them to their perfect shape. The forests spring like mushrooms from the unexhausted soil; and they are mown down yearly by the forest fires.⁵

Later, after his marriage to Fanny as they honeymooned as Silverado squatters, he recorded an image he both saw and smelled:

¹P. 143.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴P. 166.

⁵P. 168.

A rough smack of resin was in the air, and a crystal mountain purity. It came pouring over these green slopes by the oceanful. The woods sang aloud, and gave largely of their healthful breath. Gladness seemed to inhabit these upper zones, and we had left indifference behind us in the valley. "I to the hills will lift mine eyes!" There are days in a life when thus to climb out of the lowlands seems like scaling heaven.¹

Finally, there is the description of the Toll House, the inn at Silverado:

As I recall the place--the green dell below; the spires of pine; the sun-warm, scented air; that grey, gabled inn, with its faint stirrings of life amid the slumber of the mountains--I slowly awake to a sense of admiration, gratitude, and almost love. A fine place, after all, for a wasted life to doze away in--the cuckoo-clock hooting of its far home country; the croquet mallets, eloquent of English lawns; the stages daily bringing news of the turbulent world away below there; and perhaps once in the summer, a salt fog pouring overhead with its tale of the Pacific.²

Another delight for Stevenson was in the names and the sound of names in the United States. His commentary on sound was:

None can care for literature in itself who do not take a special pleasure in the sound of names; and there is no part of the world where nomenclature is so rich, poetical, humorous, and picturesque as the United States of America. All times, races, and languages have brought their contribution. Pekin is in the same State with Euclid, with Bellefontaine, and

¹P. 211.

²P. 257.

with Sandusky, Chelsea, with its London associations of red brick, Sloane Square and the King's Road, is own suburb to stately and primeval Memphis; there they have their seat, translated names of cities, where the Mississippi runs by Tennessee and Arkansas [and in a note he added, "Please pronounce Arkansaw, with the accent on the first"] and both, while I was crossing a continent, lay, watched by armed men, in the horror and isolation of a plague. Old, red Manhattan lies, like an Indian arrow-head under a steam factory, below Anglified New York. The names of the States and Territories themselves form a chorus of sweet and most romantic vocables: Delaware, Ohio, Indiana, Florida, Dakota, Iowa, Wyoming, Minnesota, and the Carolinas; there are few poems with a nobler music for the ear: a songful, tuneful land; and if the new Homer shall rise from the Western continent, his verse will be enriched, his pages sing spontaneously, with the names of states and cities that would strike the fancy in a business circular.¹

Another writer, an American poet named Walt Whitman, had yearned for such a new Homer to arise from America.² His critic, De Selincourt, remarks: "His loudest and most insistent demand was for an art which should be native to America, which should have the pride, the fierceness and the candour of the only emancipated people of the world."³ Still other American poets such as Robert P. Tristram Coffin and Stephen Vincent Benet have taken note of the musical quality of the names of our states. Europeans and other Englishmen since

¹P. 101.

²De Selincourt, p. 244.

³Ibid.

Stevenson also have noted the lyric quality in the names of states, cities, and rivers in America. In Pennsylvania, Stevenson asked the brakeman the name of a river, and when he heard that it was called the Susquehanna, "the beauty of the name seemed to be part and parcel of the beauty of the land."¹ The name was so fit that Stevenson thought of Adam who, with divine fitness, named the creatures. "That was the name as no other could be, for that shining river and desirable valley."²

Other auditory pleasures were communicative. There was the singing of the cicadae. Writing from Nebraska to Henley, Stevenson said, "The whole plain is heard singing with cicadae."³ There was also human speech. American pronunciation impressed him. At Silverado Stevenson listened to one of the residents:

. . .the old lady who looked as good as wasna bonny. The name (Guele) is pronounced 'guile'; American pronunciation; just as Stevenson degenerates at once and for ever into Stevens. They want a new edition of Webster; judging from the treatment of my own name, I cannot see why the American Dictionary should be so pompously entitled Unabridged: abridgment seems all the game.⁴

Pronouncing his own name correctly was an accomplishment

¹P. 101.

²Ibid.

³Letters, I, 284.

⁴P. 299.

Stevenson was proud of, but he noted that "the adventures" of his name were "various and fearful. There are few feats of which I am more proud than my capacity to pronounce it in true Britannic fashion, with but a single vowel, yet all the consonants preserved as thus: Stev'ns'n. But it is a feat in its own way to understand it. The ears as well as the mouth are exercised with us."¹ Even the French did not do justice to the name, he felt: "An illiterate Frenchman makes 'Steam' of it invariably; a lettered Frenchman, who has seen the spelling, gives up all attempt to emulate my dexterity and pronounces Ste-veng-song like a man."² Furnas records that Stevenson was also fascinated by American "turns of speech," and read Huckleberry Finn straight through "with dazzled wonder" and then read it straight through again "in awe obviously" of the American idiom.³

Other impressions of America are recorded by Stevenson. The American manner of conducting matters of business was, he said, "at first, unpalatable to the European."⁴ Stevenson pointed out that "when the British approach a man in the way of his calling, and for those services by which he earns his

¹P. 299.

²P. 300.

³Voyage to Windward, p. 271.

⁴P. 109.

bread," they consider him for the time being their "hired servant."¹ But he found the American system different. In the United States, "Two gentlemen meet and have a friendly talk with a view to exchanging favours if they shall agree to please."² He thought it impossible to tell which is the more convenient or the more truly courteous. "The English stiffness unfortunately tends to be continued after the particular transaction is at an end, and thus favours class separations. But on the other hand these equalitarian plainnesses leave an open field for the insolence of Jack-in-office."³ A part of this rather informal approach to business, Stevenson noticed also the frequency of shaking hands. He felt that this ceremony was "too considerable a familiarity to be squandered upon strangers."⁴ But here, he observed, "you must shake hands with everybody, and twice rather than once. A man cannot black your boots unless in the character of a friend; and the ceremony of installation is to grip him passionately by the hand."⁵ Because of this frequent ritual, he "kept trotting to and fro with a kindled eye" and holding out his hand cried, "Who's

¹P. 109.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴P. 298.

⁵Ibid.

next?"¹

According to Mrs. Stevenson, her husband was repelled initially by the average American and his apparent rudeness, but "when he found that the gentlest, most kindly acts accompanied the off-hand address, his heart warmed towards his 'younger brother.'"² Because he "was a stranger in America and not learned in their etiquette," he did not understand that by the time a man had "about strung" him "up to be the death of him by his insulting behaviour, he himself would be just upon the point of melting into confidence and serviceable attention."³ A money-changer would cross-question him like "a French commissary," asking his age, business, average income, and destination: ". . . beating down my attempts at evasion, and receiving my answers in silence . . . when all was over, he shook hands with me up to the elbows, and sent his lad nearly a quarter of a mile in the rain to get me books at a reduction."⁴ Stevenson noticed these reactions in many parts but felt that "this must be the character of some particular State or group of States," for in America, "and this again in all classes, you will find some of the softest-

¹P. 298.

²P. xviii.

³P. 86.

⁴P. 85.

mannered gentlemen in the world."¹ He noted that all the time Americans were "so very rude and yet so very kind."² For an example of this rudeness-kindness enigma he cited the newsboy, "an American personage of great importance on the American train."³ This newsboy, he said, "sells books (such books!), papers, fruit, lollipops, and cigars"; and on emigrant journeys, "soaps, towels, tin washing-dishes, tin coffee pitchers, coffee, tea, sugar, and tinned eatables, mostly hash or beans and bacon."⁴ Once when Stevenson was quite sick on the train, he sat at the end of a long car and, the catch being broken, propped one of the doors open with his feet in order to get fresh air. The newsboy was rude the first time he had to step across Stevenson's feet, Stevenson not seeing him because he was reading, but on his return trip, he gave the sick Stevenson a large, juicy pear. This the writer called "an example of that uncivil kindness of the American, which is perhaps their most bewildering character to one newly landed."⁵

Stevenson never liked class distinctions; he had discovered through "the sameness of human nature the world over" that "the

¹P. 86.

²Lettice Cooper, Robert Louis Stevenson (London, 1948), p. 25.

³P. 115.

⁴Ibid.

⁵P. 118.

families of the earth are related."¹ He wrote that "we are all nobly born; fortunate those who know it; blessed are those who remember."² He had no sympathy with revolutionary methods; and perhaps because he was "always a conservative in politics and social philosophy," he came to America with "exaggerated views of the meaning of democracy," believing that here "he would find the ideal social as well as political life."³ When he observed discrimination in America, he was indignant. In Elwin's opinion, he "witnessed the sprouting of tares that spread into the twentieth century's harvest of disaster."⁴ "Equality," Stevenson observed, "though conceived very largely in America, does not extend so low down as to an emigrant."⁵ "Thus in all other trains," he contended, "a warning cry of 'All aboard! recalls the passengers to take their seats; but as soon as I was alone with emigrants, and from the Transfer all the way to San Francisco, I found this ceremony was pretermitted; the train stole from the station without note of warning, and you had to keep an eye upon it even while you ate."⁶ This

¹Amy Cruse, Robert Louis Stevenson (London, 1915), p. 118.

²Letters, III, 271.

³Issler, p. 77.

⁴P. 140.

⁵P. 116.

⁶Pp. 116-117.

annoyance, he felt, was considerable, and the disrespect both wanton and petty. Also he found that many conductors would hold no communication with an emigrant.¹ Stevenson was "interested in his fellow passengers": "it is quite evident he really did not consider himself a better fellow than the broken-down companions whose goodwill he tried to gain by small services offered entirely in the spirit of comradeship."² He was on the friendliest terms with all of them and soon learned a great deal concerning their histories. By this knowledge, he was able to "draw near to men and women with whom he appeared to have nothing in common."³

Stevenson observed discrimination not only against emigrants but against racial groups: Negroes, Indians, Jews, and especially Chinese. He found a type of Negro different from "the negroes of Mrs. Beecher Stowe, or the Christy Minstrels" of his youth.⁴ The first one of that race encountered in America was a waiter on the emigrant train whom Stevenson described as "a gentleman, certainly somewhat dark, but of a pleasant warm hue," and "speaking English with a light and

¹P. 117.

²P. 73.

³Pp. 118-119.

⁴P. 102.

rather odd, foreign accent, every inch a man of the world, and armed with manners so patronisingly superior that I am at a loss to name their parallel in England."¹ Seeking a counterpart in England, he continues:

A butler perhaps rides as high over the unbutlered, but then he sets you right with a reserve and a sort of sighing patience whiche one is often moved to admire. And again, the abstract butler never stoops to familiarity. But the coloured gentleman will pass you a wink at a time; he is familiar like an upper-form boy to a fag; he unbends to you like Prince Hal with Poins and Falstaff. He makes himself at home and welcome.²

This waiter behaved himself throughout a meal on the train much as, with the English, "a young, free, and not very self-respecting master might behave to a good-looking chambermaid."³ Stevenson, who had come prepared "to pity the poor negro, to put him at his ease, to prove in a thousand condescensions that I was no sharer in the prejudice of race" put away his patronage for another occasion and "had the grace to be pleased with that result."⁴ He further consulted the waiter about tipping and was told never to tip: "It would not do. They considered themselves too highly to accept. They would resent the offer."⁵

¹P. 102.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

Stevenson condemned the treatment of the Indians as a "chapter of injustice and indignity such as a man must be in some way base if his heart will suffer him to pardon or forget."¹ Elwin feels that when Stevenson made this statement he could not foresee the "delirium of racial and ideological prejudice into which man could be driven by the fever of fear."² Stevenson waxed indignant against the "degradation of freedom by the persecution of the Chinese in San Francisco."³ He compared the Oriental with the other groups:

The Chinese are considered stupid, because they are imperfectly acquainted with English. They are held to be base because their dexterity and frugality enable them to underbid the lazy, luxurious Caucasian. They are said to be thieves; I am sure they have no monopoly on that. They are called cruel; the Anglo-Saxon and the cheerful Irishman may each reflect before he bears the accusation. I am told, again, that they are of the race of river pirates, and belong to the most despised and dangerous class in the Celestial Empire. But if this be so, what remarkable pirates have we here! and what must be the virtues, the industry, the education, and the intelligence of their superiors at home.⁴

Stevenson also observed class distinctions in stereotyped images of the Jew. He described the Jewish storekeepers of California in The Silverado Squatters as "profiting at once by

¹P. 140.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴P. 136.

the needs and habits of the people who have made themselves in too many cases the tyrants of the rural population."¹ He cites this example: "Credit is offered, is pressed on the new customer, and when once he is beyond his depth, the tune changes, and he is from thenceforth a white slave."² But in all the prejudices he saw, Stevenson justified them in this way:

These old, well-founded historical hatreds have a savour of nobility for the independent. That the Jew should not love the Christian, nor the Irishman love the English, nor the Indian brave tolerate the thought of the American, is not disgraceful to the nature of man; rather, indeed, honourable, since it depends on wrongs ancient like the race, and not personal to him who cherishes the indignation.³

There is one other class of people singled out by Stevenson for description--"a quite large race or class of people in America, for whom we scarcely seem to have a parallel in England."⁴ They are described as having "pure white blood," being "unknown or unrecognisable in towns," and "inhabiting the fringe of settlements and the deep, quiet places of the country."⁵ They are rebellious "to all labour, and pettily thievish, like the English gipsies; rustically ignorant, and with a touch of

¹P. 208.

²Ibid.

³Pp. 138-139.

⁴P. 236.

⁵Ibid.

wood-lore and the dexterity of the savage."¹ These people, whom he found at Silverado, he calls "Poor Whites or Lowdowners."

These impressions of America Stevenson recorded and sent to a printer for publication as early as 1880, but his father objected to their publication and so bought them back from the prospective publisher. The basis for the elder Stevenson's objection was that they would acquaint "the public with the fact that an only son of parents well-to-do in Edinburgh had been required to travel half way around the world as a common emigrant."² Not until after his son's death were these memoirs published, ostensibly to protect the image of the man as his family and well-wishers thought it should be portrayed. Leon Edel believes that the sections were originally edited "either in the normal process of publication or because Stevenson's friends and well-wishers (and his near relations) felt the picture of the footloose tramp, the hobo side of Stevenson, might injure the glamour of his literary reputation."³ Perhaps for the squeamish Victorian public it is just as well that they were left out.

Before his first real contact with the United States through an individual visiting in France in 1876, Stevenson

¹ Ibid.

² Clayton Hamilton, On The Trail of Stevenson (New York, 1923), p. 133.

³ "A Hard Journey to Treasure Island," Saturday Review, XLIX (September 3, 1966), 34.

had had only fragmentary knowledge of the United States.

J. C. Furnas, his biographer, tells us:

The melodrama of Uncle Tom's Cabin had impressed him as a child. At various intervals he had been entertained or influenced by Cooper, Whitman, Hawthorne, Poe, and Thoreau, and learned to despise Benjamin Franklin. In 1872 he maintained before the Spec. the generous thesis that American literature was already on a par with British.¹

In 1876, visiting in Grez, France, Stevenson met Mrs. Fanny Osbourne, who had gone to an art colony to study, at least partly because of her failing marriage. Fanny, eleven years Stevenson's senior, is described in a recent book review as "handsome and strong-minded."² Although her initial interest was in Bob, Louis's cousin, she became more and more interested in Louis during the summer of 1876, the fall of that same year, and the summer of 1877.³ Stevenson followed her back to San Francisco, six thousand miles away, to plead with her to marry him. Divorce took time, and Louis's health was bad. His time in San Francisco became for him a turning point--a turning point in his development as a man and as a literary craftsman: "More

¹Furnas, p. 125.

²Lorraine Smith, "One of Those Odd Couples: Poet Stevenson and Fanny," Dallas Times Herald, June 9, 1968, p. F-7.

³There seems to be no disagreement concerning these biographical facts among such biographers as Balfour, Furnas, Hellman, and Steuart.

than usually receptive because of his upset emotions, he was open to new impressions. He was observing men and women in a setting that differed radically from any he had known before."¹

Stevenson wrote of his life in America. The Wrecker, which was written in collaboration with Lloyd Osbourne, gives his reaction to San Francisco, called by Stevenson ". . . the only city which interests me in the United States," and, he might have added, the only one of which he had much personal knowledge at that time.² Scenery in California, he immortalized in Treasure Island. The Amateur Emigrant expresses his conviction of many years that America was some sort of promised land, and Across the Plains shows "the great epic of 'self-help' stripped bare of all its illusions."³ If Stevenson had spent a greater length of time in America, Professor Harriet Dorothea MacPherson contends, "there is no doubt that the United States would have figured largely in his writings. As it is, the knowledge of America which he gained at first hand, served him well in several literary productions."⁴ In an introduction to

¹Anne Roller Issler, Happier For His Presence (Stanford, 1949), p. 70.

²San Francisco Chronicle, June 8, 1888.

³"Stevenson," Bookman, I (February, 1895), 46.

⁴A Study in French Influence (New York, 1930), p. 68.

a 1966 edition of Stevenson's The Silverado Squatters, Professor James D. Hart says the lasting effect of America shows clearly in Stevenson's writings. "His twelve months of suffering and joy in the United States continued to reverberate through Robert Louis Stevenson's writings down to the very last year of his life."¹ Yet these hardships brought out the deeper aspects of his nature: "The tougher travels of his years in America made mannerisms in his writing a thing of the past, and in the place of an attractive but often precious youthfulness there came into his travel writings a new mood of maturity and a sense of substance."² Accordingly, says Watt, because he felt strongly, he could describe vividly.³ These hard inconveniences and hardships as well as a self-inflicted exile from his family matured him. Issler holds that the change began while Stevenson was crossing the ocean and the plains, that it continued while he was in Monterey, and that it reached its highest momentum in San Francisco.⁴ Frank Swinnerton generously points out, "Those of us who never take

¹From Scotland to Silverado (Cambridge, 1966), p. 11.

²P. xxxvii.

³Watt, p. 230.

⁴P. 70.

these voyages out into the unknown, who sit tight and think comfortably of such things as emigrant trains, cannot realize with what sudden effect the stubborn impact of realities can work upon those who actually venture forth."¹ He commends The Silverado Squatters as it "represents the emergence of a new Stevenson" with "much more substance than its predecessors."²

We see that Stevenson lived in America, first in San Francisco, and, after his marriage to Fanny, in Saranac Lake, New York, in the Adirondacks. He and Fanny spent their honeymoon in an abandoned mining camp. There is some reason to believe that Stevenson thought of America as his home, for on the day he died in Samoa, he felt so strong and well he said that if worst came to worst in the controversy over the control of Samoa, he would go to America and "try to raise public opinion against Germany's intrigue for possession."³ And, ". . . unlike most Britons, [he] showed little tendency to regard Americans as curiosities."⁴

Issler suggests that while Stevenson was interested in every sort of person, he liked the plain and simple better than

¹R. L. Stevenson: A Critical Study (New York, 1923), p. 51.

²Ibid., p. 52.

³Critic, XXVI (January 12, 1895), 32.

⁴Furnas, p. 272.

the more sophisticated. "In the course of his adventure with life, he sought out ordinary, folksy people. . . . He liked them with a warmly human feeling, and they liked him in return."¹ One such person was Jules Simoneau, a Frenchman who operated a restaurant in San Francisco where Stevenson frequently ate. Simoneau "looked after Louis when he was worse than usual, played chess with him, extended him credit with such unostentatious delicacy that this 'dear and kind old man' became for Louis a symbol of comradely benevolence."² After Stevenson's death Simoneau looked at a copy of "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," inscribed by the author. "He pulled the bent gold-rimmed spectacles down from his forehead onto his nose to read once again the small, fine writing which was already engraved on his heart."³ The inscription read, "But the case of Robert Louis Stevenson and Jules Simoneau--if the one forgot the other--would be stranger still!"⁴

Commonplace things as well as common people were dear to Stevenson. The cold New York winter was good for him physically, especially the dry cold of the Adirondacks. It was

¹Our Mountain Hermitage (Stanford, 1950), p. 119.

²Furnas, p. 164.

³Anne B. Fisher, No More a Stranger (Stanford, 1946), p. 202.

⁴*Ibid.*

there that he thought through the final chapter of Master of Ballantrae: "On such a fine frosty night, with no wind and the thermometer below zero, the brain works with much vivacity; and the next moment I had seen the circumstance transplanted from India and the tropics to the Adirondack wilderness and the stringent cold of the Canadian border."¹ And Stevenson liked American food. Finding enough money to eat was frequently a problem for him, but his evaluation of the food was that "in America you eat better than anywhere else; fact. The food is heavenly."² Writing to Sidney Colvin, Stevenson described a scene in New England: "A journey--like fairyland for the most engaging beauties, one little rocky and pine-shaded cove after another, each with a house and a boat at anchor, so that I left my heart in each and marvelled why American authors had been so unjust to their country."³ Stevenson's poetry is not under examination herein, but one of his poems in Underwoods expresses this love and appreciation for the small things:

If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;

¹Graham Balfour, Life of Robert Louis Stevenson (New York, 1915), p. 215.

²P. 298.

³Hamilton, p. 135.

If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain:--
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose thou, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!¹

¹The Complete Poems of Robert Louis Stevenson (New York, 1923), p. 88.

STEVENSON THE WRITER IN AMERICAN CRITICISM

American critics have looked at the life of Stevenson, as we have seen, but they have looked also at his style and structure, and they have analyzed his method of cultivating an art of expression. Frank Swinnerton and Frederick Smith, among others, rank Stevenson's essays first in literary skill.¹ Such critics as James D. Hart and Stephen Gwynn say his travel books are his best writing.² Others, like Lionel Stevenson, feel that his forte was the short story.³ Andrew Lang and Edwin Eigner consider his novels his highest achievement.⁴ In this chapter, only Stevenson's fiction will be considered since

¹The most familiar essays include An Inland Voyage (1881), Virginibus Puerisque (1887), Familiar Studies of Men and Books (1882), Memories and Portraits (1887), Father Damien (1890), A Footnote to History (1892), In the South Seas (1896), and The Morality of the Profession of Letters (1899).

²Outstanding among these are Travels With a Donkey in the Cevennes (1879), Across the Plains (1892), The Amateur Emigrant (1895), and The Silverado Squatters (1883).

³Commonly recognized titles in this genre are "The Sire de Maletroit's Door," "The Suicide Club," and "The Pavilion on the Links," all published with other stories in New Arabian Nights (1882); "Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," (1886); "The Merry Men," "Markheim," and "Thrawn Janet" published simultaneously (1887); and "The Body-Snatcher" (1895).

⁴These novels include Treasure Island (1883), Prince Otto (1885), Kidnapped (1886), The Black Arrow (1888), The Master of Ballantrae (1889), David Balfour (1893), and Weir of Hermiston (1896).

attention has been given to his travel books in the preceding chapter.

Because the outlook of mankind changes with changing times and because taste changes also, Stevenson's reaction to life has been glorified while he, the man, has been "deified"¹ in some periods, jeered at and rejected in others as a "moving syrup of appreciation,"² and converted into "a legend which eclipsed him as a serious writer."³ A British critic and a contemporary of Stevenson's, Lord Guthrie, attributes "the dulling of men's ears to the real merits of Stevenson's delicate music" to the "drumbeating and trumpeting of some of his idolaters."⁴ The prevailing image in the 1890's, as we have seen, was that of the ideal model for young people, not the image of the ensuing decade--the Bohemian, the hobo, and the restless wanderer.

Time, however, is not the sole reason for biased and shifting attitudes. The appeal of the man was lasting. In 1899, Wilbur Cross wrote of the difficulty of "dealing dispassionately with a man whose life was a ceaseless and gallant search for health."⁵ In 1948, Chew asserted that the "tradition

¹Roger Lancelyn Green, "The Robert Louis Stevenson Centenary," Contemporary Review, CLXXVIII (November, 1950), 289.

²Beer, pp. 177-178.

³The Letters of Henry James, ed. Percy Lubbock (New York, 1920), I, 384.

⁴Robert Louis Stevenson: Some Personal Recollections (Edinburgh, 1924), p. 10.

⁵Development of the English Novel (New York, 1899), p. 282.

of personal charm still colors most estimates of Stevenson's works."¹ Now, of course, there are two resulting effects of such a personal legend: one negative, the other positive. On the one hand, as Steuart notes, Stevenson lost friends because of his incurable illness.² On the other hand, during his lifetime and immediately following his death, Stevenson was the object and, at the same time, the victim of extreme adulation. As Emerson says, every hero at last becomes a bore.³ When W. E. Henley charged him with being a "seraph in chocolate, a sugar-coated effigy of a man," Stevenson's friend turned critic was accused of being a "literary leper," a "defiler of the dead," and a "bad-mannered" traitor.⁴

"It can never be safe to suppress what is true," Stevenson wrote in "The Morality of the Profession of Letters."⁵ Accepting this statement, let us examine some of his own sentiments about life and his outlook on it. It may well be that Stevenson was writing in direct contradiction of his age, as he observed it in England, for there is little doubt that he

¹A Literary History of England, ed. Albert C. Baugh (New York, 1948), p. 1498.

²Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 49.

³Joseph Wood Krutch, ed., Alexander Pope: Selected Works (New York, 1951), p. xxiii.

⁴F. M. Colby, "A Debated Charm," Bookman, XVI (February, 1902), 621.

⁵"The Morality of the Profession of Letters," Works: South Seas Edition, XXVII, 59.

was not pleased with the half of the nineteenth century into which he was born. Once in despair he wrote, "The world is so great and I am so small, / I do not like it at all, at all," but he crossed out those words and rewrote the lines so familiar to us from childhood: "The world is so full of a number of things, / I am sure we should all be as happy as kings."¹ Herman shows that "not a hint of his misery, of his suffering, of his invalidism, tainted his works."²

In America Stevenson found men who, like William Dean Howells and Walt Whitman, were optimistic and who had not accepted European weariness. He wrote

Can you conceive how irritated I am by the opposite affectation to my own when I see strong men and rich men bleating about their sorrows and the burthen of life, in a world full of "cancerous paupers," and poor sick children, and the fatally bereaved, ay and even down to such happy creatures as myself.³

Kiely says that "only when he [Stevenson] removed himself from the Victorian milieu in his last years when he lived on Samoa did he find fulfillment,"⁴ and he compares his withdrawal

¹Isabel Proudfit, The Treasure Hunter (New York, 1939), p. 147.

²William Herman, Twelve Who Achieved (New York, 1949), p. 159.

³Letters, II, 292.

⁴Robert Kiely, Robert Louis Stevenson and The Fiction of Adventure (Cambridge, 1964), p. 64.

to Robert Browning's move to Italy.

Critics are ambivalent, as was Stevenson. Frederick M. Smith says that in much of his early work his attitude was "a song in the days of darkness to keep up his own spirits," but that later it had "a surer ring" and came from one who had found that "after all, the show is well worth the price of admission, even though when looked forward to, the price seems high."¹

The year before he died, Stevenson wrote:

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 work unflinchingly. I have written in bed, and written out of it, written in hemorrhages, 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 wages 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,² inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle.

Despite this physical suffering, says Kiely, he was optimistic and therefore out of step with his age as it was known to him in weary Europe:

With the lesson before him of Arnold, Carlyle, Mill, and Tennyson, Victorians who had suffered agonizing

¹Frederick M. Smith, "Stevenson's Essays," Poet-Lore, XIV (October, 1902), 75.

²Century Readings in English Literature, ed. John W. Cunliffe, Karl Young, and Mark Van Doren (New York, 1940), p. 983.

periods of dereliction, a premature sense of aging and impotence in a state between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born, Stevenson appears to squint at the nineteenth century universe like a suspicious child, trying to avoid with his mind, as he rarely could with his body, as many deadening intrusions from the outside world as possible.¹

However, Eigner thinks that Stevenson's optimism was a defeated optimism, "heavily shadowed with the fears of the skeptics, for he had the conviction that life and toil are utterly futile: the whole world may be a labyrinth without end or issue."² Moreover, Daiches contends that even Stevenson's comedies mask a profound pessimism.³ Some of the cynicism is in his essay "Reflections and Remarks on Human Life":

You will always do wrong: you must try to get used to that, my son. It is a small matter to make a work about, when all the world is in the same case. I meant when I was a young man to write a great poem; and now I am cobbling little prose articles . . . Our business in this world is not to succeed, but to continue to fail, in good spirits.⁴

In a letter written on the choice of a profession, suppressed until Lloyd Osbourne made it available for publication in 1915, Stevenson said, "Most men are happy, and most men are dishonest. Their mind sinks to the proper level; their honor easily accepts the custom of the trade."⁵ He advised young people in Virginibus

¹p. 64.

²p. 48.

³Robert Louis Stevenson (Norfolk, 1947), p. 62.

⁴"Pulvis et Umbra," The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson: Vailima Edition (London, 1922-1923), XII, 288. Unless otherwise specified, all citations to Stevenson's works will be to this edition, and, in the notes, will be referred to as Works.

⁵"On the Choice of a Profession," Scribner's Magazine, LVII (January, 1915), 69.

Puerisque:

Hope is the boy, a blind, headlong, pleasant fellow, good to chase swallows with the salt; Faith is the grave, experienced, yet smiling man. Hope lives on ignorance; open-eyed Faith is built upon a knowledge of our life, of the tyranny of circumstance and the frailty of human resolution. Hope looks for unqualified success, but Faith counts certainly on failure, and takes honourable defeat to be a form of victory.¹

Concerning morals, a part of optimism and outlook, Stevenson asserted, "We are not damned for doing wrong but for not doing right; Christ would never hear of negative morality; thou shalt was ever his word with which he superseded thou shalt not."² He insisted, "If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it, they are wrong."³ Daiches calls his morality the "breeziest kind," the morality of Fielding and the sentimental Deists of the eighteenth century, with people being punished and rewarded according to their intentions rather than their acts.⁴ Stevenson believed the task of man was

To be honest, to be kind, to earn a little, and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to denounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation--above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself.⁵

¹Works, II, 37.

²"A Christmas Sermon," Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson, ed. William Lyon Phelps (New York, 1906), p. 603.

³Ibid., p. 606.

⁴Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 4.

⁵Essays, ed. William Lyon Phelps, p. 605.

Surely he was capable of being stoical partly because of his temperament and partly because of physical handicaps. His excessive writing was a compensation, no doubt, for other satisfactions that were missing. "Had I been well," he said a year or two before his death, "I wouldn't have written of adventures, I would have lived them."¹

In 1922, George Hellman proposed to dispel the Stevenson myth that Stevenson possessed all those virtues which are generally held up for emulation by youth.² In 1924, E. F. Benson published a venomous study of Stevenson as a man who suffered the indignity of being pilloried in stained glass.³ In an effort "to disengage the real from the legendary," Henry L. Mencken expressed surprise that no Freudian had been tempted to write a full length study of Stevenson's "most beautiful masses of complexes," including "flights from reality."⁴ In that same year Steuart's biography was published, the net effect of which allowed Stevenson personal courage but inner emptiness. Steuart said, "A great creative mind, vigorous and

¹Issler, p. 42.

²"The Stevenson Myth," Century Magazine, CV (December, 1922), 240.

³J. C. Furnas, Voyage to Windward, p. 437.

⁴"Stevenson Unwhitewashed," Current Opinion, LXXVII (December, 1924), p. 710.

fecund, may and does produce rapidly; but it produces by concentration, not by dispersion of force," this accounting for the extraordinary number of fragmentary stories and sketches, "works often begun in a burst of high inspiration and dropped abortively, which, as I have said, stress his course."¹ Hellman came back in 1925 to say that ultimately the remaining Stevenson, "with all his weaknesses and all his faults, will, an unnecessary myth dispelled, permanently hold a place in the affection of mankind."² The seeming culmination was the fair effort of Benson who claimed "Stevenson was most emphatically not a humbug,"³ aiming not at Stevenson but, at least in the opinion of Furnas, at "those who were turning him into Mary's lamb."⁴ However, similar issues reappeared in 1931 when Edwin Muir criticized Stevenson for lack of that "courage which turns the knife in his own wound to investigate it, to discover what it means, or how it can be squared with Stevenson and human ordination."⁵

Thus Stevenson, as a person, whether truly conceived or not, has commanded more attention than Stevenson the literary artist. He fought "a losing battle against mortal sickness,

¹Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 129.

²"Stevenson Emerges," Bookman, LX (January, 1925), 557.

³Voyage to Windward, p. 449.

⁴Ibid.

⁵"Robert Louis Stevenson," Bookman, LXXIV (September, 1931), p. 60.

and practically the whole of his work was done under conditions which made any productivity seem a miracle."¹ Americans found it difficult to "deal dispassionately" with such a man.² As the British critic, Lord Guthrie, could not resist saying, we may say of the American attitude: "Looking broadly and sympathetically at Stevenson's career, apart altogether from his personal charm, anything that may have to be entered on the debit side of the account will never balance his courage and his high sense of duty."³

How then shall we appraise Stevenson the writer? Always he wrote best under the shadow of illness, and yet during the last four years of his life, he had over seven thousand words published.⁴ "Gritty sand is irritating, but it produces a gem."⁵ Some writers take to drugs; many suffer a great deal. Plato considered that "what man is to learn in life is patience under suffering; to be impatient is to be weak." George Saintsbury, an Englishman described by the American critic Edmund Wilson as "a discriminating critic looking only for

¹Chapman, p. 218.

²Chew in Baugh, p. 1498.

³Guthrie, p. 7.

⁴The Mind of Robert Louis Stevenson, ed. Roger Ricklefs (New York, 1963), p. 10.

⁵Issler, p. 45.

enjoyment,"¹ calls Stevenson's style "tormented" and one at which he worked but suggests that we should be thankful to him for his almost unequalled story-telling charm.² Professor Trent asks philosophically, "Shall we bemoan the constant battle with disease, which yet left to Stevenson energy for an exquisitely wrought style?"³ It may be that during illness the senses are heightened. Art is often a triumph over difficulty, and the reader triumphs with the artist.

It is a moot question, of course, what longer life might have produced in Stevenson's writing; he died at an "age which had not brought Scott, Dickens, or Thomas Hardy to their best work."⁴ Erih Kos notes that Balzac's Comédie humaine remained unfinished, that Zola's Rougon-Macquart series was not completed, that Stendhal's Lucien Leuwen remained largely a sketch, as did Flaubert's Bouvard et Pécuchet. Then he asks, "What literary work is a totally rounded off accomplishment?"⁵ At the age of forty-four, Stevenson had produced some of the finest writing of the late Victorian world, "writing set apart from

¹"Historical Criticism," The Triple Thinkers (New York, 1948), p. 277.

²A Short History of English Literature (London, 1960), p. 70.

³A Short History of American Literature, ed. William Peterfield Trent and John Erskine (New York, 1922), p. 293.

⁴C. T. Copeland, "Robert Louis Stevenson," Atlantic Monthly, LXXV (April, 1895), 544.

⁵"The Writer as Craftsman," Saturday Review, XLIX (August 13, 1966), 13.

esthetic and decadent literature by a quality of gusto so vast that it offends the modern taste for confusion and despair."¹ Preferring "a gloomy outlook and a religious unbelief," Beach says, "highbrow critics" reject Stevenson, as they do Browning.²

We need to forget the "little boy with a fine night of stars in his eyes and a pack upon his back, singing cheerily that it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive,"³ forget, too, the shawl-wrapped figure of the legend, a myth that has taken "more than fifty years to die if it really has."⁴ Overpraise has elicited attack, and extreme adulation has caused a discrediting which victimized Stevenson and caused his portraiture to consist, in the writings of some critics, of "warts and nothing else."⁵

Stevenson's writings are worth serious examination, says a reliable critic, David Daiches.⁶ His novels, for example, possess qualities of craftsmanship which make many a contemporary novelist look silly,⁷ for Stevenson was a "fully matured"

¹"Stevenson's Letters to Charles Baxter," Saturday Review, XXXIX (September 17, 1955), 19.

²Joseph Warren Beach, The Outlook of American Prose (Chicago, 1926), p. 206.

³Swinnerton, p. 60.

⁴"Stevenson for Today," Newsweek, XXIX (April 14, 1947), 106.

⁵Literary Digest, LXXXIV (March 28, 1925), 28.

⁶Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 2.

⁷A Critical History of English Literature, II, 1088.

novelist of remarkable power and insight. In his first letter to Henry James in 1884, Stevenson marked out the course he wanted English fiction to take:

Of course, I am not so dull as to ask you to desert your walk; but could you not, in one novel, to oblige a sincere admirer, and to enrich his shelves with a beloved volume, could you not, and might you not, cast your characters in a mould a little more abstract and academic and pitch your incidents, I do not say in any stronger, but in a slightly more emphatic key--as it were an episode from one of the old (so-called) novels of adventure? I fear you will not; and I suppose I must sighingly admit you to be right. And yet, when I see, as it were, a book of Tom Jones handled with your exquisite precision and shot through with those sidelights of reflection in which you excel, I relinquish the dear vision with regret. Think upon it.¹

Stevenson's literary judgment was valued by James, who sent many works to Samoa for Stevenson's evaluation.² Yet whereas the study of James's novels has grown steadily until it has become, at least in America, "a major academic industry,"³ Percy Lubbock is almost the only critic who has given the same serious attention to a novel by Stevenson that he has given to one by James.

¹ Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 104.

² Ibid., p. 2.

³ Ibid., p. 47.

Convinced that the nature of incidents determines what kind of characters a story should have, Stevenson created actions and persons to express incidents. His approach to story or plot seems to follow the teachings of Aristotle, the first critic to classify literature, who wrote, "We maintain, therefore, that the first essential, the life and soul, so to speak, of Tragedy is the Plot; and that the Characters come second."¹ Stevenson did not satisfy himself, however, with merely inventing surprising adventures and imagining exotic settings, for he was striving for control over the materials of fiction. "To be manageable," says Eigner, "the world of his romances had to be kept relatively simple, without too much detail in its furniture or too much complication in its secondary characters."² This emphasis on plot is seen in Treasure Island, in which "a few things happen and in a certain order, as in every novel things must happen, and in a certain order."³ When he was working on this novel, Stevenson was trying hardest to develop control over his material, and he "dispensed entirely with sub-plots, parallel plots, and

¹Aristotle, Poetics, trans. Ingram Bywater, cited in David Daiches' Critical Approaches to Literature (Englewood Cliffs, 1956), p. 27.

²Eigner, p. 42.

³Ibid.

digressions, so popular in this period."¹ What inspired Treasure Island was the adventure itself, "the escape from the uninteresting, prosaic limitations of ordinary life, thrilling but temporary."² The hero had his fling but had to return to safety and order without a scar. Treasure Island was written to a map drawn for a boy's entertainment. It seems that when Stevenson thought of a new idea, he saw it in terms of chapter headings, titles, names of characters, and so on.³ He thought, as Joseph Addison had thought, that magnitude or greatness of experience was of primary concern. Addison's concept of greatness as meaning not only the "bulk of any single Object, but the Largeness of a whole View,"⁴ is echoed in Stevenson's admonition: "Stick to your own system of evocation so long as what you positively achieve is so big."⁵

In Treasure Island, the hero-narrator Jim Hawkins is a reliable narrator because "he is a 'noticing lad,'" but Jim is often unaware of the full significance of what he observes.⁶

¹Ibid.

²Edwin Muir, "Novels of Action and Character" in Robert Scholes' Approaches to the Novel (San Francisco, 1961), p. 180.

³Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 38.

⁴The Spectator, ed. Robert J. Allen (New York, 1968) No. 412, p. 209.

⁵Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 38.

⁶James Weber Linn, A Foreword to Fiction (New York, 1935), p. 59.

The obvious defect is that the narrator cannot be everywhere and witness everything, and by the time the reader has identified with him, the reader has to shift. When the narrator is anyone other than Jim, the shift occurs with only a chapter heading to warn the reader. Concerning structure, another primary concern of Stevenson's then was point of view. He experimented with point of view as he did with the various genres.¹ He tried the first person, which "the writer of romance has always fancied," says Beach, "for the reason that it gives an air of authenticity to his record."² What happens in a story is often strange and unusual, and it is all the more important that attention be given to whatever contributes to verisimilitude. Having the story told by an eye-witness, by one of those most concerned with it, helps greatly. The Master of Ballantrae uses relays of witnesses. In "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" he uses several narrators, arranged in the sequence which will best contribute to the gradual and timed release of the wonders and mysteries which are their subject matter. It contains two first person narratives, a chapter written in the impersonal style of a newspaper report, and the account of a third-person-point-of-view character, Mr. Gabriel

¹Lionel Stevenson, The English Novel: A Panorama (Boston, 1960), p. 412.

²P. 205.

Uttersen, who sometimes observes Jekyll and Hyde directly and sometimes listens to the stories told by still other characters who have observed them.¹ The last quarter of the story, the most familiar part perhaps, is the part Jekyll himself recounts. This oblique approach "added to the suspense and mystery," for the reader who comes to the story fresh does not know that "Jekyll and Hyde are one man until the work is almost over and the shock is still a potent one."² Kidnapped and its sequel, David Balfour, are cast as memoirs.

In Prince Otto Stevenson used the omniscient method of narration, and it was considered a failure as was The Black Arrow, which Stevenson himself called "mere tushery."³ In The Ebb-Tide, his last completed romance, he used the omniscient point of view. In Weir of Hermiston, his last novel, he used third-person narration. Furnas believes that this choice of a more objective form may have shown an urge toward a better tool better adapted to multidimensional work.⁴ His brilliance by this time "had shifted into a sort of four-wheel drive-- more climb, more power, heavier vibrations."⁵

¹Eigner, p. 144.

²Ibid.

³Works, XXI, 180.

⁴P. 427.

⁵J. C. Furnas, "Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa," Vogue, CXXII (August 15, 1953), 143.

Looking briefly at Treasure Island, the novel taught in the public school by the writer of this thesis, we see that the hero-narrator Jim Hawkins is a reliable narrator because "he is a noticing lad,"¹ but Jim is often unaware of the full significance of what he observes. The reader is plunged immediately into the action of the story--in medias res, as is characteristic of an epic. "We are barely past the first page and the story is well under way--not so much in terms of actual incidents, though the first of these has been told, as of anticipation, suggestion and setting."² We know something of the outcome of the story with the very first sentence:

Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted, I take up my pen in the year of grace 17__, and go back to the time when my father kept the "Admiral Benbow" Inn, and the brown old seaman, with the sabre-cut, first took up his lodging under our roof.³

Daiches calls this "a brilliantly contrived method of beginning."⁴

¹James Weber Linn, A Foreword to Fiction (New York, 1935), p. 59.

²Eigner, p. 37.

³Treasure Island (New York, 1963), p. 3.

⁴Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 37.

The events take place as they should logically: Trelawney must be unable to keep a secret; otherwise, the pirates will never know he is sailing to find the treasure. Silver, in the same way, must be a diplomat; otherwise the crew will not reach the island without being suspected. And the pirates must conveniently quarrel or the few faithful hands will never win in the end. Had Silver and his followers killed all the loyal ship's company, secured the treasure, sailed away, been captured, and taken back to England, the story would, of course, have been entirely different. One critic's judgment of this work is that it "could not have been different, could not have been done better."¹ Henry James praised the book: "One of these [novels] treats of murders, mysteries, islands of dreadful renown, hairbreadth escapes, miraculous coincidences, and buried doubloons. I call Treasure Island delightful because it appears to me to have succeeded wonderfully in what it attempts."²

Another component of fiction is setting. In his choice of settings, Stevenson used the Scotland that had impressed itself on the sensitive surfaces of his youth. Daiches reminds

¹Cooper, p. 36.

²Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 80.

us that Stevenson had a deep feeling for Scottish landscape and history, which he used best perhaps in Kidnapped, a topographical and historical novel.¹ In this novel, says Wagenknecht, Stevenson provided a few glimpses of the grim side of Scottish peasant life, but in general, he says, he cast his charming glamour over his native country, as we see it in "The Foreigner at Home":

A Scotchman may tramp the better part of Europe and the United States, and never again receive so vivid an impression of foreign travel and strange lands and manners as on his first excursion to England. The change from a hilly to a level country strikes him with delighted wonder. Along the flat horizon there arise the frequent venerable towers of churches. He sees at the end of airy vistas the revolution of the windmill sails. He may go where he pleases in the future; he may see Alps, and Pyramids, and lions; but it will be hard to beat the pleasure of that moment. There are, indeed, few merrier spectacles than that of many windmills bickering together in a fresh breeze over a woody country; their halting alacrity of movement, their pleasant business, making bread all day with uncouth gesticulations, their air, gigantically human, as of a creature half-alive, put a spirit of romance into the tamest landscape.²

Ranging from Scotland to India and the American wilderness, Stevenson demonstrated his theory that the atmosphere of a

¹A Critical History of English Literature (New York, 1960), II, 1088.

²Works, V, 10.

particular place can be the determining influence in fiction. "Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder," he wrote, "certain old houses demand to be haunted, certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck."¹ He made setting immediate by graphic and precise details, according to Lionel Stevenson, who calls attention to "Stevenson's ability to use settings for heightening emotional tension."² He created images that stand out in sharp outline: he expressed life in terms of travelers arriving at inns, sailors making landfall, armies setting out to the sound of drums. To him "life appeared . . . vivid and romantic as scene and incident"--a ship putting out from harbor with a dear cargo; a horseman rattling with his whip on the green shutters of an inn at midnight.³

In Kidnapped there are long excursions into topography with bleak descriptions of Earraid and Rannoch Moor serving as a backdrop to the bright actions of historical figures. As we have seen, the initial setting in Treasure Island is the Admiral Benbow, and for contrast with the voyage to the island we see the hall and the squire at home surrounded by comforts

¹"A Gossip on Romance," Works, V, 126.

²Lionel Stevenson, p. 412.

³Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 42.

appropriate to the well-to-do bachelor. On the island we see the countryside from a tree-top, the thin line of the river widening its way through ever farther-off places into the distant sea. Additionally, there is a vision of white skeletons and green palm trees and sapphire seas. Besides the images of action with which Stevenson's work abounds, there are other kinds of imagery, such as color imagery which we see here. Watt seems to be correct in saying that Stevenson is "the Scottish exile, par excellence; and no Scot has given to literature more deeply, because out of a deep experience, the tone, the throb, the intensity, and the truth of the love and passion for the old gray land, under the cold North Star."¹

Many critics agree that Stevenson's characters are typically "thin." Swinnerton feels that Stevenson had little interest in character: "He probably knew little about it," for "he was not primarily a student of character," and able only to grasp characterization "through idiosyncrasy."² We have seen already that Stevenson advised Henry James to subordinate character to incident. Northrop Frye shows that "the romancer does not attempt to create 'real people' so much as stylized

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson's Contribution to Literature and Life," Scribner's Magazine, LXVIII (December, 1920), 645.

²P. 78.

figures which expand into psychological archetypes."¹ The critic, C. T. Copeland, compares some characters in Stevenson with some in Scott and says they "are not unworthy of the great master [Scott]."² Whether Stevenson realized it or not, Dickens influenced him in his characterization and in his method of "leading gradually into romantic intrigues" through well-populated scenes of character and humor "so that his world is actual, its air familiar by the time that his plot begins to thicken."³ Lubbock doubts that Stevenson realized that he was using some of the same artifices Dickens used.⁴

Although Stevenson's characters seem always to "fail in life,"⁵ he "understands and sympathizes with his heroes' failure" and cannot help "bitterly regretting them."⁶ He did not hesitate to "show his characters suffering from vanity or fright or to make the setting immediate by graphic and precise details."⁷ Because of this, Stevenson cannot be described in the old terms of implausibly perfect characters and remoteness of scene. Sometimes he took friends, and, changing qualities

¹Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957), p. 304.

²Nation, LXII (January 9, 1896), 38.

³Lubbock, p. 213.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Eigner, p. 47.

⁶Ibid., p. 58.

⁷Lionel Stevenson, p. 414.

somewhat, converted them into characters, both good and evil, in his fiction. This is what he did when he "deprived W. E. Henley of all his finer qualities and higher graces of temperament, and left him with nothing but his strength, his courage, his quickness, and his magnificent geniality,"¹ and the result was Long John Silver. Eigner says that if Stevenson's fiction is a fiction of heroism, then the heroism does not reside in the characters.² In Treasure Island, "the wildest of the pirates can be trampled to death by horses or shot down by a boy. They are malignant and wild, but they are blind or self-destructive, and they end by killing one another or by marooning themselves."³ George Bernard Shaw claims to have learned from the tales of Stevenson that the romantic hero is mocked by reality,⁴ but, according to Eigner, this was a lesson Stevenson never taught.⁵ From the very first Stevenson felt that the writer should "recognize that he has only one tool in his workshop, and that tool is sympathy."⁶ Professor Trent shows that Stevenson loved his characters, for "to love a character is the only heroic way to understand it."⁷

¹Ibid.

²P. 47.

³Ibid., p. 111.

⁴The Works of Bernard Shaw (London, 1930), XI, 208.

⁵P. 112.

⁶Works: South Seas Edition, XXVII, 61.

⁷P. 174.

The Long John Silver of Kidnapped is Alan Breck, but "he never quite comes alive"; he is serving as a line between adventure and history. Yet there is some profundity in his characterization, says Daiches, unless we are to regard him as a mere picturesque piece of Scottish scenery.¹ Alan is the essence of picturesqueness:

. . . smallish in stature, but well set and as nimble as a goat; his face of a good open expression, but sunburnt very dark, and heavily freckled and pitted with the smallpox; his eyes unusually light, and had a kind of dancing madness in them that was both engaging and alarming; and when he took off his greatcoat, he laid a pair of fine silver-mounted pistols on the table, and I saw that he was belted with a great sword. His manners, besides, were elegant and he pledged the captain handsomely. Altogether I thought him at first sight a man that I would rather have for my friend than my enemy.²

David Balfour is "a block of integrity" and "one of the most self-respecting heroes of fiction."³ He is not aggressive, but he does not allow himself to be taken advantage of. Some critics, such as Cooper, see self-revelation in David:

It has been said that he was the most like Stevenson of all his characters. A novelist can only make characters out of the stuff in his own mind. Even when he believes that he draws them from observation of real characters, that very observation is coloured

¹Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 56.

²Kidnapped (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), p. 65.

³Cooper, p. 58.

by his own vision and transmuted as he writes. Some of the characters are more recognisably like him than others, that is all that can be said. There was a lot of Stevenson left out of David Balfour, and some of it was in Alan Breck Stewart.¹

The characters have a sense of impending doom as in the memorable scene where David, who has been sent by his devilish uncle to climb the dark stairway in the ruined tower, gropes his way from step to step in the murky night, vaguely conscious of perils which he cannot define--the stairway through which, but for the accident of a flash of lightning, he would have fallen to his death. It was in Weir of Hermiston, says Commins, that Stevenson "attained his fullest maturity,"² where he brought to life more forceful central characters.

Much has been made of Stevenson's omission of women from his writings.³ His explanation is simple: ". . . women appear but little in my books because they are not important elements in the side of life with which my stories are concerned--the side of life which I myself love most."⁴ In Treasure Island, women were omitted at the request of his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne. In David Balfour, he did create a woman in the form of Catriona.

¹Cooper, p. 58.

²P. xxv.

³He has been labeled a woman-hater and father of an illegitimate son, according to Furnas.

⁴Furnas, Voyage to Windward, p. 160.

Stephen Gwynn reiterates, "It is not, heaven knows, that he ever posed as a woman-hater or contemned the interest of sex; but his choice of subjects forbade its appearance."¹ But Kiely's contention is that "the prudish morality of the age"² restrained any inclusion of women, and Edwin Muir attributes the omission to the "morality of Scotland."³ But Charles Lanier says: ". . . the virtue which appeared to him most strongly, and which he loved to celebrate in fancy, was physical courage of the adventurous variety; and women are wholly lacking in that."⁴

Theme, too, played an important role in Stevenson's writing. The primacy of theme over incident and character is, as we have seen, the distinguishing feature of the romance. In the opinion of Eigner, theme developed out of his delineation of character:

It is out of this delineation, in fact, that theme develops, and should the protagonist grow in a different direction from that which was at first contemplated, the novelist will alter his theme and his plot before he will molest his character. To the romancer, on the other hand, the theme or the vision comes first, and this priority occasions, we should not say a falsification of character, but certainly a less vital interest in it and oftentimes the resultant thinness.⁵

¹"Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson," Living Age, CCIV (January 12, 1895), 70.

²P. 34.

³"Robert Louis Stevenson," Bookman, LXXIV (September, 1931), p. 56.

⁴"Robert Louis Stevenson," Review of Reviews, XI (February, 1895), 182.

⁵P. 39.

Stevenson, who rejected Scott because his works were not guided by central themes,¹ developed the theme of the Döppelgänger, or double, seen in the splitting of personality in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Eigner calls this "one of the most significant themes of nineteenth century literature."² In Stevenson also there is a carefully worked out moral pattern, one which presents a dilemma rather than one which solves a problem. Heroic endeavor is not automatically linked to obvious moral goodness: what we admire is not always what we approve of as we read. Wayne C. Booth demonstrates this point as he shows that our reactions depend not on any natural relationship but upon a judgment rendered by the author.³ He cites the example of Markheim, whose salvation we hope for after he murders the pawnbroker. Even so, in Treasure Island energy of personality belongs not to the conventional hero but to the pirate, Long John Silver. Only by luck are virtues saved in the end by an irresponsible boy who does not quite know what he is doing.

¹Eigner, p. 43.

²Ibid., p. 21.

³The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), p. 111.

Stevenson was a romancer by choice. He disagreed strongly with William Dean Howells and others whose precepts he felt would create an art "like mahogany and horsehair furniture, solid, true, serious, and as dead as Caesar."¹ The danger in seeking to draw the normal, he felt, was that "a man should draw the null, and write the novel of society instead of the romance of man."² He thought of realism as an experimental fashion, says Elwin--such a fashion as impressionism, cubism, and surrealism at later epochs.³ His age was one of transition, with experience hampered by the "prudery of contemporary taste," but he "abandoned the 'prunes' and 'prisms' of conventional conduct," preferring romance to evoke that "golden chamber of a man's dreams."⁴ Stevenson said, "All representative art, which can be said to live, is both realistic and ideal, but we of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, breathing as we do the intellectual atmosphere of our age, are more apt to err upon the side of realism than to sin in quest of the ideal."⁵ As the realists became more outspoken, the hope for reconciling realism and romanticism

¹Works, XXI, 268.

²Works, XII, 223.

³P. 81.

⁴John Franklin Genung, Stevenson's Attitude to Life (New York, 1901), p. 33.

⁵"A Note on Realism," The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson: South Seas Edition (New York, 1925), p. 74.

became more forlorn. By "confessing a liking for Mr. James and Mr. Howells" the critics declared themselves "at war with Dumas and Stevenson."¹ However, one who could not help "preferring the realists" said that a "good romance gets under my skin very easily."² Other critics were more outspoken, such as the British critic and writer whose work was published in America, Arthur Quiller-Couch, who acknowledged that "a man there was, to rescue us from the Desert of Realism--one gallant Scotsman, the adored of us all, hopeless beyond our imitation, who kept the flag of Scott flying and carried it till he fell."³ A magazine writer generalized, "Everybody is so grateful to him for leading his generation away from the aridities of realism."⁴ Fortunately, says Booth, "the alternative to dogmatic realism is not dogmatic antirealism. There are many other routes we can follow; whichever one we choose, our success will depend on our remembering the warning that Robert Louis Stevenson gives James: 'what is the making of one book, will be in the next impertinent or dull.'"⁵

¹Critic, CIII (October, 1888), 181.

²Harry Thurston Peck cited in Beer, p. 182.

³Studies in Literature (New York, 1930), p. 255.

⁴The Nation, LXII (January 9, 1896), 37.

⁵P. 24.

By the standard of the ancients, the created world is better than the real one. Longinus would add that a convincing impossibility is preferable to an unconvincing possibility, and that chance may be the beginning of the plot but not the conclusion.¹ "What is useful and indeed necessary is cheap enough; it is always the unusual which wins our wonder," he said.² It would seem that Swinnerton, who says Stevenson killed romance, and F. R. Leavis, who dismissed Stevenson's romanticism from respectability,³ are out of line with what the ancients taught. Stevenson's biographer, Steuart, states that "romance since Stevenson has become sentimental and unbelievable."⁴ While Stevenson's stories may be nourished with realities of life, their true mark is to satisfy the "nameless longings of the reader and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream."⁵ Stevenson said, "Man's one method, whether he reasons or creates, is to half-shut his eyes against the dazzle and confusion of reality. The novel, which is a work of art, exists, not by its resemblance to life, which is forced and material, as a shoe must still consist of leather, but by its immeasurable

¹P. 44.

²Ibid.

³The Great Tradition (New York, 1963), p. 6n.

⁴P. 132.

⁵Lionel Stevenson, p. 414.

difference from life, which is designed and significant, and is both the method and the meaning of the work."¹

Despite Swinnerton's comment, Eigner concludes that romance is not dead, that it will continue "so long as children and child-like adults persist," and that it "probably has suffered very little from Stevenson's meddling with it."² Romance, as Stevenson practiced it, "had a very large influence on the novel."³ That it had its roots in his childhood is evident:

When the Scotch child sees them first he falls immediately in love; and from that time forward windmills keep turning in his dreams. And so, in their degree, with every feature of the life and landscape. The sharp edge of novelty wears off; the feeling is scotched, but I doubt whether it is ever killed. Rather it keeps returning, ever the more rarely and strangely, and even in scenes to which you have been long accustomed suddenly awakes and gives a relish to enjoyment or heightens the sense of isolation.⁴

Stevenson was definitely a man who believed in craftsmanship. His interest in writing began early in his life when, at the suggestion of his nurse Alison Cummings, he kept always two books with him, "one to read and one to write in."⁵ Whenever he read a book or a piece of writing that he liked, he

¹"A Humble Remonstrance," Works, XII, 216.

²P. 229.

³Edward Wagenknecht, Cavalcade of the English Novel (New York, 1954), p. 373.

⁴"The Foreigner at Home," Works, X, 11.

⁵Ricklefs, p. 10.

tried to imitate it. Later, he received inspiration from the artists among whom he lived in Fontainebleau, where he cultivated the masters of French literature in order to improve his own self-expression, believing that French authors possessed a sense of subject superior to that of the English.¹ Stevenson also engaged in activities that would provide grist for his literary mill. Like but also unlike Rossetti, roaming London looking for "stunners"--that is, gorgeous paintable models,² he looked at everything, but he looked through literature, weighed experiences in literary scales, dramatized himself as an experimenter in style, and even surrounded himself with books as he wrote.³ And so his style was compounded of wide reading, devoted care, and a rigid self-discipline.

It is on the matter of self-discipline that some of the severest criticism has been raised. Stevenson has been called "an extraordinary mimic,"⁴ the "mistletoe of English literature,"⁵ "a hollow image of a great writer,"⁶ and a plagiarist,⁷ capable only of "ventriloquial efforts."⁸ In revealing his method, in

¹MacPherson, p. 45.

²Howard Mumford Jones, "Robert Louis Stevenson at Home," Saturday Review, XXXVIII (September 17, 1955), 22.

³Steuart, p. 191.

⁴Chapman, p. 221.

⁵Ibid.

⁶"Was Stevenson a Second-Rate Literary Artist?" Current Opinion, LVIII (February, 1915), 119.

⁷"Was Stevenson a Plagiarist?" The Outlook, CXVI (July 13, 1917), 252.

⁸Richard Ashley Rice, Robert Louis Stevenson: How to Know Him (Indianapolis, 1916), p. 56.

saying, "I have played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Boudelaire, and to Obermann,"¹ he defied the tradition of natural genius. Stevenson went along with Horace's theory which does not spare "the labor of the file."² "That, like it or not," said Stevenson, "is the way to learn to write; whether I have profited or not, that is the way. It was so Keats learned, and there never was a finer temperament than Keats."³ Some did not like it, as Gwynn says: "The characteristic English opinion makes art a matter of inspiration; and the public rather resents it when Mr. Stevenson comes and tells them that an art must be learnt like any other trade, and even exposes his own procedure."⁴ The ingredients in Treasure Island are not original: Billy Bones at the Admiral Benbow originated with Washington Irving, Stevenson admitted.⁵ Furnas contrasts the writing of Irving and Stevenson as "the difference between fuzzy and hard-twist writing," and he suggests a reading of Irving and then a reading of what Stevenson did with the same materials filtered through

¹Works, V, 35.

²An Introduction to Literary Criticism, ed. Marlies K. Danziger and W. Stacy Johnson (Boston, 1961), p. 12.

³Letters, XIII, 258.

⁴"Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson," Living Age, CCIV (January 12, 1895), 67.

⁵Voyage to Windward, p. 199.

discipline.¹ One of the most recent defenses, however, comes from C. D. Rogers, who cites others who wrote by imitating: Churchill found a model in Edward Gibbon; Gibbon's favorite was Tacitus; Tacitus had one model, Cicero;² and God made man in His image.

Stevenson never claimed any great amount of natural genius; in fact, he said, "I frankly believe (thanks to my dire industry) I have done more with smaller gifts than almost any man of letters in the world."³ A number of able writers defend him in his method. Joseph Wood Krutch stresses the cultivating of art: "It is not so generally taken for granted as it once was that 'inspiration' is an irrational, transcendental insight by virtue of which the poet knows something he has never had to learn."⁴ Practice produces facility, says Elwin, and "to refuse the name of genius to a product of application is to deny the art of Paderewski because he derived proficiency from practice."⁵ C. T. Copeland says:

¹Voyage to Windward, p. 199.

²"The Sedulous but Successful Ape," English Journal, XVI (December, 1967), 1309.

³Kelman, p. 174.

⁴Introduction, Alexander Pope: Selected Works (New York, 1951), p. viii.

⁵The Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson (London, 1950), p. xxi.

Even British critics allow a painter to study pigments before he exhibits a picture, a sculptor to model in clay before he carves the nation's heroes in marble; but in the face of repeated blows, the fine old superstition dies hard, that ill-regulated impulse is an important element in the "inspiration" of an art more subtle than either painting or sculpture.¹

Going back still farther, into the eighteenth century, we note that Alexander Pope in his Essay on Criticism says: "True ease in writing comes from art, not chance, / As those move easiest who have learned to dance."² He was a writer who "made the most of mediocre gifts."³ Daiches convincingly says, "A high-grade literary exercise is not to be sneered at; it takes a gifted and conscientious writer to produce one. And if the writer produces such exercises at the beginning of his career it is a good sign--it shows that he has no romantic illusions about creative genius providing for its happy possessor ready-made masterpieces without the necessity of hard work and conscious striving after perfection."⁴ Stevenson "plugged away with set teeth, hour after hour, and

¹"Robert Louis Stevenson," Atlantic Monthly, LXXV (April, 1895), 545.

²Alexander Pope: Selected Poetry & Prose, ed. William K. Wimsatt, Jr. (New York, 1967), p. 73.

³The Victorian Age: Prose, Poetry, and Drama, ed., John Wilson Bowyer and John Lee Brook (New York, 1954), p. 761.

⁴Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 149.

day after day. Frantically he struggled and fought, often literally in a fever."¹ No English writer ever put himself through his literary apprenticeship more vigorously than did Stevenson, but the style he developed was not patterned after any particular model but was a "potpourri style." He selected what was best from a variety of his favorite writers as Shakespeare and Homer took their material wherever they found it. When Stevenson used an idea from some other source, he never merely retold the stories from which he borrowed, and he did not hesitate to acknowledge the borrowing. Because of his early period of self-discipline, Stevenson was able to write, not train, later in life. Evidently, he did develop his own style, for "one could confidently pick either passage as Stevenson out of quite a confusing literary puzzle."²

Some critics have said Stevenson put too much stress on diction, claiming he "thumbed a thesaurus" to be able to write.³ Others have said he was the "Vergil of prose," partly

¹Issler, p. 83.

²Furnas, p. 111.

³Ibid., p. 442.

because "both were of the same ilk: temperamental, self-conscious artists, seeking, with all care, the refinements of expression."¹ Choosing words not for themselves alone but for the help they would give other words "so that word and word image and thing imaged are homogeneous," Genung contends, is "despised by Philistines who know not how much travail of spirit has gone to their ease of reading."² Stevenson did not choose a word simply because it was the next one on the shelf but because he was an "interminable searcher for the exact word which would describe his precise shade of meaning."³ He felt that "the difficulty of literature is not to write, but to write what you mean; not to affect your reader, but to affect him precisely as you wish. Anybody, it is supposed, can say what he means; and in spite of their notorious experience to the contrary, people so continue to suppose."⁴ Opposing Stevenson in this theory of composition, Chapman said "the moment a man strives after some 'effect,' he disqualifies himself from making that effect, for he draws the

¹Eli Edward Burriss, "The Classical Culture of Robert Louis Stevenson," Classical Journal, XX (February 25, 1925), 272.

²P. 37.

³Herman, p. 151.

⁴Essays by Robert Louis Stevenson, ed. Will D. Howe (New York, 1918), p. 68.

interest of the audience to the same matters that occupy his own mind, namely, upon his experiment and his efforts."¹ And, similarly, Samuel Butler wrote, "I have never known a writer yet who took pains to acquire what they called a style as a preliminary measure--as something that they had to form before their writings could be of any value. I cannot conceive how any man can take thought for his style without loss to himself and to his readers."² It seems to me that the preponderance of criticism of this era is favorable to Stevenson's laboratory method, as we see in the representative opinions which follow.

Lionel Johnson compares Stevenson with Walter Pater:

"Of modern writers, only Mr. Pater shares with Mr. Stevenson this fine anxiety not to play life false by using inaccurate expressions."³ Swinnerton speaks of Stevenson's scrupulously revised sentences, "meandering most sweetly past their consonants and syllables and 'knots' to their destined conclusion," and he says they "are and always will be, a pure delight to the ear."⁴ Professor Trent compares him to Thoreau: "If Thoreau had possessed the artistic instinct of Stevenson or

¹P. 226.

²C. E. M. Joad, Samuel Butler (Boston, 1924), p. 119.

³Reviews & Critical Papers (New York, 1966), p. 41.

⁴P. 82.

had undergone Stevenson's rigid self-imposed discipline in the writer's craft, he might have made A Week as complete a little masterpiece as An Inland Voyage."¹ Edward Bok says that Stevenson's revision proved the maxim: "Easy writing, hard reading; hard writing, easy reading."² Daiches praises his achievement, for "it set a pattern which the literary exiles of the present century have as a rule been slow to follow, to the detriment of their art."³ Grebanier says, "His apprenticeship had been long and the development of his prose style fully conscious. Hence when he actually came to write he had already overcome the preliminary problems of structure and wrote with a charm that could come only from the free use of his medium."⁴ Millett concludes, "On the whole his artistic experiments justify themselves in clearness of structure, in devices of description and narrative, and in brilliancy of style."⁵ All his critics have Stevenson's reply in: "I did my damndest anyway."⁶

¹A Short History of American Literature, p. 138.

²The Americanization of Edward Bok (New York, 1920), p. 114.

³Robert Louis Stevenson, p. 187.

⁴English Literature and Its Backgrounds, ed. Bernard D. N. Grebanier and Stith Thompson (New York, 1940), p. 848.

⁵A History of English Literature (New York, 1946), p. 379.

⁶"The Real Stevenson," Atlantic Monthly, LXXXV (May, 1900), 705.

This creative method, which remained to the last with Stevenson the "conscious, almost the self-conscious practice of a complicated handcraft," is used in high schools today for teaching students how to write more sophisticated sentences. Using sentences as examples by Faulkner, Hemingway, and others, the students substitute their words and their thoughts but retain the structure of the models' sentences.

The critics, in many instances, have asked for something which Stevenson did not intend to give. Sir Arthur Helps writes in The Spanish Conquest in America, "You often find that a long criticism upon a man, or his work, is but a demand that he should be somebody else and his work somebody else's work."¹ Leonard Woolf, observing that "when a writer's reputation has been plunging steadily downhill for thirty years, it has usually gone too far," and that "it is time for revival,"² says that he found "more pleasure" in his reading than he "expected," and that he [Stevenson] is better than his present reputation among 'highbrows' would lead one to suppose."³ Unlike Chapman, who thought of Stevenson only as

¹P. 194.

²Essays on Literature, History, Politics, Etc. (New York, 1st printed copy), p. 40.

³Ibid., p. 41.

an "afterglow of the romantic movement,"¹ MacPherson thinks that Stevenson did bring something new--style.² Eigner says that romantic fiction was enriched by Stevenson, who understood "its conventions and . . . its principles and its past literature better perhaps than anyone before his time."³

Responding to the questions posed in this thesis, some readers may quote the sarcastic Mr. Enfield in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde": "Accursed questions! It is impossible to get rid of them by way of allegory or hypothesis; they demand straight answers! You start a question and it is like starting a stone. You sit quietly on the top of a hill; and away the stone goes, starting others."⁴ It will be gratifying indeed if more men like Lionel Stevenson and David Daiches, who are engaged in criticism and scholarship, undertake extensive studies of the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson. They may remind themselves that when a man studying Stevenson thinks he has mounted to the top of Parnassus, he often finds himself on Calvary. Today, however, there are few scholars who do

¹Pp. 228-229.

²P. 49.

³P. 246.

⁴Works, VI, 16.

not know that the Victorian period is "now probably the field in which the greatest amount of important and virginal research is being conducted."¹ Thus Stevenson is being resurrected from the nursery, from the "never-never" land, to which he descended. Multi-plumed editions of his letters are being prepared. Major critical interest is in his fiction, as is shown in this chapter. Perhaps in the words of my major professor, Dr. Autrey Nell Wiley, "It is time to bring him back."

¹Lionel Stevenson, "The Victorian Period," Contemporary Scholarship: A Critical Review, ed. Lewis Leary (Cambridge, 1958), p. 139.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Henry. Henry Adams and His Friends, compiled by Harold Dean Cater. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947.
- Addison, Joseph, and Steele, Richard. Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator, ed. Robert J. Allen. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968.
- Alden, Raymond M., ed. Essays English and American. Chicago: Scott-Foresman and Company, 1927.
- Allott, Miriam. Novelists on the Novel. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.
- Archer, William. "The Style and Thought of Robert Louis Stevenson." Time, XIII (December, 1898), 581.
- Baker, R. L. "The Robert Louis Stevenson Factor." The Nation, CLXXXIX (November 14, 1959), 364-366.
- Balfour, Graham. The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915.
- Barrie, J. M. An Edinburgh Eleven. New York: Lovell, Coryell and Company, n. d.
- Basso, Hamilton. "Our Far Flung Correspondents." The New Yorker, XXXV (December 5, 1959), 213-229.
- Baudin, Maurice, Jr., and Karl G. Pfeiffer, eds. Essays for Study. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1968.
- Baugh, Albert C., ed. A Literary History of England. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948.
- Bay, J. Christian. Echoes of Robert Louis Stevenson. Chicago: Walter M. Hill, 1920.
- Beach, Joseph Warren. The Outlook of American Prose. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926.
- _____. The Twentieth Century Novel. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960.

- Beer, Thomas. The Mauve Decade. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926.
- "Biography With Warts Only." Literary Digest, LXXXIV (March 28, 1925), 28-32.
- Blake, Walter, et al., ed. The Literature of the United States. Chicago: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1966.
- Blankenship, Russell. American Literature as an Expression of the Natural Mind. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1949.
- Bok, Edward. The Americanization of Edward Bok. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.
- Booth, Wayne C. The Rhetoric of Fiction. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- Bowyer, John Wilson, and John Lee Brook, eds. The Victorian Age: Prose, Poetry, and Drama. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954.
- Bradley, Scully, Richmond Beatty, and E. Hudson Long, eds. The American Tradition in Literature, Third Edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967.
- Brooks, Cleanth, John Thibault Purser, and Robert Penn Warren, eds. An Approach to Literature, Fourth Edition. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1964.
- Brown, E. K., ed. Victorian Poetry. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1942.
- Brown, George E. A Book for Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919.
- Burriss, Eli Edward. "The Classical Culture of Robert Louis Stevenson." Classical Journal, XX (February 25, 1925), 271-279.
- Caldwell, Elsie Noble. Last Witness for Robert Louis Stevenson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960.

- Canby, Henry Seidel. Classic Americans. New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1959.
- Cargill, Oscar. Intellectual America: Ideas on the March. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941.
- Carrington, James B. "Another Glimpse of Robert Louis Stevenson." Scribner's Magazine, LXXXII (August, 1927), 180-183.
- Chamberlain, Essie, ed. Essays Old and New. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1934.
- Chapman, John Jay. Emerson and Other Essays. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898.
- Chesterton, G. K. Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Speed and Ward, 1955.
- Clark, Evert Mordecai. "The Kinship of Hazlitt and Stevenson." Studies in English, March 15, 1924, pp. 97-114.
- Clark, Harry Hayden, ed. Transitions in American Literary History. Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 1953.
- Colby, F. M. "A Debated Charm." Bookman, XIV (February, 1902), 620-621.
- Colvin, Sir Sidney. "Some Personal Recollections." Scribner's Magazine, LXVII (March, 1920), 338-354.
- _____. "Robert Louis Stevenson and Henry James." Scribner's Magazine, LXXV (March, 1924), 315-326.
- _____. "Sir Sidney Colvin in Stevenson's Defense." Living Age, CCCXVI (January 20, 1923), 181-182.
- Commins, Saxe, ed. Selected Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Random House, Inc., 1947.
- Cooke, Delmar Gross. William Dean Howells. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1922.

- Cooper, Lettice. Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Morrison and Gibb, Ltd., 1948.
- Copeland, C. T. "Robert Louis Stevenson." Atlantic Monthly, LXXV (April, 1895), 537-546.
- Craik, Henry, ed. English Prose. London: Macmillan and Company, 1896.
- Cross, Wilbur L. The Development of the English Novel. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899.
- Cruse, Amy. Robert Louis Stevenson. London: George C. Harrop and Company, 1915.
- Cunliffe, John W., Karl Young, Mark Van Doren, eds. Century Readings in English Literature, Fifth Edition. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1940.
- Daiches, David. A Critical History of English Literature. 2 vols. New York: Ronald Press Company, 1960.
- _____. Critical Approaches to Literature. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956.
- _____. Robert Louis Stevenson. Norfolk: New Direction Books, 1947.
- Danziger, Marlies K., and W. Stacy Johnson. An Introduction to Literary Criticism. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1961.
- De Selincourt, Basil. Walt Whitman: A Critical Study. New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1965.
- Edel, Leon. "A Hard Journey to Treasure Island." Saturday Review, XLIX (September 3, 1966), 34.
- Eigner, Edwin M. Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966.
- Eliot, Charles W., ed. Essays English and American. New York: Coward-McCann, 1950.
- Elwin, Malcolm, ed. The Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Coward-McCann, 1950.

- _____. The Strange Case of Robert Louis Stevenson. London: MacDonald, 1950.
- "Extracts From a Private Letter Touching Robert Louis Stevenson's Death." Harper's Weekly, XXXIX (February 2, 1895), 113.
- Fisher, Anne B. No More a Stranger. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1946.
- Ford, R. Clyde. "Modestina's Shoes--a Bit of Stevensoniana." Atlantic Monthly, CXXXVII (April, 1926), 527-531.
- Furnas, J. C. "Full Circle, Stevenson and His Critics." Atlantic Monthly, CLXXXVIII (October, 1951), 67-69.
- _____. "Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa." Vogue, CXXII, Part I (August 15, 1953), 102, 143.
- _____. Voyage to Windward. New York: William Sloane Associates, 1951.
- Frye, Northrop. Anatomy of Criticism. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.
- Fyfe, W. Hamilton, ed. Aristotle: The Poetics, Longinus: "On the Sublime," Demetrius on Style. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960.
- Genung, John Franklin. Stevenson's Attitude to Life. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, 1901.
- Gilbert, Allan H. Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden. New York: American Book Company, 1940.
- Gilder, Jeannette L. "Stevenson and After." Review of Reviews, XI (February, 1895), 186-192.
- Gosse, Edmund. "Personal Memories of Robert Louis Stevenson." Century, L (July, 1895), 447-454.
- Grebanier, Bernard D. N., and Stith Thompson, eds. English Literature and Its Backgrounds. New York: Cordon Company, 1940.

- Green, Roger Lancelyn. "The Robert Louis Stevenson Centenary." Contemporary Review, CLXXVIII (November, 1950), 289-292.
- Guthrie, Lord. Robert Louis Stevenson: Some Personal Recollections. Edinburgh: W. Green and Son, Ltd., 1924.
- Gwynn, Stephen. "Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson." Living Age, CCIV (January 12, 1895), 67-79.
- Hamilton, Clayton. On the Trail of Stevenson. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1923.
- Hart, James D., ed. From Scotland to Silverado. Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 1966.
- Hellman, George S. "Stevenson and Henry James." Century, CXI (January, 1926), 336-345.
- _____. "Stevenson Emerges." Bookman, LX (January, 1925), 575-577.
- _____. "The Stevenson Myth." Century, CV (December, 1922), 240-252.
- _____. The True Stevenson. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1925.
- Helps, Sir Thomas. The Spanish Conquest of America. London: John W. Parker and Son, 1855.
- Herman, William. Twelve Who Achieved. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1949.
- Hopkins, Gerard Manley. The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, ed. Claude Collier Abbott. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935.
- "How the Romancer Died." Critic, XXV (December 29, 1894), 453.
- Howe, Witt D., ed. Essays by Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918.

"An Interview with Mrs. Stevenson." Critic, XXVII (November 30, 1895), 361.

Issler, Anne Roller. Happier for His Presence. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1949.

_____. Our Mountain Hermitage. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1950.

James, Henry. The Letters of Henry James, ed. Percy Lubbock. Vol. I. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.

Joad, C. E. M. Samuel Butler. Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1924.

Johnson, Lionel. Reviews & Critical Papers, ed. Robert Shafer. Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, Inc., 1966.

Jones, Howard Mumford. "Robert Louis Stevenson at Home." Saturday Review, XXXVIII (September 17, 1955), 22-23.

_____. "Stevenson's Letters to Charles Baxter." Saturday Review, XXXIX (June 9, 1956), 19.

Kelman, John. The Faith of Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908.

Kiely, Robert. Robert Louis Stevenson and the Fiction of Adventure. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964.

Kos, Erih. "The Writer as Craftsman." Saturday Review, XLIX (August 13, 1966), 11-16.

Krutch, Joseph Wood, Foreword. Alexander Pope: Selected Works, ed. Louis Kronenberger. New York: The Modern Library, 1951.

Lanier, Charles D. "Robert Louis Stevenson." Review of Reviews, XI (February, 1895), 180-186.

Leavis, F. R. The Great Tradition. New York: George W. Stewart, Inc., n. d.

- Lester, Jordan A., ed. Essays of Yesterday and Today. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1943.
- Linn, James Weber. A Foreword to Fiction. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1935.
- Long, William J., ed. English Literature. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1945.
- Lubbock, Percy. The Craft of Fiction. New York: The Viking Press, 1957.
- Lucas, E. V. "Forbidden Glimpses of Robert Louis Stevenson." Living Age, CCCI (May 3, 1819), 308-310.
- MacPherson, Harriet Dorothea. A Study in French Influence. New York: Institute of French Studies, 1930.
- Maline, Julian L., et al., ed. Studies in Poetry. Dallas: The L. N. Singer Company, 1967.
- _____. Visionaries and Realists: 1789-1900. Dallas: The L. W. Singer Company, 1967.
- Masson, Rosaline. I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson. Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers, Ltd., 1922.
- Matthews, Brander. "Robert Louis Stevenson." Harper's Weekly, XXXVIII (December 29, 1894), 1248-1249.
- Millett, Fred B. A History of English Literature. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946.
- Minot, Stephen. Three Genres. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.
- Morley, Christopher. "Two Enthusiasms." Atlantic Monthly, CXLIX (April, 1932), 403-406.
- Muir, Edwin. "Robert Louis Stevenson." Bookman, LXXIV (September, 1931), 55-60.
- The Nation, LXII (January 9, 1896), 36-38.

- Nicoll, W. Robertson. "Mr. Balfour's 'Life of Stevenson.'" Bookman, X (February, 1902), 496-497.
- Omond, G. W. T. "The Art of Robert Louis Stevenson." The North American Review, CLXXII (September, 1900), 348-358.
- "On the Choice of a Profession." Scribner's Magazine, LVII (January, 1915), 66-69.
- Osbourne, Lloyd. "An Intimate Portrait." Scribner's, LXXV (November, 1923), 66-73.
- _____. "Intimate Portraits." Scribner's, LXXIV (March, 1923), 315-326.
- Parish, John Carl. "Efficiency and Robert Louis Stevenson." Bookman, LII (January, 1921), 398-400.
- Peattie, Donald, and Louise Peattie. "The Treasure of Robert Louis Stevenson." Readers' Digest, LXI (October, 1952), 83-87.
- "The Periodicals Reviewed." Review of Reviews, XI (April, 1895), 472.
- Phelps, William Lyon, ed. Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906.
- Proudfit, Isabel. The Treasure Hunter. New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1939.
- Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur. Adventures in Criticism. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925.
- _____. Studies in Literature. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930.
- Quinn, Arthur Hobson, ed. American Fiction: An Historical and Critical Survey. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936.
- Raleigh, Walter. Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Edward Arnold, 1910.

"The Real Stevenson." The Atlantic Monthly, LXXXV (May, 1900), 702-705.

Rhys, Ernest, ed. A Century of English Essays. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1959.

_____. Virginibus Puerisque and Familiar Studies of Men and Books. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1948.

Rice, Richard Ashley. Robert Louis Stevenson: How to Know Him. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1916.

Ricklefs, Roger, ed. The Mind of Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, Inc., 1963.

Rogers, C. D. "The Sedulous but Successful Ape," English Journal, XVI (December, 1967), 1309.

Saintsbury, George. A Short History of English Literature. London: Macmilland and Company, Ltd., 1960.

Scholes, Robert, ed. Approaches to the Novel. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1961.

Sharpe, Robert B. Irony in the Drama. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959.

Shaw, Bernard. Selected Plays. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1957.

Simpson, E. Blantyre. Robert Louis Stevenson. Boston: John W. Luce and Company, 1906.

Smith, Frederick M. "Stevenson's Essays." Poet-Lore, XIV (October, 1902), 70-83.

Smith, James Henry, and Edd Winfield Parks, eds. The Great Critics. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1951.

Smith, Janet Adam, ed. Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1948.

Smith, Logan Pearsall. All Trivia. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1934.

- Smith, Lorraine. "One of Those Odd Couples." Dallas Times Herald, June 9, 1968, p. F-7.
- Stephen, Leslie. Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, n. d.
- Stephens, James, Edwin Beck, and Royall Snow, eds. Victorian and Later English Poets. New York: American Book Company, 1937.
- Stern, G. D. Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1952.
- Steuart, John A. Robert Louis Stevenson. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1924.
- "Stevenson--a Review." The Nation, LXII (January 9, 1896), 36-38.
- "Stevenson as an Essayist." Critic, XXVI (January 19, 1895), 50-51.
- "Stevenson for Today." Newsweek, XXIX (April 14, 1947), 105.
- "Stevenson in Extremis." Literary Digest, LXXXIII (December 6, 1924), 30-31.
- "The Stevenson Myth." Century, CV (December, 1922), 240-252.
- "Stevenson Remeasured by War Standards." Current Opinion, LXVIII (February, 1920), 241-242.
- "Robert Louis Stevenson." Critic, XXV (December 22, 1894), 430-433.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis. The Complete Poems of Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923.
- _____. The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, ed. Sidney Colvin. 4 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911.
- _____. The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson: South Seas Edition. 28 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914.
- _____. The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson: Vailima Edition. 26 vols. London: P. F. Collier & Son, 1912.

- "Stevensoniana." Critic, XXV (December 29, 1894), 453.
- _____. Critic, XXVI (January 12, 1895), 29-31.
- _____. Critic, XXVI (May 11, 1895), 321.
- _____. Critic, XXVI (May 18, 1895), 361.
- _____. Critic, XXVII (November 16, 1895), 331.
- "Stevenson's Eden." Newsweek, XLVI (September 12, 1955), 114.
- "Stevenson's Unconscious Adventure." Harper's Weekly, XXXIX (January 12, 1895), 34.
- "Stevenson Unwhitewashed." Current Opinion, LXXVII (December, 1924), 709-710.
- Stevenson, Lionel. The English Novel: A Panorama. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960.
- _____. "The Victorian Period." Contemporary Scholarship: A Critical Review, ed. Lewis Leary. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958.
- Strunk, William, Jr., and E. B. White. The Elements of Style. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959.
- Swinerton, Frank. Robert Louis Stevenson: A Critical Study. New York: George H. Doran Company, 1923.
- Thrall, William Flint, and Addison Hibbard. A Handbook to Literature. New York: Odyssey Press, 1960.
- Townsend, Horace. Some Letters by Robert Louis Stevenson. New York: Ingalls Kimball, 1902.
- Trent, William Porterfield, and John Erskine, eds. A Short History of American Literature. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1922.

Trigg, W. H. Review of Reviews, XI (March, 1895), 326.

Twain, Mark. Mark Twain's Autobiography. Intro. by Albert Bigelow Paine. Vol. I. New York: P. F. Collier & Son Company, 1925.

"Unpublished Stevenson Manuscripts." Living Age, CCCXIV (August 5, 1922), 368-369.

Van Doren, Mark. John Dryden: A Study of His Poetry. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920.

Van Rennsselaer, M. G. "Robert Louis Stevenson and His Writing." Century, LI (November, 1895), 123-129.

Wagenknecht, Edward. Cavalcade of the English Novel. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1954.

"Was Stevenson a Plagiarist?" The Outlook, CXVI (July 13, 1917), 252-253.

"Was Stevenson a Second-Rate Literary Artist?" Current Opinion, LVIII (February, 1915), 119-120.

Watt, Francis, R. L. S. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913.

Watt, Lauchlan MacLean. "Robert Louis Stevenson's Contribution to Literature and Life." Scribner's Magazine, LXVIII (December, 1920), 641-654.

Wilde, Oscar. The Letters of Oscar Wilde, ed. Rupert Hart-Davis. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1962.

Williams, Stanley T. Studies in Victorian Literature. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1923.

Wilson, Edmund, et al., ed. The Shock of Recognition. New York: Farrar, Strauss, & Cudahy, 1955.

_____. "Historical Criticism," The Triple Thinkers. New York: Oxford University Press, 1940.

Wimsatt, William K., Jr. Alexander Pope: Selected Poetry and Prose. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967.

"With Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa." Cornhill, XXIII
(July, 1894), 27-33.

Woolf, Leonard. Essays on Literature, History, Politics, etc.
New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927.

Yeats, W. B. The Letters of W. B. Yeats, ed. Allan Wade.
New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955.