



**The Letters of  
Robert Louis Stevenson**

( Volume IV )

by Robert Louis Stevenson

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER X.....	1
PACIFIC VOYAGES, JUNE 1888 NOVEMBER 1890 .....	1
CHAPTER XI.....	155

## CHAPTER X

PACIFIC VOYAGES, JUNE 1888 NOVEMBER 1890

TO SIDNEY COLVIN

YACHT 'CASCO,' ANAHO BAY, NUKAHIVA,  
MARQUESAS ISLANDS JULY 1888.

MY DEAR COLVIN, From this somewhat (ahem) out of the way place, I write to say how d'ye do. It is all a swindle: I chose these isles as having the most beastly population, and they are far better, and far more civilised than we. I know one old chief Ko o amua, a great cannibal in his day, who ate his enemies even as he walked home from killing 'em, and he is a perfect gentleman and exceedingly amiable and simple minded: no fool, though.

The climate is delightful; and the harbour where we lie one of the loveliest spots imaginable. Yesterday evening we had near a score natives on board; lovely parties. We have a native god; very rare now. Very rare and equally absurd to

view.

This sort of work is not favourable to correspondence: it takes me all the little strength I have to go about and see, and then come home and note, the strangeness around us. I shouldn't wonder if there came trouble here some day, all the same. I could name a nation that is not beloved in certain islands and it does not know it! Strange: like ourselves, perhaps, in India! Love to all and much to yourself.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

YACHT 'CASCO,' AT SEA, NEAR THE PAUMOTUS,  
7 A.M., SEPTEMBER 6TH, 1888, WITH A DREADFUL  
PEN.

MY DEAR CHARLES, Last night as I lay under my blanket in the cockpit, courting sleep, I had a comic seizure. There was nothing visible but the southern stars, and the steersman there out by the binnacle lamp; we were all looking forward to a most deplorable landfall on the morrow,

praying God we should fetch a tuft of palms which are to indicate the Dangerous Archipelago; the night was as warm as milk, and all of a sudden I had a vision of Drummond Street. It came on me like a flash of lightning: I simply returned thither, and into the past. And when I remember all I hoped and feared as I pickled about Rutherford's in the rain and the east wind; how I feared I should make a mere shipwreck, and yet timidly hoped not; how I feared I should never have a friend, far less a wife, and yet passionately hoped I might; how I hoped (if I did not take to drink) I should possibly write one little book, etc. etc. And then now what a change! I feel somehow as if I should like the incident set upon a brass plate at the corner of that dreary thoroughfare for all students to read, poor devils, when their hearts are down. And I felt I must write one word to you. Excuse me if I write little: when I am at sea, it gives me a headache; when I am in port, I have my diary crying 'Give, give.' I shall have a fine book of travels, I feel sure; and will tell you more of the South Seas after very few months than

any other writer has done except Herman Melville perhaps, who is a howling cheese. Good luck to you, God bless you.

Your affectionate friend,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

FAKARAVA, LOW ARCHIPELAGO, SEPTEMBER  
21ST, 1888.

MY DEAR COLVIN, Only a word. Get out your big atlas, and imagine a straight line from San Francisco to Anaho, the N.E. corner of Nukahiva, one of the Marquesas Islands; imagine three weeks there: imagine a day's sail on August 12th round the eastern end of the island to Tai o hae, the capital; imagine us there till August 22nd: imagine us skirt the east side of Ua pu perhaps Rona Poa on your atlas and through the Bondelais straits to Taaka uku in Hiva Oa, where we arrive on the 23rd; imagine us there until September 4th, when we sailed for Fakarava, which we reached on the 9th, after a very difficult and dangerous

passage among these isles. Tuesday, we shall leave for Taiti, where I shall knock off and do some necessary work ashore. It looks pretty bald in the atlas; not in fact; nor I trust in the 130 odd pages of diary which I have just been looking up for these dates: the interest, indeed, has been INCREDIBLE: I did not dream there were such places or such races. My health has stood me splendidly; I am in for hours wading over the knees for shells; I have been five hours on horseback: I have been up pretty near all night waiting to see where the CASCO would go ashore, and with my diary all ready simply the most entertaining night of my life. Withal I still have colds; I have one now, and feel pretty sick too; but not as at home: instead of being in bed, for instance, I am at this moment sitting snuffling and writing in an undershirt and trousers; and as for colour, hands, arms, feet, legs, and face, I am browner than the berry: only my trunk and the aristocratic spot on which I sit retain the vile whiteness of the north.

Please give my news and kind love to Henley, Henry James, and any whom you see of well wishers. Accept from

me the very best of my affection: and believe me ever yours,

THE OLD MAN VIRULENT.

TAITI, OCTOBER 7TH, 1888.

Never having found a chance to send this off, I may add more of my news. My cold took a very bad turn, and I am pretty much out of sorts at this particular, living in a little bare one twentieth furnished house, surrounded by mangoes, etc. All the rest are well, and I mean to be soon. But these Taiti colds are very severe and, to children, often fatal; so they were not the thing for me. Yesterday the brigantine came in from San Francisco, so we can get our letters off soon. There are in Papeete at this moment, in a little wooden house with grated verandahs, two people who love you very much, and one of them is

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.



**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

TAITI, AS EVER WAS, 6TH OCTOBER 1888.

MY DEAR CHARLES,... You will receive a lot of mostly very bad proofs of photographs: the paper was so bad. Please keep them very private, as they are for the book. We send them, having learned so dread a fear of the sea, that we wish to put our eggs in different baskets. We have been thrice within an ace of being ashore: we were lost (!) for about twelve hours in the Low Archipelago, but by God's blessing had quiet weather all the time; and once, in a squall, we cam' so near gaun heels ower hurdies, that I really dinnae ken why we didnae atehgither. Hence, as I say, a great desire to put our eggs in different baskets, particularly on the Pacific (aw haw haw) Pacific Ocean.

You can have no idea what a mean time we have had, owing to incidental beastlinesses, nor what a glorious, owing to the intrinsic interest of these isles. I hope the book will be a good one; nor do I really very much doubt that the stuff is

so curious; what I wonder is, if the public will rise to it. A copy of my journal, or as much of it as is made, shall go to you also; it is, of course, quite imperfect, much being to be added and corrected; but O, for the eggs in the different baskets.

All the rest are well enough, and all have enjoyed the cruise so far, in spite of its drawbacks. We have had an awfae time in some ways, Mr. Baxter; and if I wasnae sic a verra patient man (when I ken that I HAVE to be) there wad hae been a braw row; and ance if I hadnae happened to be on deck about three in the marnin', I THINK there would have been MURDER done. The American Mairchant Marine is a kent service; ye'll have heard its praise, I'm thinkin'; an' if ye never did, ye can get TWA YEARS BEFORE THE MAST, by Dana, whaur forbye a great deal o' pleasure, ye'll get a' the needcessary information. Love to your father and all the family. Ever your affectionate friend,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MISS ADELAIDE BOODLE**

TAITI, OCTOBER 10TH, 1888.

DEAR GIVER, I am at a loss to conceive your object in giving me to a person so locomotory as my proprietor. The number of thousand miles that I have travelled, the strange bed fellows with which I have been made acquainted, I lack the requisite literary talent to make clear to your imagination. I speak of bed fellows; pocket fellows would be a more exact expression, for the place of my abode is in my master's righthand trouser pocket; and there, as he waded on the resounding beaches of Nukahiva, or in the shallow tepid water on the reef of Fakarava, I have been overwhelmed by and buried among all manner of abominable South Sea shells, beautiful enough in their way, I make no doubt, but singular company for any self respecting paper cutter. He, my master or as I more justly call him, my bearer; for although I occasionally serve him, does not he serve me daily and all day long, carrying me like an African potentate on my

subject's legs? HE is delighted with these isles, and this climate, and these savages, and a variety of other things. He now blows a flageolet with singular effects: sometimes the poor thing appears stifled with shame, sometimes it screams with agony; he pursues his career with truculent insensibility. Health appears to reign in the party. I was very nearly sunk in a squall. I am sorry I ever left England, for here there are no books to be had, and without books there is no stable situation for, dear Giver, your affectionate

WOODEN PAPER CUTTER.

A neighbouring pair of scissors snips a kiss in your direction.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

TAITI, OCTOBER 16TH, 1888.

MY DEAR COLVIN, The cruiser for San Francisco departs to morrow morning bearing you some kind of a scratch. This much more important packet will travel by way of Auckland. It contains a ballant; and I think a better ballant

than I expected ever to do. I can imagine how you will wag your pow over it; and how ragged you will find it, etc., but has it not spirit all the same? and though the verse is not all your fancy painted it, has it not some life? And surely, as narrative, the thing has considerable merit! Read it, get a typewritten copy taken, and send me that and your opinion to the Sandwiches. I know I am only courting the most excruciating mortification; but the real cause of my sending the thing is that I could bear to go down myself, but not to have much MS. go down with me. To say truth, we are through the most dangerous; but it has left in all minds a strong sense of insecurity, and we are all for putting eggs in various baskets.

We leave here soon, bound for Uahiva, Reiatea, Bora Bora, and the Sandwiches.

O, how my spirit languishes To step ashore on the Sanguishes; For there my letters wait, There shall I know my fate. O, how my spirit languidges To step ashore on the Sanguidges.

18TH. I think we shall leave here if all is well on Monday. I am quite recovered, astonishingly recovered. It must be owned these climates and this voyage have given me more strength than I could have thought possible. And yet the sea is a terrible place, stupefying to the mind and poisonous to the temper, the sea, the motion, the lack of space, the cruel publicity, the villainous tinned foods, the sailors, the captain, the passengers but you are amply repaid when you sight an island, and drop anchor in a new world. Much trouble has attended this trip, but I must confess more pleasure. Nor should I ever complain, as in the last few weeks, with the curing of my illness indeed, as if that were the bursting of an abscess, the cloud has risen from my spirits and to some degree from my temper. Do you know what they called the CASCO at Fakarava? The SILVER SHIP. Is that not pretty? Pray tell Mrs. Jenkin, DIE SILBERNE FRAU, as I only learned it since I wrote her. I think of calling the book by that name: THE CRUISE OF THE SILVER SHIP so there will be one poetic page at least the title. At the Sandwiches we shall

say farewell to the S. S. with mingled feelings. She is a lovely creature: the most beautiful thing at this moment in Taiti.

Well, I will take another sheet, though I know I have nothing to say. You would think I was bursting: but the voyage is all stored up for the book, which is to pay for it, we fondly hope; and the troubles of the time are not worth telling; and our news is little.

Here I conclude (Oct. 24th, I think), for we are now stored, and the Blue Peter metaphorically flies.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO WILLIAM AND THOMAS ARCHER**

TAITI, OCTOBER 17TH, 1888.

DEAR ARCHER, Though quite unable to write letters, I nobly send you a line signifying nothing. The voyage has agreed well with all; it has had its pains, and its extraordinary pleasures; nothing in the world can equal the excitement of the first time you cast anchor in some bay of a tropical island,

and the boats begin to surround you, and the tattooed people swarm aboard. Tell Tomarcher, with my respex, that hide and seek is not equal to it; no, nor hidee in the dark; which, for the matter of that, is a game for the unskilful: the artist prefers daylight, a good sized garden, some shrubbery, an open paddock, and come on, Macduff.

TOMARCHER, I am now a distinguished litterytour, but that was not the real bent of my genius. I was the best player of hide and seek going; not a good runner, I was up to every shift and dodge, I could jink very well, I could crawl without any noise through leaves, I could hide under a carrot plant, it used to be my favourite boast that I always WALKED into the den. You may care to hear, Tomarcher, about the children in these parts; their parents obey them, they do not obey their parents; and I am sorry to tell you (for I dare say you are already thinking the idea a good one) that it does not pay one halfpenny. There are three sorts of civilisation, Tomarcher: the real old fashioned one, in which children either had to find out how to please their dear papas,



or their dear papas cut their heads off. This style did very well, but is now out of fashion. Then the modern European style: in which children have to behave reasonably well, and go to school and say their prayers, or their dear papas WILL KNOW THE REASON WHY. This does fairly well. Then there is the South Sea Island plan, which does not do one bit. The children beat their parents here; it does not make their parents any better; so do not try it.

Dear Tomarcher, I have forgotten the address of your new house, but will send this to one of your papa's publishers. Remember us all to all of you, and believe me, yours respectfully,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

TAUTIRA (THE GARDEN OF THE WORLD),  
OTHERWISE CALLED HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN  
VILLE NOVEMBER 1888.

MY DEAR CHARLES, Whether I have a penny left in

the wide world, I know not, nor shall know, till I get to Honolulu, where I anticipate a devil of an awakening. It will be from a mighty pleasant dream at least: Tautira being mere Heaven. But suppose, for the sake of argument, any money to be left in the hands of my painful doer, what is to be done with it? Save us from exile would be the wise man's choice, I suppose; for the exile threatens to be eternal. But yet I am of opinion in case there should be SOME dibs in the hand of the P.D., I.E. painful doer; because if there be none, I shall take to my flageolet on the high road, and work home the best way I can, having previously made away with my family I am of opinion that if and his are in the customary state, and you are thinking of an offering, and there should be still some funds over, you would be a real good P.D. to put some in with yours and tak' the credit o't, like a wee man! I know it's a beastly thing to ask; but it, after all, does no earthly harm, only that much good. And besides, like enough there's nothing in the till, and there is an end. Yet I live here in the full lustre of millions; it is thought I am the richest son of

man that has yet been to Tautira: I! and I am secretly eaten with the fear of lying in pawn, perhaps for the remainder of my days, in San Francisco. As usual, my colds have much hashed my finances.

Do tell Henley I write this just after having dismissed Ori the sub chief, in whose house I live, Mrs. Ori, and Pairai, their adopted child, from the evening hour of music: during which I Publickly (with a k) Blow on the Flageolet. These are words of truth. Yesterday I told Ori about W. E. H., counterfeited his playing on the piano and the pipe, and succeeded in sending the six feet four there is of that sub chief somewhat sadly to his bed; feeling that his was not the genuine article after all. Ori is exactly like a colonel in the Guards. I am, dear Charles, ever yours affectionately,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TAUTIRA, 10TH NOVEMBER ' 88.**

MY DEAR CHARLES, Our mainmast is dry rotten, and we are all to the devil; I shall lie in a debtor's jail. Never mind, Tautira is first chop. I am so besotted that I shall put on the back of this my attempt at words to Wandering Willie; if you can conceive at all the difficulty, you will also conceive the vanity with which I regard any kind of result; and whatever mine is like, it has some sense, and Burns's has none.

Home no more home to me, whither must I wander?  
Hunger my driver, I go where I must. Cold blows the winter wind over hill and heather; Thick drives the rain, and my roof is in the dust. Loved of wise men was the shade of my roof tree. The true word of welcome was spoken in the door Dear days of old, with the faces in the firelight, Kind folks of old, you come again no more.

Home was home then, my dear, full of kindly faces,  
Home was home then, my dear, happy for the child. Fire and

the windows bright glittered on the moorland; Song, tuneful song, built a palace in the wild. Now, when day dawns on the brow of the moorland, Lone stands the house, and the chimney stone is cold. Lone let it stand, now the friends are all departed, The kind hearts, the true hearts, that loved the place of old.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO J. A. SYMONDS**

NOVEMBER 11TH 1888.

One November night, in the village of Tautira, we sat at the high table in the hall of assembly, hearing the natives sing. It was dark in the hall, and very warm; though at times the land wind blew a little shrewdly through the chinks, and at times, through the larger openings, we could see the moonlight on the lawn. As the songs arose in the rattling Tahitian chorus, the chief translated here and there a verse. Farther on in the volume you shall read the songs themselves; and I am in hopes that not you only, but all who can find a

savour in the ancient poetry of places, will read them with some pleasure. You are to conceive us, therefore, in strange circumstances and very pleasing; in a strange land and climate, the most beautiful on earth; surrounded by a foreign race that all travellers have agreed to be the most engaging; and taking a double interest in two foreign arts.

We came forth again at last, in a cloudy moonlight, on the forest lawn which is the street of Tautira. The Pacific roared outside upon the reef. Here and there one of the scattered palm built lodges shone out under the shadow of the wood, the lamplight bursting through the crannies of the wall. We went homeward slowly, Ori a Ori carrying behind us the lantern and the chairs, properties with which we had just been enacting our part of the distinguished visitor. It was one of those moments in which minds not altogether churlish recall the names and deplore the absence of congenial friends; and it was your name that first rose upon our lips. 'How Symonds would have enjoyed this evening!' said one, and then another. The word caught in my mind; I went to bed, and it was still

there. The glittering, frosty solitudes in which your days are cast arose before me: I seemed to see you walking there in the late night, under the pine trees and the stars; and I received the image with something like remorse.

There is a modern attitude towards fortune; in this place I will not use a graver name. Staunchly to withstand her buffets and to enjoy with equanimity her favours was the code of the virtuous of old. Our fathers, it should seem, wondered and doubted how they had merited their misfortunes: we, rather how we have deserved our happiness. And we stand often abashed and sometimes revolted, at those partialities of fate by which we profit most. It was so with me on that November night: I felt that our positions should be changed. It was you, dear Symonds, who should have gone upon that voyage and written this account. With your rich stores of knowledge, you could have remarked and understood a thousand things of interest and beauty that escaped my ignorance; and the brilliant colours of your style would have carried into a thousand sickrooms the sea air and

the strong sun of tropic islands. It was otherwise decreed. But suffer me at least to connect you, if only in name and only in the fondness of imagination, with the voyage of the 'SILVER SHIP.'

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

DEAR SYMONDS, I send you this (November 11th), the morning of its completion. If I ever write an account of this voyage, may I place this letter at the beginning? It represents I need not tell you, for you too are an artist a most genuine feeling, which kept me long awake last night; and though perhaps a little elaborate, I think it a good piece of writing. We are IN HEAVEN HERE. Do not forget

R. L. S.

Please keep this: I have no perfect copy. TAUTIRA, ON THE PENINSULA OF TAHITI.



**Letter: TO THOMAS ARCHER**

TAUTIRA, ISLAND OF TAHITI NOVEMBER 1888.

DEAR TOMARCHER, This is a pretty state of things! seven o'clock and no word of breakfast! And I was awake a good deal last night, for it was full moon, and they had made a great fire of cocoa nut husks down by the sea, and as we have no blinds or shutters, this kept my room very bright. And then the rats had a wedding or a school feast under my bed. And then I woke early, and I have nothing to read except Virgil's AENEID, which is not good fun on an empty stomach, and a Latin dictionary, which is good for naught, and by some humorous accident, your dear papa's article on Skerryvore. And I read the whole of that, and very impudent it is, but you must not tell your dear papa I said so, or it might come to a battle in which you might lose either a dear papa or a valued correspondent, or both, which would be prodigal. And still no breakfast; so I said 'Let's write to Tomarcher.'

This is a much better place for children than any I have hitherto seen in these seas. The girls (and sometimes the boys) play a very elaborate kind of hopscotch. The boys play horses exactly as we do in Europe; and have very good fun on stilts, trying to knock each other down, in which they do not often succeed. The children of all ages go to church and are allowed to do what they please, running about the aisles, rolling balls, stealing mamma's bonnet and publicly sitting on it, and at last going to sleep in the middle of the floor. I forgot to say that the whips to play horses, and the balls to roll about the church at least I never saw them used elsewhere grow ready made on trees; which is rough on toy shops. The whips are so good that I wanted to play horses myself; but no such luck! my hair is grey, and I am a great, big, ugly man. The balls are rather hard, but very light and quite round. When you grow up and become offensively rich, you can charter a ship in the port of London, and have it come back to you entirely loaded with these balls; when you could satisfy your mind as to their character, and give them away when done

with to your uncles and aunts. But what I really wanted to tell you was this: besides the tree top toys (Hush a by, toy shop, on the tree top!), I have seen some real MADE toys, the first hitherto observed in the South Seas.

This was how. You are to imagine a four wheeled gig; one horse; in the front seat two Tahiti natives, in their Sunday clothes, blue coat, white shirt, kilt (a little longer than the Scotch) of a blue stuff with big white or yellow flowers, legs and feet bare; in the back seat me and my wife, who is a friend of yours; under our feet, plenty of lunch and things: among us a great deal of fun in broken Tahitian, one of the natives, the sub chief of the village, being a great ally of mine. Indeed we have exchanged names; so that he is now called Rui, the nearest they can come to Louis, for they have no L and no S in their language. Rui is six feet three in his stockings, and a magnificent man. We all have straw hats, for the sun is strong. We drive between the sea, which makes a great noise, and the mountains; the road is cut through a forest mostly of fruit trees, the very creepers, which take the

place of our ivy, heavy with a great and delicious fruit, bigger than your head and far nicer, called Barbedine. Presently we came to a house in a pretty garden, quite by itself, very nicely kept, the doors and windows open, no one about, and no noise but that of the sea. It looked like a house in a fairy tale, and just beyond we must ford a river, and there we saw the inhabitants. Just in the mouth of the river, where it met the sea waves, they were ducking and bathing and screaming together like a covey of birds: seven or eight little naked brown boys and girls as happy as the day was long; and on the banks of the stream beside them, real toys toy ships, full rigged, and with their sails set, though they were lying in the dust on their beam ends. And then I knew for sure they were all children in a fairy story, living alone together in that lonely house with the only toys in all the island; and that I had myself driven, in my four wheeled gig, into a corner of the fairy story, and the question was, should I get out again? But it was all right; I guess only one of the wheels of the gig had got into the fairy story; and the next jolt the whole thing

vanished, and we drove on in our sea side forest as before, and I have the honour to be Tomarcher's valued correspondent, TERIITEPA, which he was previously known as

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

YACHT 'CASCO,' AT SEA, 14TH JANUARY, 1889.

MY DEAR COLVIN, Twenty days out from Papeete. Yes, sir, all that, and only (for a guess) in 4 degrees north or at the best 4 degrees 30 minutes, though already the wind seems to smell a little of the North Pole. My handwriting you must take as you get, for we are speeding along through a nasty swell, and I can only keep my place at the table by means of a foot against the divan, the unoccupied hand meanwhile gripping the ink bottle. As we begin (so very slowly) to draw near to seven months of correspondence, we are all in some fear; and I want to have letters written before I shall be plunged into that boiling pot of disagreeables which I

constantly expect at Honolulu. What is needful can be added there.

We were kept two months at Tautira in the house of my dear old friend, Ori a Ori, till both the masts of this invaluable yacht had been repaired. It was all for the best: Tautira being the most beautiful spot, and its people the most amiable, I have ever found. Besides which, the climate suited me to the ground; I actually went sea bathing almost every day, and in our feasts (we are all huge eaters in Tairapu) have been known to apply four times for pig. And then again I got wonderful materials for my book, collected songs and legends on the spot; songs still sung in chorus by perhaps a hundred persons, not two of whom can agree on their translation; legends, on which I have seen half a dozen seniors sitting in conclave and debating what came next. Once I went a day's journey to the other side of the island to Tati, the high chief of the Tevas MY chief that is, for I am now a Teva and Teriitera, at your service to collect more and correct what I had already. In the meanwhile I got on with my

work, almost finished the MASTER OF BALLANTRAE, which contains more human work than anything of mine but KIDNAPPED, and wrote the half of another ballad, the SONG OF RAHERO, on a Tairapu legend of my own clan, sir not so much fire as the FEAST OF FAMINE, but promising to be more even and correct. But the best fortune of our stay at Tautira was my knowledge of Ori himself, one of the finest creatures extant. The day of our parting was a sad one. We deduced from it a rule for travellers: not to stay two months in one place which is to cultivate regrets.

At last our contemptible ship was ready; to sea we went, bound for Honolulu and the letter bag, on Christmas Day; and from then to now have experienced every sort of minor misfortune, squalls, calms, contrary winds and seas, pertinacious rains, declining stores, till we came almost to regard ourselves as in the case of Vanderdecken. Three days ago our luck seemed to improve, we struck a leading breeze, got creditably through the doldrums, and just as we looked to have the N.E. trades and a straight run, the rains and squalls

and calms began again about midnight, and this morning, though there is breeze enough to send us along, we are beaten back by an obnoxious swell out of the north. Here is a page of complaint, when a verse of thanksgiving had perhaps been more in place. For all this time we must have been skirting past dangerous weather, in the tail and circumference of hurricanes, and getting only annoyance where we should have had peril, and ill humour instead of fear.

I wonder if I have managed to give you any news this time, or whether the usual damn hangs over my letter? 'The midwife whispered, Be thou dull!' or at least inexplicit. Anyway I have tried my best, am exhausted with the effort, and fall back into the land of generalities. I cannot tell you how often we have planned our arrival at the Monument: two nights ago, the 12th January, we had it all planned out, arrived in the lights and whirl of Waterloo, hailed a hansom, span up Waterloo Road, over the bridge, etc. etc., and hailed the Monument gate in triumph and with indescribable delight. My dear Custodian, I always think we are too sparing of



assurances: Cordelia is only to be excused by Regan and Goneril in the same nursery; I wish to tell you that the longer I live, the more dear do you become to me; nor does my heart own any stronger sentiment. If the bloody schooner didn't send me flying in every sort of direction at the same time, I would say better what I feel so much; but really, if you were here, you would not be writing letters, I believe; and even I, though of a more marine constitution, am much perturbed by this bobbery and wish O ye Gods, how I wish! that it was done, and we had arrived, and I had Pandora's Box (my mail bag) in hand, and was in the lively hope of something eatable for dinner instead of salt horse, tinned mutton, duff without any plums, and pie fruit, which now make up our whole repertory. O Pandora's Box! I wonder what you will contain. As like as not you will contain but little money: if that be so, we shall have to retire to Frisco in the CASCO, and thence by sea VIA Panama to Southampton, where we should arrive in April. I would like fine to see you on the tug: ten years older both of us than the last time you came to welcome

Fanny and me to England. If we have money, however, we shall do a little differently: send the CASCO away from Honolulu empty of its high born lessees, for that voyage to Frisco is one long dead beat in foul and at last in cold weather; stay awhile behind, follow by steamer, cross the States by train, stay awhile in New York on business, and arrive probably by the German Line in Southampton. But all this is a question of money. We shall have to lie very dark awhile to recruit our finances: what comes from the book of the cruise, I do not want to touch until the capital is repaid.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

HONOLULU, JANUARY 1889.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, Here at last I have arrived. We could not get away from Tahiti till Christmas Day, and then had thirty days of calms and squalls, a deplorable passage. This has thrown me all out of gear in every way. I plunge into business.

1. THE MASTER: Herewith go three more parts. You see he grows in bulk; this making ten already, and I am not yet sure if I can finish it in an eleventh; which shall go to you QUAM PRIMUM I hope by next mail.

2. ILLUSTRATIONS TO M. I totally forgot to try to write to Hole. It was just as well, for I find it impossible to forecast with sufficient precision. You had better throw off all this and let him have it at once. PLEASE DO: ALL, AND AT ONCE: SEE FURTHER; and I should hope he would still be in time for the later numbers. The three pictures I have received are so truly good that I should bitterly regret having the volume imperfectly equipped. They are the best illustrations I have seen since I don't know when.

3. MONEY. To morrow the mail comes in, and I hope it will bring me money either from you or home, but I will add a word on that point.

4. My address will be Honolulu no longer Yacht CASCO, which I am packing off till probably April.

5. As soon as I am through with THE MASTER, I shall

finish the GAME OF BLUFF now rechristened THE WRONG BOX. This I wish to sell, cash down. It is of course copyright in the States; and I offer it to you for five thousand dollars. Please reply on this by return. Also please tell the typewriter who was so good as to be amused by our follies that I am filled with admiration for his piece of work.

6. MASTER again. Please see that I haven't the name of the Governor of New York wrong (1764 is the date) in part ten. I have no book of reference to put me right. Observe you now have up to August inclusive in hand, so you should begin to feel happy.

Is this all? I wonder, and fear not. Henry the Trader has not yet turned up: I hope he may to morrow, when we expect a mail. Not one word of business have I received either from the States or England, nor anything in the shape of coin; which leaves me in a fine uncertainty and quite penniless on these islands. H.M. (who is a gentleman of a courtly order and much tinctured with letters) is very polite; I may possibly ask for the position of palace doorkeeper. My voyage has

been a singular mixture of good and ill fortune. As far as regards interest and material, the fortune has been admirable; as far as regards time, money, and impediments of all kinds, from squalls and calms to rotten masts and sprung spars, simply detestable. I hope you will be interested to hear of two volumes on the wing. The cruise itself, you are to know, will make a big volume with appendices; some of it will first appear as (what they call) letters in some of M'Clure's papers. I believe the book when ready will have a fair measure of serious interest: I have had great fortune in finding old songs and ballads and stories, for instance, and have many singular instances of life in the last few years among these islands.

The second volume is of ballads. You know TICONDEROGA. I have written another: THE FEAST OF FAMINE, a Marquesan story. A third is half done: THE SONG OF RAHERO, a genuine Tahitian legend. A fourth dances before me. A Hawaiian fellow this, THE PRIEST'S DROUGHT, or some such name. If, as I half suspect, I get enough subjects out of the islands, TICONDEROGA shall be

suppressed, and we'll call the volume SOUTH SEA BALLADS. In health, spirits, renewed interest in life, and, I do believe, refreshed capacity for work, the cruise has proved a wise folly. Still we're not home, and (although the friend of a crowned head) are penniless upon these (as one of my correspondents used to call them) 'lovely but FATIL islands.' By the way, who wrote the LION OF THE NILE? My dear sir, that is Something Like. Overdone in bits, it has a true thought and a true ring of language. Beg the anonymous from me, to delete (when he shall republish) the two last verses, and end on 'the lion of the Nile.' One Lampman has a good sonnet on a 'Winter Evening' in, I think, the same number: he seems ill named, but I am tempted to hope a man is not always answerable for his name. For instance, you would think you knew mine. No such matter. It is at your service and Mr. Scribner's and that of all of the faithful Teriitera (pray pronounce Tayree Tayra) or (GALLICE) Teri tera.

R. L. S.

More when the mail shall come.

I am an idiot. I want to be clear on one point. Some of Hole's drawings must of course be too late; and yet they seem to me so excellent I would fain have the lot complete. It is one thing for you to pay for drawings which are to appear in that soul swallowing machine, your magazine: quite another if they are only to illustrate a volume. I wish you to take a brisk (even a fiery) decision on the point; and let Hole know. To resume my desultory song, I desire you would carry the same fire (hereinbefore suggested) into your decision on the WRONG BOX; for in my present state of benighted ignorance as to my affairs for the last seven months I know not even whether my house or my mother's house have been let I desire to see something definite in front of me outside the lot of palace doorkeeper. I believe the said WRONG BOX is a real lark; in which, of course, I may be grievously deceived; but the typewriter is with me. I may also be deceived as to the numbers of THE MASTER now going and already gone; but to me they seem First Chop, sir, First Chop. I hope I shall pull off that damned ending; but it still

depresses me: this is your doing, Mr. Burlingame: you would have it there and then, and I fear it I fear that ending.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

HONOLULU, FEBRUARY 8TH, 1889.

MY DEAR CHARLES, Here we are at Honolulu, and have dismissed the yacht, and lie here till April anyway, in a fine state of haze, which I am yet in hopes some letter of yours (still on the way) may dissipate. No money, and not one word as to money! However, I have got the yacht paid off in triumph, I think; and though we stay here impignorated, it should not be for long, even if you bring us no extra help from home. The cruise has been a great success, both as to matter, fun, and health; and yet, Lord, man! we're pleased to be ashore! Yon was a very fine voyage from Tahiti up here, but the dry land's a fine place too, and we don't mind squalls any longer, and eh, man, that's a great thing. Blow, blow, thou wintry wind, thou hast done me no appreciable harm beyond



a few grey hairs! Altogether, this foolhardy venture is achieved; and if I have but nine months of life and any kind of health, I shall have both eaten my cake and got it back again with usury. But, man, there have been days when I felt guilty, and thought I was in no position for the head of a house.

Your letter and accounts are doubtless at S. F., and will reach me in course. My wife is no great shakes; she is the one who has suffered most. My mother has had a Huge Old Time; Lloyd is first chop; I so well that I do not know myself sea bathing, if you please, and what is far more dangerous, entertaining and being entertained by His Majesty here, who is a very fine intelligent fellow, but O, Charles! what a crop for the drink! He carries it, too, like a mountain with a sparrow on its shoulders. We calculated five bottles of champagne in three hours and a half (afternoon), and the sovereign quite presentable, although perceptibly more dignified at the end....

The extraordinary health I enjoy and variety of interests

I find among these islands would tempt me to remain here; only for Lloyd, who is not well placed in such countries for a permanency; and a little for Colvin, to whom I feel I owe a sort of filial duty. And these two considerations will no doubt bring me back to go to bed again in England. Yours ever affectionately,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO R A M STEVENSON**

HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, FEBRUARY  
1889.

MY DEAR BOB, My extremely foolhardy venture is practically over. How foolhardy it was I don't think I realised. We had a very small schooner, and, like most yachts, over rigged and over sparred, and like many American yachts on a very dangerous sail plan. The waters we sailed in are, of course, entirely unlighted, and very badly charted; in the Dangerous Archipelago, through which we were fools enough to go, we were perfectly in ignorance of where we

were for a whole night and half the next day, and this in the midst of invisible islands and rapid and variable currents; and we were lucky when we found our whereabouts at last. We have twice had all we wanted in the way of squalls: once, as I came on deck, I found the green sea over the cockpit coamings and running down the companion like a brook to meet me; at that same moment the foresail sheet jammed and the captain had no knife; this was the only occasion on the cruise that ever I set a hand to a rope, but I worked like a Trojan, judging the possibility of haemorrhage better than the certainty of drowning. Another time I saw a rather singular thing: our whole ship's company as pale as paper from the captain to the cook; we had a black squall astern on the port side and a white squall ahead to starboard; the complication passed off innocuous, the black squall only fetching us with its tail, and the white one slewing off somewhere else. Twice we were a long while (days) in the close vicinity of hurricane weather, but again luck prevailed, and we saw none of it. These are dangers incident to these seas and small craft.

What was an amazement, and at the same time a powerful stroke of luck, both our masts were rotten, and we found it out I was going to say in time, but it was stranger and luckier than that. The head of the mainmast hung over so that hands were afraid to go to the helm; and less than three weeks before I am not sure it was more than a fortnight we had been nearly twelve hours beating off the lee shore of Eimeo (or Moorea, next island to Tahiti) in half a gale of wind with a violent head sea: she would neither tack nor wear once, and had to be boxed off with the mainsail you can imagine what an ungodly show of kites we carried and yet the mast stood. The very day after that, in the southern bight of Tahiti, we had a near squeak, the wind suddenly coming calm; the reefs were close in with, my eye! what a surf! The pilot thought we were gone, and the captain had a boat cleared, when a lucky squall came to our rescue. My wife, hearing the order given about the boats, remarked to my mother, 'Isn't that nice? We shall soon be ashore!' Thus does the female mind unconsciously skirt along the verge of eternity. Our voyage

up here was most disastrous calms, squalls, head sea, waterspouts of rain, hurricane weather all about, and we in the midst of the hurricane season, when even the hopeful builder and owner of the yacht had pronounced these seas unfit for her. We ran out of food, and were quite given up for lost in Honolulu: people had ceased to speak to Belle about the CASCO, as a deadly subject.

But the perils of the deep were part of the programme; and though I am very glad to be done with them for a while and comfortably ashore, where a squall does not matter a snuff to any one, I feel pretty sure I shall want to get to sea again ere long. The dreadful risk I took was financial, and double headed. First, I had to sink a lot of money in the cruise, and if I didn't get health, how was I to get it back? I have got health to a wonderful extent; and as I have the most interesting matter for my book, bar accidents, I ought to get all I have laid out and a profit. But, second (what I own I never considered till too late), there was the danger of collisions, of damages and heavy repairs, of disablement,

towing, and salvage; indeed, the cruise might have turned round and cost me double. Nor will this danger be quite over till I hear the yacht is in San Francisco; for though I have shaken the dust of her deck from my feet, I fear (as a point of law) she is still mine till she gets there.

From my point of view, up to now the cruise has been a wonderful success. I never knew the world was so amusing. On the last voyage we had grown so used to sea life that no one wearied, though it lasted a full month, except Fanny, who is always ill. All the time our visits to the islands have been more like dreams than realities: the people, the life, the beachcombers, the old stories and songs I have picked up, so interesting; the climate, the scenery, and (in some places) the women, so beautiful. The women are handsomest in Tahiti, the men in the Marquesas; both as fine types as can be imagined. Lloyd reminds me, I have not told you one characteristic incident of the cruise from a semi naval point of view. One night we were going ashore in Anaho Bay; the most awful noise on deck; the breakers distinctly audible in

the cabin; and there I had to sit below, entertaining in my best style a negroid native chieftain, much the worse for rum! You can imagine the evening's pleasure.

This naval report on cruising in the South Seas would be incomplete without one other trait. On our voyage up here I came one day into the dining room, the hatch in the floor was open, the ship's boy was below with a baler, and two of the hands were carrying buckets as for a fire; this meant that the pumps had ceased working.

One stirring day was that in which we sighted Hawaii. It blew fair, but very strong; we carried jib, foresail, and mainsail, all single reefed, and she carried her lee rail under water and flew. The swell, the heaviest I have ever been out in I tried in vain to estimate the height, AT LEAST fifteen feet came tearing after us about a point and a half off the wind. We had the best hand old Louis at the wheel; and, really, he did nobly, and had noble luck, for it never caught us once. At times it seemed we must have it; Louis would look over his shoulder with the queerest look and dive down his

neck into his shoulders; and then it missed us somehow, and only sprays came over our quarter, turning the little outside lane of deck into a mill race as deep as to the cockpit coamings. I never remember anything more delightful and exciting. Pretty soon after we were lying absolutely becalmed under the lee of Hawaii, of which we had been warned; and the captain never confessed he had done it on purpose, but when accused, he smiled. Really, I suppose he did quite right, for we stood committed to a dangerous race, and to bring her to the wind would have been rather a heart sickening manoeuvre.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO MARCEL SCHWOB**

HONOLULU, SANDWICH ISLANDS, FEBRUARY  
8TH, 1889.

DEAR SIR, I thank you from the midst of such a flurry as you can imagine, with seven months' accumulated correspondence on my table for your two friendly and clever



letters. Pray write me again. I shall be home in May or June, and not improbably shall come to Paris in the summer. Then we can talk; or in the interval I may be able to write, which is to day out of the question. Pray take a word from a man of crushing occupations, and count it as a volume. Your little CONTE is delightful. Ah yes, you are right, I love the eighteenth century; and so do you, and have not listened to its voice in vain. The Hunted One,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

HONOLULU, 8TH MARCH 1889.

MY DEAR CHARLES, At last I have the accounts: the Doer has done excellently, and in the words of , 'I reciprocate every step of your behaviour.'...I send a letter for Bob in your care, as I don't know his Liverpool address, by which (for he is to show you part of it) you will see we have got out of this adventure or hope to have with wonderful fortune. I have the retrospective horrors on me when I think of the liabilities I

incurred; but, thank God, I think I'm in port again, and I have found one climate in which I can enjoy life. Even Honolulu is too cold for me; but the south isles were a heaven upon earth to a pair, catarrhal party like Johns'one. We think, as Tahiti is too complete a banishment, to try Madeira. It's only a week from England, good communications, and I suspect in climate and scenery not unlike our dear islands; in people, alas! there can be no comparison. But friends could go, and I could come in summer, so I should not be quite cut off.

Lloyd and I have finished a story, **THE WRONG BOX**. If it is not funny, I am sure I do not know what is. I have split over writing it. Since I have been here, I have been toiling like a galley slave: three numbers of **THE MASTER** to rewrite, five chapters of the **WRONG BOX** to write and rewrite, and about five hundred lines of a narrative poem to write, rewrite, and re rewrite. Now I have **THE MASTER** waiting me for its continuation, two numbers more; when that's done, I shall breathe. This spasm of activity has been chequered with champagne parties: Happy and Glorious,

Hawaii Ponoī paua: kou moi (Native Hawaiians, dote upon your monarch!) Hawaiian God save the King. (In addition to my other labours, I am learning the language with a native moonshee.) Kalakaua is a terrible companion; a bottle of fizz is like a glass of sherry to him, he thinks nothing of five or six in an afternoon as a whet for dinner. You should see a photograph of our party after an afternoon with H. H. M.: my! what a crew! Yours ever affectionately,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO HENRY JAMES**

HONOLULU MARCH 1889.

MY DEAR JAMES, Yes I own up I am untrue to friendship and (what is less, but still considerable) to civilisation. I am not coming home for another year. There it is, cold and bald, and now you won't believe in me at all, and serve me right (says you) and the devil take me. But look here, and judge me tenderly. I have had more fun and pleasure of my life these past months than ever before, and

more health than any time in ten long years. And even here in Honolulu I have withered in the cold; and this precious deep is filled with islands, which we may still visit; and though the sea is a deathful place, I like to be there, and like squalls (when they are over); and to draw near to a new island, I cannot say how much I like. In short, I take another year of this sort of life, and mean to try to work down among the poisoned arrows, and mean (if it may be) to come back again when the thing is through, and converse with Henry James as heretofore; and in the meanwhile issue directions to H. J. to write to me once more. Let him address here at Honolulu, for my views are vague; and if it is sent here it will follow and find me, if I am to be found; and if I am not to be found the man James will have done his duty, and we shall be at the bottom of the sea, where no post office clerk can be expected to discover us, or languishing on a coral island, the philosophic drudges of some barbarian potentate: perchance, of an American Missionary. My wife has just sent to Mrs. Sitwell a translation (TANT BIEN QUE MAL) of a letter I

have had from my chief friend in this part of the world: go and see her, and get a hearing of it; it will do you good; it is a better method of correspondence 'than even Henry James's. I jest, but seriously it is a strange thing for a tough, sick, middle aged scrivener like R. L. S. to receive a letter so conceived from a man fifty years old, a leading politician, a crack orator, and the great wit of his village: boldly say, 'the highly popular M.P. of Tautira.' My nineteenth century strikes here, and lies alongside of something beautiful and ancient. I think the receipt of such a letter might humble, shall I say even ? and for me, I would rather have received it than written REDGAUNTLET or the SIXTH AENEID. All told, if my books have enabled or helped me to make this voyage, to know Rui, and to have received such a letter, they have (in the old prefatorial expression) not been writ in vain. It would seem from this that I have been not so much humbled as puffed up; but, I assure you, I have in fact been both. A little of what that letter says is my own earning; not all, but yet a little; and the little makes me proud, and all the rest ashamed;

and in the contrast, how much more beautiful altogether is the ancient man than him of to day!

Well, well, Henry James is pretty good, though he IS of the nineteenth century, and that glaringly. And to curry favour with him, I wish I could be more explicit; but, indeed, I am still of necessity extremely vague, and cannot tell what I am to do, nor where I am to go for some while yet. As soon as I am sure, you shall hear. All are fairly well the wife, your countrywoman, least of all; troubles are not entirely wanting; but on the whole we prosper, and we are all affectionately yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

HONOLULU, APRIL 2ND, 1889.

MY DEAR COLVIN, I am beginning to be ashamed of writing on to you without the least acknowledgment, like a tramp; but I do not care I am hardened; and whatever be the cause of your silence, I mean to write till all is blue. I am

outright ashamed of my news, which is that we are not coming home for another year. I cannot but hope it may continue the vast improvement of my health: I think it good for Fanny and Lloyd; and we have all a taste for this wandering and dangerous life. My mother I send home, to my relief, as this part of our cruise will be (if we can carry it out) rather difficult in places. Here is the idea: about the middle of June (unless the Boston Board objects) we sail from Honolulu in the missionary ship (barquentine auxiliary steamer) MORNING STAR: she takes us through the Gilberts and Marshalls, and drops us (this is my great idea) on Ponape, one of the volcanic islands of the Carolines. Here we stay marooned among a doubtful population, with a Spanish vice governor and five native kings, and a sprinkling of missionaries all at loggerheads, on the chance of fetching a passage to Sydney in a trader, a labour ship, or (maybe, but this appears too bright) a ship of war. If we can't get the MORNING STAR (and the Board has many reasons that I can see for refusing its permission) I mean to try to fetch Fiji,

hire a schooner there, do the Fijis and Friendlies, hit the course of the RICHMOND at Tonga Tabu, make back by Tahiti, and so to S. F., and home: perhaps in June 1890. For the latter part of the cruise will likely be the same in either case. You can see for yourself how much variety and adventure this promises, and that it is not devoid of danger at the best; but if we can pull it off in safety, gives me a fine book of travel, and Lloyd a fine lecture and diorama, which should vastly better our finances.

I feel as if I were untrue to friendship; believe me, Colvin, when I look forward to this absence of another year, my conscience sinks at thought of the Monument; but I think you will pardon me if you consider how much this tropical weather mends my health. Remember me as I was at home, and think of me sea bathing and walking about, as jolly as a sandboy: you will own the temptation is strong; and as the scheme, bar fatal accidents, is bound to pay into the bargain, sooner or later, it seems it would be madness to come home now, with an imperfect book, no illustrations to speak of, no



diorama, and perhaps fall sick again by autumn. I do not think I delude myself when I say the tendency to catarrh has visibly diminished.

It is a singular tiring that as I was packing up old papers ere I left Skerryvore, I came on the prophecies of a drunken Highland sibyl, when I was seventeen. She said I was to be very happy, to visit America, and TO BE MUCH UPON THE SEA. It seems as if it were coming true with a vengeance. Also, do you remember my strong, old, rooted belief that I shall die by drowning? I don't want that to come true, though it is an easy death; but it occurs to me oddly, with these long chances in front. I cannot say why I like the sea; no man is more cynically and constantly alive to its perils; I regard it as the highest form of gambling; and yet I love the sea as much as I hate gambling. Fine, clean emotions; a world all and always beautiful; air better than wine; interest unflagging; there is upon the whole no better life. Yours ever,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

HONOLULU, APRIL 1889.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, This is to announce the most prodigious change of programme. I have seen so much of the South Seas that I desire to see more, and I get so much health here that I dread a return to our vile climates. I have applied accordingly to the missionary folk to let me go round in the MORNING STAR; and if the Boston Board should refuse, I shall get somehow to Fiji, hire a trading schooner, and see the Fijis and Friendlies and Samoa. He would be a South Seayer, Mr. Burlingame. Of course, if I go in the MORNING STAR, I see all the eastern (or western?) islands.

Before I sail, I shall make out to let you have the last of THE MASTER: though I tell you it sticks! and I hope to have had some proofs forbye, of the verses anyway. And now to business.

I want (if you can find them) in the British sixpenny edition, if not, in some equally compact and portable shape

Seaside Library, for instance the Waverley Novels entire, or as entire as you can get 'em, and the following of Marryat: PHANTOM SHIP, PETER SIMPLE, PERCIVAL KEENE, PRIVATEERSMAN, CHILDREN OF THE NEW FOREST, FRANK MILDMAY, NEWTON FORSTER, DOG FIEND (SNARLEYYOW). Also MIDSHIPMAN EASY, KINGSBURN, Carlyle's FRENCH REVOLUTION, Motley's DUTCH REPUBLIC, Lang's LETTERS ON LITERATURE, a complete set of my works, JENKIN, in duplicate; also FAMILIAR STUDIES, ditto.

I have to thank you for the accounts, which are satisfactory indeed, and for the cheque for \$1000. Another account will have come and gone before I see you. I hope it will be equally roseate in colour. I am quite worked out, and this cursed end of THE MASTER hangs over me like the arm of the gallows; but it is always darkest before dawn, and no doubt the clouds will soon rise; but it is a difficult thing to write, above all in Mackellarese; and I cannot yet see my way clear. If I pull this off, THE MASTER will be a pretty good

novel or I am the more deceived; and even if I don't pull it off, it'll still have some stuff in it.

We shall remain here until the middle of June anyway; but my mother leaves for Europe early in May. Hence our mail should continue to come here; but not hers. I will let you know my next address, which will probably be Sydney. If we get on the MORNING STAR, I propose at present to get marooned on Ponape, and take my chance of getting a passage to Australia. It will leave times and seasons mighty vague, and the cruise is risky; but I shall know something of the South Seas when it is done, or else the South Seas will contain all there is of me. It should give me a fine book of travels, anyway.

Low will probably come and ask some dollars of you. Pray let him have them, they are for outfit. O, another complete set of my books should go to Captain A. H. Otis, care of Dr. Merritt, Yacht CASCO, Oakland, Cal. In haste,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO MISS ADELAIDE BOODLE**

HONOLULU, APRIL 6TH, 1889.

MY DEAR MISS BOODLE, Nobody writes a better letter than my Gamekeeper: so gay, so pleasant, so engagingly particular, answering (by some delicate instinct) all the questions she suggests. It is a shame you should get such a poor return as I can make, from a mind essentially and originally incapable of the art epistolary. I would let the paper cutter take my place; but I am sorry to say the little wooden seaman did after the manner of seamen, and deserted in the Societies. The place he seems to have stayed at seems, for his absence was not observed till we were near the Equator was Tautira, and, I assure you, he displayed good taste, Tautira being as 'nigh hand heaven' as a paper cutter or anybody has a right to expect.

I think all our friends will be very angry with us, and I give the grounds of their probable displeasure bluntly we are not coming home for another year. My mother returns next

month. Fanny, Lloyd, and I push on again among the islands on a trading schooner, the EQUATOR first for the Gilbert group, which we shall have an opportunity to explore thoroughly; then, if occasion serve, to the Marshalls and Carolines; and if occasion (or money) fail, to Samoa, and back to Tahiti. I own we are deserters, but we have excuses. You cannot conceive how these climates agree with the wretched house plant of Skerryvore: he wonders to find himself sea bathing, and cutting about the world loose, like a grown up person. They agree with Fanny too, who does not suffer from her rheumatism, and with Lloyd also. And the interest of the islands is endless; and the sea, though I own it is a fearsome place, is very delightful. We had applied for places in the American missionary ship, the MORNING STAR, but this trading schooner is a far preferable idea, giving us more time and a thousandfold more liberty; so we determined to cut off the missionaries with a shilling.

The Sandwich Islands do not interest us very much; we live here, oppressed with civilisation, and look for good

things in the future. But it would surprise you if you came out to night from Honolulu (all shining with electric lights, and all in a bustle from the arrival of the mail, which is to carry you these lines) and crossed the long wooden causeway along the beach, and came out on the road through Kapiolani park, and seeing a gate in the palings, with a tub of gold fish by the wayside, entered casually in. The buildings stand in three groups by the edge of the beach, where an angry little spitfire sea continually spirts and thrashes with impotent irascibility, the big seas breaking further out upon the reef. The first is a small house, with a very large summer parlour, or LANAI, as they call it here, roofed, but practically open. There you will find the lamps burning and the family sitting about the table, dinner just done: my mother, my wife, Lloyd, Belle, my wife's daughter, Austin her child, and to night (by way of rarity) a guest. All about the walls our South Sea curiosities, war clubs, idols, pearl shells, stone axes, etc.; and the walls are only a small part of a lanai, the rest being glazed or latticed windows, or mere open space. You will see there

no sign of the Squire, however; and being a person of a humane disposition, you will only glance in over the balcony railing at the merry makers in the summer parlour, and proceed further afield after the Exile. You look round, there is beautiful green turf, many trees of an outlandish sort that drop thorns look out if your feet are bare; but I beg your pardon, you have not been long enough in the South Seas and many oleanders in full flower. The next group of buildings is ramshackle, and quite dark; you make out a coach house door, and look in only some cocoanuts; you try round to the left and come to the sea front, where Venus and the moon are making luminous tracks on the water, and a great swell rolls and shines on the outer reef; and here is another door all these places open from the outside and you go in, and find photography, tubs of water, negatives steeping, a tap, and a chair and an inkbottle, where my wife is supposed to write; round a little further, a third door, entering which you find a picture upon the easel and a table sticky with paints; a fourth door admits you to a sort of court, where there is a hen sitting



I believe on a fallacious egg. No sign of the Squire in all this. But right opposite the studio door you have observed a third little house, from whose open door lamplight streams and makes hay of the strong moonlight shadows. You had supposed it made no part of the grounds, for a fence runs round it lined with oleander; but as the Squire is nowhere else, is it not just possible he may be here? It is a grim little wooden shanty; cobwebs bedeck it; friendly mice inhabit its recesses; the mailed cockroach walks upon the wall; so also, I regret to say, the scorpion. Herein are two pallet beds, two mosquito curtains, strung to the pitch boards of the roof, two tables laden with books and manuscripts, three chairs, and, in one of the beds, the Squire busy writing to yourself, as it chances, and just at this moment somewhat bitten by mosquitoes. He has just set fire to the insect powder, and will be all right in no time; but just now he contemplates large white blisters, and would like to scratch them, but knows better. The house is not bare; it has been inhabited by Kanakas, and you know what children are! the bare wood

walls are pasted over with pages from the GRAPHIC, HARPER'S WEEKLY, etc. The floor is matted, and I am bound to say the matting is filthy. There are two windows and two doors, one of which is condemned; on the panels of that last a sheet of paper is pinned up, and covered with writing. I cull a few plums:

'A duck hammock for each person. A patent organ like the commandant's at Taiohae. Cheap and bad cigars for presents. Revolvers. Permanganate of potass. Liniment for the head and sulphur. Fine tooth comb.'

What do you think this is? Simply life in the South Seas foreshortened. These are a few of our desiderata for the next trip, which we jot down as they occur.

There, I have really done my best and tried to send something like a letter one letter in return for all your dozens. Pray remember us all to yourself, Mrs. Boodle, and the rest of your house. I do hope your mother will be better when this comes. I shall write and give you a new address when I have made up my mind as to the most probable, and I do beg you

will continue to write from time to time and give us airs from home. To morrow think of it I must be off by a quarter to eight to drive in to the palace and breakfast with his Hawaiian Majesty at 8.30: I shall be dead indeed. Please give my news to Scott, I trust he is better; give him my warm regards. To you we all send all kinds of things, and I am the absentee Squire,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

HONOLULU, APRIL 1889.

MY DEAR CHARLES, As usual, your letter is as good as a cordial, and I thank you for it, and all your care, kindness, and generous and thoughtful friendship, from my heart. I was truly glad to hear a word of Colvin, whose long silence has terrified me; and glad to hear that you condoned the notion of my staying longer in the South Seas, for I have decided in that sense. The first idea was to go in the MORNING STAR, missionary ship; but now I have found a trading schooner, the

EQUATOR, which is to call for me here early in June and carry us through the Gilberts. What will happen then, the Lord knows. My mother does not accompany us: she leaves here for home early in May, and you will hear of us from her; but not, I imagine, anything more definite. We shall get dumped on Butaritari, and whether we manage to go on to the Marshalls and Carolines, or whether we fall back on Samoa, Heaven must decide; but I mean to fetch back into the course of the RICHMOND (to think you don't know what the RICHMOND is! the steamer of the Eastern South Seas, joining New Zealand, Tongatabu, the Samoas, Taheite, and Rarotonga, and carrying by last advices sheep in the saloon!) into the course of the RICHMOND and make Taheite again on the home track. Would I like to see the SCOTS OBSERVER? Wouldn't I not? But whaur? I'm direckit at space. They have nae post offishes at the Gilberts, and as for the Car'lines! Ye see, Mr. Baxter, we're no just in the punkshewal CENTRE o' civ'lisation. But pile them up for me, and when I've decided on an address, I'll let you ken, and

ye'll can send them stavin' after me. Ever your affectionate,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

HONOLULU, 10TH MAY 1889.

MY DEAR CHARLES, I am appalled to gather from your last just to hand that you have felt so much concern about the letter. Pray dismiss it from your mind. But I think you scarce appreciate how disagreeable it is to have your private affairs and private unguarded expressions getting into print. It would soon sicken any one of writing letters. I have no doubt that letter was very wisely selected, but it just shows how things crop up. There was a raging jealousy between the two yachts; our captain was nearly in a fight over it. However, no more; and whatever you think, my dear fellow, do not suppose me angry with you or ; although I was ANNOYED AT THE CIRCUMSTANCE a very different thing. But it is difficult to conduct life by letter, and I continually feel I may be drifting into some matter of offence,

in which my heart takes no part.

I must now turn to a point of business. This new cruise of ours is somewhat venturesome; and I think it needful to warn you not to be in a hurry to suppose us dead. In these ill charted seas, it is quite on the cards we might be cast on some unvisited, or very rarely visited, island; that there we might lie for a long time, even years, unheard of; and yet turn up smiling at the hinder end. So do not let me be 'rowpit' till you get some certainty we have gone to Davie Jones in a squall, or graced the feast of some barbarian in the character of Long Pig.

I have just been a week away alone on the lee coast of Hawaii, the only white creature in many miles, riding five and a half hours one day, living with a native, seeing four lepers shipped off to Molokai, hearing native causes, and giving my opinion as *AMICUS CURIAE* as to the interpretation of a statute in English; a lovely week among God's best at least God's sweetest works Polynesians. It has bettered me greatly. If I could only stay there the time that

remains, I could get my work done and be happy; but the care of my family keeps me in vile Honolulu, where I am always out of sorts, amidst heat and cold and cesspools and beastly HAOLES. What is a haole? You are one; and so, I am sorry to say, am I. After so long a dose of whites, it was a blessing to get among Polynesians again even for a week.

Well, Charles, there are waur haoles than yoursel', I'll say that for ye; and trust before I sail I shall get another letter with more about yourself. Ever your affectionate friend

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO W H LOW**

HONOLULU, (ABOUT) 20TH MAY '89.

MY DEAR LOW, The goods have come; many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. I have at length finished THE MASTER; it has been a sore cross to me; but now he is buried, his body's under hatches, his soul, if there is any hell to go to, gone to hell; and I forgive him: it is harder to forgive Burlingame for having

induced me to begin the publication, or myself for suffering the induction. Yes, I think Hole has done finely; it will be one of the most adequately illustrated books of our generation; he gets the note, he tells the story MY story: I know only one failure the Master standing on the beach. You must have a letter for me at Sydney till further notice. Remember me to Mrs. Will. H., the godlike sculptor, and any of the faithful. If you want to cease to be a republican, see my little Kaiulani, as she goes through but she is gone already. You will die a red, I wear the colours of that little royal maiden, NOUS ALLONS CHANTER A LA RONDE, SI VOUS VOULEZ! only she is not blonde by several chalks, though she is but a half blood, and the wrong half Edinburgh Scots like myself. But, O Low, I love the Polynesian: this civilisation of ours is a dingy, ungentlemanly business; it drops out too much of man, and too much of that the very beauty of the poor beast: who has his beauties in spite of Zola and Co. As usual, here is a whole letter with no news: I am a bloodless, inhuman dog; and no doubt Zola is a better correspondent. Long live your



fine old English admiral yours, I mean the U.S.A. one at Samoa; I wept tears and loved myself and mankind when I read of him: he is not too much civilised. And there was Gordon, too; and there are others, beyond question. But if you could live, the only white folk, in a Polynesian village; and drink that warm, light VIN DU PAYS of human affection, and enjoy that simple dignity of all about you I will not gush, for I am now in my fortieth year, which seems highly unjust, but there it is, Mr. Low, and the Lord enlighten your affectionate

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO MRS. R. L. STEVENSON**

KALAWAO, MOLOKAI MAY 1889.

DEAR FANNY, I had a lovely sail up. Captain Cameron and Mr. Gilfillan, both born in the States, yet the first still with a strong Highland, and the second still with a strong Lowland accent, were good company; the night was warm, the victuals plain but good. Mr. Gilfillan gave me his berth,

and I slept well, though I heard the sisters sick in the next stateroom, poor souls. Heavy rolling woke me in the morning; I turned in all standing, so went right on the upper deck. The day was on the peep out of a low morning bank, and we were wallowing along under stupendous cliffs. As the lights brightened, we could see certain abutments and buttresses on their front where wood clustered and grass grew brightly. But the whole brow seemed quite impassable, and my heart sank at the sight. Two thousand feet of rock making 19 degrees (the Captain guesses) seemed quite beyond my powers. However, I had come so far; and, to tell you the truth, I was so cowed with fear and disgust that I dared not go back on the adventure in the interests of my own self respect. Presently we came up with the leper promontory: lowland, quite bare and bleak and harsh, a little town of wooden houses, two churches, a landing stair, all unsightly, sour, northerly, lying athwart the sunrise, with the great wall of the pali cutting the world out on the south. Our lepers were sent on the first boat, about a dozen, one poor child very horrid,

one white man, leaving a large grown family behind him in Honolulu, and then into the second stepped the sisters and myself. I do not know how it would have been with me had the sisters not been there. My horror of the horrible is about my weakest point; but the moral loveliness at my elbow blotted all else out; and when I found that one of them was crying, poor soul, quietly under her veil, I cried a little myself; then I felt as right as a trivet, only a little crushed to be there so uselessly. I thought it was a sin and a shame she should feel unhappy; I turned round to her, and said something like this: 'Ladies, God Himself is here to give you welcome. I'm sure it is good for me to be beside you; I hope it will be blessed to me; I thank you for myself and the good you do me.' It seemed to cheer her up; but indeed I had scarce said it when we were at the landing stairs, and there was a great crowd, hundreds of (God save us!) pantomime masks in poor human flesh, waiting to receive the sisters and the new patients.

Every hand was offered: I had gloves, but I had made up

my mind on the boat's voyage NOT to give my hand; that seemed less offensive than the gloves. So the sisters and I went up among that crew, and presently I got aside (for I felt I had no business there) and set off on foot across the promontory, carrying my wrap and the camera. All horror was quite gone from me: to see these dread creatures smile and look happy was beautiful. On my way through Kalaupapa I was exchanging cheerful ALOHAS with the patients coming galloping over on their horses; I was stopping to gossip at house doors; I was happy, only ashamed of myself that I was here for no good. One woman was pretty, and spoke good English, and was infinitely engaging and (in the old phrase) towardly; she thought I was the new white patient; and when she found I was only a visitor, a curious change came in her face and voice the only sad thing, morally sad, I mean that I met that morning. But for all that, they tell me none want to leave. Beyond Kalaupapa the houses became rare; dry stone dykes, grassy, stony land, one sick pandanus; a dreary country; from overhead in the little

clinging wood shogs of the pali chirruping of birds fell; the low sun was right in my face; the trade blew pure and cool and delicious; I felt as right as ninepence, and stopped and chatted with the patients whom I still met on their horses, with not the least disgust. About half way over, I met the superintendent (a leper) with a horse for me, and O, wasn't I glad! But the horse was one of those curious, dogged, cranky brutes that always dully want to go somewhere else, and my traffic with him completed my crushing fatigue. I got to the guest house, an empty house with several rooms, kitchen, bath, etc. There was no one there, and I let the horse go loose in the garden, lay down on the bed, and fell asleep.

Dr. Swift woke me and gave me breakfast, then I came back and slept again while he was at the dispensary, and he woke me for dinner; and I came back and slept again, and he woke me about six for supper; and then in about an hour I felt tired again, and came up to my solitary guest house, played the flageolet, and am now writing to you. As yet, you see, I have seen nothing of the settlement, and my crushing fatigue

(though I believe that was moral and a measure of my cowardice) and the doctor's opinion make me think the pali hopeless. 'You don't look a strong man,' said the doctor; 'but are you sound?' I told him the truth; then he said it was out of the question, and if I were to get up at all, I must be carried up. But, as it seems, men as well as horses continually fall on this ascent: the doctor goes up with a change of clothes it is plain that to be carried would in itself be very fatiguing to both mind and body; and I should then be at the beginning of thirteen miles of mountain road to be ridden against time. How should I come through? I hope you will think me right in my decision: I mean to stay, and shall not be back in Honolulu till Saturday, June first. You must all do the best you can to make ready.

Dr. Swift has a wife and an infant son, beginning to toddle and run, and they live here as composed as brick and mortar at least the wife does, a Kentucky German, a fine enough creature, I believe, who was quite amazed at the sisters shedding tears! How strange is mankind! Gilfillan too,

a good fellow I think, and far from a stupid, kept up his hard Lowland Scottish talk in the boat while the sister was covering her face; but I believe he knew, and did it (partly) in embarrassment, and part perhaps in mistaken kindness. And that was one reason, too, why I made my speech to them. Partly, too, I did it, because I was ashamed to do so, and remembered one of my golden rules, 'When you are ashamed to speak, speak up at once.' But, mind you, that rule is only golden with strangers; with your own folks, there are other considerations. This is a strange place to be in. A bell has been sounded at intervals while I wrote, now all is still but a musical humming of the sea, not unlike the sound of telegraph wires; the night is quite cool and pitch dark, with a small fine rain; one light over in the leper settlement, one cricket whistling in the garden, my lamp here by my bedside, and my pen cheeping between my inky fingers.

Next day, lovely morning, slept all night, 80 degrees in the shade, strong, sweet Anaho trade wind.

LOUIS.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

HONOLULU, JUNE 1889.

MY DEAR COLVIN, I am just home after twelve days journey to Molokai, seven of them at the leper settlement, where I can only say that the sight of so much courage, cheerfulness, and devotion strung me too high to mind the infinite pity and horror of the sights. I used to ride over from Kalawao to Kalaupapa (about three miles across the promontory, the cliff wall, ivied with forest and yet inaccessible from steepness, on my left), go to the Sisters' home, which is a miracle of neatness, play a game of croquet with seven leper girls (90 degrees in the shade), got a little old maid meal served me by the Sisters, and ride home again, tired enough, but not too tired. The girls have all dolls, and love dressing them. You who know so many ladies delicately clad, and they who know so many dressmakers, please make it known it would be an acceptable gift to send scraps for doll dressmaking to the Reverend Sister Maryanne, Bishop Home,



Kalaupapa, Molokai, Hawaiian Islands.

I have seen sights that cannot be told, and heard stories that cannot be repeated: yet I never admired my poor race so much, nor (strange as it may seem) loved life more than in the settlement. A horror of moral beauty broods over the place: that's like bad Victor Hugo, but it is the only way I can express the sense that lived with me all these days. And this even though it was in great part Catholic, and my sympathies flew never with so much difficulty as towards Catholic virtues. The pass book kept with heaven stirs me to anger and laughter. One of the sisters calls the place 'the ticket office to heaven.' Well, what is the odds? They do their darg and do it with kindness and efficiency incredible; and we must take folk's virtues as we find them, and love the better part. Of old Damien, whose weaknesses and worse perhaps I heard fully, I think only the more. It was a European peasant: dirty, bigoted, untruthful, unwise, tricky, but superb with generosity, residual candour and fundamental good humour: convince him he had done wrong (it might take hours of insult) and he

would undo what he had done and like his corrector better. A man, with all the grime and paltriness of mankind, but a saint and hero all the more for that. The place as regards scenery is grand, gloomy, and bleak. Mighty mountain walls descending sheer along the whole face of the island into a sea unusually deep; the front of the mountain ivied and furred with clinging forest, one viridescent cliff: about half way from east to west, the low, bare, stony promontory edged in between the cliff and the ocean; the two little towns (Kalawao and Kalaupapa) seated on either side of it, as bare almost as bathing machines upon a beach; and the population gorgons and chimaeras dire. All this tear of the nerves I bore admirably; and the day after I got away, rode twenty miles along the opposite coast and up into the mountains: they call it twenty, I am doubtful of the figures: I should guess it nearer twelve; but let me take credit for what residents allege; and I was riding again the day after, so I need say no more about health. Honolulu does not agree with me at all: I am always out of sorts there, with slight headache, blood to the head, etc. I had a good deal of work to

do and did it with miserable difficulty; and yet all the time I have been gaining strength, as you see, which is highly encouraging. By the time I am done with this cruise I shall have the material for a very singular book of travels: names of strange stories and characters, cannibals, pirates, ancient legends, old Polynesian poetry, never was so generous a farrago. I am going down now to get the story of a shipwrecked family, who were fifteen months on an island with a murderer: there is a specimen. The Pacific is a strange place; the nineteenth century only exists there in spots: all round, it is a no man's land of the ages, a stir about of epochs and races, barbarisms and civilisations, virtues and crimes.

It is good of you to let me stay longer, but if I had known how ill you were, I should be now on my way home. I had chartered my schooner and made all arrangements before (at last) we got definite news. I feel highly guilty; I should be back to insult and worry you a little. Our address till further notice is to be c/o R. Towns and Co., Sydney. That is final: I only got the arrangement made yesterday; but you may now

publish it abroad. Yours ever,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO JAMES PAYN**

HONOLULU, H.I., JUNE 13TH, 1889.

MY DEAR JAMES PAYN, I get sad news of you here at my offsetting for further voyages: I wish I could say what I feel. Sure there was never any man less deserved this calamity; for I have heard you speak time and again, and I remember nothing that was unkind, nothing that was untrue, nothing that was not helpful, from your lips. It is the ill talkers that should hear no more. God knows, I know no word of consolation; but I do feel your trouble. You are the more open to letters now; let me talk to you for two pages. I have nothing but happiness to tell; and you may bless God you are a man so sound hearted that (even in the freshness of your calamity) I can come to you with my own good fortune unashamed and secure of sympathy. It is a good thing to be a good man, whether deaf or whether dumb; and of all our

fellow craftsmen (whom yet they count a jealous race), I never knew one but gave you the name of honesty and kindness: come to think of it gravely, this is better than the finest hearing. We are all on the march to deafness, blindness, and all conceivable and fatal disabilities; we shall not all get there with a report so good. My good news is a health astonishingly reinstated. This climate; these voyagings; these landfalls at dawn; new islands peaking from the morning bank; new forested harbours; new passing alarms of squalls and surf; new interests of gentle natives, the whole tale of my life is better to me than any poem.

I am fresh just now from the leper settlement of Molokai, playing croquet with seven leper girls, sitting and yarning with old, blind, leper beachcombers in the hospital, sickened with the spectacle of abhorrent suffering and deformation amongst the patients, touched to the heart by the sight of lovely and effective virtues in their helpers: no stranger time have I ever had, nor any so moving. I do not think it a little thing to be deaf, God knows, and God defend me from the

same! but to be a leper, of one of the self condemned, how much more awful! and yet there's a way there also. 'There are Molokais everywhere,' said Mr. Dutton, Father Damien's dresser; you are but new landed in yours; and my dear and kind adviser, I wish you, with all my soul, that patience and courage which you will require. Think of me meanwhile on a trading schooner, bound for the Gilbert Islands, thereafter for the Marshalls, with a diet of fish and cocoanut before me; bound on a cruise of well, of investigation to what islands we can reach, and to get (some day or other) to Sydney, where a letter addressed to the care of R. Towns & Co. will find me sooner or later; and if it contain any good news, whether of your welfare or the courage with which you bear the contrary, will do me good. Yours affectionately (although so near a stranger),

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

SCHOONER 'EQUATOR,' APAIANG LAGOON,  
AUGUST 22ND, 1889.

MY DEAR COLVIN, The missionary ship is outside the reef trying (vainly) to get in; so I may have a chance to get a line off. I am glad to say I shall be home by June next for the summer, or we shall know the reason why. For God's sake be well and jolly for the meeting. I shall be, I believe, a different character from what you have seen this long while. This cruise is up to now a huge success, being interesting, pleasant, and profitable. The beachcomber is perhaps the most interesting character here; the natives are very different, on the whole, from Polynesians: they are moral, stand offish (for good reasons), and protected by a dark tongue. It is delightful to meet the few Hawaiians (mostly missionaries) that are dotted about, with their Italian BRIO and their ready friendliness. The whites are a strange lot, many of them good, kind, pleasant fellows; others quite the lowest I have ever

seen even in the slums of cities. I wish I had time to narrate to you the doings and character of three white murderers (more or less proven) I have met. One, the only undoubted assassin of the lot, quite gained my affection in his big home out of a wreck, with his New Hebrides wife in her savage turban of hair and yet a perfect lady, and his three adorable little girls in Rob Roy Macgregor dresses, dancing to the hand organ, performing circus on the floor with startling effects of nudity, and curling up together on a mat to sleep, three sizes, three attitudes, three Rob Roy dresses, and six little clenched fists: the murderer meanwhile brooding and gloating over his chicks, till your whole heart went out to him; and yet his crime on the face of it was dark: disembowelling, in his own house, an old man of seventy, and him drunk.

It is lunch time, I see, and I must close up with my warmest love to you. I wish you were here to sit upon me when required. Ah! if you were but a good sailor! I will never leave the sea, I think; it is only there that a Briton lives: my poor grandfather, it is from him I inherit the taste, I fancy,



and he was round many islands in his day; but I, please God, shall beat him at that before the recall is sounded. Would you be surprised to learn that I contemplate becoming a shipowner? I do, but it is a secret. Life is far better fun than people dream who fall asleep among the chimney stacks and telegraph wires.

Love to Henry James and others near. Ever yours, my dear fellow,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

EQUATOR TOWN, APEMAMA, OCTOBER 1889.

No MORNING STAR came, however; and so now I try to send this to you by the schooner J. L. TIERNAN. We have been about a month ashore, camping out in a kind of town the king set up for us: on the idea that I was really a 'big chief' in England. He dines with us sometimes, and sends up a cook for a share of our meals when he does not come himself. This sounds like high living! alas, undeceive yourself. Salt junk is the mainstay; a low island, except for cocoanuts, is just the same as a ship at sea: brackish water, no supplies, and very

little shelter. The king is a great character a thorough tyrant, very much of a gentleman, a poet, a musician, a historian, or perhaps rather more a genealogist it is strange to see him lying in his house among a lot of wives (nominal wives) writing the History of Apemama in an account book; his description of one of his own songs, which he sang to me himself, as 'about sweethearts, and trees, and the sea and no true, all the same lie,' seems about as compendious a definition of lyric poetry as a man could ask. Tembinoka is here the great attraction: all the rest is heat and tedium and villainous dazzle, and yet more villainous mosquitoes. We are like to be here, however, many a long week before we get away, and then whither? A strange trade this voyaging: so vague, so bound down, so helpless. Fanny has been planting some vegetables, and we have actually onions and radishes coming up: ah, onion despiser, were you but awhile in a low island, how your heart would leap at sight of a coster's barrow! I think I could shed tears over a dish of turnips. No doubt we shall all be glad to say farewell to low islands I had

near said for ever. They are very tame; and I begin to read up the directory, and pine for an island with a profile, a running brook, or were it only a well among the rocks. The thought of a mango came to me early this morning and set my greed on edge; but you do not know what a mango is, so .

I have been thinking a great deal of you and the Monument of late, and even tried to get my thoughts into a poem, hitherto without success. God knows how you are: I begin to weary dreadfully to see you well, in nine months, I hope; but that seems a long time. I wonder what has befallen me too, that flimsy part of me that lives (or dwindles) in the public mind; and what has befallen THE MASTER, and what kind of a Box the Merry Box has been found. It is odd to know nothing of all this. We had an old woman to do devil work for you about a month ago, in a Chinaman's house on Apaiang (August 23rd or 24th). You should have seen the crone with a noble masculine face, like that of an old crone SIC, a body like a man's (naked all but the feathery female girdle), knotting cocoanut leaves and muttering spells: Fanny

and I, and the good captain of the EQUATOR, and the Chinaman and his native wife and sister in law, all squatting on the floor about the sibyl; and a crowd of dark faces watching from behind her shoulder (she sat right in the doorway) and tittering aloud with strange, appalled, embarrassed laughter at each fresh adjuration. She informed us you were in England, not travelling and now no longer sick; she promised us a fair wind the next day, and we had it, so I cherish the hope she was as right about Sidney Colvin. The shipowning has rather petered out since I last wrote, and a good many other plans beside.

Health? Fanny very so so; I pretty right upon the whole, and getting through plenty work: I know not quite how, but it seems to me not bad and in places funny.

South Sea Yarns:

1. THE WRECKER } } R. L. S. 2. THE PEARL  
FISHER } by and } Lloyd O. 3. THE BEACHCOMBERS }

THE PEARL FISHER, part done, lies in Sydney. It is THE WRECKER we are now engaged upon: strange ways of

life, I think, they set forth: things that I can scarce touch upon, or even not at all, in my travel book; and the yarns are good, I do believe. THE PEARL FISHER is for the NEW YORK LEDGER: the yarn is a kind of Monte Cristo one. THE WRECKER is the least good as a story, I think; but the characters seem to me good. THE BEACHCOMBERS is more sentimental. These three scarce touch the outskirts of the life we have been viewing; a hot bed of strange characters and incidents: Lord, how different from Europe or the Pallid States! Farewell. Heaven knows when this will get to you. I burn to be in Sydney and have news.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

SCHOONER 'EQUATOR,' AT SEA. 190 MILES OFF SAMOA. MONDAY, DECEMBER 2ND, 1889

MY DEAR COLVIN, We are just nearing the end of our long cruise. Rain, calms, squalls, bang there's the foretopmast gone; rain, calm, squalls, away with the staysail; more rain,

more calm, more squalls; a prodigious heavy sea all the time, and the EQUATOR staggering and hovering like a swallow in a storm; and the cabin, a great square, crowded with wet human beings, and the rain avalanching on the deck, and the leaks dripping everywhere: Fanny, in the midst of fifteen males, bearing up wonderfully. But such voyages are at the best a trial. We had one particularity: coming down on Winslow Reef, p. d. (position doubtful): two positions in the directory, a third (if you cared to count that) on the chart; heavy sea running, and the night due. The boats were cleared, bread put on board, and we made up our packets for a boat voyage of four or five hundred miles, and turned in, expectant of a crash. Needless to say it did not come, and no doubt we were far to leeward. If we only had twopenceworth of wind, we might be at dinner in Apia to morrow evening; but no such luck: here we roll, dead before a light air and that is no point of sailing at all for a fore and aft schooner the sun blazing overhead, thermometer 88 degrees, four degrees above what I have learned to call South Sea temperature; but

for all that, land so near, and so much grief being happily astern, we are all pretty gay on board, and have been photographing and draught playing and sky larking like anything. I am minded to stay not very long in Samoa and confine my studies there (as far as any one can forecast) to the history of the late war. My book is now practically modelled: if I can execute what is designed, there are few better books now extant on this globe, bar the epics, and the big tragedies, and histories, and the choice lyric poetics and a novel or so none. But it is not executed yet; and let not him that putteth on his armour, vaunt himself. At least, nobody has had such stuff; such wild stories, such beautiful scenes, such singular intimacies, such manners and traditions, so incredible a mixture of the beautiful and horrible, the savage and civilised. I will give you here some idea of the table of contents, which ought to make your mouth water. I propose to call the book THE SOUTH SEAS: it is rather a large title, but not many people have seen more of them than I, perhaps no one certainly no one capable of using the material.

PART I. GENERAL. 'OF SCHOONERS, ISLANDS,  
AND MAROONS.'

CHAPTER I. Marine.

II. Contraband (smuggling, barratry, labour traffic).

III. The Beachcomber.

IV. Beachcomber stories. i. The Murder of the  
Chinaman. ii. Death of a Beachcomber. iii. A Character. iv.  
The Apia Blacksmith.

PART II. THE MARQUESAS.

V. Anaho. i. Arrival. ii. Death. iii. The Tapu. iv. Morals.  
v. Hoka.

VI. Tai o hae. i. Arrival. ii. The French. iii. The Royal  
Family. iv. Chiefless Folk. v. The Catholics. vi. Hawaiian  
Missionaries.

VII. Observations of a Long Pig. i. Cannibalism. ii.  
Hatiheu. iii. Frere Michel. iv. Toahauka and Atuona. v. The  
Vale of Atuona. vi. Moipu. vii. Captain Hati.

PART III. THE DANGEROUS ARCHIPELAGO.

VIII. The Group.



IX. A House to let in a Low Island.

X. A Paumotuan Funeral. i. The Funeral. ii. Tales of the Dead.

PART IV. TAHITI.

XI. Tautira.

XII. Village Government in Tahiti.

XIII. A Journey in Quest of Legends.

XIV. Legends and Songs.

XV. Life in Eden.

XVI. Note on the French Regimen.

PART V. THE EIGHT ISLANDS.

XVII. A Note on Missions.

XVIII. The Kona Coast of Hawaii. i. Hookena. ii. A Ride in the Forest. iii. A Law Case. iv. The City of Refuge. v. The Lepers.

XIX. Molokai. i. A Week in the Precinct. ii. History of the Leper Settlement. iii. The Mokolii. iv. The Free Island.

PART VI. THE GILBERTS.

XX. The Group. ii. Position of Woman. iii. The

Missions. iv. Devilwork. v. Republics.

XXI. Rule and Misrule on Makin. i. Butaritari, its King and Court. ii. History of Three Kings. iii. The Drink Question.

XXII. A Butaritarian Festival.

XXIII. The King of Apemama. i. First Impressions. ii. Equator Town and the Palace. iii. The Three Corselets.

PART VII. SAMOA.

which I have not yet reached.

Even as so sketched it makes sixty chapters, not less than 300 CORNHILL pages; and I suspect not much under 500. Samoa has yet to be accounted for: I think it will be all history, and I shall work in observations on Samoan manners, under the similar heads in other Polynesian islands. It is still possible, though unlikely, that I may add a passing visit to Fiji or Tonga, or even both; but I am growing impatient to see yourself, and I do not want to be later than June of coming to England. Anyway, you see it will be a large work, and as it will be copiously illustrated, the Lord knows what it will cost.

We shall return, God willing, by Sydney, Ceylon, Suez and, I guess, Marseilles the many masted (copyright epithet). I shall likely pause a day or two in Paris, but all that is too far ahead although now it begins to look near so near, and I can hear the rattle of the hansom up Endell Street, and see the gates swing back, and feel myself jump out upon the Monument steps Hosanna! home again. My dear fellow, now that my father is done with his troubles, and 17 Heriot Row no more than a mere shell, you and that gaunt old Monument in Bloomsbury are all that I have in view when I use the word home; some passing thoughts there may be of the rooms at Skerryvore, and the black birds in the chine on a May morning; but the essence is S. C. and the Museum. Suppose, by some damned accident, you were no more: well, I should return just the same, because of my mother and Lloyd, whom I now think to send to Cambridge; but all the spring would have gone out of me, and ninety per cent. of the attraction lost. I will copy for you here a copy of verses made in Apemama.

I heard the pulse of the besieging sea Throb far away all night. I heard the wind Fly crying, and convulse tumultuous palms. I rose and strolled. The isle was all bright sand, And flailing fans and shadows of the palm: The heaven all moon, and wind, and the blind vault The keenest planet slain, for Venus slept. The King, my neighbour, with his host of wives, Slept in the precinct of the palisade: Where single, in the wind, under the moon, Among the slumbering cabins, blazed a fire, Sole street lamp and the only sentinel. To other lands and nights my fancy turned, To London first, and chiefly to your house, The many pillared and the well beloved. There yearning fancy lighted; there again In the upper room I lay and heard far off The unsleeping city murmur like a shell; The muffled tramp of the Museum guard Once more went by me; I beheld again Lamps vainly brighten the dispeopled street; Again I longed for the returning morn, The awaking traffic, the bestirring birds, The consentaneous trill of tiny song That weaves round monumental cornices A passing charm of beauty: most of all, For your light foot I wearied,

and your knock That was the glad reveille of my day. Lo,  
now, when to your task in the great house At morning  
through the portico you pass, One moment glance where, by  
the pillared wall, Far voyaging island gods, begrimed with  
smoke, Sit now unworshipped, the rude monument Of faiths  
forgot and races undivined; Sit now disconsolate,  
remembering well The priest, the victim, and the songful  
crowd, The blaze of the blue noon, and that huge voice  
Incessant, of the breakers on the shore. As far as these from  
their ancestral shrine, So far, so foreign, your divided friends  
Wander, estranged in body, not in mind.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

SCHOONER 'EQUATOR,' AT SEA, WEDNESDAY,  
4TH DECEMBER 1889.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, We are now about to rise,  
like whales, from this long dive, and I make ready a  
communication which is to go to you by the first mail from

Samoa. How long we shall stay in that group I cannot forecast; but it will be best still to address at Sydney, where I trust, when I shall arrive, perhaps in one month from now, more probably in two or three, to find all news.

BUSINESS. Will you be likely to have a space in the Magazine for a serial story, which should be, ready, I believe, by April, at latest by autumn? It is called THE WRECKER; and in book form will appear as number 1 of South Sea Yarns by R. L. S. and Lloyd Osbourne. Here is the table as far as fully conceived, and indeed executed. ...

The story is founded on fact, the mystery I really believe to be insoluble; the purchase of a wreck has never been handled before, no more has San Francisco. These seem all elements of success. There is, besides, a character, Jim Pinkerton, of the advertising American, on whom we build a good deal; and some sketches of the American merchant marine, opium smuggling in Honolulu, etc. It should run to (about) three hundred pages of my MS. I would like to know if this tale smiles upon you, if you will have a vacancy, and

what you will be willing to pay. It will of course be copyright in both the States and England. I am a little anxious to have it tried serially, as it tests the interest of the mystery.

PLEASURE. We have had a fine time in the Gilbert group, though four months on low islands, which involves low diet, is a largish order; and my wife is rather down. I am myself, up to now, a pillar of health, though our long and vile voyage of calms, squalls, cataracts of rain, sails carried away, foretopmast lost, boats cleared and packets made on the approach of a p. d. reef, etc., has cured me of salt brine, and filled me with a longing for beef steak and mangoes not to be depicted. The interest has been immense. Old King Tembinoka of Apemama, the Napoleon of the group, poet, tyrant, altogether a man of mark, gave me the woven corselets of his grandfather, his father and his uncle, and, what pleased me more, told me their singular story, then all manner of strange tales, facts and experiences for my South Sea book, which should be a Tearer, Mr. Burlingame: no one at least has had such stuff.

We are now engaged in the hell of a dead calm, the heat is cruel it is the only time when I suffer from heat: I have nothing on but a pair of serge trousers, and a singlet without sleeves of Oxford gauze O, yes, and a red sash about my waist; and yet as I sit here in the cabin, sweat streams from me. The rest are on deck under a bit of awning; we are not much above a hundred miles from port, and we might as well be in Kamschatka. However, I should be honest: this is the first calm I have endured without the added bane of a heavy swell, and the intoxicated blue bottle wallowings and knockings of the helpless ship.

I wonder how you liked the end of THE MASTER; that was the hardest job I ever had to do; did I do it?

My wife begs to be remembered to yourself and Mrs. Burlingame. Remember all of us to all friends, particularly Low, in case I don't get a word through for him. I am, yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.



**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

SAMOA, DECEMBER 1889.

MY DEAR BAXTER,... I cannot return until I have seen either Tonga or Fiji or both: and I must not leave here till I have finished my collections on the war a very interesting bit of history, the truth often very hard to come at, and the search (for me) much complicated by the German tongue, from the use of which I have desisted (I suppose) these fifteen years. The last two days I have been mugging with a dictionary from five to six hours a day; besides this, I have to call upon, keep sweet, and judiciously interview all sorts of persons English, American, German, and Samoan. It makes a hard life; above all, as after every interview I have to come and get my notes straight on the nail. I believe I should have got my facts before the end of January, when I shall make our Tonga or Fiji. I am down right in the hurricane season; but they had so bad a one last year, I don't imagine there will be much of an edition this. Say that I get to Sydney

some time in April, and I shall have done well, and be in a position to write a very singular and interesting book, or rather two; for I shall begin, I think, with a separate opuscle on the Samoan Trouble, about as long as KIDNAPPED, not very interesting, but valuable and a thing proper to be done. And then, hey! for the big South Sea Book: a devil of a big one, and full of the finest sport.

This morning as I was going along to my breakfast a little before seven, reading a number of BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, I was startled by a soft TALOFA, ALII (note for my mother: they are quite courteous here in the European style, quite unlike Tahiti), right in my ear: it was Mataafa coming from early mass in his white coat and white linen kilt, with three fellows behind him. Mataafa is the nearest thing to a hero in my history, and really a fine fellow; plenty sense, and the most dignified, quiet, gentle manners. Talking of BLACKWOOD a file of which I was lucky enough to find here in the lawyer's Mrs. Oliphant seems in a staggering state: from the WRONG BOX to THE MASTER I scarce recognise

either my critic or myself. I gather that THE MASTER should do well, and at least that notice is agreeable reading. I expect to be home in June: you will have gathered that I am pretty well. In addition to my labours, I suppose I walk five or six miles a day, and almost every day I ride up and see Fanny and Lloyd, who are in a house in the bush with Ah Fu. I live in Apia for history's sake with Moors, an American trader. Day before yesterday I was arrested and fined for riding fast in the street, which made my blood bitter, as the wife of the manager of the German Firm has twice almost ridden me down, and there seems none to say her nay. The Germans have behaved pretty badly here, but not in all ways so ill as you may have gathered: they were doubtless much provoked; and if the insane Knappe had not appeared upon the scene, might have got out of the muddle with dignity. I write along without rhyme or reason, as things occur to me.

I hope from my outcries about printing you do not think I want you to keep my news or letters in a Blue Beard closet. I like all friends to hear of me; they all should if I had ninety

hours in the day, and strength for all of them; but you must have gathered how hard worked I am, and you will understand I go to bed a pretty tired man.

29TH DECEMBER, 1889.

To morrow (Monday, I won't swear to my day of the month; this is the Sunday between Christmas and New Year) I go up the coast with Mr. Clarke, one of the London Society missionaries, in a boat to examine schools, see Tamasese, etc. Lloyd comes to photograph. Pray Heaven we have good weather; this is the rainy season; we shall be gone four or five days; and if the rain keep off, I shall be glad of the change; if it rain, it will be beastly. This explains still further how hard pressed I am, as the mail will be gone ere I return, and I have thus lost the days I meant to write in. I have a boy, Henry, who interprets and copies for me, and is a great nuisance. He said he wished to come to me in order to learn 'long expressions.' Henry goes up along with us; and as I am not fond of him, he may before the trip is over hear some 'strong expressions.' I am writing this on the back balcony at

Moors', palms and a hill like the hill of Kinnoull looking in at me; myself lying on the floor, and (like the parties in Handel's song) 'clad in robes of virgin white'; the ink is dreadful, the heat delicious, a fine going breeze in the palms, and from the other side of the house the sudden angry splash and roar of the Pacific on the reef, where the warships are still piled from last year's hurricane, some under water, one high and dry upon her side, the strangest figure of a ship was ever witnessed; the narrow bay there is full of ships; the men of war covered with sail after the rains, and (especially the German ship, which is fearfully and awfully top heavy) rolling almost yards in, in what appears to be calm water.

Samoa, Apia at least, is far less beautiful than the Marquesas or Tahiti: a more gentle scene, gentler acclivities, a tamer face of nature; and this much aided, for the wanderer, by the great German plantations with their countless regular avenues of palms. The island has beautiful rivers, of about the bigness of our waters in the Lothians, with pleasant pools and waterfalls and overhanging verdure, and often a great

volume of sound, so that once I thought I was passing near a mill, and it was only the voice of the river. I am not specially attracted by the people; but they are courteous; the women very attractive, and dress lovely; the men purposedlike, well set up, tall, lean, and dignified. As I write the breeze is brisking up, doors are beginning to slam: and shutters; a strong draught sweeps round the balcony; it looks doubtful for to morrow. Here I shut up. Ever your affectionate,

R. L. STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO DR SCOTT**

APIA, SAMOA, JANUARY 20TH, 1890.

MY DEAR SCOTT, Shameful indeed that you should not have heard of me before! I have now been some twenty months in the South Seas, and am (up to date) a person whom you would scarce know. I think nothing of long walks and rides: I was four hours and a half gone the other day, partly riding, partly climbing up a steep ravine. I have stood a six months' voyage on a copra schooner with about three months

ashore on coral atolls, which means (except for cocoanuts to drink) no change whatever from ship's food. My wife suffered badly it was too rough a business altogether Lloyd suffered and, in short, I was the only one of the party who 'kept my end up.'

I am so pleased with this climate that I have decided to settle; have even purchased a piece of land from three to four hundred acres, I know not which till the survey is completed, and shall only return next summer to wind up my affairs in England; thenceforth I mean to be a subject of the High Commissioner.

Now you would have gone longer yet without news of your truant patient, but that I have a medical discovery to communicate. I find I can (almost immediately) fight off a cold with liquid extract of coca; two or (if obstinate) three teaspoonfuls in the day for a variable period of from one to five days sees the cold generally to the door. I find it at once produces a glow, stops rigour, and though it makes one very uncomfortable, prevents the advance of the disease. Hearing

of this influenza, it occurred to me that this might prove remedial; and perhaps a stronger exhibition injections of cocaine, for instance still better.

If on my return I find myself let in for this epidemic, which seems highly calculated to nip me in the bud, I shall feel very much inclined to make the experiment. See what a gulf you may save me from if you shall have previously made it on ANIMA VILI, on some less important sufferer, and shall have found it worse than useless.

How is Miss Boodle and her family? Greeting to your brother and all friends in Bournemouth, yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

FEBRUAR DEN 3EN 1890. DAMPFER LUBECK  
ZWISCHEN APIA UND SYDNEY.

MY DEAR CHARLES, I have got one delightful letter from you, and heard from my mother of your kindness in going to see her. Thank you for that: you can in no way more



touch and serve me...Ay, ay, it is sad to sell 17; sad and fine were the old days: when I was away in Apemama, I wrote two copies of verse about Edinburgh and the past, so ink black, so golden bright. I will send them, if I can find them, for they will say something to you, and indeed one is more than half addressed to you. This is it

TO MY OLD COMRADES

Do you remember can we e'er forget? How, in the coiled perplexities of youth, In our wild climate, in our scowling town, We gloomed and shivered, sorrowed, sobbed, and feared? The belching winter wind, the missile rain, The rare and welcome silence of the snows, The laggard morn, the haggard day, the night, The grimy spell of the nocturnal town, Do you remember? Ah, could one forget! As when the fevered sick that all night long Listed the wind intone, and hear at last The ever welcome voice of the chanticleer Sing in the bitter hour before the dawn, With sudden ardour, these desire the day:

(Here a squall sends all flying.)

So sang in the gloom of youth the bird of hope; So we,  
exulting, hearkened and desired. For lo! as in the palace  
porch of life We huddled with chimeras, from within How  
sweet to hear! the music swelled and fell, And through the  
breach of the revolving doors What dreams of splendour  
blinded us and fled! I have since then contended and rejoiced;  
Amid the glories of the house of life Profoundly entered, and  
the shrine beheld: Yet when the lamp from my expiring eyes  
Shall dwindle and recede, the voice of love Fall insignificant  
on my closing ears, What sound shall come but the old cry of  
the wind In our inclement city? what return But the image of  
the emptiness of youth, Filled with the sound of footsteps and  
that voice Of discontent and rapture and despair? So, as in  
darkness, from the magic lamp, The momentary pictures  
gleam and fade And perish, and the night resurges these Shall  
I remember, and then all forget.

They're pretty second rate, but felt. I can't be bothered to  
copy the other.

I have bought 314 and a half acres of beautiful land in the bush behind Apia; when we get the house built, the garden laid, and cattle in the place, it will be something to fall back on for shelter and food; and if the island could stumble into political quiet, it is conceivable it might even bring a little income...We range from 600 to 1500 feet, have five streams, waterfalls, precipices, profound ravines, rich tablelands, fifty head of cattle on the ground (if any one could catch them), a great view of forest, sea, mountains, the warships in the haven: really a noble place. Some day you are to take a long holiday and come and see us: it has been all planned.

With all these irons in the fire, and cloudy prospects, you may be sure I was pleased to hear a good account of business. I believed THE MASTER was a sure card: I wonder why Henley thinks it grimy; grim it is, God knows, but sure not grimy, else I am the more deceived. I am sorry he did not care for it; I place it on the line with KIDNAPPED myself. We'll see as time goes on whether it goes above or

falls below.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

SS. LUBECK, BETWEEN APIA AND SYDNEY,  
FEBRUARY 1890.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, I desire nothing better than to continue my relation with the Magazine, to which it pleases me to hear I have been useful. The only thing I have ready is the enclosed barbaric piece. As soon as I have arrived in Sydney I shall send you some photographs, a portrait of Tembinoka, perhaps a view of the palace or of the 'matted men' at their singing; also T.'s flag, which my wife designed for him: in a word, what I can do best for you. It will be thus a foretaste of my book of travels. I shall ask you to let me have, if I wish it, the use of the plates made, and to make up a little tract of the verses and illustrations, of which you might send six copies to H. M. Tembinoka, King of Apemama VIA Butaritari, Gilbert Islands. It might be best to

send it by Crawford and Co., S. F. There is no postal service; and schooners must take it, how they may and when. Perhaps some such note as this might be prefixed:

AT MY DEPARTURE FROM THE ISLAND OF APEMAMA, FOR WHICH YOU WILL LOOK IN VAIN IN MOST ATLASES, THE KING AND I AGREED, SINCE WE BOTH SET UP TO BE IN THE POETICAL WAY, THAT WE SHOULD CELEBRATE OUR SEPARATION IN VERSE. WHETHER OR NOT HIS MAJESTY HAS BEEN TRUE TO HIS BARGAIN, THE LAGGARD POSTS OF THE PACIFIC MAY PERHAPS INFORM ME IN SIX MONTHS, PERHAPS NOT BEFORE A YEAR. THE FOLLOWING LINES REPRESENT MY PART OF THE CONTRACT, AND IT IS HOPED, BY THEIR PICTURES OF STRANGE MANNERS, THEY MAY ENTERTAIN A CIVILISED AUDIENCE. NOTHING THROUGHOUT HAS BEEN INVENTED OR EXAGGERATED; THE LADY HEREIN REFERRED TO AS THE AUTHOR'S MUSE, HAS CONFINED HERSELF TO STRINGING INTO

RHYME FACTS AND LEGENDS THAT I SAW OR  
HEARD DURING TWO MONTHS' RESIDENCE UPON  
THE ISLAND.

R. L. S.

You will have received from me a letter about THE WRECKER. No doubt it is a new experiment for me, being disguised so much as a study of manners, and the interest turning on a mystery of the detective sort, I think there need be no hesitation about beginning it in the fall of the year. Lloyd has nearly finished his part, and I shall hope to send you very soon the MS. of about the first four sevenths. At the same time, I have been employing myself in Samoa, collecting facts about the recent war; and I propose to write almost at once and to publish shortly a small volume, called I know not what the War In Samoa, the Samoa Trouble, an Island War, the War of the Three Consuls, I know not perhaps you can suggest. It was meant to be a part of my travel book; but material has accumulated on my hands until I see myself forced into volume form, and I hope it may be of use, if it

come soon. I have a few photographs of the war, which will do for illustrations. It is conceivable you might wish to handle this in the Magazine, although I am inclined to think you won't, and to agree with you. But if you think otherwise, there it is. The travel letters (fifty of them) are already contracted for in papers; these I was quite bound to let M'Clure handle, as the idea was of his suggestion, and I always felt a little sore as to one trick I played him in the matter of the end papers. The war volume will contain some very interesting and picturesque details: more I can't promise for it. Of course the fifty newspaper letters will be simply patches chosen from the travel volume (or volumes) as it gets written.

But you see I have in hand:

Say half done. 1. THE WRECKER.

Lloyd's copy half done, mine not touched. 2. THE PEARL FISHER (a novel promised to the LEDGER, and which will form, when it comes in book form, No. 2 of our SOUTH SEA YARNS).

Not begun, but all material ready. 3. THE WAR VOLUME.

Ditto. 4. THE BIG TRAVEL BOOK, which includes the letters.

You know how they stand. 5. THE BALLADS.

EXCUSEZ DU PEU! And you see what madness it would be to make any fresh engagement. At the same time, you have THE WRECKER and the WAR VOLUME, if you like either or both to keep my name in the Magazine.

It begins to look as if I should not be able to get any more ballads done this somewhile. I know the book would sell better if it were all ballads; and yet I am growing half tempted to fill up with some other verses. A good few are connected with my voyage, such as the 'Home of Tembinoka' sent herewith, and would have a sort of slight affinity to the SOUTH SEA BALLADS. You might tell me how that strikes a stranger.

In all this, my real interest is with the travel volume, which ought to be of a really extraordinary interest



I am sending you 'Tembinoka' as he stands; but there are parts of him that I hope to better, particularly in stanzas III. and II. I scarce feel intelligent enough to try just now; and I thought at any rate you had better see it, set it up if you think well, and let me have a proof; so, at least, we shall get the bulk of it straight. I have spared you Tenkoruti, Tenbaitake, Tembinatake, and other barbarous names, because I thought the dentists in the States had work enough without my assistance; but my chiefs name is **TEMBINOKA**, pronounced, according to the present quite modern habit in the Gilberts, 'Tembinok'. Compare in the margin Tengkorootch; a singular new trick, setting at defiance all South Sea analogy, for nowhere else do they show even the ability, far less the will, to end a word upon a consonant. Loia is Lloyd's name, ship becomes shipe, teapot, tipote, etc. Our admirable friend Herman Melville, of whom, since I could judge, I have thought more than ever, had no ear for languages whatever: his Hapar tribe should be Hapaa, etc.

But this is of no interest to you: suffice it, you see how I

am as usual up to the neck in projects, and really all likely bairns this time. When will this activity cease? Too soon for me, I dare to say.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO JAMES PAYN**

FEBRUARY 4TH, 1890, SS. 'LUBECK.'

MY DEAR JAMES PAYN, In virtue of confessions in your last, you would at the present moment, if you were along of me, be sick; and I will ask you to receive that as an excuse for my hand of write. Excuse a plain seaman if he regards with scorn the likes of you pore land lubbers ashore now. (Reference to nautical ditty.) Which I may however be allowed to add that when eight months' mail was laid by my side one evening in Apia, and my wife and I sat up the most of the night to peruse the same (precious indisposed we were next day in consequence) no letter, out of so many, more appealed to our hearts than one from the pore, stick in the mud, land lubbering, common (or garden) Londoner, James

Payn. Thank you for it; my wife says, 'Can't I see him when we get back to London?' I have told her the thing appeared to me within the spear of practical politix. (Why can't I spell and write like an honest, sober, god fearing litry gent? I think it's the motion of the ship.) Here I was interrupted to play chess with the chief engineer; as I grow old, I prefer the 'athletic sport of cribbage,' of which (I am sure I misquote) I have just been reading in your delightful LITERARY RECOLLECTIONS. How you skim along, you and Andrew Lang (different as you are), and yet the only two who can keep a fellow smiling every page, and ever and again laughing out loud. I joke wi' deeficulty, I believe; I am not funny; and when I am, Mrs. Oliphant says I'm vulgar, and somebody else says (in Latin) that I'm a whore, which seems harsh and even uncalled for: I shall stick to weepers; a 5s. weeper, 2s. 6d. laughter, 1s. shocker.

My dear sir, I grow more and more idiotic; I cannot even feign sanity. Sometime in the month of June a stalwart weather beaten man, evidently of seafaring antecedents, shall

be observed wending his way between the Athenaeum Club and Waterloo Place. Arrived off No. 17, he shall be observed to bring his head sharply to the wind, and tack into the outer haven. 'Captain Payn in the harbour?' 'Ay, ay, sir. What ship?' 'Barquentin R. L. S., nine hundred and odd days out from the port of Bournemouth, homeward bound, with yarns and curiosities.'

Who was it said, 'For God's sake, don't speak of it!' about Scott and his tears? He knew what he was saying. The fear of that hour is the skeleton in all our cupboards; that hour when the pastime and the livelihood go together; and I am getting hard of hearing myself; a pore young child of forty, but new come frae my Mammy, O!

Excuse these follies, and accept the expression of all my regards. Yours affectionately,

R. L. STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY, MARCH 7TH, 1890.

MY DEAR CHARLES, I did not send off the enclosed before from laziness; having gone quite sick, and being a blooming prisoner here in the club, and indeed in my bedroom. I was in receipt of your letters and your ornamental photo, and was delighted to see how well you looked, and how reasonably well I stood...I am sure I shall never come back home except to die; I may do it, but shall always think of the move as suicidal, unless a great change comes over me, of which as yet I see no symptom. This visit to Sydney has smashed me handsomely; and yet I made myself a prisoner here in the club upon my first arrival. This is not encouraging for further ventures; Sydney winter or, I might almost say, Sydney spring, for I came when the worst was over is so small an affair, comparable to our June depression at home in Scotland...The pipe is right again; it was the springs that had rusted, and ought to have been oiled. Its voice is now that of

an angel; but, Lord! here in the club I dare not wake it! Conceive my impatience to be in my own backwoods and raise the sound of minstrelsy. What pleasures are to be compared with those of the Unvirtuous Virtuoso. Yours ever affectionately, the Unvirtuous Virtuoso,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO SIDNEY COLVIN**

SS. 'JANET NICOLL,' OFF UPOLU SPRING 1890.

MY DEAREST COLVIN, I was sharply ill at Sydney, cut off, right out of bed, in this steamer on a fresh island cruise, and have already reaped the benefit. We are excellently found this time, on a spacious vessel, with an excellent table; the captain, supercargo, our one fellow passenger, etc., very nice; and the charterer, Mr. Henderson, the very man I could have chosen. The truth is, I fear, this life is the only one that suits me; so long as I cruise in the South Seas, I shall be well and happy alas, no, I do not mean that, and ABSIT OMEN! I mean that, so soon as I cease from

cruising, the nerves are strained, the decline commences, and I steer slowly but surely back to bedward. We left Sydney, had a cruel rough passage to Auckland, for the JANET is the worst roller I was ever aboard of. I was confined to my cabin, ports closed, self shied out of the berth, stomach (pampered till the day I left on a diet of perpetual egg nogg) revolted at ship's food and ship eating, in a frowsy bunk, clinging with one hand to the plate, with the other to the glass, and using the knife and fork (except at intervals) with the eyelid. No matter: I picked up hand over hand. After a day in Auckland, we set sail again; were blown up in the main cabin with calcium fires, as we left the bay. Let no man say I am unscientific: when I ran, on the alert, out of my stateroom, and found the main cabin incarnadined with the glow of the last scene of a pantomime, I stopped dead: 'What is this?' said I. 'This ship is on fire, I see that; but why a pantomime?' And I stood and reasoned the point, until my head was so muddled with the fumes that I could not find the companion. A few seconds later, the captain had to enter crawling on his belly,

and took days to recover (if he has recovered) from the fumes. By singular good fortune, we got the hose down in time and saved the ship, but Lloyd lost most of his clothes and a great part of our photographs was destroyed. Fanny saw the native sailors tossing overboard a blazing trunk; she stopped them in time, and behold, it contained my manuscripts. Thereafter we had three (or two) days fine weather: then got into a gale of wind, with rain and a vexatious sea. As we drew into our anchorage in a bight of Savage Island, a man ashore told me afterwards the sight of the JANET NICOLL made him sick; and indeed it was rough play, though nothing to the night before. All through this gale I worked four to six hours per diem, spearing the ink bottle like a flying fish, and holding my papers together as I might. For, of all things, what I was at was history the Samoan business and I had to turn from one to another of these piles of manuscript notes, and from one page to another in each, until I should have found employment for the hands of Briareus. All the same, this history is a godsend for a voyage; I can put in time, getting



events co ordinated and the narrative distributed, when my much heaving numskull would be incapable of finish or fine style. At Savage we met the missionary barque JOHN WILLIAMS. I tell you it was a great day for Savage Island: the path up the cliffs was crowded with gay islandresses (I like that feminine plural) who wrapped me in their embraces, and picked my pockets of all my tobacco, with a manner which a touch would have made revolting, but as it was, was simply charming, like the Golden Age. One pretty, little, stalwart minx, with a red flower behind her ear, had searched me with extraordinary zeal; and when, soon after, I missed my matches, I accused her (she still following us) of being the thief. After some delay, and with a subtle smile, she produced the box, gave me ONE MATCH, and put the rest away again. Too tired to add more. Your most affectionate,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

S.S. 'JANET NICOLL,' OFF PERU ISLAND,  
KINGSMILLS GROUP, JULY 13th, '90.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, I am moved to write to you in the matter of the end papers. I am somewhat tempted to begin them again. Follow the reasons PRO and CON:

1st. I must say I feel as if something in the nature of the end paper were a desirable finish to the number, and that the substitutes of occasional essays by occasional contributors somehow fail to fill the bill. Should you differ with me on this point, no more is to be said. And what follows must be regarded as lost words.

2nd. I am rather taken with the idea of continuing the work. For instance, should you have no distaste for papers of the class called RANDOM MEMORIES, I should enjoy continuing them (of course at intervals), and when they were done I have an idea they might make a readable book. On the other hand, I believe a greater freedom of choice might be

taken, the subjects more varied and more briefly treated, in somewhat approaching the manner of Andrew Lang in the SIGN OF THE SHIP; it being well understood that the broken sticks method is one not very suitable (as Colonel Burke would say) to my genius, and not very likely to be pushed far in my practice. Upon this point I wish you to condense your massive brain. In the last lot I was promised, and I fondly expected to receive, a vast amount of assistance from intelligent and genial correspondents. I assure you, I never had a scratch of a pen from any one above the level of a village idiot, except once, when a lady sowed my head full of grey hairs by announcing that she was going to direct her life in future by my counsels. Will the correspondents be more copious and less irrelevant in the future? Suppose that to be the case, will they be of any use to me in my place of exile? Is it possible for a man in Samoa to be in touch with the great heart of the People? And is it not perhaps a mere folly to attempt, from so hopeless a distance, anything so delicate as a series of papers? Upon these points, perpend,

and give me the results of your perpensions.

3rd. The emolument would be agreeable to your humble servant.

I have now stated all the PROS, and the most of the CONS are come in by the way. There follows, however, one immense Con (with a capital 'C'), which I beg you to consider particularly. I fear that, to be of any use for your magazine, these papers should begin with the beginning of a volume. Even supposing my hands were free, this would be now impossible for next year. You have to consider whether, supposing you have no other objection, it would be worth while to begin the series in the middle of a volume, or desirable to delay the whole matter until the beginning of another year.

Now supposing that the CONS have it, and you refuse my offer, let me make another proposal, which you will be very inclined to refuse at the first off go, but which I really believe might in time come to something. You know how the penny papers have their answers to correspondents. Why not

do something of the same kind for the 'culchawed'? Why not get men like Stimson, Brownell, Professor James, Goldwin Smith, and others who will occur to you more readily than to me, to put and to answer a series of questions of intellectual and general interest, until at last you should have established a certain standard of matter to be discussed in this part of the Magazine?

I want you to get me bound volumes of the Magazine from its start. The Lord knows I have had enough copies; where they are I know not. A wandering author gathers no magazines.

THE WRECKER is in no forrader state than in last reports. I have indeed got to a period when I cannot well go on until I can refresh myself on the proofs of the beginning. My respected collaborator, who handles the machine which is now addressing you, has indeed carried his labours farther, but not, I am led to understand, with what we used to call a blessing; at least, I have been refused a sight of his latest labours. However, there is plenty of time ahead, and I feel no

anxiety about the tale, except that it may meet with your approval.

All this voyage I have been busy over my TRAVELS, which, given a very high temperature and the saloon of a steamer usually going before the wind, and with the cabins in front of the engines, has come very near to prostrating me altogether. You will therefore understand that there are no more poems. I wonder whether there are already enough, and whether you think that such a volume would be worth the publishing? I shall hope to find in Sydney some expression of your opinion on this point. Living as I do among not the most cultured of mankind ('splendidly educated and perfect gentlemen when sober') I attach a growing importance to friendly criticisms from yourself.

I believe that this is the most of our business. As for my health, I got over my cold in a fine style, but have not been very well of late. To my unaffected annoyance, the blood spitting has started again. I find the heat of a steamer decidedly wearing and trying in these latitudes, and I am

inclined to think the superior expedition rather dearly paid for. Still, the fact that one does not even remark the coming of a squall, nor feel relief on its departure, is a mercy not to be acknowledged without gratitude. The rest of the family seem to be doing fairly well; both seem less run down than they were on the EQUATOR, and Mrs. Stevenson very much less so. We have now been three months away, have visited about thirty five islands, many of which were novel to us, and some extremely entertaining; some also were old acquaintances, and pleasant to revisit. In the meantime, we have really a capital time aboard ship, in the most pleasant and interesting society, and with (considering the length and nature of the voyage) an excellent table. Please remember us all to Mr. Scribner, the young chieftain of the house, and the lady, whose health I trust is better. To Mrs. Burlingame we all desire to be remembered, and I hope you will give our news to Low, St. Gaudens, Faxon, and others of the faithful in the city. I shall probably return to Samoa direct, having given up all idea of returning to civilisation in the meanwhile. There,

on my ancestral acres, which I purchased six months ago from a blind Scots blacksmith, you will please address me until further notice. The name of the ancestral acres is going to be Vailima; but as at the present moment nobody else knows the name, except myself and the co patentees, it will be safer, if less ambitious, to address R. L. S., Apia, Samoa. The ancestral acres run to upwards of three hundred; they enjoy the ministrations of five streams, whence the name. They are all at the present moment under a trackless covering of magnificent forest, which would be worth a great deal if it grew beside a railway terminus. To me, as it stands, it represents a handsome deficit. Obliging natives from the Cannibal Islands are now cutting it down at my expense. You would be able to run your magazine to much greater advantage if the terms of authors were on the same scale with those of my cannibals. We have also a house about the size of a manufacturer's lodge. 'Tis but the egg of the future palace, over the details of which on paper Mrs. Stevenson and I have already shed real tears; what it will be when it comes to



paying for it, I leave you to imagine. But if it can only be built as now intended, it will be with genuine satisfaction and a growunded pride that I shall welcome you at the steps of my Old Colonial Home, when you land from the steamer on a long merited holiday. I speak much at my ease; yet I do not know, I may be now an outlaw, a bankrupt, the abhorred of all good men. I do not know, you probably do. Has Hyde turned upon me? Have I fallen, like Danvers Carew?

It is suggested to me that you might like to know what will be my future society. Three consuls, all at logger heads with one another, or at the best in a clique of two against one; three different sects of missionaries, not upon the best of terms; and the Catholics and Protestants in a condition of unhealable ill feeling as to whether a wooden drum ought or ought not to be beaten to announce the time of school. The native population, very genteel, very songful, very agreeable, very good looking, chronically spoiling for a fight (a circumstance not to be entirely neglected in the design of the palace). As for the white population of (technically, 'The

Beach'), I don't suppose it is possible for any person not thoroughly conversant with the South Seas to form the smallest conception of such a society, with its grog shops, its apparently unemployed hangers on, its merchants of all degrees of respectability and the reverse. The paper, of which I must really send you a copy if yours were really a live magazine, you would have an exchange with the editor: I assure you, it has of late contained a great deal of matter about one of your contributors rejoices in the name of SAMOA TIMES AND SOUTH SEA ADVERTISER. The advertisements in the ADVERTISER are permanent, being simply subsidies for its existence. A dashing warfare of newspaper correspondence goes on between the various residents, who are rather fond of recurring to one another's antecedents. But when all is said, there are a lot of very nice, pleasant people, and I don't know that Apia is very much worse than half a hundred towns that I could name.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

HOTEL SEBASTOPOL, NOUMEA, AUGUST 1890.

MY DEAR CHARLES, I have stayed here a week while Lloyd and my wife continue to voyage in the JANET NICOLL; this I did, partly to see the convict system, partly to shorten my stay in the extreme cold hear me with my extreme! MOI QUI SUIS ORIGINAIRE D'EDINBOURG of Sydney at this season. I am feeling very seedy, utterly fatigued, and overborne with sleep. I have a fine old gentleman of a doctor, who attends and cheers and entertains, if he does not cure me; but even with his ministrations I am almost incapable of the exertion sufficient for this letter; and I am really, as I write, falling down with sleep. What is necessary to say, I must try to say shortly. Lloyd goes to clear out our establishments: pray keep him in funds, if I have any; if I have not, pray try to raise them. Here is the idea: to install ourselves, at the risk of bankruptcy, in Samoa. It is not the least likely it will pay (although it may); but it is almost certain it will support life,

with very few external expenses. If I die, it will be an endowment for the survivors, at least for my wife and Lloyd; and my mother, who might prefer to go home, has her own. Hence I believe I shall do well to hurry my installation. The letters are already in part done; in part done is a novel for Scribner; in the course of the next twelve months I should receive a considerable amount of money. I am aware I had intended to pay back to my capital some of this. I am now of opinion I should act foolishly. Better to build the house and have a roof and farm of my own; and thereafter, with a livelihood assured, save and repay... There is my livelihood, all but books and wine, ready in a nutshell; and it ought to be more easy to save and to repay afterwards. Excellent, say you, but will you save and will you repay? I do not know, said the Bell of Old Bow...It seems clear to me...The deuce of the affair is that I do not know when I shall see you and Colvin. I guess you will have to come and see me: many a time already we have arranged the details of your visit in the yet unbuilt house on the mountain. I shall be able to get decent wine

from Noumea. We shall be able to give you a decent welcome, and talk of old days. APROPOS of old days, do you remember still the phrase we heard in Waterloo Place? I believe you made a piece for the piano on that phrase. Pray, if you remember it, send it me in your next. If you find it impossible to write correctly, send it me A LA RECITATIVE, and indicate the accents. Do you feel (you must) how strangely heavy and stupid I am? I must at last give up and go sleep; I am simply a rag.

The morrow: I feel better, but still dim and groggy. To night I go to the governor's; such a lark no dress clothes twenty four hours' notice able bodied Polish tailor suit made for a man with the figure of a puncheon same hastily altered for self with the figure of a bodkin sight inconceivable. Never mind; dress clothes, 'which nobody can deny'; and the officials have been all so civil that I liked neither to refuse nor to appear in mufti. Bad dress clothes only prove you are a grisly ass; no dress clothes, even when explained, indicate a want of respect. I wish you were here with me to help me

dress in this wild raiment, and to accompany me to M. Noel Pardon's. I cannot say what I would give if there came a knock now at the door and you came in. I guess Noel Pardon would go begging, and we might burn the fr. 200 dress clothes in the back garden for a bonfire; or what would be yet more expensive and more humorous, get them once more expanded to fit you, and when that was done, a second time cut down for my gossamer dimensions.

I hope you never forget to remember me to your father, who has always a place in my heart, as I hope I have a little in his. His kindness helped me infinitely when you and I were young; I recall it with gratitude and affection in this town of convicts at the world's end. There are very few things, my dear Charles, worth mention: on a retrospect of life, the day's flash and colour, one day with another, flames, dazzles, and puts to sleep; and when the days are gone, like a fast flying thaumatrope, they make but a single pattern. Only a few things stand out; and among these most plainly to me Rutland Square, Ever, my dear Charles, your affectionate

friend,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S. Just returned from trying on the dress clo'. Lord, you should see the coat! It stands out at the waist like a bustle, the flaps cross in front, the sleeves are like bags.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY AUGUST 1890.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME

BALLADS.

The deuce is in this volume. It has cost me more botheration and dubiety than any other I ever took in hand. On one thing my mind is made up: the verses at the end have no business there, and throw them down. Many of them are bad, many of the rest want nine years' keeping, and the remainder are not relevant throw them down; some I never want to hear of more, others will grow in time towards decent items in a second UNDERWOODS and in the meanwhile, down with them! At the same time, I have a sneaking idea the

ballads are not altogether without merit I don't know if they're poetry, but they're good narrative, or I'm deceived. (You've never said one word about them, from which I astutely gather you are dead set against: 'he was a diplomatic man' extract from epitaph of E. L. B. 'and remained on good terms with Minor Poets.')

You will have to judge: one of the Gladstonian trinity of paths must be chosen. (1st) Either publish the five ballads, such as they are, in a volume called **BALLADS**; in which case pray send sheets at once to Chatto and Windus. Or (2nd) write and tell me you think the book too small, and I'll try and get into the mood to do some more. Or (3rd) write and tell me the whole thing is a blooming illusion; in which case draw off some twenty copies for my private entertainment, and charge me with the expense of the whole dream.

In the matter of rhyme no man can judge himself; I am at the world's end, have no one to consult, and my publisher holds his tongue. I call it unfair and almost unmanly. I do indeed begin to be filled with animosity; Lord, wait till you



see the continuation of THE WRECKER, when I introduce some New York publishers...It's a good scene; the quantities you drink and the really hideous language you are represented as employing may perhaps cause you one tithe of the pain you have inflicted by your silence on, sir, The Poetaster,

R. L. S.

Lloyd is off home; my wife and I dwell sundered: she in lodgings, preparing for the move; I here in the club, and at my old trade bedridden. Naturally, the visit home is given up; we only wait our opportunity to get to Samoa, where, please, address me.

Have I yet asked you to despatch the books and papers left in your care to me at Apia, Samoa? I wish you would, QUAM PRIMUM.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO HENRY JAMES**

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY, AUGUST 1890.

MY DEAR HENRY JAMES, Kipling is too clever to live. The BETE HUMAINE I had already perused in Noumea, listening the while to the strains of the convict band. He a Beast; but not human, and, to be frank, not very interesting. 'Nervous maladies: the homicidal ward,' would be the better name: O, this game gets very tedious.

Your two long and kind letters have helped to entertain the old familiar sickbed. So has a book called THE BONDMAN, by Hall Caine; I wish you would look at it. I am not half way through yet. Read the book, and communicate your views. Hall Caine, by the way, appears to take Hugo's view of History and Chronology. (LATER; the book doesn't keep up; it gets very wild.)

I must tell you plainly I can't tell Colvin I do not think I shall come to England more than once, and then it'll be to die. Health I enjoy in the tropics; even here, which they call sub

or semi tropical, I come only to catch cold. I have not been out since my arrival; live here in a nice bedroom by the fireside, and read books and letters from Henry James, and send out to get his TRAGIC MUSE, only to be told they can't be had as yet in Sydney, and have altogether a placid time. But I can't go out! The thermometer was nearly down to 50 degrees the other day no temperature for me, Mr. James: how should I do in England? I fear not at all. Am I very sorry? I am sorry about seven or eight people in England, and one or two in the States. And outside of that, I simply prefer Samoa. These are the words of honesty and soberness. (I am fasting from all but sin, coughing, THE BONDMAN, a couple of eggs and a cup of tea.) I was never fond of towns, houses, society, or (it seems) civilisation. Nor yet it seems was I ever very fond of (what is technically called) God's green earth. The sea, islands, the islanders, the island life and climate, make and keep me truly happier. These last two years I have been much at sea, and I have NEVER WEARIED; sometimes I have indeed grown impatient for some

destination; more often I was sorry that the voyage drew so early to an end; and never once did I lose my fidelity to blue water and a ship. It is plain, then, that for me my exile to the place of schooners and islands can be in no sense regarded as a calamity.

Good bye just now: I must take a turn at my proofs.

N.B. Even my wife has weakened about the sea. She wearied, the last time we were ashore, to get afloat again.

Yours ever,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO MARCEL SCHWOB**

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY, AUGUST 19TH, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. SCHWOB, MAIS, ALORS, VOUS AVEZ TOUS LES BONHEURS, VOUS! More about Villon; it seems incredible: when it is put in order, pray send it me.

You wish to translate the BLACK ARROW: dear sir, you are hereby authorised; but I warn you, I do not like the work. Ah, if you, who know so well both tongues, and have

taste and instruction if you would but take a fancy to translate a book of mine that I myself admired for we sometimes admire our own or I do with what satisfaction would the authority be granted! But these things are too much to expect. VOUS NE DETESTEZ PAS ALORS MES BONNES FEMMES? MOI, JE LES DETESTE. I have never pleased myself with any women of mine save two character parts, one of only a few lines the Countess of Rosen, and Madame Desprez in the TREASURE OF FRANCHARD.

I had indeed one moment of pride about my poor BLACK ARROW: Dickon Crookback I did, and I do, think is a spirited and possible figure. Shakespeare's O, if we can call that cocoon Shakespeare! Shakespeare's is spirited one likes to see the untaught athlete butting against the adamantine ramparts of human nature, head down, breach up; it reminds us how trivial we are to day, and what safety resides in our triviality. For spirited it may be, but O, sure not possible! I love Dumas and I love Shakespeare: you will not mistake me when I say that the Richard of the one reminds me of the

Porthos of the other; and if by any sacrifice of my own literary baggage I could clear the VICOMTE DE BRAGELONNE of Porthos, JEKYLL might go, and the MASTER, and the BLACK ARROW, you may be sure, and I should think my life not lost for mankind if half a dozen more of my volumes must be thrown in.

The tone of your pleasant letters makes me egotistical; you make me take myself too gravely. Comprehend how I have lived much of my time in France, and loved your country, and many of its people, and all the time was learning that which your country has to teach breathing in rather that atmosphere of art which can only there be breathed; and all the time knew and raged to know that I might write with the pen of angels or of heroes, and no Frenchman be the least the wiser! And now steps in M. Marcel Schwob, writes me the most kind encouragement, and reads and understands, and is kind enough to like my work.

I am just now overloaded with work. I have two huge novels on hand THE WRECKER and the PEARL FISHER,

in collaboration with my stepson: the latter, the PEARL FISHER, I think highly of, for a black, ugly, trampling, violent story, full of strange scenes and striking characters. And then I am about waist deep in my big book on the South Seas: THE big book on the South Seas it ought to be, and shall. And besides, I have some verses in the press, which, however, I hesitate to publish. For I am no judge of my own verse; self deception is there so facile. All this and the cares of an impending settlement in Samoa keep me very busy, and a cold (as usual) keeps me in bed.

Alas, I shall not have the pleasure to see you yet awhile, if ever. You must be content to take me as a wandering voice, and in the form of occasional letters from recondite islands; and address me, if you will be good enough to write, to Apia, Samoa. My stepson, Mr. Osbourne, goes home meanwhile to arrange some affairs; it is not unlikely he may go to Paris to arrange about the illustrations to my South Seas; in which case I shall ask him to call upon you, and give you some word of our outlandish destinies. You will find him

intelligent, I think; and I am sure, if (PAR HASARD) you should take any interest in the islands, he will have much to tell you. Herewith I conclude, and am your obliged and interested correspondent,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S. The story you refer to has got lost in the post.

**Letter: TO ANDREW LANG**

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY AUGUST 1890.

MY DEAR LANG, I observed with a great deal of surprise and interest that a controversy in which you have been taking sides at home, in yellow London, hinges in part at least on the Gilbert Islanders and their customs in burial. Nearly six months of my life has been passed in the group: I have revisited it but the other day; and I make haste to tell you what I know. The upright stones I enclose you a photograph of one on Apemama are certainly connected with religion; I do not think they are adored. They stand usually on the windward shore of the islands, that is to say, apart



from habitation (on ENCLOSED ISLANDS, where the people live on the sea side, I do not know how it is, never having lived on one). I gathered from Tembinoka, Rex Apemamae, that the pillars were supposed to fortify the island from invasion: spiritual martellos. I think he indicated they were connected with the cult of Tenti pronounce almost as chintz in English, the T being explosive; but you must take this with a grain of salt, for I knew no word of Gilbert Island; and the King's English, although creditable, is rather vigorous than exact. Now, here follows the point of interest to you: such pillars, or standing stones, have no connection with graves. The most elaborate grave that I have ever seen in the group to be certain is in the form of a RAISED BORDER of gravel, usually strewn with broken glass. One, of which I cannot be sure that it was a grave, for I was told by one that it was, and by another that it was not consisted of a mound about breast high in an excavated taro swamp, on the top of which was a child's house, or rather MANIAPA that is to say, shed, or open house, such as is used in the group for social or

political gatherings so small that only a child could creep under its eaves. I have heard of another great tomb on Apemama, which I did not see; but here again, by all accounts, no sign of a standing stone. My report would be no connection between standing stones and sepulture. I shall, however, send on the terms of the problem to a highly intelligent resident trader, who knows more than perhaps any one living, white or native, of the Gilbert group; and you shall have the result. In Samoa, whither I return for good, I shall myself make inquiries; up to now, I have neither seen nor heard of any standing stones in that group. Yours,

R. L. STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MRS. CHARLES FAIRCHILD**

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY SEPTEMBER 1890.

MY DEAR MRS. FAIRCHILD, I began a letter to you on board the JANET NICOLL on my last cruise, wrote, I believe, two sheets, and ruthlessly destroyed the flippant trash. Your last has given me great pleasure and some pain,

for it increased the consciousness of my neglect. Now, this must go to you, whatever it is like.

...You are quite right; our civilisation is a hollow fraud, all the fun of life is lost by it; all it gains is that a larger number of persons can continue to be contemporaneously unhappy on the surface of the globe. O, unhappy! there is a big word and a false continue to be not nearly by about twenty per cent. so happy as they might be: that would be nearer the mark.

When observe that word, which I will write again and larger WHEN you come to see us in Samoa, you will see for yourself a healthy and happy people.

You see, you are one of the very few of our friends rich enough to come and see us; and when my house is built, and the road is made, and we have enough fruit planted and poultry and pigs raised, it is undeniable that you must come must is the word; that is the way in which I speak to ladies. You and Fairchild, anyway perhaps my friend Blair we'll arrange details in good time. It will be the salvation of your

souls, and make you willing to die.

Let me tell you this: In '74 or '75 there came to stay with my father and mother a certain Mr. Seed, a prime minister or something of New Zealand. He spotted what my complaint was; told me that I had no business to stay in Europe; that I should find all I cared for, and all that was good for me, in the Navigator Islands; sat up till four in the morning persuading me, demolishing my scruples. And I resisted: I refused to go so far from my father and mother. O, it was virtuous, and O, wasn't it silly! But my father, who was always my dearest, got to his grave without that pang; and now in 1890, I (or what is left of me) go at last to the Navigator Islands. God go with us! It is but a Pisgah sight when all is said; I go there only to grow old and die; but when you come, you will see it is a fair place for the purpose.

Flaubert has not turned up; I hope he will soon; I knew of him only through Maxime Descamps. With kindest messages to yourself and all of yours, I remain,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

## CHAPTER XI

LIFE IN SAMOA, NOVEMBER 1890 DECEMBER  
1892

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA, APIA, SAMOA, NOV. 7, 1890.

I WISH you to add to the words at the end of the prologue; they run, I think, thus, 'And this is the yarn of Loudon Dodd'; add, 'not as he told, but as he wrote it afterwards for his diversion.' This becomes the more needful, because, when all is done, I shall probably revert to *Tai o hae*, and give final details about the characters in the way of a conversation between Dodd and Havers. These little snippets of information and *FAITS DIVERS* have always a disjointed, broken backed appearance; yet, readers like them. In this book we have introduced so many characters, that this kind of epilogue will be looked for; and I rather hope, looking far ahead, that I can lighten it in dialogue.

We are well past the middle now. How does it strike you? and can you guess my mystery? It will make a fattish volume!

I say, have you ever read the HIGHLAND WIDOW? I never had till yesterday: I am half inclined, bar a trip or two, to think it Scott's masterpiece; and it has the name of a failure! Strange things are readers.

I expect proofs and revises in duplicate.

We have now got into a small barrack at our place. We see the sea six hundred feet below filling the end of two vales of forest. On one hand the mountain runs above us some thousand feet higher; great trees stand round us in our clearing; there is an endless voice of birds; I have never lived in such a heaven; just now, I have fever, which mitigates but not destroys my gusto in my circumstances. You may envy

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

...O, I don't know if I mentioned that having seen your new tail to the magazine, I cried off interference, at least for this trip. Did I ask you to send me my books and papers, and

all the bound volumes of the mag.? QUORUM PARS. I might add that were there a good book or so new I don't believe there is such would be welcome.

I desire I positively begin to awake to be remembered to Scribner, Low, St. Gaudens, Russell Sullivan. Well, well, you fellows have the feast of reason and the flow of soul; I have a better looking place and climate: you should hear the birds on the hill now! The day has just wound up with a shower; it is still light without, though I write within here at the cheek of a lamp; my wife and an invaluable German are wrestling about bread on the back verandah; and how the birds and the frogs are rattling, and piping, and hailing from the woods! Here and there a throaty chuckle; here and there, cries like those of jolly children who have lost their way; here and there, the ringing sleigh bell of the tree frog. Out and away down below me on the sea it is still raining; it will be wet under foot on schooners, and the house will leak; how well I know that! Here the showers only patter on the iron roof, and sometimes roar; and within, the lamp burns steady on the tafa covered

walls, with their dusky tartan patterns, and the book shelves with their thin array of books; and no squall can rout my house or bring my heart into my mouth. The well pleased South Sea Islander,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA, DECEMBER 1890.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, By some diabolical accident, I have mislaid your last. What was in it? I know not, and here I am caught unexpectedly by the American mail, a week earlier than by computation. The computation, not the mail, is supposed to be in error. The vols. of SCRIBNER'S have arrived, and present a noble appearance in my house, which is not a noble structure at present. But by autumn we hope to be sprawling in our verandah, twelve feet, sir, by eighty eight in front, and seventy two on the flank; view of the sea and mountains, sunrise, moonrise, and the German fleet at anchor three miles away in Apia harbour. I hope some



day to offer you a bowl of kava there, or a slice of a pineapple, or some lemonade from my own hedge. I know a hedge where the lemons grow' SHAKESPEARE. My house at this moment smells of them strong; and the rain, which a while ago roared there, now rings in minute drops upon the iron roof. I have no WRECKER for you this mail, other things having engaged me. I was on the whole rather relieved you did not vote for regular papers, as I feared the traces. It is my design from time to time to write a paper of a reminiscential (beastly word) description; some of them I could scarce publish from different considerations; but some of them for instance, my long experience of gambling places Homburg, Wiesbaden, Baden Baden, old Monaco, and new Monte Carlo would make good magazine padding, if I got the stuff handled the right way. I never could fathom why verse was put in magazines; it has something to do with the making up, has it not? I am scribbling a lot just now; if you are taken badly that way, apply to the South Seas. I could send you some, I believe, anyway, only none of it is thoroughly ripe. If

kept back the volume of ballads, I'll soon make it a respectable size if this fit continue. By the next mail you may expect some more WRECKER, or I shall be displeased. Probably no more than a chapter, however, for it is a hard one, and I am denuded of my proofs, my collaborator having walked away with them to England; hence some trouble in catching the just note.

I am a mere farmer: my talk, which would scarce interest you on Broadway, is all of fuafua and tuitui, and black boys, and planting and weeding, and axes and cutlasses; my hands are covered with blisters and full of thorns; letters are, doubtless, a fine thing, so are beer and skittles, but give me farming in the tropics for real interest. Life goes in enchantment; I come home to find I am late for dinner; and when I go to bed at night, I could cry for the weariness of my loins and thighs. Do not speak to me of vexation, the life brims with it, but with living interest fairly.

Christmas I go to Auckland, to meet Tamate, the New Guinea missionary, a man I love. The rest of my life is a

prospect of much rain, much weeding and making of paths, a little letters, and devilish little to eat. I am, my dear Burlingame, with messages to all whom it may concern, very sincerely yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO HENRY JAMES**

VAILIMA, APIA, SAMOA, DECEMBER 29TH, 1890.

MY DEAR HENRY JAMES, It is terrible how little everybody writes, and how much of that little disappears in the capacious maw of the Post Office. Many letters, both from and to me, I now know to have been lost in transit: my eye is on the Sydney Post Office, a large ungainly structure with a tower, as being not a hundred miles from the scene of disappearance; but then I have no proof. THE TRAGIC MUSE you announced to me as coming; I had already ordered it from a Sydney bookseller: about two months ago he advised me that his copy was in the post; and I am still tragically museless.

News, news, news. What do we know of yours? What do you care for ours? We are in the midst of the rainy season, and dwell among alarms of hurricanes, in a very unsafe little two storied wooden box 650 feet above and about three miles from the sea beach. Behind us, till the other slope of the island, desert forest, peaks, and loud torrents; in front green slopes to the sea, some fifty miles of which we dominate. We see the ships as they go out and in to the dangerous roadstead of Apia; and if they lie far out, we can even see their topmasts while they are at anchor. Of sounds of men, beyond those of our own labourers, there reach us, at very long intervals, salutes from the warships in harbour, the bell of the cathedral church, and the low of the conch shell calling the labour boys on the German plantations. Yesterday, which was Sunday the QUANTIEME is most likely erroneous; you can now correct it we had a visitor Baker of Tonga. Heard you ever of him? He is a great man here: he is accused of theft, rape, judicial murder, private poisoning, abortion, misappropriation of public moneys oddly enough, not forgery,

nor arson: you would be amused if you knew how thick the accusations fly in this South Sea world. I make no doubt my own character is something illustrious; or if not yet, there is a good time coming.

But all our resources have not of late been Pacific. We have had enlightened society: La Farge the painter, and your friend Henry Adams: a great privilege would it might endure. I would go oftener to see them, but the place is awkward to reach on horseback. I had to swim my horse the last time I went to dinner; and as I have not yet returned the clothes I had to borrow, I dare not return in the same plight: it seems inevitable as soon as the wash comes in, I plump straight into the American consul's shirt or trousers! They, I believe, would come oftener to see me but for the horrid doubt that weighs upon our commissariat department; we have OFTEN almost nothing to eat; a guest would simply break the bank; my wife and I have dined on one avocado pear; I have several times dined on hard bread and onions. What would you do with a guest at such narrow seasons? eat him? or

serve up a labour boy fricasseed?

Work? work is now arrested, but I have written, I should think, about thirty chapters of the South Sea book; they will all want rehandling, I dare say. Gracious, what a strain is a long book! The time it took me to design this volume, before I could dream of putting pen to paper, was excessive; and then think of writing a book of travels on the spot, when I am continually extending my information, revising my opinions, and seeing the most finely finished portions of my work come part by part in pieces. Very soon I shall have no opinions left. And without an opinion, how to string artistically vast accumulations of fact? Darwin said no one could observe without a theory; I suppose he was right; 'tis a fine point of metaphysic; but I will take my oath, no man can write without one at least the way he would like to, and my theories melt, melt, melt, and as they melt the thaw waters wash down my writing, and leave unideal tracts wastes instead of cultivated farms.

Kipling is by far the most promising young man who

has appeared since ahem I appeared. He amazes me by his precocity and various endowment. But he alarms me by his copiousness and haste. He should shield his fire with both hands 'and draw up all his strength and sweetness in one ball.' ('Draw all his strength and all His sweetness up into one ball'? I cannot remember Marvell's words.) So the critics have been saying to me; but I was never capable of and surely never guilty of such a debauch of production. At this rate his works will soon fill the habitable globe; and surely he was armed for better conflicts than these succinct sketches and flying leaves of verse? I look on, I admire, I rejoice for myself; but in a kind of ambition we all have for our tongue and literature I am wounded. If I had this man's fertility and courage, it seems to me I could heave a pyramid.

Well, we begin to be the old fogies now; and it was high time SOMETHING rose to take our places. Certainly Kipling has the gifts; the fairy godmothers were all tipsy at his christening: what will he do with them?

Goodbye, my dear James; find an hour to write to us,

and register your letter. Yours affectionately,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO RUDYARD KIPLING**

VAILIMA, 1891.

SIR, I cannot call to mind having written you, but I am so throng with occupation this may have fallen aside. I never heard tell I had any friends in Ireland, and I am led to understand you are come of no considerable family. The gentleman I now serve with assures me, however, you are a very pretty fellow and your letter deserves to be remarked. It's true he is himself a man of a very low descent upon the one side; though upon the other he counts cousinship with a gentleman, my very good friend, the late Mr. Balfour of the Shaws, in the Lothian; which I should be wanting in good fellowship to forget. He tells me besides you are a man of your hands; I am not informed of your weapon; but if all be true it sticks in my mind I would be ready to make exception in your favour, and meet you like one gentleman with another.



I suppose this'll be your purpose in your favour, which I could very ill make out; it's one I would be sweir to baulk you of. It seems, Mr. McIlvaine, which I take to be your name, you are in the household of a gentleman of the name of Coupling: for whom my friend is very much engaged. The distances being very uncommodious, I think it will be maybe better if we leave it to these two to settle all that's necessary to honour. I would have you to take heed it's a very unusual condescension on my part, that bear a King's name; and for the matter of that I think shame to be mingled with a person of the name of Coupling, which is doubtless a very good house but one I never heard tell of, any more than Stevenson. But your purpose being laudable, I would be sorry (as the word goes) to cut off my nose to spite my face. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

A. STEWART, CHEVALIER DE ST. LOUIS.

TO MR. M'ILVAINE, GENTLEMAN PRIVATE IN A  
FOOT REGIMENT, UNDER COVER TO MR. COUPLING.

He has read me some of your Barrack Room Ballants,

which are not of so noble a strain as some of mine in the Gaelic, but I could set some of them to the pipes if this rencounter goes as it's to be desired. Let's first, as I understand you to move, do each other this rational courtesys; and if either will survive, we may grow better acquaint. For your tastes for what's martial and for poetry agree with mine.

A. S.

**Letter: TO MARCEL SCHWOB**

SYDNEY, JANUARY 19th, 1891.

MY DEAR SIR, SAPRISTI, COMME VOUS Y ALLEZ!

Richard III. and Dumas, with all my heart; but not Hamlet. Hamlet is great literature; Richard III. a big, black, gross, sprawling melodrama, writ with infinite spirit but with no refinement or philosophy by a man who had the world, himself, mankind, and his trade still to learn. I prefer the Vicomte de Bragelonne to Richard III.; it is better done of its kind: I simply do not mention the Vicomte in the same part of the building with Hamlet, or Lear, or Othello, or any of those

masterpieces that Shakespeare survived to give us.

Also, COMME VOUS Y ALLEZ in my commendation! I fear my SOLIDE EDUCATION CLASSIQUE had best be described, like Shakespeare's, as 'little Latin and no Greek,' and I was educated, let me inform you, for an engineer. I shall tell my bookseller to send you a copy of MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS, where you will see something of my descent and education, as it was, and hear me at length on my dear Vicomte. I give you permission gladly to take your choice out of my works, and translate what you shall prefer, too much honoured that so clever a young man should think it worth the pains. My own choice would lie between KIDNAPPED and the MASTER OF BALLANTRAE. Should you choose the latter, pray do not let Mrs. Henry thrust the sword up to the hilt in the frozen ground one of my inconceivable blunders, an exaggeration to stagger Hugo. Say 'she sought to thrust it in the ground.' In both these works you should be prepared for Scotticisms used deliberately.

I fear my stepson will not have found time to get to

Paris; he was overwhelmed with occupation, and is already on his voyage back. We live here in a beautiful land, amid a beautiful and interesting people. The life is still very hard: my wife and I live in a two roomed cottage, about three miles and six hundred and fifty feet above the sea; we have had to make the road to it; our supplies are very imperfect; in the wild weather of this (the hurricane) season we have much discomfort: one night the wind blew in our house so outrageously that we must sit in the dark; and as the sound of the rain on the roof made speech inaudible, you may imagine we found the evening long. All these things, however, are pleasant to me. You say L'ARTISTE INCONSCIENT set off to travel: you do not divide me right. 0.6 of me is artist; 0.4, adventurer. First, I suppose, come letters; then adventure; and since I have indulged the second part, I think the formula begins to change: 0.55 of an artist, 0.45 of the adventurer were nearer true. And if it had not been for my small strength, I might have been a different man in all things,

Whatever you do, do not neglect to send me what you

publish on Villon: I look forward to that with lively interest. I have no photograph at hand, but I will send one when I can. It would be kind if you would do the like, for I do not see much chance of our meeting in the flesh: and a name, and a handwriting, and an address, and even a style? I know about as much of Tacitus, and more of Horace; it is not enough between contemporaries, such as we still are. I have just remembered another of my books, which I re read the other day, and thought in places good PRINCE OTTO. It is not as good as either of the others; but it has one recommendation it has female parts, so it might perhaps please better in France.

I will ask Chatto to send you, then PRINCE OTTO, MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS, UNDERWOODS, and BALLADS, none of which you seem to have seen. They will be too late for the New Year: let them be an Easter present.

You must translate me soon; you will soon have better to do than to transverse the work of others. Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON,

With the worst pen in the South Pacific.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

SS. 'LUBECK,' AT SEA ON THE RETURN VOYAGE  
FROM SYDNEY, MARCH 1891.

MY DEAR CHARLES, Perhaps in my old days I do grow irascible; 'the old man virulent' has long been my pet name for myself. Well, the temper is at least all gone now; time is good at lowering these distemperatures; far better is a sharp sickness, and I am just (and scarce) afoot again after a smoking hot little malady at Sydney. And the temper being gone, I still think the same... We have not our parents for ever; we are never very good to them; when they go and we have lost our front file man, we begin to feel all our neglects mighty sensibly. I propose a proposal. My mother is here on board with me; to day for once I mean to make her as happy as I am able, and to do that which I know she likes. You, on the other hand, go and see your father, and do ditto, and give him a real good hour or two. We shall both be glad hereafter.

Yours ever,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO H. B. BAILDON**

VAILIMA, UPOLU UNDATED, BUT WRITTEN IN  
1891.

MY DEAR BAILDON, This is a real disappointment. It was so long since we had met, I was anxious to see where time had carried and stranded us. Last time we saw each other it must have been all ten years ago, as we were new to the thirties it was only for a moment, and now we're in the forties, and before very long we shall be in our graves. Sick and well, I have had a splendid life of it, grudge nothing, regret very little and then only some little corners of misconduct for which I deserve hanging, and must infallibly be damned and, take it all over, damnation and all, would hardly change with any man of my time, unless perhaps it were Gordon or our friend Chalmers: a man I admire for his virtues, love for his faults, and envy for the really A1 life he

has, with everything heart my heart, I mean could wish. It is curious to think you will read this in the grey metropolis; go the first grey, east windy day into the Caledonian Station, if it looks at all as it did of yore: I met Satan there. And then go and stand by the cross, and remember the other one him that went down my brother, Robert Fergusson. It is a pity you had not made me out, and seen me as patriarch and planter. I shall look forward to some record of your time with Chalmers: you can't weary me of that fellow, he is as big as a house and far bigger than any church, where no man warms his hands. Do you know anything of Thomson? Of A , B , C , D , E , F , at all? As I write C.'s name mustard rises my nose; I have never forgiven that weak, amiable boy a little trick he played me when I could ill afford it: I mean that whenever I think of it, some of the old wrath kindles, not that I would hurt the poor soul, if I got the world with it. And Old X ? Is he still afloat? Harmless bark! I gather you ain't married yet, since your sister, to whom I ask to be remembered, goes with you. Did you see a silly tale, JOHN NICHOLSON'S PREDICAMENT,



or some such name, in which I made free with your home at Murrayfield? There is precious little sense in it, but it might amuse. Cassell's published it in a thing called YULE TIDE years ago, and nobody that ever I heard of read or has ever seen YULE TIDE. It is addressed to a class we never met readers of Cassell's series and that class of conscientious chaff, and my tale was dull, though I don't recall that it was conscientious. Only, there's the house at Murrayfield and a dead body in it. Glad the BALLADS amused you. They failed to entertain a coy public, at which I wondered, not that I set much account by my verses, which are the verses of Prosator; but I do know how to tell a yarn, and two of the yarns are great. RAHERO is for its length a perfect folk tale: savage and yet fine, full of tailforemost morality, ancient as the granite rocks; if the historian, not to say the politician, could get that yarn into his head, he would have learned some of his A B C. But the average man at home cannot understand antiquity; he is sunk over the ears in Roman civilisation; and a tale like that of RAHERO falls on his ears inarticulate. The

SPECTATOR said there was no psychology in it; that interested me much: my grandmother (as I used to call that able paper, and an able paper it is, and a fair one) cannot so much as observe the existence of savage psychology when it is put before it. I am at bottom a psychologist and ashamed of it; the tale seized me one third because of its picturesque features, two thirds because of its astonishing psychology, and the SPECTATOR says there's none. I am going on with a lot of island work, exulting in the knowledge of a new world, 'a new created world' and new men; and I am sure my income will DECLINE and FALL off; for the effort of comprehension is death to the intelligent public, and sickness to the dull.

I do not know why I pester you with all this trash, above all as you deserve nothing. I give you my warm TALOFA ('my love to you,' Samoan salutation). Write me again when the spirit moves you. And some day, if I still live, make out the trip again and let us hob a nob with our grey pows on my

verandah. Yours sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO W CRAIBE ANGUS**

VAILIMA, SAMOA, APRIL 1891.

DEAR MR. ANGUS, Surely I remember you! It was W. C. Murray who made us acquainted, and we had a pleasant crack. I see your poet is not yet dead. I remember even our talk or you would not think of trusting that invaluable JOLLY BEGGARS to the treacherous posts, and the perils of the sea, and the carelessness of authors. I love the idea, but I could not bear the risk. However

'Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle ' it was kindly thought upon.

My interest in Burns is, as you suppose, perennial. I would I could be present at the exhibition, with the purpose of which I heartily sympathise; but the NANCY has not waited in vain for me, I have followed my chest, the anchor is weighed long ago, I have said my last farewell to the hills

and the heather and the lynns: like Leyden, I have gone into far lands to die, not stayed like Burns to mingle in the end with Scottish soil. I shall not even return like Scott for the last scene. Burns Exhibitions are all over. 'Tis a far cry to Lochow from tropical Vailima.

But still our hearts are true, our hearts are Highland,  
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.'

When your hand is in, will you remember our poor Edinburgh Robin? Burns alone has been just to his promise; follow Burns, he knew best, he knew whence he drew fire from the poor, white faced, drunken, vicious boy that raved himself to death in the Edinburgh madhouse. Surely there is more to be gleaned about Fergusson, and surely it is high time the task was set about. I way tell you (because your poet is not dead) something of how I feel: we are three Robins who have touched the Scots lyre this last century. Well, the one is the world's, he did it, he came off, he is for ever; but I and the other ah! what bonds we have born in the same city; both sickly, both pestered, one nearly to madness, one to the

madhouse, with a damnatory creed; both seeing the stars and the dawn, and wearing shoe leather on the same ancient stones, under the same pends, down the same closes, where our common ancestors clashed in their armour, rusty or bright. And the old Robin, who was before Burns and the flood, died in his acute, painful youth, and left the models of the great things that were to come; and the new, who came after, outlived his greensickness, and has faintly tried to parody the finished work. If you will collect the strays of Robin Fergusson, fish for material, collect any last re echoing of gossip, command me to do what you prefer to write the preface to write the whole if you prefer: anything, so that another monument (after Burns's) be set up to my unhappy predecessor on the causey of Auld Reekie. You will never know, nor will any man, how deep this feeling is: I believe Fergusson lives in me. I do, but tell it not in Gath; every man has these fanciful superstitions, coming, going, but yet enduring; only most men are so wise (or the poet in them so dead) that they keep their follies for themselves. I am, yours

very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO EDMUND GOSSE**

VAILIMA, APRIL 1891.

MY DEAR GOSSE, I have to thank you and Mrs. Gosse for many mementoes, chiefly for your LIFE of your father. There is a very delicate task, very delicately done. I noted one or two carelessnesses, which I meant to point out to you for another edition; but I find I lack the time, and you will remark them for yourself against a new edition. They were two, or perhaps three, flabbinesses of style which (in your work) amazed me. Am I right in thinking you were a shade bored over the last chapters? or was it my own fault that made me think them susceptible of a more athletic compression? (The flabbinesses were not there, I think, but in the more admirable part, where they showed the bigger.) Take it all together, the book struck me as if you had been hurried at the last, but particularly hurried over the proofs,

and could still spend a very profitable fortnight in earnest revision and (towards the end) heroic compression. The book, in design, subject, and general execution, is well worth the extra trouble. And even if I were wrong in thinking it specially wanted, it will not be lost; for do we not know, in Flaubert's dread confession, that 'prose is never done'? What a medium to work in, for a man tired, perplexed among different aims and subjects, and spurred by the immediate need of 'siller'! However, it's mine for what it's worth; and it's one of yours, the devil take it; and you know, as well as Flaubert, and as well as me, that it is NEVER DONE; in other words, it is a torment of the pit, usually neglected by the bards who (lucky beggars!) approached the Styx in measure. I speak bitterly at the moment, having just detected in myself the last fatal symptom, three blank verses in succession and I believe, God help me, a hemistich at the tail of them; hence I have deposed the labourer, come out of hell by my private trap, and now write to you from my little place in purgatory. But I prefer hell: would I could always dig in

those red coals or else be at sea in a schooner, bound for isles unvisited: to be on shore and not to work is emptiness suicidal vacancy.

I was the more interested in your LIFE of your father, because I meditate one of mine, or rather of my family. I have no such materials as you, and (our objections already made) your attack fills me with despair; it is direct and elegant, and your style is always admirable to me lenity, lucidity, usually a high strain of breeding, an elegance that has a pleasant air of the accidental. But beware of purple passages. I wonder if you think as well of your purple passages as I do of mine? I wonder if you think as ill of mine as I do of yours? I wonder; I can tell you at least what is wrong with yours they are treated in the spirit of verse. The spirit I don't mean the measure, I don't mean you fall into bastard cadences; what I mean is that they seem vacant and smoothed out, ironed, if you like. And in a style which (like yours) aims more and more successfully at the academic, one purple word is already much; three a whole phrase is



inadmissible. Wed yourself to a clean austerity: that is your force. Wear a linen ephod, splendidly candid. Arrange its folds, but do not fasten it with any brooch. I swear to you, in your talking robes, there should be no patch of adornment; and where the subject forces, let it force you no further than it must; and be ready with a twinkle of your pleasantry. Yours is a fine tool, and I see so well how to hold it; I wonder if you see how to hold mine? But then I am to the neck in prose, and just now in the 'dark INTERSTYLAR cave,' all methods and effects wooing me, myself in the midst impotent to follow any. I look for dawn presently, and a full flowing river of expression, running whither it wills. But these useless seasons, above all, when a man MUST continue to spoil paper, are infinitely weary.

We are in our house after a fashion; without furniture, 'tis true, camping there, like the family after a sale. But the bailiff has not yet appeared; he will probably come after. The place is beautiful beyond dreams; some fifty miles of the Pacific spread in front; deep woods all round; a mountain

making in the sky a profile of huge trees upon our left; about us, the little island of our clearing, studded with brave old gentlemen (or ladies, or 'the twa o' them') whom we have spared. It is a good place to be in; night and morning, we have Theodore Rouseaus (always a new one) hung to amuse us on the walls of the world; and the moon this is our good season, we have a moon just now makes the night a piece of heaven. It amazes me how people can live on in the dirty north; yet if you saw our rainy season (which is really a caulker for wind, wet, and darkness howling showers, roaring winds, pit blackness at noon) you might marvel how we could endure that. And we can't. But there's a winter everywhere; only ours is in the summer. Mark my words: there will be a winter in heaven and in hell. CELA RENTRE DANS LES PROCEDES DU BON DIEU; ET VOUS VERREZ! There's another very good thing about Vailima, I am away from the little bubble of the literary life. It is not all beer and skittles, is it? By the by, my BALLADS seem to have been dam bad; all the crickets sing so in their crickety

papers; and I have no ghost of an idea on the point myself: verse is always to me the unknowable. You might tell me how it strikes a professional bard: not that it really matters, for, of course, good or bad, I don't think I shall get into THAT galley any more. But I should like to know if you join the shrill chorus of the crickets. The crickets are the devil in all to you: 'tis a strange thing, they seem to rejoice like a strong man in their injustice. I trust you got my letter about your Browning book. In case it missed, I wish to say again that your publication of Browning's kind letter, as an illustration of HIS character, was modest, proper, and in radiant good taste. In Witness whereof, etc., etc.,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MISS RAWLINSON**

VAILIMA, APIA, SAMOA, APRIL 1891.

MY DEAR MAY, I never think of you by any more ceremonial name, so I will not pretend. There is not much chance that I shall forget you until the time comes for me to

forget all this little turmoil in a corner (though indeed I have been in several corners) of an inconsiderable planet. You remain in my mind for a good reason, having given me (in so short a time) the most delightful pleasure. I shall remember, and you must still be beautiful. The truth is, you must grow more so, or you will soon be less. It is not so easy to be a flower, even when you bear a flower's name. And if I admired you so much, and still remember you, it is not because of your face, but because you were then worthy of it, as you must still continue.

Will you give my heartiest congratulations to Mr. S.? He has my admiration; he is a brave man; when I was young, I should have run away from the sight of you, pierced with the sense of my unfitness. He is more wise and manly. What a good husband he will have to be! And you what a good wife! Carry your love tenderly. I will never forgive him or you it is in both your hands if the face that once gladdened my heart should be changed into one sour or sorrowful.

What a person you are to give flowers! It was so I first

heard of you; and now you are giving the May flower!

Yes, Skerryvore has passed; it was, for us. But I wish you could see us in our new home on the mountain, in the middle of great woods, and looking far out over the Pacific. When Mr. S. is very rich, he must bring you round the world and let you see it, and see the old gentleman and the old lady. I mean to live quite a long while yet, and my wife must do the same, or else I couldn't manage it; so, you see, you will have plenty of time; and it's a pity not to see the most beautiful places, and the most beautiful people moving there, and the real stars and moon overhead, instead of the tin imitations that preside over London. I do not think my wife very well; but I am in hopes she will now have a little rest. It has been a hard business, above all for her; we lived four months in the hurricane season in a miserable house, overborne with work, ill fed, continually worried, drowned in perpetual rain, beaten upon by wind, so that we must sit in the dark in the evenings; and then I ran away, and she had a month of it alone. Things go better now; the back of the work

is broken; and we are still foolish enough to look forward to a little peace. I am a very different person from the prisoner of Skerryvore. The other day I was three and twenty hours in an open boat; it made me pretty ill; but fancy its not killing me half way! It is like a fairy story that I should have recovered liberty and strength, and should go round again among my fellow men, boating, riding, bathing, toiling hard with a wood knife in the forest. I can wish you nothing more delightful than my fortune in life; I wish it you; and better, if the thing be possible.

Lloyd is tinkling below me on the typewriter; my wife has just left the room; she asks me to say she would have written had she been well enough, and hopes to do it still. Accept the best wishes of your admirer,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MISS ADELAIDE BOODLE**

VAILIMA, MAY 1891.

MY DEAR ADELAIDE, I will own you just did manage to tread on my gouty toe; and I beg to assure you with most people I should simply have turned away and said no more. My cudgelling was therefore in the nature of a caress or testimonial.

God forbid, I should seem to judge for you on such a point; it was what you seemed to set forth as your reasons that fluttered my old Presbyterian spirit for, mind you, I am a child of the Covenanters whom I do not love, but they are mine after all, my father's and my mother's and they had their merits too, and their ugly beauties, and grotesque heroisms, that I love them for, the while I laugh at them; but in their name and mine do what you think right, and let the world fall. That is the privilege and the duty of private persons; and I shall think the more of you at the greater distance, because you keep a promise to your fellow man, your helper and

creditor in life, by just so much as I was tempted to think the less of you (O not much, or I would never have been angry) when I thought you were the swallower of a (tin foil) formula.

I must say I was uneasy about my letter, not because it was too strong as an expression of my unregenerate sentiments, but because I knew full well it should be followed by something kinder. And the mischief has been in my health. I fell sharply sick in Sydney, was put aboard the LUBECK pretty bad, got to Vailima, hung on a month there, and didn't pick up as well as my work needed; set off on a journey, gained a great deal, lost it again; and am back at Vailima, still no good at my necessary work. I tell you this for my imperfect excuse that I should not have written you again sooner to remove the bad taste of my last.

A road has been called Adelaide Road; it leads from the back of our house to the bridge, and thence to the garden, and by a bifurcation to the pig pen. It is thus much traversed, particularly by Fanny. An oleander, the only one of your seeds that prospered in this climate, grows there; and the



name is now some week or ten days applied and published. ADELAIDE ROAD leads also into the bush, to the banana patch, and by a second bifurcation over the left branch of the stream to the plateau and the right hand of the gorges. In short, it leads to all sorts of good, and is, besides, in itself a pretty winding path, bound downhill among big woods to the margin of the stream.

What a strange idea, to think me a Jew hater! Isaiah and David and Heine are good enough for me; and I leave more unsaid. Were I of Jew blood, I do not think I could ever forgive the Christians; the ghettos would get in my nostrils like mustard or lit gunpowder. Just so you as being a child of the Presbytery, I retain I need not dwell on that. The ascendant hand is what I feel most strongly; I am bound in and in with my forbears; were he one of mine, I should not be struck at all by Mr. Moss of Bevis Marks, I should still see behind him Moses of the Mount and the Tables and the shining face. We are all nobly born; fortunate those who know it; blessed those who remember.

I am, my dear Adelaide, most genuinely yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Write by return to say you are better, and I will try to do the same.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

VAILIMA, TUESDAY, 19TH MAY '91.

MY DEAR CHARLES, I don't know what you think of me, not having written to you at all during your illness. I find two sheets begun with your name, but that is no excuse...I am keeping bravely; getting about better, every day, and hope soon to be in my usual fettle. My books begin to come; and I fell once more on the Old Bailey session papers. I have 1778, 1784, and 1786. Should you be able to lay hands on any other volumes, above all a little later, I should be very glad you should buy them for me. I particularly want ONE or TWO during the course of the Peninsular War. Come to think, I ought rather to have communicated this want to Bain. Would it bore you to communicate to that effect with the great man?

The sooner I have them, the better for me. 'Tis for Henry Shovel. But Henry Shovel has now turned into a work called 'The Shovels of Newton French: Including Memoirs of Henry Shovel, a Private in the Peninsular War,' which work is to begin in 1664 with the marriage of Skipper, afterwards Alderman Shovel of Bristol, Henry's great great grandfather, and end about 1832 with his own second marriage to the daughter of his runaway aunt. Will the public ever stand such an opus? Gude kens, but it tickles me. Two or three historical personages will just appear: Judge Jeffreys, Wellington, Colquhoun, Grant, and I think Townsend the runner. I know the public won't like it; let 'em lump it then; I mean to make it good; it will be more like a saga. Adieu, yours ever affectionately,

R. L. STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA SUMMER 1891.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, I find among my grandfather's papers his own reminiscences of his voyage round the north with Sir Walter, eighty years ago, LABUNTUR ANNI! They are not remarkably good, but he was not a bad observer, and several touches seem to me speaking. It has occurred to me you might like them to appear in the MAGAZINE. If you would, kindly let me know, and tell me how you would like it handled. My grandad's MS. runs to between six and seven thousand words, which I could abbreviate of anecdotes that scarce touch Sir W. Would you like this done? Would you like me to introduce the old gentleman? I had something of the sort in my mind, and could fill a few columns rather A PROPOS. I give you the first offer of this, according to your request; for though it may forestall one of the interests of my biography, the thing seems to me particularly suited for prior appearance in a

magazine.

I see the first number of the WRECKER; I thought it went lively enough; and by a singular accident, the picture is not unlike Tai o hae!

Thus we see the age of miracles, etc. Yours very sincerely,

R. L. S.

Proofs for next mail.

**Letter: TO W CRAI BE ANGUS**

SUMMER 1891.

DEAR MR. ANGUS, You can use my letter as you will. The parcel has not come; pray Heaven the next post bring it safe. Is it possible for me to write a preface here? I will try if you like, if you think I must: though surely there are Rivers in Assyria. Of course you will send me sheets of the catalogue; I suppose it (the preface) need not be long; perhaps it should be rather very short? Be sure you give me your views upon these points. Also tell me what names to

mention among those of your helpers, and do remember to register everything, else it is not safe.

The true place (in my view) for a monument to Fergusson were the churchyard of Haddington. But as that would perhaps not carry many votes, I should say one of the two following sites: First, either as near the site of the old Bedlam as we could get, or, second, beside the Cross, the heart of his city. Upon this I would have a fluttering butterfly, and, I suggest, the citation,

Poor butterfly, thy case I mourn.

For the case of Fergusson is not one to pretend about. A more miserable tragedy the sun never shone upon, or (in consideration of our climate) I should rather say refused to brighten. Yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Where Burns goes will not matter. He is no local poet, like your Robin the First; he is general as the casing air. Glasgow, as the chief city of Scottish men, would do well; but for God's sake, don't let it be like the Glasgow memorial

to Knox: I remember, when I first saw this, laughing for an hour by Shrewsbury clock.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO H C IDE**

VAILIMA, JUNE 19, 1891.

DEAR MR. IDE, Herewith please find the DOCUMENT, which I trust will prove sufficient in law. It seems to me very attractive in its eclecticism; Scots, English, and Roman law phrases are all indifferently introduced, and a quotation from the works of Haynes Bayly can hardly fail to attract the indulgence of the Bench. Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

I, Robert Louis Stevenson, Advocate of the Scots Bar, author of THE MASTER OF BALLANTRAE and MORAL EMBLEMS, stuck civil engineer, sole owner and patentee of the Palace and Plantation known as Vailima in the island of Upolu, Samoa, a British Subject, being in sound mind, and pretty well, I thank you, in body:

In consideration that Miss Annie H. Ide, daughter of H. C. Ide, in the town of Saint Johnsbury, in the county of Caledonia, in the state of Vermont, United States of America, was born, out of all reason, upon Christmas Day, and is therefore out of all justice denied the consolation and profit of a proper birthday;

And considering that I, the said Robert Louis Stevenson, have attained an age when O, we never mention it, and that I have now no further use for a birthday of any description;

And in consideration that I have met H. C. Ide, the father of the said Annie H. Ide, and found him about as white a land commissioner as I require:

HAVE TRANSFERRED, and DO HEREBY TRANSFER, to the said Annie H. Ide, ALL AND WHOLE my rights and priviledges in the thirteenth day of November, formerly my birthday, now, hereby, and henceforth, the birthday of the said Annie H. Ide, to have, hold, exercise, and enjoy the same in the customary manner, by the sporting of fine raiment, eating of rich meats, and receipt of gifts,



compliments, and copies of verse, according to the manner of our ancestors;

AND I DIRECT the said Annie H. Ide to add to the said name of Annie H. Ide the name Louisa at least in private; and I charge her to use my said birthday with moderation and humanity, ET TAMQUAM BONA FILIA FAMILIAE, the said birthday not being so young as it once was, and having carried me in a very satisfactory manner since I can remember;

And in case the said Annie H. Ide shall neglect or contravene either of the above conditions, I hereby revoke the donation and transfer my rights in the said birthday to the President of the United States of America for the time being:

In witness whereof I have hereto set my hand and seal this nineteenth day of June in the year of grace eighteen hundred and ninety one.

SEAL.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

WITNESS, LLOYD OSBOURNE, WITNESS,

HAROLD WATTS.

**Letter: TO HENRY JAMES**

VAILIMA, OCTOBER 1891.

MY DEAR HENRY JAMES, From this perturbed and hunted being expect but a line, and that line shall be but a whoop for Adela. O she's delicious, delicious; I could live and die with Adela die, rather the better of the two; you never did a straighter thing, and never will.

DAVID BALFOUR, second part of KIDNAPPED, is on the stocks at last; and is not bad, I think. As for THE WRECKER, it's a machine, you know don't expect aught else a machine, and a police machine; but I believe the end is one of the most genuine butcheries in literature; and we point to our machine with a modest pride, as the only police machine without a villain. Our criminals are a most pleasing crew, and leave the dock with scarce a stain upon their character.

What a different line of country to be trying to draw Adela, and trying to write the last four chapters of THE

WRECKER! Heavens, it's like two centuries; and ours is such rude, transpontine business, aiming only at a certain fervour of conviction and sense of energy and violence in the men; and yours is so neat and bright and of so exquisite a surface! Seems dreadful to send such a book to such an author; but your name is on the list. And we do modestly ask you to consider the chapters on the NORAH CREINA with the study of Captain Nares, and the forementioned last four, with their brutality of substance and the curious (and perhaps unsound) technical manoeuvre of running the story together to a point as we go along, the narrative becoming more succinct and the details fining off with every page. Sworn affidavit of

R. L. S.

NO PERSON NOW ALIVE HAS BEATEN ADELA: I  
ADORE ADELA AND HER MAKER. SIC SUBSCRIB.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

A Sublime Poem to follow.

Adela, Adela, Adela Chart, What have you done to my

elderly heart? Of all the ladies of paper and ink I count you  
the paragon, call you the pink. The word of your brother  
depicts you in part: 'You raving maniac!' Adela Chart; But in  
all the asylums that cumber the ground, So delightful a  
maniac was ne'er to be found.

I pore on you, dote on you, clasp you to heart, I laud,  
love, and laugh at you, Adela Chart, And thank my dear  
maker the while I admire That I can be neither your husband  
nor sire.

Your husband's, your sire's were a difficult part; You're a  
byway to suicide, Adela Chart; But to read of, depicted by  
exquisite James, O, sure you're the flower and quintessence  
of dames.

R. L. S.

ERUCTAVIT COR MEUM.

My heart was inditing a goodly matter about Adela  
Chart. Though oft I've been touched by the volatile dart, To  
none have I grovelled but Adela Chart, There are passable  
ladies, no question, in art But where is the marrow of Adela

Chart? I dreamed that to Tyburn I passed in the cart I dreamed I was married to Adela Chart: From the first I awoke with a palpable start, The second dumfounded me, Adela Chart!

Another verse bursts from me, you see; no end to the violence of the Muse.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

OCTOBER 8TH, 1891.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, All right, you shall have the TALES OF MY GRANDFATHER soon, but I guess we'll try and finish off THE WRECKER first. A PROPOS of whom, please send some advanced sheets to Cassell's away ahead of you so that they may get a dummy out.

Do you wish to illustrate MY GRANDFATHER? He mentions as excellent a portrait of Scott by Basil Hall's brother. I don't think I ever saw this engraved; would it not, if you could get track of it, prove a taking embellishment? I suggest this for your consideration and inquiry. A new

portrait of Scott strikes me as good. There is a hard, tough, constipated old portrait of my grandfather hanging in my aunt's house, Mrs. Alan Stevenson, 16 St. Leonard's Terrace, Chelsea, which has never been engraved the better portrait, Joseph's bust has been reproduced, I believe, twice and which, I am sure, my aunt would let you have a copy of. The plate could be of use for the book when we get so far, and thus to place it in the MAGAZINE might be an actual saving.

I am swallowed up in politics for the first, I hope for the last, time in my sublunary career. It is a painful, thankless trade; but one thing that came up I could not pass in silence. Much drafting, addressing, deputationising has eaten up all my time, and again (to my contrition) I leave you Wreckerless. As soon as the mail leaves I tackle it straight.

Yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA AUTUMN 1891.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, The time draws nigh, the mail is near due, and I snatch a moment of collapse so that you may have at least some sort of a scratch of note along with the end of THE WRECKER. Hurray!

Which I mean to go herewith. It has taken me a devil of a pull, but I think it's going to be ready. If I did not know you were on the stretch waiting for it and trembling for your illustrations, I would keep it for another finish; but things being as they are, I will let it go the best way I can get it. I am now within two pages of the end of Chapter XXV., which is the last chapter, the end with its gathering up of loose threads, being the dedication to Low, and addressed to him: this is my last and best expedient for the knotting up of these loose cards. 'Tis possible I may not get that finished in time, in which case you'll receive only Chapters XXII. to XXV. by this mail, which is all that can be required for illustration.

I wish you would send me MEMOIRS OF BARON MARBOT (French); INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF LANGUAGE, Strong, Logeman & Wheeler; PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY, William James; Morris & Magnusson's SAGA LIBRARY, any volumes that are out; George Meredith's ONE OF OUR CONQUERORS; LA BAS, by Huysmans (French); O'Connor Morris's GREAT COMMANDERS OF MODERN TIMES; LIFE'S HANDICAP, by Kipling; of Taine's ORIGINES DE LA FRANCE CONTEMPORAINE, I have only as far as LA REVOLUTION, vol. iii.; if another volume is out, please add that. There is for a book box.

I hope you will like the end; I think it is rather strong meat. I have got into such a deliberate, dilatory, expansive turn, that the effort to compress this last yarn was unwelcome; but the longest yarn has to come to an end sometime. Please look it over for carelessnesses, and tell me if it had any effect upon your jaded editorial mind. I'll see if ever I have time to add more.



I add to my book box list Adams' HISTORICAL ESSAYS; the Plays of A. W. Pinero all that have appeared, and send me the rest in course as they do appear; NOUGHTS AND CROSSES by Q.; Robertson's SCOTLAND UNDER HER EARLY KINGS.

SUNDAY.

The deed is done, didst thou not hear a noise? 'The end' has been written to this endless yarn, and I am once more a free man. What will he do with it?

**Letter: TO W CRAIBE ANGUS**

VAILIMA, SAMOA, NOVEMBER 1891.

MY DEAR MR. ANGUS, Herewith the invaluable sheets. They came months after your letter, and I trembled; but here they are, and I have scrawled my vile name on them, and 'thocht shame' as I did it. I am expecting the sheets of your catalogue, so that I may attack the preface. Please give me all the time you can. The sooner the better; you might even send me early proofs as they are sent out, to give me

more incubation. I used to write as slow as judgment; now I write rather fast; but I am still 'a slow study,' and sit a long while silent on my eggs. Unconscious thought, there is the only method: macerate your subject, let it boil slow, then take the lid off and look in and there your stuff is, good or bad. But the journalist's method is the way to manufacture lies; it will worship if you know the luminous quaker phrase; and the will is only to be brought in the field for study, and again for revision. The essential part of work is not an act, it is a state.

I do not know why I write you this trash.

Many thanks for your handsome dedication. I have not yet had time to do more than glance at Mrs. Begg; it looks interesting. Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MISS ANNIE HIDE**

VAILIMA, SAMOA NOVEMBER 1891.

MY DEAR LOUISA, Your picture of the church, the photograph of yourself and your sister, and your very witty and pleasing letter, came all in a bundle, and made me feel I had my money's worth for that birthday. I am now, I must be, one of your nearest relatives; exactly what we are to each other, I do not know, I doubt if the case has ever happened before your papa ought to know, and I don't believe he does; but I think I ought to call you in the meanwhile, and until we get the advice of counsel learned in the law, my name daughter. Well, I was extremely pleased to see by the church that my name daughter could draw; by the letter, that she was no fool; and by the photograph, that she was a pretty girl, which hurts nothing. See how virtues are rewarded! My first idea of adopting you was entirely charitable; and here I find that I am quite proud of it, and of you, and that I chose just the kind of name daughter I wanted. For I can draw too, or

rather I mean to say I could before I forgot how; and I am very far from being a fool myself, however much I may look it; and I am as beautiful as the day, or at least I once hoped that perhaps I might be going to be. And so I might. So that you see we are well met, and peers on these important points. I am VERY glad also that you are older than your sister. So should I have been, if I had had one. So that the number of points and virtues which you have inherited from your name father is already quite surprising.

I wish you would tell your father not that I like to encourage my rival that we have had a wonderful time here of late, and that they are having a cold day on Mulinuu, and the consuls are writing reports, and I am writing to the TIMES, and if we don't get rid of our friends this time I shall begin to despair of everything but my name daughter.

You are quite wrong as to the effect of the birthday on your age. From the moment the deed was registered (as it was in the public press with every solemnity), the 13th of November became your own AND ONLY birthday, and you

ceased to have been born on Christmas Day. Ask your father: I am sure he will tell you this is sound law. You are thus become a month and twelve days younger than you were, but will go on growing older for the future in the regular and human manner from one 13th November to the next. The effect on me is more doubtful; I may, as you suggest, live for ever; I might, on the other hand, come to pieces like the one horse shay at a moment's notice; doubtless the step was risky, but I do not the least regret that which enables me to sign myself your revered and delighted name father,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO FRED ORR**

VAILIMA, UPOLU, SAMOA, NOVEMBER 28TH,  
1891.

DEAR SIR, Your obliging communication is to hand. I am glad to find that you have read some of my books, and to see that you spell my name right. This is a point (for some reason) of great difficulty; and I believe that a gentleman

who can spell Stevenson with a v at sixteen, should have a show for the Presidency before fifty. By that time

I, nearer to the wayside inn,  
predict that you will have outgrown your taste for autographs, but perhaps your son may have inherited the collection, and on the morning of the great day will recall my prophecy to your mind. And in the papers of 1921 (say) this letter may arouse a smile.

Whatever you do, read something else besides novels and newspapers; the first are good enough when they are good; the second, at their best, are worth nothing. Read great books of literature and history; try to understand the Roman Empire and the Middle Ages; be sure you do not understand when you dislike them; condemnation is non comprehension. And if you know something of these two periods, you will know a little more about to day, and may be a good President.

I send you my best wishes, and am yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON,  
AUTHOR OF A VAST QUANTITY OF LITTLE

BOOKS.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA, DECEMBER 1891.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, The end of THE WRECKER having but just come in, you will, I dare say, be appalled to receive three (possibly four) chapters of a new book of the least attractive sort: a history of nowhere in a corner, for no time to mention, running to a volume! Well, it may very likely be an illusion; it is very likely no one could possibly wish to read it, but I wish to publish it. If you don't cotton to the idea, kindly set it up at my expense, and let me know your terms for publishing. The great affair to me is to have per return (if it might be) four or five better say half a dozen sets of the roughest proofs that can be drawn. There are a good many men here whom I want to read the blessed thing, and not one would have the energy to read MS. At the same time, if you care to glance at it, and have the time, I should be very glad of your opinion as to whether I have

made any step at all towards possibly inducing folk at home to read matter so extraneous and outlandish. I become heavy and owlsh; years sit upon me; it begins to seem to me to be a man's business to leave off his damnable faces and say his say. Else I could have made it pungent and light and lively. In considering, kindly forget that I am R. L. S.; think of the four chapters as a book you are reading, by an inhabitant of our 'lovely but fatil' islands; and see if it could possibly amuse the hebetated public. I have to publish anyway, you understand; I have a purpose beyond; I am concerned for some of the parties to this quarrel. What I want to hear is from curiosity; what I want you to judge of is what we are to do with the book in a business sense. To me it is not business at all; I had meant originally to lay all the profits to the credit of Samoa; when it comes to the pinch of writing, I judge this unfair I give too much and I mean to keep (if there be any profit at all) one half for the artisan; the rest I shall hold over to give to the Samoans FOR THAT WHICH I CHOOSE AND AGAINST WORK DONE. I think I have never heard



of greater insolence than to attempt such a subject; yet the tale is so strange and mixed, and the people so oddly characted above all, the whites and the high note of the hurricane and the warships is so well prepared to take popular interest, and the latter part is so directly in the day's movement, that I am not without hope but some may read it; and if they don't, a murrain on them! Here is, for the first time, a tale of Greeks Homeric Greeks mingled with moderns, and all true; Odysseus alongside of Rajah Brooke, PROPORTION GARDEE; and all true. Here is for the first time since the Greeks (that I remember) the history of a handful of men, where all know each other in the eyes, and live close in a few acres, narrated at length, and with the seriousness of history. Talk of the modern novel; here is a modern history. And if I had the misfortune to found a school, the legitimate historian might lie down and die, for he could never overtake his material. Here is a little tale that has not 'caret' ed its 'vates'; 'sacer' is another point.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO HENRY JAMES**

DECEMBER 7TH, 1891.

MY DEAR HENRY JAMES, Thanks for yours; your former letter was lost; so it appears was my long and masterly treatise on the TRAGIC MUSE. I remember sending it very well, and there went by the same mail a long and masterly tractate to Gosse about his daddy's life, for which I have been long expecting an acknowledgment, and which is plainly gone to the bottom with the other. If you see Gosse, please mention it. These gems of criticism are now lost literature, like the tomes of Alexandria. I could not do 'em again. And I must ask you to be content with a dull head, a weary hand, and short commons, for to day, as I am physically tired with hard work of every kind, the labours of the planter and the author both piled upon me mountain deep. I am delighted beyond expression by Bourget's book: he has phrases which affect me almost like Montaigne; I had read ere this a masterly essay of his on Pascal; this book does it; I

write for all his essays by this mail, and shall try to meet him when I come to Europe. The proposal is to pass a summer in France, I think in Royat, where the faithful could come and visit me; they are now not many. I expect Henry James to come and break a crust or two with us. I believe it will be only my wife and myself; and she will go over to England, but not I, or possibly incog. to Southampton, and then to Boscombe to see poor Lady Shelley. I am writing trying to write in a Babel fit for the bottomless pit; my wife, her daughter, her grandson and my mother, all shrieking at each other round the house not in war, thank God! but the din is ultra martial, and the note of Lloyd joins in occasionally, and the cause of this to do is simply cacao, whereof chocolate comes. You may drink of our chocolate perhaps in five or six years from now, and not know it. It makes a fine bustle, and gives us some hard work, out of which I have slunk for to day.

I have a story coming out: God knows when or how; it answers to the name of the BEACH OF FALESA, and I think

well of it. I was delighted with the TRAGIC MUSE; I thought the Muse herself one of your best works; I was delighted also to hear of the success of your piece, as you know I am a dam failure, and might have dined with the dinner club that Daudet and these parties frequented.

NEXT DAY.

I have just been breakfasting at Baiae and Brindisi, and the charm of Bourget hag rides me. I wonder if this exquisite fellow, all made of fiddle strings and scent and intelligence, could bear any of my bald prose. If you think he could, ask Colvin to send him a copy of these last essays of mine when they appear; and tell Bourget they go to him from a South Sea Island as literal homage. I have read no new book for years that gave me the same literary thrill as his SENSATIONS D'ITALIE. If (as I imagine) my cut and dry literature would be death to him, and worse than death journalism be silent on the point. For I have a great curiosity to know him, and if he doesn't know my work, I shall have the better chance of making his acquaintance. I read THE

PUPIL the other day with great joy; your little boy is admirable; why is there no little boy like that unless he hails from the Great Republic?

Here I broke off, and wrote Bourget a dedication; no use resisting; it's a love affair. O, he's exquisite, I bless you for the gift of him. I have really enjoyed this book as I almost as I used to enjoy books when I was going twenty twenty three; and these are the years for reading!

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA JAN 2ND, '92.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, Overjoyed you were pleased with WRECKER, and shall consider your protests. There is perhaps more art than you think for in the peccant chapter, where I have succeeded in packing into one a dedication, an explanation, and a termination. Surely you had not recognised the phrase about boodle? It was a quotation from Jim Pinkerton, and seemed to me agreeably skittish.

However, all shall be prayerfully considered.

To come to a more painful subject. Herewith go three more chapters of the wretched HISTORY; as you see, I approach the climax. I expect the book to be some 70,000 words, of which you have now 45. Can I finish it for next mail? I am going to try! 'Tis a long piece of journalism, and full of difficulties here and there, of this kind and that, and will make me a power of friends to be sure. There is one Becker who will probably put up a window to me in the church where he was baptized; and I expect a testimonial from Captain Hand.

Sorry to let the mail go without the Scott; this has been a bad month with me, and I have been below myself. I shall find a way to have it come by next, or know the reason why. The mail after, anyway.

A bit of a sketch map appears to me necessary for my HISTORY; perhaps two. If I do not have any, 'tis impossible any one should follow; and I, even when not at all interested, demand that I shall be able to follow; even a tourist book

without a map is a cross to me; and there must be others of my way of thinking. I inclose the very artless one that I think needful. Vailima, in case you are curious, is about as far again behind Tanugamanono as that is from the sea.

M'Clure is publishing a short story of mine, some 50,000 words, I think, THE BEACH OF FALESA; when he's done with it, I want you and Cassell to bring it out in a little volume; I shall send you a dedication for it; I believe it good; indeed, to be honest, very good. Good gear that pleases the merchant.

The other map that I half threaten is a chart for the hurricane. Get me Kimberley's report of the hurricane: not to be found here. It is of most importance; I MUST have it with my proofs of that part, if I cannot have it earlier, which now seems impossible. Yours in hot haste,

R. L. STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO J. M BARRIE**

VAILIMA, SAMOA, FEBRUARY 1892.

DEAR MR. BARRIE, This is at least the third letter I have written you, but my correspondence has a bad habit of not getting so far as the post. That which I possess of manhood turns pale before the business of the address and envelope. But I hope to be more fortunate with this: for, besides the usual and often recurrent desire to thank you for your work you are one of four that have come to the front since I was watching and had a corner of my own to watch, and there is no reason, unless it be in these mysterious tides that ebb and flow, and make and mar and murder the works of poor scribblers, why you should not do work of the best order. The tides have borne away my sentence, of which I was weary at any rate, and between authors I may allow myself so much freedom as to leave it pending. We are both Scots besides, and I suspect both rather Scotty Scots; my own Scotchness tends to intermittency, but is at times



erisypelitous if that be rightly spelt. Lastly, I have gathered we had both made our stages in the metropolis of the winds: our Virgil's 'grey metropolis,' and I count that a lasting bond. No place so brands a man.

Finally, I feel it a sort of duty to you to report progress. This may be an error, but I believed I detected your hand in an article it may be an illusion, it may have been by one of those industrious insects who catch up and reproduce the handling of each emergent man but I'll still hope it was yours and hope it may please you to hear that the continuation of KIDNAPPED is under way. I have not yet got to Alan, so I do not know if he is still alive, but David seems to have a kick or two in his shanks. I was pleased to see how the Anglo Saxon theory fell into the trap: I gave my Lowlander a Gaelic name, and even commented on the fact in the text; yet almost all critics recognised in Alan and David a Saxon and a Celt. I know not about England; in Scotland at least, where Gaelic was spoken in Fife little over the century ago, and in Galloway not much earlier, I deny that there exists such a

thing as a pure Saxon, and I think it more than questionable if there be such a thing as a pure Celt.

But what have you to do with this? and what have I? Let us continue to inscribe our little bits of tales, and let the heathen rage! Yours, with sincere interest in your career,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO WILLIAM MORRIS**

VAILIMA, SAMOA, FEB. 1892.

MASTER, A plea from a place so distant should have some weight, and from a heart so grateful should have some address. I have been long in your debt, Master, and I did not think it could be so much increased as you have now increased it. I was long in your debt and deep in your debt for many poems that I shall never forget, and for SIGURD before all, and now you have plunged me beyond payment by the Saga Library. And so now, true to human nature, being plunged beyond payment, I come and bark at your heels.

For surely, Master, that tongue that we write, and that

you have illustrated so nobly, is yet alive. She has her rights and laws, and is our mother, our queen, and our instrument. Now in that living tongue WHERE has one sense, WHEREAS another. In the HEATHSLAYINGS STORY, p. 241, line 13, it bears one of its ordinary senses. Elsewhere and usually through the two volumes, which is all that has yet reached me of this entrancing publication, WHEREAS is made to figure for WHERE.

For the love of God, my dear and honoured Morris, use WHERE, and let us know WHEREAS we are, wherefore our gratitude shall grow, whereby you shall be the more honoured wherever men love clear language, whereas now, although we honour, we are troubled.

Whereunder, please find inscribed to this very impudent but yet very anxious document, the name of one of the most distant but not the youngest or the coldest of those who honour you.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MRS. CHARLES FAIRCHILD**

VAILIMA, MARCH 1892.

MY DEAR MRS. FAIRCHILD, I am guilty in your sight, but my affairs besiege me. The chief justiceship of a family of nineteen persons is in itself no sinecure, and sometimes occupies me for days: two weeks ago for four days almost entirely, and for two days entirely. Besides which, I have in the last few months written all but one chapter of a HISTORY OF SAMOA for the last eight or nine years; and while I was unavoidably delayed in the writing of this, awaiting material, put in one half of DAVID BALFOUR, the sequel to KIDNAPPED. Add the ordinary impediments of life, and admire my busyness. I am now an old, but healthy skeleton, and degenerate much towards the machine. By six at work: stopped at half past ten to give a history lesson to a step grandson; eleven, lunch; after lunch we have a musical performance till two; then to work again; bath, 4.40, dinner, five; cards in the evening till eight; and then to bed only I

have no bed, only a chest with a mat and blankets and read myself to sleep. This is the routine, but often sadly interrupted. Then you may see me sitting on the floor of my verandah haranguing and being harangued by squatting chiefs on a question of a road; or more privately holding an inquiry into some dispute among our familiars, myself on my bed, the boys on the floor for when it comes to the judicial I play dignity or else going down to Apia on some more or less unsatisfactory errand. Altogether it is a life that suits me, but it absorbs me like an ocean. That is what I have always envied and admired in Scott; with all that immensity of work and study, his mind kept flexible, glancing to all points of natural interest. But the lean hot spirits, such as mine, become hypnotised with their bit occupations if I may use Scotch to you it is so far more scornful than any English idiom. Well, I can't help being a skeleton, and you are to take this devious passage for an apology.

I thought ALADDIN capital fun; but why, in fortune, did he pretend it was moral at the end? The so called

nineteenth century, OU VA T IL SE NICHER? 'Tis a trifle, but Pyle would do well to knock the passage out, and leave his boguey tale a boguey tale, and a good one at that.

The arrival of your box was altogether a great success to the castaways. You have no idea where we live. Do you know, in all these islands there are not five hundred whites, and no postal delivery, and only one village it is no more and would be a mean enough village in Europe? We were asked the other day if Vailima were the name of our post town, and we laughed. Do you know, though we are but three miles from the village metropolis, we have no road to it, and our goods are brought on the pack saddle? And do you know or I should rather say, can you believe or (in the famous old Tichborne trial phrase) would you be surprised to learn, that all you have read of Vailima or Subpriorsford, as I call it is entirely false, and we have no ice machine, and no electric light, and no water supply but the cistern of the heavens, and but one public room, and scarce a bedroom apiece? But, of course, it is well known that I have made enormous sums by my

evanescent literature, and you will smile at my false humility. The point, however, is much on our minds just now. We are expecting an invasion of Kiplings; very glad we shall be to see them; but two of the party are ladies, and I tell you we had to hold a council of war to stow them. You European ladies are so particular; with all of mine, sleeping has long become a public function, as with natives and those who go down much into the sea in ships.

Dear Mrs. Fairchild, I must go to my work. I have but two words to say in conclusion.

First, civilisation is rot.

Second, console a savage with more of the milk of that over civilised being, your adorable schoolboy.

As I wrote these remarkable words, I was called down to eight o'clock prayers, and have just worked through a chapter of Joshua and five verses, with five treble choruses of a Samoan hymn; but the music was good, our boys and precentress ('tis always a woman that leads) did better than I ever heard them, and to my great pleasure I understood it all

except one verse. This gave me the more time to try and identify what the parts were doing, and further convict my dull ear. Beyond the fact that the soprano rose to the tonic above, on one occasion I could recognise nothing. This is sickening, but I mean to teach my ear better before I am done with it or this vile carcass.

I think it will amuse you (for a last word) to hear that our precentress she is the washerwoman is our shame. She is a good, healthy, comely, strapping young wench, full of energy and seriousness, a splendid workwoman, delighting to train our chorus, delighting in the poetry of the hymns, which she reads aloud (on the least provocation) with a great sentiment of rhythm. Well, then, what is curious? Ah, we did not know! but it was told us in a whisper from the cook house she is not of good family. Don't let it get out, please; everybody knows it, of course, here; there is no reason why Europe and the States should have the advantage of me also. And the rest of my housefolk are all chief people, I assure you. And my late overseer (far the best of his race) is a really



serious chief with a good 'name.' Tina is the name; it is not in the Almanach de Gotha, it must have got dropped at press. The odd thing is, we rather share the prejudice. I have almost always though not quite always found the higher the chief the better the man through all the islands; or, at least, that the best man came always from a highish rank. I hope Helen will continue to prove a bright exception.

With love to Fairchild and the Huge Schoolboy, I am,  
my dear Mrs. Fairchild, yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA, MARCH 1892.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, Herewith Chapters IX. and X., and I am left face to face with the horrors and dilemmas of the present regimen: pray for those that go down to the sea in ships. I have promised Henley shall have a chance to publish the hurricane chapter if he like, so please let the slips be sent QUAM PRIMUM to C. Baxter, W.S., 11 S. Charlotte

Street, Edinburgh. I got on mighty quick with that chapter about five days of the toughest kind of work. God forbid I should ever have such another pirn to wind! When I invent a language, there shall be a direct and an indirect pronoun differently declined then writing would be some fun.

DIRECT INDIRECT

He Tu Him Tum His Tus

Ex.: HE seized TUM by TUS throat; but TU at the same moment caught HIM by HIS hair. A fellow could write hurricanes with an inflection like that! Yet there would be difficulties too.

Do what you please about THE BEACH; and I give you CARTE BLANCHE to write in the matter to Baxter or telegraph if the time press to delay the English contingent. Herewith the two last slips of THE WRECKER. I cannot go beyond. By the way, pray compliment the printers on the proofs of the Samoa racket, but hint to them that it is most unbusiness like and unscholarly to clip the edges of the galleys; these proofs should really have been sent me on

large paper; and I and my friends here are all put to a great deal of trouble and confusion by the mistake. For, as you must conceive, in a matter so contested and complicated, the number of corrections and the length of explanations is considerable.

Please add to my former orders

LE CHEVALIER DES TOUCHES by Barbey  
d'Aurevilly. LES DIABOLIQUES...CORRESPONDANCE  
DE HENRI BEYLE (Stendahl).

Yours sincerely,

R. L. STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO T. W DOVER**

VAILIMA PLANTATION, UPOLU, SAMOA, JUNE  
20TH, 1892.

SIR, In reply to your very interesting letter, I cannot fairly say that I have ever been poor, or known what it was to want a meal. I have been reduced, however, to a very small sum of money, with no apparent prospect of increasing it; and

at that time I reduced myself to practically one meal a day, with the most disgusting consequences to my health. At this time I lodged in the house of a working man, and associated much with others. At the same time, from my youth up, I have always been a good deal and rather intimately thrown among the working classes, partly as a civil engineer in out of the way places, partly from a strong and, I hope, not ill favoured sentiment of curiosity. But the place where, perhaps, I was most struck with the fact upon which you comment was the house of a friend, who was exceedingly poor, in fact, I may say destitute, and who lived in the attic of a very tall house entirely inhabited by persons in varying stages of poverty. As he was also in ill health, I made a habit of passing my afternoon with him, and when there it was my part to answer the door. The steady procession of people begging, and the expectant and confident manner in which they presented themselves, struck me more and more daily; and I could not but remember with surprise that though my father lived but a few streets away in a fine house, beggars scarce

came to the door once a fortnight or a month. From that time forward I made it my business to inquire, and in the stories which I am very fond of hearing from all sorts and conditions of men, learned that in the time of their distress it was always from the poor they sought assistance, and almost always from the poor they got it.

Trusting I have now satisfactorily answered your question, which I thank you for asking, I remain, with sincere compliments,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA, SUMMER 1892.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, First of all, YOU HAVE ALL THE CORRECTIONS ON 'THE WRECKER.' I found I had made what I meant and forgotten it, and was so careless as not to tell you.

Second, of course, and by all means, charge corrections on the Samoa book to me; but there are not near so many as I

feared. The Lord hath dealt bountifully with me, and I believe all my advisers were amazed to see how nearly correct I had got the truck, at least I was. With this you will receive the whole revise and a typewritten copy of the last chapter. And the thing now is Speed, to catch a possible revision of the treaty. I believe Cassells are to bring it out, but Baxter knows, and the thing has to be crammed through PRETISSIMO, A LA CHASSEUR.

You mention the belated Barbeys; what about the equally belated Pineros? And I hope you will keep your bookshop alive to supplying me continuously with the SAGA LIBRARY. I cannot get enough of SAGAS; I wish there were nine thousand; talk about realism!

All seems to flourish with you; I also prosper; none the less for being quit of that abhorred task, Samoa. I could give a supper party here were there any one to sup. Never was such a disagreeable task, but the thing had to be told....

There, I trust I am done with this cursed chapter of my career, bar the rotten eggs and broken bottles that may follow,

of course. Pray remember, speed is now all that can be asked, hoped, or wished. I give up all hope of proofs, revises, proof of the map, or sic like; and you on your side will try to get it out as reasonably seemly as may be.

Whole Samoa book herewith. Glory be to God. Yours  
very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

VAILIMA PLANTATION, UPOLU, SAMOAN  
ISLANDS, 18TH JULY 1892.

MY DEAR CHARLES,... I have been now for some time contending with powers and principalities, and I have never once seen one of my own letters to the TIMES. So when you see something in the papers that you think might interest the exiles of Upolu, do not think twice, out with your saxpence, and send it flying to Vailima. Of what you say of the past, eh, man, it was a queer time, and awful miserable, but there's no sense in denying it was awful fun. Do you

mind the youth in Highland garb and the tableful of coppers? Do you mind the SIGNAL of Waterloo Place? Hey, how the blood stands to the heart at such a memory! Hae ye the notes o't? Gie's them. Gude's sake, man, gie's the notes o't; I mind ye made a tune o't an' played it on your pinanny; gie's the notes. Dear Lord, that past.

Glad to hear Henley's prospects are fair: his new volume is the work of a real poet. He is one of those who can make a noise of his own with words, and in whom experience strikes an individual note. There is perhaps no more genuine poet living, bar the Big Guns. In case I cannot overtake an acknowledgment to himself by this mail, please let him hear of my pleasure and admiration. How poorly compares! He is all smart journalism and cleverness: it is all bright and shallow and limpid, like a business paper a good one, S'ENTEND; but there is no blot of heart's blood and the Old Night: there are no harmonics, there is scarce harmony to his music; and in Henley all of these; a touch, a sense within sense, a sound outside the sound, the shadow of the



inscrutable, eloquent beyond all definition. The First London Voluntary knocked me wholly. Ever yours affectionately, my dear Charles,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Kind memories to your father and all friends.

**Letter: TO W E HENLEY**

VAILIMA PLANTATION, UPOLU, SAMOA,  
AUGUST 1ST, 1892.

MY DEAR HENLEY, It is impossible to let your new volume pass in silence. I have not received the same thrill of poetry since G. M.'s JOY OF EARTH volume and LOVE IN A VALLEY; and I do not know that even that was so intimate and deep. Again and again, I take the book down, and read, and my blood is fired as it used to be in youth. ANDANTE CON MOTO in the VOLUNTARIES, and the thing about the trees at night (No. XXIV. I think) are up to date my favourites. I did not guess you were so great a magician; these are new tunes, this is an undertone of the true Apollo;

these are not verse, they are poetry inventions, creations, in language. I thank you for the joy you have given me, and remain your old friend and present huge admirer,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The hand is really the hand of Esau, but under a course of threatened scrivener's cramp.

For the next edition of the Book of Verses, pray accept an emendation. Last three lines of Echoes No. XLIV. read

'But life in act? How should the grave Be victor over these, Mother, a mother of men?'

The two vocatives scatter the effect of this inimitable close. If you insist on the longer line, equip 'grave' with an epithet.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA, UPOLU, AUGUST 1st, '92.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, Herewith MY GRANDFATHER. I have had rather a bad time suppressing the old gentleman, who was really in a very garrulous stage; as for getting him IN ORDER, I could do but little towards that; however, there are one or two points of interest which may justify us in printing. The swinging of his stick and not knowing the sailor of Coruiskin, in particular, and the account of how he wrote the lives in the Bell Book particularly please me. I hope my own little introduction is not egoistic; or rather I do not care if it is. It was that old gentleman's blood that brought me to Samoa.

By the by, vols. vii., viii., and ix. of Adams's HISTORY have never come to hand; no more have the dictionaries.

Please send me STONEHENGE ON HORSE, STORIES AND INTERLUDES by Barry Pain, and EDINBURGH SKETCHES AND MEMOIRS by David Masson. THE

WRECKER has turned up. So far as I have seen, it is very satisfactory, but on pp. 548, 549, there has been a devil of a miscarriage. The two Latin quotations instead of following each other being separated (doubtless for printing considerations) by a line of prose. My compliments to the printers; there is doubtless such a thing as good printing, but there is such a thing as good sense.

The sequel to KIDNAPPED, DAVID BALFOUR by name, is about three quarters done and gone to press for serial publication. By what I can find out it ought to be through hand with that and ready for volume form early next spring. Yours very sincerely,

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO ANDREW LANG**

VAILIMA, AUGUST 1892.

MY DEAR LANG, I knew you would prove a trusty purveyor. The books you have sent are admirable. I got the name of my hero out of Brown Blair of Balmyle Francie

Blair. But whether to call the story BLAIR OF BALMYLE, or whether to call it THE YOUNG CHEVALIER, I have not yet decided. The admirable Cameronian tract perhaps you will think this a cheat is to be boned into DAVID BALFOUR, where it will fit better, and really furnishes me with a desired foothold over a boggy place.

LATER; no, it won't go in, and I fear I must give up 'the idolatrous occupant upon the throne,' a phrase that overjoyed me beyond expression. I am in a deuce of a flutter with politics, which I hate, and in which I certainly do not shine; but a fellow cannot stand aside and look on at such an exhibition as our government. 'Taint decent; no gent can hold a candle to it. But it's a grind to be interrupted by midnight messengers and pass your days writing proclamations (which are never proclaimed) and petitions (which ain't petited) and letters to the TIMES, which it makes my jaws yawn to re read, and all your time have your heart with David Balfour: he has just left Glasgow this morning for Edinburgh, James More has escaped from the castle; it is far more real to me

than the Behring Sea or the Baring brothers either he got the news of James More's escape from the Lord Advocate, and started off straight to comfort Catriona. You don't know her; she's James More's daughter, and a respectable young wumman; the Miss Grants think so the Lord Advocate's daughters so there can't be anything really wrong. Pretty soon we all go to Holland, and be hanged; thence to Dunkirk, and be damned; and the tale concludes in Paris, and be Poll parrotted. This is the last authentic news. You are not a real hard working novelist; not a practical novelist; so you don't know the temptation to let your characters maunder. Dumas did it, and lived. But it is not war; it ain't sportsmanlike, and I have to be stopping their chatter all the time. Brown's appendix is great reading.

My only grief is that I can't Use the idolatrous occupant.

Yours ever,

R. L. S.

Blessing and praising you for a useful (though idolatrous) occupant of Kensington.

**Letter: TO THE COUNTESS OF JERSEY**

AUGUST 14, 1745.

TO MISS AMELIA BALFOUR MY DEAR COUSIN,

We are going an expedition to leeward on Tuesday morning. If a lady were perhaps to be encountered on horseback say, towards the Gasi gasi river about six A.M., I think we should have an episode somewhat after the style of the '45. What a misfortune, my dear cousin, that you should have arrived while your cousin Graham was occupying my only guest chamber for Osterley Park is not so large in Samoa as it was at home but happily our friend Haggard has found a corner for you!

The King over the Water the Gasi gasi water will be pleased to see the clan of Balfour mustering so thick around his standard.

I have (one serious word) been so lucky as to get a really secret interpreter, so all is for the best in our little adventure into the WAVERLEY NOVELS. I am your

affectionate cousin,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Observe the stealth with which I have blotted my signature, but we must be political A OUTRANCE.

**Letter: TO THE COUNTESS OF JERSEY**

MY DEAR COUSIN, I send for your information a copy of my last letter to the gentleman in question. 'Tis thought more wise, in consideration of the difficulty and peril of the enterprise, that we should leave the town in the afternoon, and by several detachments. If you would start for a ride with the Master of Haggard and Captain Lockhart of Lee, say at three o'clock of the afternoon, you would make some rencounters by the wayside which might be agreeable to your political opinions. All present will be staunch.

The Master of Haggard might extend his ride a little, and return through the marsh and by the nuns' house (I trust that has the proper flavour), so as a little to diminish the effect of separation. I remain, your affectionate cousin to



command,

O TUSITALA.

P.S. It is to be thought this present year of grace will be historical.

**Letter: TO MRS. CHARLES FAIRCHILD**

VAILIMA, AUGUST 1892.

MY DEAR MRS. FAIRCHILD, Thank you a thousand times for your letter. You are the Angel of (the sort of) Information (that I care about); I appoint you successor to the newspaper press; and I beg of you, whenever you wish to gird at the age, or think the bugs out of proportion to the roses, or despair, or enjoy any cosmic or epochal emotion, to sit down again and write to the Hermit of Samoa. What do I think of it all? Well, I love the romantic solemnity of youth; and even in this form, although not without laughter, I have to love it still. They are such ducks! But what are they made of? We were just as solemn as that about atheism and the stars and humanity; but we were all for belief anyway we

held atheism and sociology (of which none of us, nor indeed anybody, knew anything) for a gospel and an iron rule of life; and it was lucky enough, or there would have been more windows broken. What is apt to puzzle one at first sight in the New Youth is that, with such rickety and risky problems always at heart, they should not plunge down a Niagara of Dissolution. But let us remember the high practical timidity of youth. I was a particularly brave boy this I think of myself, looking back and plunged into adventures and experiments, and ran risks that it still surprises me to recall. But, dear me, what a fear I was in of that strange blind machinery in the midst of which I stood; and with what a compressed heart and what empty lungs I would touch a new crank and await developments! I do not mean to say I do not fear life still; I do; and that terror (for an adventurer like myself) is still one of the chief joys of living.

But it was different indeed while I was yet girt with the priceless robes of inexperience; then the fear was exquisite and infinite. And so, when you see all these little Ibsens, who

seem at once so dry and so excitable, and faint in swathes over a play (I suppose for a wager) that would seem to me merely tedious, smile behind your hand, and remember the little dears are all in a blue funk. It must be very funny, and to a spectator like yourself I almost envy it. But never get desperate; human nature is human nature; and the Roman Empire, since the Romans founded it and made our European human nature what it is, bids fair to go on and to be true to itself. These little bodies will all grow up and become men and women, and have heaps of fun; nay, and are having it now; and whatever happens to the fashion of the age, it makes no difference there are always high and brave and amusing lives to be lived; and a change of key, however exotic, does not exclude melody. Even Chinamen, hard as we find it to believe, enjoy being Chinese. And the Chinaman stands alone to be unthinkable; natural enough, as the representative of the only other great civilisation. Take my people here at my doors; their life is a very good one; it is quite thinkable, quite acceptable to us. And the little dears

will be soon skating on the other foot; sooner or later, in each generation, the one half of them at least begin to remember all the material they had rejected when first they made and nailed up their little theory of life; and these become reactionaries or conservatives, and the ship of man begins to fill upon the other tack.

Here is a sermon, by your leave! It is your own fault, you have amused and interested me so much by your breath of the New Youth, which comes to me from so far away, where I live up here in my mountain, and secret messengers bring me letters from rebels, and the government sometimes seizes them, and generally grumbles in its beard that Stevenson should really be deported. O, my life is the more lively, never fear!

It has recently been most amusingly varied by a visit from Lady Jersey. I took her over mysteriously (under the pseudonym of my cousin, Miss Amelia Balfour) to visit Mataafa, our rebel; and we had great fun, and wrote a Ouida novel on our life here, in which every author had to describe

himself in the Ouida glamour, and of which for the Jerseys intend printing it I must let you have a copy. My wife's chapter, and my description of myself, should, I think, amuse you. But there were finer touches still; as when Belle and Lady Jersey came out to brush their teeth in front of the rebel King's palace, and the night guard squatted opposite on the grass and watched the process; or when I and my interpreter, and the King with his secretary, mysteriously disappeared to conspire. Ever yours sincerely,

R. L. STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO GORDON BROWNE**

VAILIMA, SAMOA, AUTUMN 1892. TO THE ARTIST WHO DID THE ILLUSTRATIONS TO 'UMA.'

DEAR SIR, I only know you under the initials G. B., but you have done some exceedingly spirited and satisfactory illustrations to my story THE BEACH OF FALESA, and I wish to write and thank you expressly for the care and talent shown. Such numbers of people can do good black and

whites! So few can illustrate a story, or apparently read it. You have shown that you can do both, and your creation of Wiltshire is a real illumination of the text. It was exactly so that Wiltshire dressed and looked, and you have the line of his nose to a nicety. His nose is an inspiration. Nor should I forget to thank you for Case, particularly in his last appearance. It is a singular fact which seems to point still more directly to inspiration in your case that your missionary actually resembles the flesh and blood person from whom Mr. Tarleton was drawn. The general effect of the islands is all that could be wished; indeed I have but one criticism to make, that in the background of Case taking the dollar from Mr. Tarleton's head head not hand, as the fools have printed it the natives have a little too much the look of Africans.

But the great affair is that you have been to the pains to illustrate my story instead of making conscientious black and whites of people sitting talking. I doubt if you have left unrepresented a single pictorial incident. I am writing by this mail to the editor in the hopes that I may buy from him the

originals, and I am, dear sir, your very much obliged,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MISS MORSE**

VAILIMA, SAMOAN ISLANDS, OCTOBER 7TH,  
1892.

DEAR MADAM, I have a great diffidence in answering your valued letter. It would be difficult for me to express the feelings with which I read it and am now trying to re read it as I dictate this.

You ask me to forgive what you say 'must seem a liberty,' and I find that I cannot thank you sufficiently or even find a word with which to qualify your letter. Dear Madam, such a communication even the vainest man would think a sufficient reward for a lifetime of labour. That I should have been able to give so much help and pleasure to your sister is the subject of my grateful wonder.

That she, being dead, and speaking with your pen, should be able to repay the debt with such a liberal interest, is

one of those things that reconcile us with the world and make us take hope again. I do not know what I have done to deserve so beautiful and touching a compliment; and I feel there is but one thing fit for me to say here, that I will try with renewed courage to go on in the same path, and to deserve, if not to receive, a similar return from others.

You apologise for speaking so much about yourselves. Dear Madam, I thought you did so too little. I should have wished to have known more of those who were so sympathetic as to find a consolation in my work, and so graceful and so tactful as to acknowledge it in such a letter as was yours.

Will you offer to your mother the expression of a sympathy which (coming from a stranger) must seem very airy, but which yet is genuine; and accept for yourself my gratitude for the thought which inspired you to write to me and the words which you found to express it.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.



**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA PLANTATION, SAMOAN ISLANDS, OCT.  
10TH, 1892.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, It is now, as you see, the 10th of October, and there has not reached the Island of Upolu one single copy, or rag of a copy, of the Samoa book. I lie; there has come one, and that in the pocket of a missionary man who is at daggers drawn with me, who lends it to all my enemies, conceals it from all my friends, and is bringing a lawsuit against me on the strength of expressions in the same which I have forgotten, and now cannot see. This is pretty tragic, I think you will allow; and I was inclined to fancy it was the fault of the Post Office. But I hear from my sister in law Mrs. Sanchez that she is in the same case, and has received no 'Footnote.' I have also to consider that I had no letter from you last mail, although you ought to have received by that time 'My Grandfather and Scott,' and 'Me and my Grandfather.' Taking one consideration with another,

therefore, I prefer to conceive that No. 743 Broadway has fallen upon gentle and continuous slumber, and is become an enchanted palace among publishing houses. If it be not so, if the 'Footnotes' were really sent, I hope you will fall upon the Post Office with all the vigour you possess. How does **THE WRECKER** go in the States? It seems to be doing exceptionally well in England. Yours sincerely,

**ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.**

**Letter: TO J. M BARRIE**

VAILIMA PLANTATION, SAMOAN ISLANDS,  
NOVEMBER 1ST, 1892.

DEAR MR. BARRIE, I can scarce thank you sufficiently for your extremely amusing letter. No, **THE AULD LICHT IDYLS** never reached me I wish it had, and I wonder extremely whether it would not be good for me to have a pennyworth of the Auld Licht pulpit. It is a singular thing that I should live here in the South Seas under conditions so new and so striking, and yet my imagination so

continually inhabit that cold old huddle of grey hills from which we come. I have just finished DAVID BALFOUR; I have another book on the stocks, THE YOUNG CHEVALIER, which is to be part in France and part in Scotland, and to deal with Prince Charlie about the year 1749; and now what have I done but begun a third which is to be all moorland together, and is to have for a centrepiece a figure that I think you will appreciate that of the immortal Braxfield Braxfield himself is my GRAND PREMIER, or, since you are so much involved in the British drama, let me say my heavy lead....

Your descriptions of your dealings with Lord Rintoul are frightfully unconscientious. You should never write about anybody until you persuade yourself at least for the moment that you love him, above all anybody on whom your plot revolves. It will always make a hole in the book; and, if he has anything to do with the mechanism, prove a stick in your machinery. But you know all this better than I do, and it is one of your most promising traits that you do not take your

powers too seriously. The LITTLE MINISTER ought to have ended badly; we all know it did; and we are infinitely grateful to you for the grace and good feeling with which you lied about it. If you had told the truth, I for one could never have forgiven you. As you had conceived and written the earlier parts, the truth about the end, though indisputably true to fact, would have been a lie, or what is worse, a discord in art. If you are going to make a book end badly, it must end badly from the beginning. Now your book began to end well. You let yourself fall in love with, and fondle, and smile at your puppets. Once you had done that, your honour was committed at the cost of truth to life you were bound to save them. It is the blot on RICHARD FEVEREL, for instance, that it begins to end well; and then tricks you and ends ill. But in that case there is worse behind, for the ill ending does not inherently issue from the plot the story HAD, in fact, ENDED WELL after the great last interview between Richard and Lucy and the blind, illogical bullet which smashes all has no more to do between the boards than a fly

has to do with the room into whose open window it comes buzzing. It MIGHT have so happened; it needed not; and unless needs must, we have no right to pain our readers. I have had a heavy case of conscience of the same kind about my Braxfield story. Braxfield only his name is Hermiston has a son who is condemned to death; plainly, there is a fine tempting fitness about this; and I meant he was to hang. But now on considering my minor characters, I saw there were five people who would in a sense who must break prison and attempt his rescue. They were capable, hardy folks, too, who might very well succeed. Why should they not then? Why should not young Hermiston escape clear out of the country? and be happy, if he could, with his But soft! I will not betray my secret of my heroine. Suffice it to breathe in your ear that she was what Hardy calls (and others in their plain way don't) a Pure Woman. Much virtue in a capital letter, such as yours was.

Write to me again in my infinite distance. Tell me about your new book. No harm in telling ME; I am too far off to be

indiscreet; there are too few near me who would care to hear. I am rushes by the riverside, and the stream is in Babylon: breathe your secrets to me fearlessly; and if the Trade Wind caught and carried them away, there are none to catch them nearer than Australia, unless it were the Tropic Birds. In the unavoidable absence of my amanuensis, who is buying eels for dinner, I have thus concluded my despatch, like St. Paul, with my own hand.

And in the inimitable words of Lord Kames, Faur ye weel, ye bitch. Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO E. L. BURLINGAME**

VAILIMA PLANTATION, NOV. 2ND, 1892.

MY DEAR BURLINGAME, In the first place, I have to acknowledge receipt of your munificent cheque for three hundred and fifty dollars. Glad you liked the Scott voyage; rather more than I did upon the whole. As the proofs have not turned up at all, there can be no question of returning them,

and I am therefore very much pleased to think you have arranged not to wait. The volumes of Adams arrived along with yours of October 6th. One of the dictionaries has also blundered home, apparently from the Colonies; the other is still to seek. I note and sympathise with your bewilderment as to FALESA. My own direct correspondence with Mr. Baxter is now about three months in abeyance. Altogether you see how well it would be if you could do anything to wake up the Post Office. Not a single copy of the 'Footnote' has yet reached Samoa, but I hear of one having come to its address in Hawaii. Glad to hear good news of Stoddard. Yours sincerely,

R. L. STEVENSON.

P.S. Since the above was written an aftermath of post matter came in, among which were the proofs of MY GRANDFATHER. I shall correct and return them, but as I have lost all confidence in the Post Office, I shall mention here: first galley, 4th line from the bottom, for 'AS' read 'OR.'

Should I ever again have to use my work without

waiting for proofs, bear in mind this golden principle. From a congenital defect, I must suppose, I am unable to write the word OR wherever I write it the printer unerringly puts AS and those who read for me had better, wherever it is possible, substitute OR for AS. This the more so since many writers have a habit of using AS which is death to my temper and confusion to my face.

R. L. S.

**Letter: TO LI EUTENANT EELES**

VAILIMA PLANTATION, UPOLU, SAMOAN ISLANDS, NOVEMBER 15TH, 1892.

DEAR EELES, In the first place, excuse me writing to you by another hand, as that is the way in which alone all my correspondence gets effected. Before I took to this method, or rather before I found a victim, it SIMPLY didn't get effected.

Thank you again and again, first for your kind thought of writing to me, and second for your extremely amusing and interesting letter. You can have no guess how immediately



interesting it was to our family. First of all, the poor soul at Nukufetau is an old friend of ours, and we have actually treated him ourselves on a former visit to the island. I don't know if Hoskin would approve of our treatment; it consisted, I believe, mostly in a present of stout and a recommendation to put nails in his water tank. We also (as you seem to have done) recommended him to leave the island; and I remember very well how wise and kind we thought his answer. He had half caste children (he said) who would suffer and perhaps be despised if he carried them elsewhere; if he left them there alone, they would almost certainly miscarry; and the best thing was that he should stay and die with them. But the cream of the fun was your meeting with Burn. We not only know him, but (as the French say) we don't know anybody else; he is our intimate and adored original; and prepare your mind he was, is, and ever will be, TOMMY HADDON! As I don't believe you to be inspired, I suspect you to have suspected this. At least it was a mighty happy suspicion. You are quite right: Tommy is really 'a good chap,' though about

as comic as they make them.

I was extremely interested in your Fiji legend, and perhaps even more so in your capital account of the CURACOA'S misadventure. Alas! we have nothing so thrilling to relate. All hangs and fools on in this isle of misgovernment, without change, though not without novelty, but wholly without hope, unless perhaps you should consider it hopeful that I am still more immediately threatened with arrest. The confounded thing is, that if it comes off, I shall be sent away in the Ringarooma instead of the CURACOA. The former ship burst upon by the run she had been sent off by despatch and without orders and to make me a little more easy in my mind she brought newspapers clamouring for my incarceration. Since then I have had a conversation with the German Consul. He said he had read a review of my Samoa book, and if the review were fair, must regard it as an insult, and one that would have to be resented. At the same time, I learn that letters addressed to the German squadron lie for them here in the Post Office. Reports are current of other

English ships being on the way I hope to goodness yours will be among the number. And I gather from one thing and another that there must be a holy row going on between the powers at home, and that the issue (like all else connected with Samoa) is on the knees of the gods. One thing, however, is pretty sure if that issue prove to be a German Protectorate, I shall have to tramp. Can you give us any advice as to a fresh field of energy? We have been searching the atlas, and it seems difficult to fill the bill. How would Rarotonga do? I forget if you have been there. The best of it is that my new house is going up like winking, and I am dictating this letter to the accompaniment of saws and hammers. A hundred black boys and about a score draught oxen perished, or at least barely escaped with their lives, from the mud holes on our road, bringing up the materials. It will be a fine legacy to H.I.G.M.'s Protectorate, and doubtless the Governor will take it for his country house. The Ringarooma people, by the way, seem very nice. I liked Stansfield particularly.

Our middy has gone up to San Francisco in pursuit of

the phantom Education. We have good word of him, and I hope he will not be in disgrace again, as he was when the hope of the British Navy need I say that I refer to Admiral Burney? honoured us last. The next time you come, as the new house will be finished, we shall be able to offer you a bed. Nares and Meiklejohn may like to hear that our new room is to be big enough to dance in. It will be a very pleasant day for me to see the Curacoa in port again and at least a proper contingent of her officers 'skipping in my 'all.'

We have just had a feast on my birthday at which we had three of the Ringaromas, and I wish they had been three CURACOAS say yourself, Hoskin, and Burney the ever Great. (Consider this an invitation.) Our boys had got the thing up regardless. There were two huge sows oh, brutes of animals that would have broken down a hansom cab four smaller pigs, two barrels of beef, and a horror of vegetables and fowls. We sat down between forty and fifty in a big new native house behind the kitchen that you have never seen, and ate and public spoke till all was blue. Then we had about half

an hour's holiday with some beer and sherry and brandy and soda to restrengthen the European heart, and then out to the old native house to see a siva. Finally, all the guests were packed off in a trackless black night and down a road that was rather fitted for the CURACOA than any human pedestrian, though to be sure I do not know the draught of the CURACOA. My ladies one and all desire to be particularly remembered to our friends on board, and all look forward, as I do myself, in the hope of your return. Yours sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

And let me hear from you again!

**Letter: TO CHARLES BAXTER**

1ST DEC. '92.

...I have a novel on the stocks to be called THE JUSTICE CLERK. It is pretty Scotch, the Grand Premier is taken from Braxfield (Oh, by the by, send me Cockburn's MEMORIALS) and some of the story is well queer. The heroine is seduced by one man, and finally disappears with

the other man who shot him...Mind you, I expect the JUSTICE CLERK to be my masterpiece. My Braxfield is already a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, and so far as he has gone FAR my best character.

LATER.

Second thought. I wish Pitcairn's CRIMINAL TRIALS QUAM PRIMUM. Also, an absolutely correct text of the Scots judiciary oath.

Also, in case Pitcairn does not come down late enough, I wish as full a report as possible of a Scotch murder trial between 1790 1820. Understand, THE FULLEST POSSIBLE.

Is there any book which would guide me as to the following facts?

The Justice Clerk tries some people capitally on circuit. Certain evidence cropping up, the charge is transferred to the J. C.'s own son. Of course, in the next trial the J. C. is excluded, and the case is called before the Lord Justice General.

Where would this trial have to be? I fear in Edinburgh, which would not suit my view. Could it be again at the circuit town?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO MRS. JENKIN**

DECEMBER 5TH, 1892.

MY DEAR MRS. JENKIN,... So much said, I come with guilty speed to what more immediately concerns myself. Spare us a month or two for old sake's sake, and make my wife and me happy and proud. We are only fourteen days from San Francisco, just about a month from Liverpool; we have our new house almost finished. The thing CAN be done; I believe we can make you almost comfortable. It is the loveliest climate in the world, our political troubles seem near an end. It can be done, it must! Do, please, make a virtuous effort, come and take a glimpse of a new world I am sure you do not dream of, and some old friends who do often dream of your arrival.

Alas, I was just beginning to get eloquent, and there goes the lunch bell, and after lunch I must make up the mail.

Do come. You must not come in February or March bad months. From April on it is delightful. Your sincere friend,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO HENRY JAMES**

DECEMBER 5TH, 1892.

MY DEAR JAMES, How comes it so great a silence has fallen? The still small voice of self approval whispers me it is not from me. I have looked up my register, and find I have neither written to you nor heard from you since June 22nd, on which day of grace that invaluable work began. This is not as it should be. How to get back? I remember acknowledging with rapture the of the MASTER, and I remember receiving MARBOT: was that our last relation?

Hey, well! anyway, as you may have probably gathered from the papers, I have been in devilish hot water, and (what



may be new to you) devilish hard at work. In twelve calendar months I finished THE WRECKER, wrote all of FALESA but the first chapter (well, much of), the HISTORY OF SAMOA, did something here and there to my LIFE OF MY GRANDFATHER, and began And Finished DAVID BALFOUR. What do you think of it for a year? Since then I may say I have done nothing beyond draft three chapters of another novel, THE JUSTICE CLERK, which ought to be shorter and a blower at least if it don't make a spoon, it will spoil the horn of an Aurochs (if that's how it should be spelt).

On the hot water side it may entertain you to know that I have been actually sentenced to deportation by my friends on Mulinnu, C. J. Cedercrantz, and Baron Senfft von Pilsach. The awful doom, however, declined to fall, owing to Circumstances over Which. I only heard of it (so to speak) last night. I mean officially, but I had walked among rumours. The whole tale will be some day put into my hand, and I shall share it with humorous friends.

It is likely, however, by my judgment, that this epoch of

gaiety in Samoa will soon cease; and the fierce white light of history will beat no longer on Yours Sincerely and his fellows here on the beach. We ask ourselves whether the reason will more rejoice over the end of a disgraceful business, or the unregenerate man more sorrow over the stoppage of the fun. For, say what you please, it has been a deeply interesting time. You don't know what news is, nor what politics, nor what the life of man, till you see it on so small a scale and with your own liberty on the board for stake. I would not have missed it for much. And anxious friends beg me to stay at home and study human nature in Brompton drawing rooms! FARCEURS! And anyway you know that such is not my talent. I could never be induced to take the faintest interest in Brompton QUA Brompton or a drawing room QUA a drawing room. I am an Epick Writer with a k to it, but without the necessary genius.

Hurry up with another book of stories. I am now reduced to two of my contemporaries, you and Barrie O, and Kipling you and Barrie and Kipling are now my Muses Three.

And with Kipling, as you know, there are reservations to be made. And you and Barrie don't write enough. I should say I also read Anstey when he is serious, and can almost always get a happy day out of Marion Crawford *CE N'EST PAS TOUJOURS LA GUERRE*, but it's got life to it and guts, and it moves. Did you read the *WITCH OF PRAGUE*? Nobody could read it twice, of course; and the first time even it was necessary to skip. *E PUR SI MUOVE*. But Barrie is a beauty, the *LITTLE MINISTER* and the *WINDOW IN THRUMS*, eh? Stuff in that young man; but he must see and not be too funny. Genius in him, but there's a journalist at his elbow there's the risk. Look, what a page is the glove business in the *WINDOW!* knocks a man flat; that's guts, if you please.

Why have I wasted the little time that is left with a sort of naked review article? I don't know, I'm sure. I suppose a mere ebullition of congested literary talk I am beginning to think a visit from friends would be due. Wish you could come!

Let us have your news anyway, and forgive this silly

stale effusion. Yours ever,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

**Letter: TO J. M BARRIE**

VAILIMA, DECEMBER 1892.

DEAR J. M. BARRIE, You will be sick of me soon; I cannot help it. I have been off my work for some time, and re-read the EDINBURGH ELEVEN, and had a great mind to write a parody and give you all your sauce back again, and see how you would like it yourself. And then I read (for the first time I know not how) the WINDOW IN THRUMS; I don't say that it is better than THE MINISTER; it's less of a tale and there is a beauty, a material beauty, of the tale IPSE, which clever critics nowadays long and love to forget; it has more real flaws; but somehow it is well, I read it last anyway, and it's by Barrie. And he's the man for my money. The glove is a great page; it is startlingly original, and as true as death and judgment. Tibbie Birse in the Burial is great, but I think it was a journalist that got in the word 'official.' The same

character plainly had a word to say to Thomas Haggard. Thomas affects me as a lie I beg your pardon; doubtless he was somebody you knew, that leads people so far astray. The actual is not the true.

I am proud to think you are a Scotchman though to be sure I know nothing of that country, being only an English tourist, quo' Gavin Ogilvy. I commend the hard case of Mr. Gavin Ogilvy to J. M. Barrie, whose work is to me a source of living pleasure and heartfelt national pride. There are two of us now that the Shirra might have patted on the head. And please do not think when I thus seem to bracket myself with you, that I am wholly blinded with vanity. Jess is beyond my frontier line; I could not touch her skirt; I have no such glamour of twilight on my pen. I am a capable artist; but it begins to look to me as if you were a man of genius. Take care of yourself, for my sake. It's a devilish hard thing for a man who writes so many novels as I do, that I should get so few to read. And I can read yours, and I love them.

A pity for you that my amanuensis is not on stock to day,

and my own hand perceptibly worse than usual. Yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

DECEMBER 5TH, 1892.

P.S. They tell me your health is not strong. Man, come out here and try the Prophet's chamber. There's only one bad point to us we do rise early. The Amanuensis states that you are a lover of silence and that ours is a noisy house and she is a chatterbox I am not answerable for these statements, though I do think there is a touch of garrulity about my premises. We have so little to talk about, you see. The house is three miles from town, in the midst of great silent forests. There is a burn close by, and when we are not talking you can hear the burn, and the birds, and the sea breaking on the coast three miles away and six hundred feet below us, and about three times a month a bell I don't know where the bell is, nor who rings it; it may be the bell in Hans Andersen's story for all I know. It is never hot here 86 in the shade is about our hottest and it is never cold except just in the early mornings. Take it for all in all, I suppose this island climate to be by far the healthiest in

the world even the influenza entirely lost its sting. Only two patients died, and one was a man nearly eighty, and the other a child below four months. I won't tell you if it is beautiful, for I want you to come here and see for yourself. Everybody on the premises except my wife has some Scotch blood in their veins I beg your pardon except the natives and then my wife is a Dutchwoman and the natives are the next thing conceivable to Highlanders before the forty five. We would have some grand cracks!

R. L. S.

COME, it will broaden your mind, and be the making of me.