strongly drawn to the beautiful island, he stayed not longer than six weeks, and proceeded to Sydney, where, early in 1890, he published, in a blaze of righteous anger, his *Father Damien: an Open Letter to the Rev, Dr Hyde of Honolulu,* in vindication of the memory of Father Damien and his work among the lepers of the Pacific. At Sydney he was very ill again: it was now obvious that his only chance of health lay within the tropics. For nearly the whole of the year 1890 the Stevensons were cruising through unfamiliar archipelagos (on board a little trading steamer, the “ Janet Nicholl.” Meanwhile his volume of *Ballads* was published in London.

The last four years of his unquiet life were spent at Samoa, in circumstances of such health and vigour as he had never previously enjoyed, and in surroundings singularly picturesque. It was in November 1890 that he made his abode at Vailima, where he took a small barrack of a wooden box 500 ft. above the sea, and began to build himself a large house close by. The natives gave him the name of Tusitala. His character developed unanticipated strength on the practical side; he became a vigorous employer of labour, an active planter, above all a powerful and benignant island chieftain. He gathered by degrees around him ti a kind of feudal clan or servants and retainers,” and he plunged, with more generous ardour than coolness of judgment, into the troubled politics of the country. He took up the cause of the deposed king Mataafa with extreme ardour, and he wrote a book, *A Footnote to History: Eight Years of Trouble in Samoa* (1892), in the endeavour to win over British sympathy to his native friends. In the autumn of this year he received a visit at Vailima from the countess of Jersey, in company with whom and some others he wrote the burlesque extravagance in prose and verse, called *An Object of Pity,* privately printed in 1893 at Sydney. Whenever the cultivation of his estate and the vigorous championship of his Samoan retainers gave him the, leisure, Stevenson was during these years almost wholly occupied in writing romances of Scottish life. *The Wrecker,* an adventurous tale of American life, which mainly belonged to an earlier time, was written in collaboration with Mr Lloyd Osbourne and finally published in 1892; and towards the close of that very eventful and busy year he began *The Justice Clerk,* afterwards *Weir of Hermiston,* A portion of the old record of emigrant experiences in 1879, long suppressed for private reasons, also appeared in book form in 1892. In 1893 Stevenson published the important Scottish romance of *Catriona,* written as a sequel to *Kidnapped,* and the three tales illustrative of Pacific Ocean character, *Island Nights’ Entertain­ments.* But in 1893 the uniform good fortune which had attended the Stevensons since their settlement in Samoa began to be disturbed. The whole family at Vailima became ill, and the final subjugation of his protégé Mataafa, and the destruction of his party in Samoan politics, deeply distressed and discouraged Stevenson. In a series of letters to *The Times* he exposed the policy of the chief justice, Mr Cedercrantz, and the president of the council, Baron Senfft. He so influenced public opinion that both were removed from office. In the autumn of that year he went for a change of scene to the Sandwich Islands, but was taken ill there, and was only too glad to return to Samoa. In 1894 he was greatly cheered by the plan, suggested by friends in England and carried out by them with the greatest energy, υf the noble collection of his works in twenty-eight volumes, since known as the Edinburgh editions. In September 1894 was published *The Ebb Tide,* the latest of his books which he saw through the press. Of Stevenson’s daily avocations, and of the temper of his mind through these years of romantic exile, a clear idea may be obtained by the posthumous *Vailima Letters,* edited by Mr Sidney Colvin in 1895. Through 1894 he was engaged in composing two romances, neither of which he lived to complete. He was dictating *Weir of Hermiston,* apparently in his usual health, on the day he died. This was the 3rd of December 1894; he was gaily talking on the verandah of his house at Vailima when he had a stroke of apoplexy, from which he never recovered consciousness, and passed away painlessly in the course of the evening. His body was carried next day by sixty sturdy

Samoans, who acknowledged Stevenson as their chief, to the summit of the precipitous peak of Vaea, where he had wished to be buried, and where they left him to rest for ever with the Pacific Ocean at his feet.

The charm of the personal character of Stevenson and the romantic vicissitudes of his life are so predominant in the minds of all who knew him, or lived within earshot of his legend, that they made the ultimate position which he will take in the history of English literature somewhat difficult to decide. That he was the most attractive figure of a man of letters in his generation is admitted; and the acknowledged fascination of his character was deepened, and was extended over an extremely wide circle of readers, by the publication in 1899 of his *Letters,* which have subdued even those who were rebellious to the entertainment of his books. It is therefore from the point of view of its "charm ” that the genius of Stevenson must be approached, and in this respect there was between himself and his books, his manners and his style, his practice and his theory, a very unusual harmony. Very few authors of so high a class have been so consistent, or have made their conduct so close a reflec­tion of their philosophy. This unity of the man in his work makes it difficult, for one who knew him, to be sure that one rightly gauges the purely literary significance of the latter. There are some living who still hear in every page of Stevenson the voice of the man himself, and see in every turn of his language his flashing smile. So far, however, as it is possible to dis­engage one’s self from this captivation, it may be said that the mingling of distinct and original vision with a singularly conscientious handling of the English language, in the sincere\* and wholesome self-consciousness of the strenuous artist, seems to be the central feature of Stevenson as a writer by profession. He was always assiduously graceful, always desiring to present his idea, his image, his rhapsody, in as persuasive a light as possible, and, particularly, with as much harmony as possible. He had mastered his manner and, as one may say, learned his trade, in the exercise of criticism and the reflective parts of literature, before he surrendered himself to that powerful creative impulse which had long been tempting him, so that when, in mature life, he essayed the portraiture of invented character he came to it unhampered by any imperfection of language. This distinguished mastery of style, and love of it for its own sake within the bounds of good sense and literary decorum, gave him a pre-eminence among the story-tellers of his time. No doubt it is still by his romances that Stevenson keeps the wider circle of his readers. But many hold that his letters and essays are finer contributions to pure literature, and that on these exquisite mixtures of wisdom, pathos, melody and humour his fame is likely to be ultimately based. In verse he had a touch far less sure than in prose. Here we find less evi­dence of sedulous workmanship, yet not infrequently a piercing sweetness, a depth of emotion, a sincere and spontaneous lovableness, which are irresistibly touching and inspiring.

The personal appearance of Stevenson has often been described: he was tall, extremely thin, dark-haired, restless, compelling attention with the lustre of his wonderful brown eyes. In the existing portraits of him those who never saw him are apt to discover a strangeness which seems to them sinister or even affected. This is a consequence of the false stability of portraiture, since in life the unceasing movement of light in the eyes, the mobility of the mouth, and the sympathy and sweetness which radiated from all the features, precluded the faintest notion of want of sincerity. Whatever may be the ultimate order of reputation among his various books, or what­ever posterity may ultimately see fit to ordain as regards the popularity of any of them, it is difficult to believe that the time will ever come in which Stevenson will not be remembered as the most beloved of the writers of that age which he did so much to cheer and stimulate by his example.

His cousin R. A. Μ. Stevenson (1847-1900) was an accom­plished art-critic, who in 1889 became professor of fine arts at University College, Liverpool; he published several works on art (*Rubens,* 1898; *Velasquez,* 1895; *Raeburn,* 1900).