

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The One-legged Man

THE winter in New York State was so cold that the stoves in the little wooden cabin at Saranac Lake seemed to emit no heat, until you touched them and burnt yourself. During that February in 1888, the mercury fell often to 40 below zero overnight. Yet the exquisite cold seemed strangely to suit the weak chest of 37-year-old Louis and, wrapped in a heavy buffalo-skin coat, he was able to work at his new novel, *The Master of Ballantrae*. Through the thin walls he could hear his wife and Valentine the maid preparing breakfast. The two women had recently been ill, obliging Louis and his step-son Lloyd to cook and wash dishes, but both could now return to writing - not that Lloyd's tapping at the typewriter was entirely serious as he rattled through the facetious plot of *The Wrong Box*.

Louis, as an internationally famous author, could indulge his family, taking on 19-year-old Lloyd as his co-writer and dressing up Fanny's short stories for Scribner's Magazine, whose proprietor had been happy to publish a new short story called *The Nixie* by 'Mrs Robert Louis Stevenson'. Louis may have felt uneasy, because he knew the idea had been taken from his cousin Katharine, who could not get her version into print. Yet back in London Katharine had not actually refused Fanny's brash request for permission to borrow the story, although a more sensitive person might have fathomed her true feelings.

In the cold, clear air of Saranac, where Louis had come to escape the life-threatening chest haemorrhages that had plagued him for eight years, he had other things on his mind beyond Katharine's financial struggles. At the nearby Adirondack Cottage Sanatorium for the treatment of tuberculosis, he had been examined by Dr Edward Livingston Trudeau, who had developed a test for the bacillus that caused the disease. Curiously, although Trudeau found what might be indications of an earlier consumption, Louis did not appear to have tuberculosis now.

The other timebomb within him had been a constant companion for so long that

he rarely thought of it, although in dark moments the fear of paralysis could still raise its ugly head. Out here in the crisp, cold back of beyond he seemed far away from the temptations of youth and the women who had put his health in jeopardy. Then one day his attention was drawn to a wooden villa on the top of a hill, its shutters always discreetly closed. On enquiring who lived there, Louis was told brusquely that her name was Ett Blood - and she ran a house of ill repute. For 150 square miles all round, marvelled Louis, the country was 'in a state of nature, without roads, and all the communication by streams and lakes and portages! And here sits Ett Blood at the receipt of custom, as in Rose Street; and has (I am told - I have not seen her) the same powdered smile that is the touch of cities. Ett (by the by) has seen me from behind her blind or perhaps it was one of her inmates.'¹

This comic tableau of the clean-living invalid spied upon by whores would have delighted the big and bawdy Henley. The one-legged man knew where many skeletons lay buried in Louis's past and would not scruple to rattle them if he felt his friend had become over-fond of moralising. Henley was larger than life and a friend of the bosom but he could also be sly and dangerous as the character Louis had modelled on him...

With a cry, John seized a branch of a tree, whipped the crutch out of his armpit, and sent that uncouth missile hurtling through the air. It struck poor Tom, point foremost, and with stunning violence, right between the shoulders in the middle of his back... Silver, agile as a monkey, even without leg or crutch, was on the top of him next moment, and had twice buried his knife up to the hilt in that defenceless body...²

This was no fanciful description. Like Long John Silver, Henley used his wooden crutch as a weapon and had once hurled it at Oscar Wilde during an argument on the steps of a London club. Big-hearted and generous Henley might be, but he could also be bitter, jealous and backstabbing. He had found it increasingly hard to accept the acclaim and financial success Louis now enjoyed - and from the start Henley had never liked Fanny. Louis found it increasingly difficult to remain on good terms with his old friend, and the letter that now arrived from England was the last straw.

'Dear Boy,' wrote Henley from his home in Chiswick. 'If you will wash dishes, and haunt back-kitchens, in the lovely climate of the Eastern States, you must put up

with the consequences...' There were more weak attempts at jocularity - then a paragraph that made Louis's hands tremble with rage: 'I read "The Nixie" with considerable amazement. It's Katharine's; surely it's Katharine's? The situation, the environment, the principal figure - voyons! There are even reminiscences of phrase and imagery, parallel incident - que sais-je? It is all better focussed, no doubt; but I think it has lost as much (at least) as it has gained; and why there wasn't a double signature is what I've not been able to understand.'³

Henley was undoubtedly making mischief, but to Louis this was premeditated malice. As he struggled to focus on the familiar scrawl he could almost feel the hot bite of the knife between his shoulderblades and the sudden gush of blood choking his lungs. His friend had just accused his wife of treating his cousin despicably... he couldn't let this pass. Louis was so angry he could barely read the rest of the letter, nor see that Henley had been in the depth of depression as he wrote: 'The spring is spring no more. I am thirty-nine this year. I am dam, dam tired. What I want is the wings of a dove - a soiled dove even! - that I might flee away and be at rest. Don't show this to anybody...'⁴

But by now Louis was out of all sympathy with his old friend. He was through with Henley, to whom he had given so much, and who still, after such disloyalty, had the brass neck to harp on about their first meeting: 'Twas a blessed hour for all of us, that day thirteen years syne, when old Stephen brought you into my back kitchen, wasn't it? Enfin - ! We have lived, we have loved, we have suffered; and the end is the best of all... Forgive this babble, and take care of yourself, and burn this letter. Your friend, W.E.H.'⁵

Louis did not burn the letter. He kept it, along with others, and they festered like the putrid bone that had cost Henley his leg. Not only Henley but Katharine, too, would be frozen out from Louis's affections, leaving Charles Baxter as a wretched intermediary - Louis still wanted to make sure both former friends were provided for financially, a kind of moral schizophrenia arising from guilt. A few careless words in a letter had caused him untold anguish and innumerable bouts of histrionics in which he wished himself dead, yet having cut himself off from Henley he felt bereft: 'What a miss I have of him. The charm, the wit, the vigour of the man,

haunt my memory; my past is all full of his big presence and his welcome, wooden footstep...'⁶

Henley's letter had been the trigger for unacknowledged feelings that had been at work in Louis's imagination years before as he completed *Treasure Island*, describing the last exit of Long John Silver with the help of Ben Gunn:

*The maroon had connived at his escape in a shore boat some hours ago, and he now assured us he had only done so to preserve our lives, which would certainly have been forfeit if 'that man with the one leg had stayed aboard'. But this was not all. The sea cook had not gone empty-handed. He had cut through a bulkhead unobserved, and had removed one of the sacks of coin, worth, perhaps, three or four hundred guineas, to help him on his further wanderings. I think we were all pleased to be so cheaply quit of him... Of Silver we have heard no more. That formidable seafaring man with one leg has at last gone clean out of my life...'*⁷

'So they both died and went out of the story,' Louis wrote to Charles Baxter, 'and I daresay young fellows short of a magazine article in the twentieth century (if our civilisation endures) will expose the horrid RLS and defend and at last do justice to the misused WEH. For he is of that big, round, human, faulty stamp of man that makes lovers after death. I bet he has drunk more, and smoked more, and talked more sense, and quarrelled with more friends, than any of God's creatures...'⁸

WILLIAM Ernest Henley had made his way to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary in the August of 1873, when Louis was falling in love with Mrs Sitwell at Cockfield Rectory. At the infirmary gates in Drummond Street, the young man who struggled to prop himself upright as he fumbled for the cab fare had just turned 24 and was on his beam ends. After paying the cabman, Henley had tenpence ha'penny left in his pocket.

He had come to throw himself on the mercy of Joseph Lister, pioneer of antiseptic surgery, who was all that stood between Henley and a wretched future as a hopeless cripple. The tuberculosis that had cost him his left leg now threatened his right, but he had refused to accept the verdict of the doctors at Margate that a second amputation was necessary. His unshakeable faith in Lister persuaded the eminent medic to take him on.

During 20 months in hospital, Henley's only means of earning a living was his pen. Before the disease got into his right foot, he had been making headway with various publications in London, earning enough to support himself and assist his widowed mother. The Henleys had always struggled to get by. Henley's father had been a bookseller in Gloucester whose business had given his eldest son a lifelong taste for literature but had never brought in a good income. With five boys to bring up - Will, Anthony, Nigel, Joseph and Teddy - and their sister Margaret, it was a wonder there was enough to send Will to the Crypt Grammar School.

By the time Henley was 14, he had tuberculosis in his left foot. Treatment was horrendous, although he submitted cheerfully to being sent to a Gloucester slaughterhouse to plunge the foot into the entrails of a newly slaughtered beast in futile hope of a cure. As the foot got worse, he was forced to use a crutch. The pain, disability and eventual disfigurement must have been devastating but Henley discovered great reserves of courage and refused to become an object of pity. Foolish schoolfellows who ridiculed him found he could hop after them with astonishing alacrity and God help them when they came within reach of his fists.⁹

His father died in 1868, aged just 42, and four months later 18-year-old Henley went into hospital in London for ten months of treatment, during which his left foot was amputated. Undeterred, he took lodgings in London, began writing facetious 'Bohemian Ballads' for a short-lived weekly, and made the acquaintance of Harry Nichols, who ran a cafe in the East End. They shared a taste for whisky and cheap whores, who for a shilling were happy to overlook the young man's deformity. But his right foot was now badly infected, forcing him back into hospital in Margate and then, refusing a second amputation, to Edinburgh.

In a letter to Harry Nichols he described his first operation there. Borne off to the theatre 'in a long basket, like poultry!', he was chloroformed before Lister wielded the scalpel: 'There was a long cut across the foot, from ankle to ankle, dividing vessels, tendons and everything, and laying open the affected bone, which in turn was scooped out (gouge and pliers), so that a large triangular cavity was the result, the apex of which pointed to the toes. This cavity was filled with strips of lint in carbolic oil; changed, first of all, every four hours, then every eight hours, then twice

a day: the leg itself being bandaged into a long iron splint, and the foot pulled out so as to expose every part of the internal surface of the cavity to the action of the oil...'¹⁰

When Lister came to close the wound, he found more necrotised bone needed scraping out and the process had to begin again. Yet Henley bore the long months of pain and frustration like a man, and flirted with the nurses, including one Louisa Webb from his native Gloucester: 'Miss Webb is young and fair and English, with the sort of skin you like to fancy you are kissing. She is short and would be very well built, if she were not quite so stout. Her walk is provocative... I have made all sorts of attempts to get acquainted with her: if she came once, I say, twisting my moustache, she would certainly come again – But she won't come once and this is why I say to myself with a sigh: "Oh, Miss Webb!", why I dream of her in all sorts of improper conjunctures; why I confess I would give all I am worth in this world, my artificial leg included, once with my lips to divide those beautiful breasts, once with my body to open those adorable legs, once with my etc. etc. etc. – Oh, Miss Webb!'¹¹

More realistically, poor, sex-starved Henley reported: 'Between me and the Night-nurse, a robust, young person with wonderful eyebrows, there is much palaver, amorous on my side, disdainful on hers. If only I had another leg! – Nick, old pal, there was a real 'un lost to the world, when I was spoiled; I regret it, for the sake of all the women on earth.'¹²

Henley convalesced in a part of the hospital which was once a back-kitchen, 'a small miss-shapen room, low-ceiled and flag-floored, and the walls are a dirty-buff-brown'.¹³ There were two beds, the other taken by Edward Boyle, an Edinburgh sea captain visited by his sister Anna, a girl of 19. She was no conventional beauty, with a stocky figure, mannish features and wide, clear eyes, but in Henley she excited something greater than his lust for Miss Webb. When Captain Boyle was discharged from hospital and his bed taken by two young boys, Roden Shields and Willie Morrison, Anna continued to visit the bearded young man with one leg.

She was not there that Friday in February, 1875, when Louis first stepped into that 'back-kitchen' with Leslie Stephen of the Cornhill magazine. Stephen, who had published a poem of Henley's and thought he had promise, was in Edinburgh to give a lecture and decided his two young contributors should be introduced. Louis,

he figured, would be able to lend Henley books 'and perhaps read his MSS. and be otherwise useful'¹⁴.

Louis wrote about Henley to Mrs Sitwell next day: 'It was very sad to see him there, in a little room with two beds, and a couple of sick children in the other bed; a girl came in to visit the children and played dominoes on the counterpane with them; the gas flared and crackled, the fire burned in a dull economical way; Stephen and I sat on a couple of chairs and the poor fellow sat up in his bed, with his hair and beard all tangled, and talked as cheerfully as if he had been in a King's Palace.'¹⁵

Louis was no goody-goody but the difference in social status between himself and Henley made him feel slightly awkward, as he had been years ago when he asked the poor, crippled boy: 'Would you like to play with me?' Yet this time there was no filthy abuse, just Henley's cheerful acceptance of whatever gifts were offered. Unlike Louis, who could never give without seeking an acknowledgment, Henley had a true Bohemian disregard for property and seized the good things in life with both hands. This fascinated Louis, yet there was something dark and disturbing in his new friend, recalling the faceless horseman who haunted his childhood dreams.

*On stormy nights, when the wind shook the four corners of the house, I would see him in a thousand forms, and with a thousand diabolical expressions. Now the leg would be cut off at the knee, now at the hip; now he was a monstrous kind of a creature who never had but the one leg, and that in the middle of his body. To see him leap and run and pursue me over hedge and ditch was the worst of nightmares...*¹⁶

There was more to this than Louis's horror of deformity. He would soon get used to Henley's wooden leg and the crutch which, like Long John Silver, 'he managed with wonderful dexterity, hopping about on it like a bird. He was very tall and strong, with a face as big as a ham - plain and pale, but intelligent and smiling...'¹⁷ In Henley, Louis found someone who shared his passion for romance in all its darker aspects that so terrified Mrs Grundy. From the most high-flown discussions on art, literature and music to the grossest low-life escapades, Henley was a companion in all things, a cheerful pagan answerable only to himself. Alone in his suffering in that little back-kitchen, he had set down his credo:

*In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed...*

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.¹⁸*

Henley might be destitute and missing a leg but, like the poor barefoot boy whistling in the rain, he was a man. Within days Louis had brought Baxter to see him - the lawyer gave him a bundle of Balzac, 'big, yellow books, quite impudently French'¹⁹ - and the three were soon sworn friends like Dumas's musketeers. Henley was the jovial Porthos, Baxter the sly and subtle Aramis, while Louis was D'Artagnan, quick-tempered and jealous of his honour, the very qualities that would one day trigger the fatal quarrel with Henley.

To supply the invalid with more books, Louis raided Simpson's personal library in St Colme Street, a tricky business because the Simp had no library steps and scaled the shelves like a sailor in the rigging. When Louis got stuck in a blind panic, with Simpson's two dogs barking at his heels, the Simp cheerfully clambered up and lobbed down promising volumes. Later the affable baronet went round to the infirmary to make friends with Henley himself.

When the university term finished in mid-March, Louis slipped anchor for a few days in London with Colvin and Mrs Sitwell before spending a month in France. A letter on Savile Club notepaper gave Bob just a day's notice of his cousin's arrival, and he and his American artist friend Will Low went round to the St Lazare station to meet Louis off the train from Calais. Flush with Tom Stevenson's bounty, Louis had his luggage sent round to Lavenue's hotel and the three of them then strolled across Paris in the hazy sunshine, talking endlessly.

For someone supposedly 'seedy' and in need of recuperation, Louis seemed full of

vitality as he held forth on a bench by the Pont des Arts before tackling a heroic lunch at Lavenue's restaurant, washed down with an astonishingly good Beaujolais-Fleury at just two francs fifty centimes a bottle. Lingered long over coffee and cigarettes, they decamped eventually to the Luxembourg gardens until twilight, then dined at another restaurant where Louis rejected the little liqueur glasses and knocked back half a tumbler of cordial: 'I have come to Paris to rest and tomorrow I shall lie abed all day.'²⁰

Next day he did not rise until 7pm. The following morning he dashed off a note to his mother requesting a further £5²¹ - nearly £1,000 in modern money - before setting off with Bob for Barbizon and the Forest of Fontainebleau, former hunting ground of kings and now an artist's paradise. Bob took him to Siron's Inn, home of a remarkable Bohemian community. There Louis woke early on his first morning, with the sun flooding in through shutterless windows, reflecting off whitewashed walls and the bare wooden floor. The partitions between sleeping quarters were adorned with charcoal sketches of men, dogs and horses, even a romantic landscape splashed in oil. Louis went down to the *salle-a-manger* to find a couple of artists lingering over their coffee before shouldering easel, sunshade, stool and paint-box and heading out into the woods. Later, burdened only with his book to read and notebook to write in, Louis followed with Bob.

*Perhaps you may set yourself down in the bay between two spreading beech-roots with a book on your lap, and be awakened all of a sudden by a friend: 'I say, just keep where you are, will you? You make the jolliest motive.' And you reply: 'Well, I don't mind, if I may smoke.' And thereafter the hours go idly by. Your friend at the easel labours doggedly a little way off, in the wide shadow of the tree; and yet farther, across a strait of glaring sunshine, you see another painter, encamped in the shadow of another tree, and up to his waist in the fern... 'You can get up now,' says the painter; 'I'm at the background.'*²²

That evening Siron the innkeeper fed them like fighting cocks and they helped themselves to wine, absinthe or cordials. Louis soon learned the curious system whereby drinks appeared on the bill as 'Estrats', the sum varying in accordance with each Bohemian's ability to pay. Louis felt immediately at home and drew on his own palette of words to paint his surroundings:

Hortense is drawing water from the well; and as all the rooms open into the court, you can see the white-capped cook over the furnace in the kitchen, and some idle painter, who has stored his canvases and washed his brushes, jangling a waltz on the crazy, tongue-tied piano in the salle-a-manger.

'EDMOND, ENCORE UN VERMOUTH,' cries a man in velveteen, adding in a tone of apologetic afterthought, 'UN DOUBLE, S'IL VOUS PLAIT.'

'Where are you working?' asks one in pure white linen from top to toe.

'At the Carrefour de l'Epine,' returns the other in corduroy (they are all gaitered, by the way). 'I couldn't do a thing to it. I ran out of white. Where were you?'

'I wasn't working. I was looking for motives.'

'A TABLE, MESSIEURS!' cries M. Siron, bearing through the court the first tureen of soup. And immediately the company begins to settle down about the long tables in the dining-room, framed all round with sketches of all degrees of merit and demerit. There's the big picture of the huntsman winding a horn with a dead boar between his legs, and his legs - well, his legs in stockings. And here is the little picture of a raw mutton-chop, in which Such-a-one knocked a hole last summer with no worse a missile than a plum from the dessert...

Dinner over, people drop outside to smoke and chat. Perhaps we go along to visit our friends at the other end of the village, where there is always a good welcome and a good talk, and perhaps some pickled oysters and white wine to close the evening. Or a dance is organised in the dining-room, and the piano exhibits all its paces under manful jockeying, to the light of three or four candles and a lamp or two, while the waltzers move to and fro upon the wooden floor...²³

Louis broke his sojourn at Barbizon for a few days in Paris. The official reason was to see some classical tragedies at the theatre. A letter to Mrs Sitwell reveals him in 'a somewhat curious humour... I am perfectly careless about life, God, death, immortality, fame, virtue and company. The firm of insolubles may all go tapsalteerie, for all that I care... There is only one very good thing in the world: the acting of Sarah Bernhardt. I beg your pardon, there is another: Pierre Veron's Pantheon de Poche. I recognise also the merit of cold fish a l'huile, and Rousillon wine for breakfast... You may suppose that I am angry. Yes, I am; very angry and bitter; or rather very bitter and not angry. I have lost another pair of scales; I see life

more naked and hollow.'²⁴

Such melancholy was incomprehensible to Henley, who wrote from his hospital bed: 'You say you are "very busy and very sad". How a man can be busy and sad at the same time I don't know. Especially if he has gone up (as to his health) like a jack-in-the-box. But I spare you further criticism. Your too admirable tobacco, which I have smoked most religiously since your departure, has rendered me incapable of doing much more than look at the ceiling, repeating the multiplication table from time to time as an agreeable intellectual exercise. But it's nearly all gone, and under a course of mild birdseye I expect soon to be pretty well, thank you.'²⁵

Already, on barely five weeks' acquaintance, Henley was quite happy to poke fun at his new friend's self-indulgence and prevail on his generosity. By the time Louis got back to Edinburgh, Henley had been discharged from hospital, his leg stabilised if not cured. Baxter, 'who has been exceeding good to me', kept an eye on him, but the new lodgings in George Street were far from ideal. Four days after returning home, Louis received a cheerful note from Henley, urging him to come round and help correct proofs of a series of poems written in hospital which Leslie Stephen had accepted for the Cornhill. The one-legged man warned he was living in the top flat, 'up no end of stairs - come, my torn-faced child!'²⁶

Louis was already deep in rehearsals for Jenkin's production of *Twelfth Night*, but spent his afternoons with Henley and did what he could to help. This included carrying an armchair round from Heriot Row, balanced on his head, and struggling to get it up the stairs. The pragmatic Simp later pointed out that a sensible person would have taken the chair in his father's carriage.²⁷ Tom Stevenson's big open barouche was indeed soon pressed into service to take Henley for drives.

Louis described the first of these to Mrs Sitwell: 'I had a business to carry him down the long stair, and more of a business to get him up again; but while he was in the carriage, it was splendid. It is now just the top of spring with us. The whole country is mad with green... You may imagine what it was to a man who has been eighteen months in a hospital ward. The look of his face was wine to me. He plainly has been little into the country before. Imagine this: I always stopped him on the Bridges to let him enjoy the great cry of green that goes up to Heaven out of the river

beds, and he asked (more than once) "What noise is that?" - "The water" - "O" almost incredulously... I have lost the sense of wonder of course; but there must be something to wonder at; for Henley has eyes and ears and an immortal soul of his own.²⁸

Henley himself would celebrate the moment in *Discharged*, his last hospital poem, whose acute hypersensitivity reveals how severe his sensory deprivation had been:

*O, the wonder, the spell of the streets!
The stature and strength of the horses,
The rustle and echo of footfalls,
The flat roar and rattle of wheels!
A swift tram floats huge on us...*

*As of old
Ambulant, undulant drapery,
Vaguely and strangely provocative,
Flutters and beckons. O, yonder -
Is it? - the gleam of a stocking!*

*Free...!
Dizzy, hysterical, faint,
I sit, and the carriage rolls on with me
Into the wonderful world.²⁹*

Louis drove Henley out to Duddingston Loch, transformed by lush greenery and birdsong from the lamplit skating rink over which he had glided that winter. The two drove further afield to Queensferry, for a friendly jar at the Hawes Inn overlooking the Firth of Forth. This was one of Louis's favourite spots, immortalised later in *Kidnapped*, and their day there so impressed Henley that years later, long after their quarrel, he would return on a sentimental pilgrimage.

Despite a cold and a sore throat, Louis managed to step out on stage as Orsino at the Jenkin theatricals. For the dress rehearsal the amateur actors invited their

servants along as an audience, with Isabella Williamson the Heriot Row cook declaring she and the housemaid were 'just proud to be able to say it was oor young gentleman'³⁰. Jenkin spared no expense on costumes. Louis appeared, he told Mrs Sitwell, 'in all the pomp of Solomon; splendid Francis the First clothes, heavy with gold and stage jewellery... To sup afterwards with these clothes on and a wonderful lot of gaiety and Shakesperian jokes about the table, is something to live for. It is so nice to feel you have been dead three hundred years, and the sound of your laughter is faint and far off in the centuries.'³¹

In the audience was 19-year-old Flora Masson, who nearly half a century later would still recall the 'satisfied languor' of Louis's rich voice as he spoke the opening words of the play: 'If Music be the food of love, play on...'. After the performance, Flora noted Louis's mother making her way out alone, 'her pretty face still radiant with maternal pride. Louis Stevenson, one of a little group of performers who were waiting, I suppose, "to sup afterwards with those clothes on," was looking down over the balustrade, half-way up the staircase. But in a moment he was down among the departing guests; wrapped his mother's cloak with an infinite tenderness about her, and then, escaping from the crowd's admiring eyes, fled up the staircase again. I can still see the upward look of adoration his mother gave him...'³²

It was now time for the Stevensons to decamp to Swanston. Before leaving, Louis helped move Henley to new lodgings at Portobello, where the seaside air was thought more conducive to convalescence. Now and then Louis or Baxter would drop in for a visit and by the end of May Henley could report: 'My leg is looking beautiful.'³³

Eventually there would be a fourth musketeer to join this merry trio, an Athos to complete the romantic conceit, but nobody had heard from Walter Ferrier for a considerable time. The beautiful, lordly youth who had been given every advantage had spent the past couple of years down south with the demon drink. That May, unknown to his friends in Edinburgh and struggling to pay the rent on lodgings at Ventnor in the Isle of Wight, poor alcoholic Ferrier was making one last play for solvency, self-respect, even immortality by wielding a pen. At times the hand would shake and the pen strokes would be wild and irregular, but over the coming year a

two-volume novel called *Mottiscliffe: An Autumn Story* would take shape.

Louis, meanwhile, had to face his final examination that July to become an advocate. He was not confident of winning his father's £1,000 reward. To Mrs Sitwell he wrote: 'Life is a curious problem (original remark: copyright); and I do not see my way through it very distinctly at present. I do so hunger and thirst after money (i.e. happiness); and yet to get that, I must give up my hope of making myself strong and well (i.e. happiness). Two birds are building a nest in the holly before my window; you should see them fly up with great straws in their mouths: God prosper them. They are better off than we; they are not obliged to play other people's games, wear other people's clothes, walk with other people's gait, and say other people's silly words after them by leaden rote, under pain of breaking hearts and drawing hot tears and driving the gross dagger of disappointment into breasts full of hope...'³⁴

In early May Louis had penned a short paper *On the Spirit of Springtime*, which he considered the best he had written, although he suspected Grundy-fearing editors would find its 'jolly mixture of sensuality and awful pretty sentimentality'³⁵ too strong to publish. He sent it to Colvin who, deliberately or otherwise, lost it while changing rooms at Cambridge. Keeping remarkably calm - 'Well, so be it. There is one masterpiece fewer in the world'³⁶ - Louis took inspiration from Baudelaire's *Poemes en Prose* and in the final month of May penned half a dozen himself, 'rather longer and not quite so good'. These he sent to Colvin with a warning that 'if you lose them, you need not seek to look upon my face again'³⁷. One, entitled *A Summer Night*, evokes Edinburgh from a bench in Princes Street where Louis and Bob sat talking until dawn:

The late summer twilight, dotted with lamps, lingered over the city; and here and there, where wide ways crossed each other on the ridge, beside the statues of kings and statesmen, one saw, far away to the north, thin clouds, and lakes of lucid sky, and the blue hills, sharp and still and solemn. The red lamp that marks a letter box burned like a bright carbuncle against the pale gemlike heavens.

The dresses of harlots swayed and swished upon the pavement. Pale faces leaped out of the crowd as they went by the lights, and passed away like a dream in the general dream of the pallid and populous streets. The coarse brass band filled the air with a rough and ready

melody: and the fall of alternate feet, and the turn of shoulders and swish of dresses, fell into time with it strangely. Face after face went by; swinging dress after dress brushed on the even stones; out of face after face the eyes stood forth with a sordid animal invitation.

High up overhead, from the planted castle, from blue tower and battlement deployed against the sallow southern heaven, there went forth over the city the pulse of drums and the brazen call of bugles. The last tramway car brushed past with a gleam out of its lighted windows; the stooping figures on the roof stood out darkly against the sky...³⁸

All through the summer night Louis and Bob had sat there by the garden railing, their high-flown talk interrupted only by the occasional passing of a policeman, bullseye lantern at his belt. With the coming of dawn, as the street lamps faded, the cousins rose with a sigh 'and duties awoke with the birds, and rights went out with the stars; and the day found us slaves, whom the night had left freemen reckoning the treasure of time'³⁹.

The restless spirit of the piece was echoed in a letter to Mrs Sitwell: 'I feel a desire to go out of the house, and begin life anew in the cool blue night. Never to come back here; never, never. Only to go on forever by sunny day, and gray day, by bright night and foul, by highway and byway, town and hamlet, until somewhere by a roadside or in some clean inn, clean death opened his arms to me, and took me to his quiet heart forever... I have survived myself, and all that I held best and dearest, and somehow live on, a curious changeling, a merry ghost... only I had rather, a thousandfold rather, died and been done with the whole damned sham forever.'⁴⁰

As a morale booster, Louis paid a flying visit to London from June 17th-21st to see his Madonna and Colvin before the final onslaught on his law textbooks. Yet even on July 4th, just ten days from his exam and 'keeping jolly', he complained to Mrs Sitwell that his essay on Fontainebleau, three plays and a short story were all competing for his attention⁴¹, not to mention the formal thesis in Latin which had to be submitted before he could become an advocate. Later to Mrs Sitwell he wrote: 'I near my examination now by hours, and yet cannot raise a panic... God defend the ignorant!'⁴²

On the morning of his examination, a girl cousin and another young female guest at Swanston saw him off, throwing their slippers after the departing carriage. Louis

sprang out, picked up the guest's slipper and put it in his top pocket, leaving the two girls laughing at the gate. It must have brought him luck. Louis's achievement in qualifying for the Scottish Bar was near-miraculous. According to a fellow law student, the unlikely candidate 'had been told, or had somehow got to know, what questions this particular professor would ask, and he had carefully prepared his replies in the exact words of the text-books. The first question was "What is marriage?" Stevenson replied in the actual words laid down by Erskine - "The conjunction of man and woman in the strictest society of life till death shall separate them.'" After Louis had quoted verbatim replies to two further questions, the professor 'was non-plussed and never spoke again'. Shortly afterwards Louis emerged from the room in the company of his examiners, 'all of them looking very jolly', secure in the knowledge that his father's thousand pounds was his⁴³.

That afternoon his mother and her house guests drove into Edinburgh. His cousin Etta Balfour would recall: 'The excitement and joy were tremendous when we heard that he had passed, and was a full-blown advocate. We were driving in the big, open barouche, and nothing would satisfy Lou but that he would sit on the top of the carriage, that was thrown back open... and he kept waving his hat and calling out to people as they passed, whether known or unknown, just like a man gone quite mad.'⁴⁴

Two days later came the far worse ordeal for Louis of presenting himself in full legal attire for formal admission to the Scottish Bar. His long Bohemian hair hung down below the white wig and, despite it being July, he was virtually blue with the cold. One of his fellows declared he looked like a drunken Irishman going to a funeral, to which he replied: 'I wish I were that Irishman, coming from that funeral.'⁴⁵ Yet for all his tragi-comic appearance, another young lawyer there noticed his dark, gleaming eyes 'in which even then anxiety and merriment were having a battle'.

There was still one person Louis needed to inform of his triumph. In the hurly-burly of celebration, he seized a piece of notepaper headed with the motto of the Faculty of Advocates and dashed off an elated message culminating in a soaring spiral of ecstasy around his initials:

Madonna,
Passed.
ever
your
R.L.S. ⁴⁶

Louis and Baxter went out to Portobello to share the glad tidings with Henley. A libation was in order, and the state in which they departed from the invalid's lodgings in Straiton Place can be gathered from a note Henley sent Louis next day: 'You left an umbrella, Baxter a cigar case and a paper parcel, apparently of stationery. I will sit upon all three.'⁴⁷ Henley himself was celebrating the appearance of his *Hospital Outlines: Sketches and Portraits* in that month's *Cornhill*. Louis envied him his gift as a poet, telling Colvin: 'This, in my profound discouragement, is a great thing for me; if I cannot do good work myself, at least, it seems, I can help others better inspired.'⁴⁸

Louis was left with a commission to write an entry on the French poet Pierre-Jean de Beranger for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. His earlier enthusiasm for his short story *When The Devil Was Well* had evaporated, although he did not destroy it. Colvin had been enthusiastic, but Louis replied: 'I cannot agree with you; it seems green fruit to me, if not really unwholesome; it is profoundly feeble, damn its weak knees!'⁴⁹

Even the piece on Fontainebleau would not come out right, but Louis would soon gather additional material on a long sojourn in Barbizon. Leaving Henley in the care of Anna Boyle and Baxter, he took the boat from Leith to London en route to France in the company of Sir Walter Simpson. It was a rough passage, made worse by over-indulgence, and 'Grindlay spewed most gay and free'. By the time they reached the haven of the Savile Club, the Simp needed a stiff drink. But the Savile's brandy and selzer - 'Selzer and some colouring matter unknown, is the right name for it' - had no

effect, no matter how many the Simp swallowed, 'so he just gets bagged and bagged and better bagged and ever more bagged; and has to go to bed in the end, sick and sober, with a haggard light in one eye'⁵⁰.

In London they bumped into Robert Glasgow Brown, with whom Louis, Ferrier and Omond had created the short-lived college magazine. The young Tory swell had been forced to leave Edinburgh after a showy speech he made at a political dinner turned out to be a complete piece of plagiarism, exposed in *The Scotsman*. As Louis put it: 'The blow would have broken a less finely tempered spirit; and even him I suppose it rendered reckless; for he took flight to London, and there, in a fast club, disposed of the bulk of his considerable patrimony in the space of one winter. For years thereafter he lived I know not how; always well dressed, always in good hotels and good society, always with empty pockets...'⁵¹

This was the same Brown who now appeared before Louis and the Simp: 'All right, seemingly. Coins, weeds, clo'; all as before, telling great tales of *bonnes fortunes* among ladies of title; whereat I and Grindlay shake the head of incredulity.'⁵² Whatever Brown's invisible means of support, he had somehow acquired the editorship of *Vanity Fair*. All editors were worth cultivating, so it can be assumed he and Louis parted on the best back-slapping terms.

For the trip to France, and as a concession to the impeccably turned-out baronet, Louis had been persuaded into a respectable set of tweeds, asserting his originality by selecting an exceptionally light shade. He cut a fine figure as he stepped out with the Simp and 18-year-old Eve, also staying in town. She would recall how 'walking up the pathway by Holland House, some smuts fell, and Stevenson scudded like a ghost in his light robes along the alley till, breathless, he stopped, and gaspingly asked, "Have any blacks fallen on my angel clothes?"". In a spirit of mischief, Eve examined the back of the tweed jacket, found it clear but pretended to remove the soot, then upbraided her 'clumsy' brother for smudging the biggest smut into the material. There then followed a pantomime in Kensington High Street as Louis, nearly weeping with annoyance, tore off the jacket - and found it still immaculate. 'Then he cast a reproachful glance at us, and, with a forgiving smile, said, "Eh - you two brutes - to misquote a well-known author.'⁵³

Louis arrived in Barbizon to find Bob making great strides: 'Simpson and I cannot see that anyone hereabout paints as well as he does: the only doubt is whether an English public would care about them.'⁵⁴ But the excitement and stress of the past few months had taken their toll on Louis, who spent several days in bed at Siron's Inn before joining Bob, Simpson and some other artists on a three-day jaunt to the village of Grez-sur-Loing.

As this excursion is a matter of some length, and, moreover, we go in force, we have set aside our usual vehicle, the pony-cart, and ordered a large wagonette from Lejosne's. It has been waiting for near an hour, while one went to pack a knapsack, and t'other hurried over his toilette and coffee; but now it is filled from end to end with merry folk in summer attire, the coachman cracks his whip, and amid much applause from round the inn door off we rattle at a spanking trot... For some time back we have had the sound of cannon in our ears; and now, a little past Franchard, we find a mounted trooper holding a led horse, who brings the wagonette to a stand. The artillery is practising in the Quadrilateral, it appears; passage along the Route Ronde formally interdicted for the moment... And meanwhile the doctor, with sun umbrella, wide Panama, and patriarchal beard, is busy wheedling and (for aught the rest of us know) bribing the too facile sentry...

'EN VOITURE, MESSIEURS, MESDAMES,' sings the Doctor; and on we go again at a good round pace.... At any moment we may meet the sergeant, who will send us back. At any moment we may encounter a flying shell, which will send us somewhere farther off than Grez...

And Grez, when we get there, is indeed a place worthy of some praise. It lies out of the forest, a cluster of houses, with an old bridge, an old castle in ruin, and a quaint old church. The inn garden descends in terraces to the river; stable-yard, kailyard, orchard, and a space of lawn, fringed with rushes and embellished with a green arbour. On the opposite bank there is a reach of English-looking plain, set thickly with willows and poplars. And between the two lies the river, clear and deep, and full of reeds and floating... We have come here for the river. And no sooner have we all bathed than we board the two shallops and push off gaily, and go gliding under the trees and gathering a great treasure of water-lilies...

Half the party are to return to-night with the wagonette; and some of the others, loath to break up company, will go with them a bit of the way and drink a stirrup-cup at Marlotte. It

is dark in the wagonette, and not so merry as it might have been. The coachman loses the road. So-and-so tries to light fireworks with the most indifferent success. Some sing, but the rest are too weary to applaud; and it seems as if the festival were fairly at an end... How quick bright things come to confusion! When we arise next morning, the grey showers fall steadily, the trees hang limp, and the face of the stream is spoiled with dimpling raindrops...

To-morrow dawns so fair that two of the party [Louis and Bob] agree to walk back for exercise, and let their kidnap-sacks follow by the trap. I need hardly say they are neither of them French; for, of all English phrases, the phrase 'for exercise' is the least comprehensible across the Straits of Dover... As they draw near the Quadrilateral, and hear once more the report of the big guns, they take a by-road to avoid the sentries, and go on a while somewhat vaguely, with the sound of the cannon in their ears and the rain beginning to fall....

'I am sure we should keep more to the right,' says one; and the other is just as certain they should hold to the left. And now, suddenly, the heavens open, and the rain falls 'sheer and strong and loud,' as out of a shower-bath. In a moment they are as wet as shipwrecked sailors. They cannot see out of their eyes for the drift, and the water churns and gurgles in their boots. They leave the track and try across country with a gambler's desperation... At last they chance on the right path, and make Franchard in the early evening, the sorriest pair of wanderers that ever welcomed English ale...⁵⁵

On this occasion the Simp returned by carriage, but a few days later he accompanied Louis on a walking tour along the green, breezy valley of the Loing. By night there was thunder and lightning and the rain fell in sheets but the days were bright and cloudless as they made their separate ways to the next inn. The seemingly anti-social procedure worked well, since the Simp walked as he thought, slowly and deliberately, while Louis's long, gliding, guinea-fowl step soon ate up the miles, and this way there was always something fresh to talk about that evening over dinner. Each was happy in his own company, the Simp philosophising to himself or pondering over a page of Jules Michelet's History of France, while Louis was deep in the poetic works of Charles, Duke of Orleans, and amused himself composing roundels as he walked.

While the Simp remained neat and dapper, the light tweed jacket in which Louis had lived for several weeks had long lost its angelic aspect and was now teamed up

with cheap, ready-made linen trousers and leather gaiters. His flannel shirt was of the usual dark and grubby hue, 'which the satirical called black', and he topped the lot off with a smoking-cap of Indian work, the gold lace pitifully frayed and tarnished. When he dressed like a mountebank, it was small wonder the police, border guards and bank officials regarded him with suspicion.

As Louis forged ahead at nearly five miles an hour, the ready-made trousers fluttering about his spindle shanks, he looked anxiously around him as if in terror of pursuit and compared himself to Francois Villon the poet and thief, fleeing into exile at Rousillon. As in Villon's day, France in 1875 was in turmoil. Less than five years had passed since a shattered Emperor Louis Napoleon had surrendered his sword to William, King of Prussia, after 44 days of warfare that had devastated France, had agonised Louis as he sunbathed on Earraid and given his contemporary Guy de Maupassant a taste of combat and its ugly aftermath.

In the circumstances, any suspicious-looking character was likely to be regarded as a Prussian spy - or worse. On the road between Chateau Renard and Chatillon-sur-Loing, Louis fell in with a rural postman who seemed visibly excited by his rucksack and demanded to know, with a nudge and a wink, what it contained. Clearly dissatisfied with Louis's explanation, he shook his head: 'Non, non, vous avez des portraits. Voyons, show me the portraits!'

With a shout of laughter, Louis realised what the man was getting at: 'By portraits he meant indecent photographs... he thought to have identified a pornographic colporteur. When countryfolk in France have made up their minds as to a person's calling, argument is fruitless. Along all the rest of the way, the postman piped and fluted meltingly to get a sight of the collection; now he would upbraid, now he would reason - "Voyons, I will tell nobody"; then he tried corruption, and insisted on paying for a glass of wine; and, at last when our ways separated - "Non," said he, "ce ne'st pas bien de votre part. O non, ce n'est pas bien." And shaking his head with quite a sentimental sense of injury, he departed unrefreshed.'

Next day, in the hamlet of La Jussiere, Louis's outlandish apparel caused the hostess of a poor, bare drinking shop to mistake him for a tramp in such dire poverty that she refused to take more than a halfpenny for his glass of grenadine - as

he left 'his conscience told him he had stolen the syrup'. Approaching Chatillon, looking forward to a cold plunge and a change of shirt before the Simp's arrival, he was stopped by a gendarme: 'Monsieur est voyageur?'

Forgetful of his vile attire, Louis replied facetiously: 'So it would appear.'

'His papers are in order?' inquired the gendarme, and Louis was forced to admit he had none with him. This meant he must appear before the Commissary, whom they found sitting at a table in his bedroom, copiously perspiring, 'a stupid man, sleepy with the heat and fretful at the interruption, whom neither appeal nor argument could reach'. On learning it was forbidden to travel without papers, a sensible person would have eaten humble pie. Louis, in his soiled white tweeds, unspeakable shirt and Indian smoking cap, decided to pick a fight: 'Pardon me: I am convinced of the contrary. I am here on my rights as an English subject by international treaty.'

The Commissary's suspicion that he was a spy was raised further when he asked Louis's trade and was given the improbable answer: 'I am a Scotch advocate.' Clearly this mountebank was no such thing, and his explanation that he was travelling for pleasure was scornfully dismissed.

'With that?' exclaimed the Commissary, pointing at Louis's unsavoury knapsack. 'Look here, I am a person of intelligence!'

When Louis propped the knapsack against the bed to open it, 'the Commissary fairly bounded from his seat; his face and neck flushed past purple, almost into blue; and he screamed to lay the desecrating object on the floor'. But the sack's contents, turned over gingerly by the Commissary as if they were a potential source of infection, contained 'nothing really criminal except the roundels'.

The poems of Charles of Orleans put a new suspicion into the petty official's head: 'I will tell you what you are. You are a German and have come to sing at the fair.' But even now, Louis could not resist the urge to be facetious: 'Would you like to hear me sing? I believe I could convince you of the contrary.' At this the Commissary took a pen and demanded to know his name, but gave up after several deliberate mumblings of Rob't Lou's Stev'ns'n. 'Well, we must do without the name: it is unspellable.'

Having started to take a statement, the Commissary became belligerent until Louis 'suddenly flared up, refused to accept more insults or to answer further questions, defied the Commissary to do his worst, and promised him, if he did, that he should bitterly repent it'. At this the 'Scotch advocate' was promptly frogmarched down to the gendarmerie, his pockets emptied and his person thrown into a cell. In vain he pleaded to be allowed to keep a handkerchief.

'Non,' declared the gendarme darkly. 'We have had histories of people who hanged themselves.'

'What,' cried Louis. 'And is it for that you refuse me my handkerchief? But see how much more easily I could hang myself in my trousers!'

This piece of facetiousness got him no further than the rest, but at least he had the presence of mind to extract a promise from the gendarme that he would also arrest the Simp when he arrived in town. After that, the prisoner was left to cool his heels. The cellar in which he was confined was lit only by an unglazed, narrow aperture high up in the wall and smothered in the leaves of a green vine. The walls were of naked masonry, the floor of bare earth. There was an earthenware basin, a water-jug, and a wooden bedstead with a blue-gray cloak for bedding. The chill of the place struck deeper and deeper until Louis climbed onto the bed and lay 'upon the verge of shivering, plunged in semi-darkness, wound in a garment whose touch he dreaded like the plague, and (in a spirit far removed from resignation) telling the roll of the insults he had just received'.

Meanwhile the Simp had arrived in Chatillon, 'a man born to float easily through life, his face and manner artfully recommending him to all'. At the town entry the gendarme 'culled him like a wayside flower' and a moment later he was taken into the Commissary's office. The French official was taken aback to find himself confronted by 'a man about whom there could be no mistake: a man of an unquestionable and unassailable manner, in apple-pie order, dressed not with neatness merely but elegance, ready with his passport, at a word, and well supplied with money: a man the Commissary would have doffed his hat to on chance upon the highway...'

And this man actually claimed the mountebank in the cells as his friend!

Furthermore, examination of the passport revealed its owner to be a member of the British aristocracy. 'Baronet?' inquired the Commissary, aghast.

Examination of the Simp's belongings reduced the servile official to a state of rapturous admiration, 'gloating over the contents of the knapsack, commending our friend's tailor. Ah, what an honoured guest was the Commissary entertaining! what suitable clothes he wore for the warm weather! what beautiful maps, what an attractive work of history he carried in his knapsack!'

The Simp, recalled Louis, 'had passed some years of his life in Egypt, where he had made acquaintance with two very bad things, cholera morbus and pashas; and in the eye of the Commissary, as he fingered the volume of Michelet, it seemed to our traveller there was something Turkish...' Sensing a willingness to accept a bribe, the baronet affably offered to make a present of the Michelet before he and Louis departed the following day. Shortly after this pragmatic suggestion, the gendarme threw open the door of Louis's cell and declared: 'Vous etes libre!'

All would have gone well, had not Louis not taken a dislike to the wife of the Marechal-des-logis or chief gendarme, a proud, handsome woman who taunted him as he left the barracks, to which Louis replied in kind. Shortly after he and the Simp had finished an excellent dinner at the inn, the glass door flew open with a crash and the Marechal-des-logis, 'gorgeously belted and befrogged, entered without salutation, strode up the room with a clang of spurs and weapons, and disappeared through a door at the far end'. He was followed by the gendarme who had arrested Louis and now struck him lightly on the shoulder, uttering the terse command: 'Suivez!'

Reluctantly Louis did as he was told, leaving the Simp alone with his coffee. The interview in the back kitchen was convoluted but the Marechal's position was clear. He thought the Commissary had done wrong, but he did not wish to get his subordinates into trouble and wanted shot of Louis, who at long last decided to be helpful, declaring: 'In short, you want to wash your hands of further responsibility? Well, then, let me go to Paris.'

The Marechal-des-logis looked at his watch.

'You may leave,' said he, 'by the ten o'clock train for Paris.'

And at noon the next day the travellers were telling their misadventure in the dining-room at Siron's.⁵⁶

The invalid Louis in the little wooden cabin at Saranac put down his pen on this account for Scribner's Magazine of happy days a dozen years ago, and recalled one of the 'criminal' roundeaux he had sent his Madonna from Chateau Renard:

*We'll walk the woods no more
But stay beside the fire,
To weep for old desire
And things that are no more.*

*The woods are spoiled and hoar,
The ways are full of mire;
We'll walk the the woods no more
But stay beside the fire.*

*We loved in days of yore
Love, laughter and the lyre.
Ah God, but death is dire
And death is at the door -
We'll walk the woods no more.⁵⁷*

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¹ RLS to Bob Stevenson, Saranac Lake, January 1888, Yale 1998, Transcript copy British Library.

² RLS, Treasure Island, Chapter 14.

³ WE Henley to RLS, Merton Place, Chiswick, March 9, 1888. The Selected Letters of WE Henley, ed Damian Atkinson, p167, MS National Library of Scotland.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ RLS to Charles Baxter, SS Lubeck at sea in the Pacific, late February, 1891. Yale 2303, MS Yale.

⁷ RLS Treasure Island, Chapter 34.

⁸ RLS to Charles Baxter, Vailima, Samoa, November 9 or 10, 1891. Yale 2364, MS Yale.

⁹ John Connell, WE Henley

¹⁰ WE Henley to Harry Nichols, Reserved Ward B, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, December 18, 1873. Atkinson p 14, MS Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

¹¹ WE Henley to Harry Nichols, Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, May 17, 1874. Atkinson p18, MS Huntington Library.

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- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Leslie Stephen to his wife, February 1875, quoted by FW Maitland in *Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*.
- ¹⁵ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Heriot Row, February 13, 1875. Yale 364. MS National Library of Scotland.
- ¹⁶ RLS, *Treasure Island*, Chapter I.
- ¹⁷ RLS, *Treasure Island*, Chapter VIII.
- ¹⁸ WE Henley, *To RTHB, Life and Death (Echoes)*.
- ¹⁹ WE Henley, *Envoy – To Charles Baxter*.
- ²⁰ Will H Low, *A Chronicle of Friendships*.
- ²¹ RLS to his Mother, *Café du Senat, Pres du Luxembourg*, Paris, March 29, 1875. Yale 373, MS Cornell University.
- ²² RLS, *Forest Notes*.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, *Café Palais Royal*, Paris, April 1875. Yale 380, MS Yale.
- ²⁵ WE Henley to RLS, *Royal Infirmary*, March 21, 1875. MS Yale.
- ²⁶ WE Henley to RLS, *Top Flat, 45 George Street, Edinburgh*, April 27, 1875. MS Yale.
- ²⁷ Evelyn Blantyre Simpson, *The Robert Louis Stevenson Originals*, Chapter III.
- ²⁸ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Heriot Row, May 5, 1875. Yale 385, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ²⁹ WE Henley, *Discharged, In Hospital: Rhymes and Rhythms*.
- ³⁰ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, Heriot Row, May 2, 1875. Yale 384, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² Flora Masson, *I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed Rosaline Masson.
- ³³ WE Henley to RLS, *Edinburgh*, May 29, 1875. MS Yale.
- ³⁴ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, *Swanston Cottage*, May 7, 1875. Yale 387, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ³⁵ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, *Swanston Cottage*, May 1875. Yale 389, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ³⁶ RLS to Sidney Colvin, *Swanston Cottage*, June 1875. Yale 396, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ RLS, *A Summer Night*, included by Ernest Mehew in *Volume Two of the Yale Letters*.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, *Swanston Cottage*, May 1875. Yale 388, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ⁴¹ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, *Swanston Cottage*, July 4. Yale 399, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ⁴² RLS to Fanny Sitwell, *Swanston Cottage*, July 11. Yale 403, printed in the Edinburgh edition of Stevenson's works.
- ⁴³ James F Mackay, *I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed Rosaline Masson.
- ⁴⁴ Mrs Etta Younger, *I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed Rosaline Masson.
- ⁴⁵ George Moody Stuart, *I Can Remember Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed Rosaline Masson.
- ⁴⁶ RLS to Fanny Sitwell, *Edinburgh*, July 14, 1875. Yale 405, MS National Library of Scotland.
- ⁴⁷ WE Henley to RLS, *4 Straiton Place, Edinburgh*, July 17, 1875. MS Yale.
- ⁴⁸ RLS to Sidney Colvin, *Swanston Cottage*, cJuly 19, 1875. Yale 406, MS Yale.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ RLS to Charles Baxter, *Savile Club, London*, July 28, 1875. Yale 407, MS Yale.
- ⁵¹ RLS, *A College Magazine*.
- ⁵² RLS to Charles Baxter, *Savile Club, London*, July 28, 1875. Yale 407, MS Yale.
- ⁵³ Evelyn Blantyre Simpson, *Robert Louis Stevenson's Edinburgh Days*, Chapter IX.
- ⁵⁴ RLS to his Mother, *Barbizon, France*, early August, 1875. Yale 409, extract from *American Art Association sale catalogue*.
- ⁵⁵ RLS, *Forest Notes, Essays of Travel*.
- ⁵⁶ RLS, *Epilogue to An Inland Voyage*.
- ⁵⁷ RLS, *Nous n'irons plus aux bois, Poems 1869-1879, XXIX*.