

man is in dead earnest. The key to the little book is this: "Just lately I read in a well-known theological work, that the priesthood is of 'super-eminent importance.' I do not believe it." Then he goes on to show that the prophetic mission of Christ is of greater importance, and I think he is right. Thousands of people want to be saved by Christ as a priest who will not take the trouble to listen to him as a prophet. They are very eager to be sprinkled with the blood that cleanseth from all sin, but are impatient of the teaching that tells what God is and what they ought to be. The priesthood is not abolished because the prophetic function comes first; on the contrary, it becomes more rational and comprehensible. It is a good thing that an earnest evangelical like Mr. Murray wrote these words, and not as earnest and pious a man but under suspicion of heterodoxy, for, in the latter case, they would have been set down as rank heresy. Christ's first attitude towards mankind was and is that of a revealer of the Godhead. Thereafter come reconciliation and the Kingship.

The transition to Vailima Letters is great, as they contain hardly a decent rag of theology. They are letters written by Robert Louis Stevenson to his friend Sidney Colvin, from his estate of Vailima in Samoa, between Nov. 1890 and Oct. 1894. The book containing them has 266 pages and two illustrations, and is published in the Colonial Library of Methuen & Co., of London. Mr. Colvin seems to have been a warm and exceedingly useful friend of Stevenson's, standing between him and his publishers, aiding him with advice and criticism, and performing many another kindly office. The letters are painfully interesting. They tell of a sick man, half the time with sick friends about him, struggling with wild native growth on his estate, as the Talker does in the summer time, getting chronically soaked with heavy Samoan showers, writing stories and poems, essays and sketches, learning Samoan, governing his strange household, and working hard to ensure peace and prosperity in his island home. It was, to say the least, a foolish thing of him to scandalize the religious people of Samoa by inaugurating a paper chase on horseback on the Sabbath, and he did many more unconventional things, with a Bohemian recklessness that men of genius sometimes allow themselves and which smug mediocrity never forgives. But the natives loved him, and he inspired all who knew him with enthusiasm. What his creed was does not appear in the letters, but he loved God and Christ and his fellowmen, was the friend of the missionaries, and held family worship in his household. There are profane expressions in some of his epistles, but they belong to the region of literary profanity, and are more innocuous than pious epithets flowing from saintly pens dipped in gall. The Vailima letters are *sui generis*, like their great author.