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INTER'S FIRST FOOTSTEPS.

WHAT a nut-sweet healthiness there is about Robert Louis Stevenson! How different he is from our decadent *fin de siècle* minor poets. It has been a pleasant task to watch through even one changing fortnight the truth of those words of his—

“To make this earth our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page,
God's bright and intricate device,
Of days and seasons doth suffice.”

How much of joy there is in the contrast alone. It seemed in summer as though all one needed for perfect contentment was to lie on the warm grass under the great fir, to pluck the tiny wild yellow flowers of the lady's bed-straw, and look dreamily at the blue haze over the distant landscape as one watched the afternoon sun bringing out the rich time-worn brown of that beautiful Somerset tower that is the gem of the middle distance.

And yet what a store of sensations there was within the very same quiet scene. No white mountains are needed whose tops the sun gilds, no mysterious lakes, or rocky valleys, all the power of nature can be really put forth in this quiet pastoral landscape, for its face can alter to express her every mood.

There is a resinous-bracing scent that comes as we walk across the turf soft with dew, and smell the damp leaves. A Londoner, accustomed to enjoy the bright and gleaming blues in his Brett's sea-pieces in the Academy or to gloat over summer's wealth poured out in warm reds and deep blue in a Kent sketch by Mrs. Allingham, would hardly believe what subtle play of colour there is in these first winter tints. When

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