

not merely an affair of temperament or physical organization, his indomitable gaiety; he willed to be cheerful, to be happy and a source of happiness to those about him. Down the ages there comes a voice whose full significance does not always reach us, dulled as we are by familiarity with its message—"I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." It is not an easy lesson. It requires concentration of mind and will, and the obedient heart of the little child. But there was about Stevenson a singular childlikeness that remained unaffected by all the vicissitudes and developments of his life. It finds its most definite expression in the *Child's Garden of Verses*, a book that stands alone as the mirror of the mind of a child. The old poet, Vaughan, must have had visions of something like it when he wrote of

CHILDE-HOOD.

"I cannot reach it; and my striving eye
Dazles at it, as at eternity.
Were now that chronicle alive,
Those white designs which children drive,
And the thoughts of each harmless hour
With their content, too, in my power,
Quickly would I my path make even
And by meer playing, go to Heaven."

Indeed, to read through the *Child's Garden* is to wipe out the records of experience and to be a child again. In that book truly, "everlasting Spring abides, and never-withering flowers." And it is the same eager fresh unsullied spirit that cries—

"Wanted Volunteers
To do their best for two-score years!"
"A ready soldier here I stand
Primed for thy command,
With burnished sword.
If this be faith O Lord
Help thou mine unbelief
And be my battle brief."—

It was only in 1881, and by a kind of chance, that Stevenson fell upon romance-writing, wrote *Treasure Island*, and became famous. For one thing, if there had been nothing more, his generation owes him a debt of gratitude—he set the fashion of the purely romantic novel, in