

And the finest and most peculiar work of Stevenson is rather that he was the first writer to treat seriously and poetically the æsthetic instincts of the boy. He celebrated the toy gun rather than the rattle. Around the child and his rattle there has gathered a splendid service of literature and art ; Hans Andersen and Charles Kingsley and George Macdonald and Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway and a list of celebrities a mile long bring their splendid gifts to the christening. But the tragedy of the helpless infant (if it be a male infant—girls are quite a different matter) is simply this, that, having been fed on literature and art, as fine in its way as Shelley and Turner up to the age of seven, he feels within him

*Robert Louis  
Stevenson  
xl.*