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POEM AND SPEECH BY R. L. STEVENSON, REVEALING THE FICTIONIST IN HIS MOST VARYING MOODS

At the time of Robert Louis Stevenson's visit to Honolulu he became friendly with a large number of the residents, but none claimed his attention more than Mrs. Caroline Bush, who had previously been a great admirer of the author. And to Mrs. Bush the verses entitled "From Wishing Land" were written. The circumstances connected with their writing and presentation are related by Mrs. Bush herself:

"It was some time in March that our family left the city and took a residence adjoining that of Mr. Stevenson's at Waikiki Beach. We had known him well in town, saw that he was lonesome and ill, and told him half jokingly that some day we were going to move out near him to keep him company at Sans Souci. He replied that he would be very glad if we would, and so, when we actually moved, I believe that he was pleased.

"It so happened that my birthday anniversary fell upon the day following our arrival and Stevenson had heard us speak of it. At any rate the following morning the maid brought in to me from the lanai (enclosed porch) an envelope addressed to myself, which upon opening I found to be a poem, 'From Wishing Land.' Mr. Stevenson had written it the night before after we had left him, as he afterward told us, and had brought it over to the house in the early morning, for his nights at this time were exceedingly restless. He found no one awake about the place and so laid the little packet, tied with ribbon and palm fibre, upon the lanai table."

The poem has not before been published. It is as follows:

FROM WISHING LAND.
Dear lady, tapping at your door
Some little verses stand,
And beg on this auspicious day
To come and kiss your hand.

Their syllables all counted right,
Their rhymes each in its place,
Like birthday children at the door
They wait to see your face.

Rise, lady, rise and let them in;
Fresh from the fairy shore,
They bring you things you wish to have,
Each in its pinafore.

For they have been to Wishing Land
This morning in the dew,
And all your dearest wishes bring—
All granted home to you.

What these may be they would not tell,
And could not if they would;
They take the packets sealed to you
As trusty servants should.

But there was one that looked like love,
And one that smelled like health,
And one that had a jingling sound—
I fancy it might be wealth.

Ah, well, they are but wishes still,
But, lady dear, for you,
I know that all you wish is kind,
I pray it all come true.

The manuscript of the address delivered by Stevenson before the Scottish Thistle Club of Honolulu just before his departure for Samoa in 1893 has just been presented to the club by the estate of the late Thomas Lindsay, who was president of the club at the time and who requested and received the scrawled pages from the writer. The speech was not published at the time, and Mr. Lindsay refused during his life to allow the manuscript out of his possession, but his heirs have decided it should be given to the club, and the various pages will be framed separately and hung upon the club room walls.

Stevenson was at the time occupying a little cottage, not much more pretentious than a shack, at Waikiki, three miles from Honolulu, and his kinsmen of the Scottish Thistle Club invited him to come and speak before them. The author was at that time preparing for his trip to Samoa, but he accepted the invitation, laboriously walked from his abode to the club rooms, arriving late, and read his address.

A careful transcript of the closely written eighteen pages is in part: "Ladies and Gentlemen and Brother Scots—I sincerely trust none of you have come here under a misapprehension. If you have come expecting a speech you will be disappointed, for I am in no sense a public speaker. If there is any one thing that frustrates truth and obscures the public mind it is the doubtful gift of public speaking."

"My one reason for consenting to talk before you to-night lies in that weakness, or strength, that binds Scots' hearts together wherever they may meet each other. I cannot say why they are proud to be Scotsmen—the fact remains that they are. It is not that our land is sunny, like these tropical isles, and its climate is not even lovely. Scotland's history contains little that is not disgusting to people of humane feelings. That long brawl which is called Scotch history contains scarcely one object that Scots have any patience with.

"First there was a long period during which the wild Celts were cutting each others' throats and trying the thickness of each others' skulls. Coming down a little further we arrive at the time of Sir William Wallace, the guardian of Scotland, a man far ahead of his time, who if not particularly amiable had some humorous qualities.

"Following him came Robert the Bruce, a little humorous and certainly amiable. He was something of a rogue—that kind of a political rogue which it may be indelicate for me to mention as I have come from Samoa, where we are all politicians and the most offensive kind of a rogue is a politician. Bruce figured in a time when they were grasping everything in sight, each without any regard for the right of property in his neighbor's cow.



ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

"Coming to the Reformation, they had two great characters—John Knox and Mary Queen of Scots—and I must confess to a foible for Mary in my sympathies. Take her all in all, Mary was quite a good fellow. It is true she blew up her husband and committed other little eccentricities, still she was rather a good fellow. Scotland owed much to John Knox, and this is a name I should never presume to mention in a jocular manner, for every Scotsman in his heart of hearts knows that perhaps to him more than to any one else advanced the credit of their country's advancement in education, but they could not find anything amiable in John Knox, 'the who never feared the face of man.'

"Following the great reformer came a great host of priestlings. Persecutions and trials for witchcraft then became general. The great struggle on behalf of the Solemn League and the Covenanters was a conspicuous feature at this time. The Covenanters were very interesting, but would any one ask me to sympathize with them? They suffered themselves to be killed simply because they could not kill others.

"Like others before me, I have found difficulty in coming to the real facts of the succeeding period owing to the unger and some desperate cases; slipping by sentinels and flittings in the darkness many and often.

"One more is in my mind for a last word, the gentle Lochiel, who from the first saw what folly the rising was, and said so, but with grave offense to his Prince; yet afterward he silenced reproach, when, wounded, he went into skulking in the hills of Benalder, almost in sight of English troops as they lay encamped on the Inverness moor. I received a book the other day called 'The Stickit Minister,' with a dedication to myself which affected me strangely, so that I could not read without a gulp. It was addressed to me in the third person, and made me remember those places.

"Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying. His heart remembers how?"

ocean outlet; then I mind a bulk of a farmer, called Cameron of Glenpean, who befriended the Prince more than once in his wanderings; and the wife of Angus MacDonald, whose hairns perished in the Prince's cause, and her tears not yet dried—a most heroic wife!

"Nor must I nald MacLeod be forgot, who piloted the Prince's boat, an open cobbie, without compass, through storm and mirk across the Minch; nor the Mackenzies of Stornoway, who, although supporters of the Government, put aside the reward of £30,000 only insisting that Prince Charlie should embark at once and depart their neighborhood.

"Then there was Flora MacDonald, a bonny lass—who can ever forget her? And it can be said to her honor that her loyalty to her Prince went hand in hand with her prudence, for she ventured even to dressing him in petticoats and took him by dangerous route to Skye, disguised as a female servant called Betty Burke, and fending all dangers until she had placed him in safe Scots' hands at the old inn of Portree.

"Next came the three Macdoods and the hiding on the Isle of Raza; then the mainland again with manifold danger and some desperate cases; slipping by sentinels and flittings in the darkness many and often.

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