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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE
and WEIR OF HERMISTON

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The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

and

Weir of Hermiston

Edited with an Introduction by
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INTRODUCTION

> Nothing Mr. Stevenson has written as yet has so strongly impressed us with the versatility of his very original genius as this sparsely-printed little shilling volume. (*The Times*, 25 January 1886)
>
> Stevenson's 'Weir of Hermiston' certainly promised to be the best of his novels . . . (*Athenaeum*, 23 May 1896)[1]

Jekyll and Hyde was published in 1886 and gained Stevenson international acclaim: a prime example of his strengths as a writer at the outset of a relatively short literary career, the book introduces themes and preoccupations that remained with Stevenson throughout his life, themes that have become part of the consciousness of many generations of readers. *Weir of Hermiston* was the novel upon which he was working on the day of his death; promising to be 'the best of his novels', it explores and refines issues that were first brought to light by him in *Jekyll and Hyde*.

Stevenson was born in Edinburgh in 1850, the son of Thomas Stevenson, a well-known harbour and lighthouse engineer, and was educated at the Edinburgh Academy and University. Even in his early years, he suffered from that ill health (respiratory disorders) that was to trouble him throughout his life. Initially he had intended to follow his father's profession and study engineering but then he decided to read for the Bar and was admitted in 1875. He did not, however, practise as a barrister but kept to his decision, made in 1871, to pursue a full-time literary career. In spite of the success of *Treasure Island* (1883), *Kidnapped* (1886) and *Jekyll and Hyde* (1886), he was not self-supporting as a writer at this stage of his career; and he was not in fact financially independent until his father's death in 1887. Both his temperament and his constitution prompted Stevenson to travel widely. In 1879, he went to the United States (following

[1] Paul Maixner (ed.), *Robert Louis Stevenson: The Critical Heritage* (1981), pp. 205, 465.

Fanny Osbourne whom he had met in France in 1876 and whom he married in 1880) and he spent parts of the subsequent years at Davos in Switzerland and by the Mediterranean. As a wedding present to his new daughter-in-law, Thomas Stevenson bought the house in Bournemouth, 'Skerryvore' (named after one of the most famous of Scottish lighthouses built by Stevenson's uncle), where Fanny and Louis lived from 1886 to 1887. It was here that he wrote *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Kidnapped* and a number of short stories. After his father's death in 1887, Stevenson left Britain, travelled with his mother and Fanny, made a trip to America and then cruised around the Pacific. In 1888–9 the family settled at Vailima in Samoa where he wrote *Weir of Hermiston* and where he died in December 1894.

The move to Bournemouth and to 'Skerryvore' was in some ways both disquieting for and uncharacteristic of Stevenson: as his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, comments, 'Stevenson, in the word he hated most of all, had become the "burgess" of his former jeers. Respectability, dullness, and similar villas encompassed him for miles in every direction.'[2] Yet, perhaps, this place, an appropriate setting for a respectable Jekyll, was instrumental in Stevenson's story of duality, offering a marked contrast to his own active, subversive inner life.

Different accounts of the story's genesis exist. Lloyd comments:

> One day he [R.L.S.] came down to luncheon in a very preoccupied frame of mind; hurried through his meal—an unheard-of thing for him to do—and on leaving said he was working with extraordinary success on a new story that had come to him in a dream, and that he was not to be interrupted or disturbed even if the house caught fire.[3]

The importance to Stevenson of dreams in his work is clear, too, from the essay 'A Chapter on Dreams' (see Appendix B, pp. 198–209 below) where he describes the vital assistance he receives from his 'unseen collaborators', the 'Little People' who give him inspiration whilst he is asleep.

[2] Lloyd Osbourne, 'Stevenson at Thirty-Seven', Tusitala Edition, V, vii.
[3] Ibid., p. ix.

Lloyd goes on to report how, for three days, a hush fell on the house until Stevenson appeared with the first draft to read aloud. Lloyd himself was spell-bound; Fanny, however, initially silent, ventured to comment that Louis had 'missed the point . . . missed the allegory; had made it merely a story—a magnificent bit of sensationalism—when it should have been a masterpiece.' At first Stevenson was extremely angry but then he came to see the justness of Fanny's criticism, burned the manuscript and, during the next three days, wrote it again. As Lloyd says, 'it was an astounding feat . . . sixty-four thousand words in six days'.[4]

A slightly different account is given in Balfour's *Life*, where the author states that Fanny wrote:

> . . . pointing out her chief objection—that it was really an allegory, whereas he had treated it purely as if it were a story. In the first draft Jekyll's nature was bad all through, and the Hyde change was worked only for the sake of a disguise. She gave the paper to her husband and left the room. After a while his bell rang; on her return she found him sitting up in bed (the clinical thermometer in his mouth), pointing with a long denunciatory finger to a pile of ashes. He had burned the entire draft. Having realised that he had taken the wrong point of view, that the tale was an allegory and not another 'Markheim' he at once destroyed his manuscript, acting not out of pique, but from a fear that he might be tempted to make use of it, and not re-write the whole from a new standpoint.[5]

The dream, combined with pressing financial circumstances, was the immediate inspiration for *Jekyll and Hyde*; but other elements had been with Stevenson for the greater part of his life and contributed to the story. Since boyhood he had been fascinated by that notorious Scots character Deacon Brodie, cabinet-maker by day, robber by night. A bookcase and a chest of drawers crafted by the Deacon in his daytime self occupied their place in the young Louis's (he was always called Louis, pronounced with the 's') room in Edinburgh. The Deacon was thus one of the earliest 'double' characters to have fired his imagination. Then, in adult life, Fanny reports that her husband was 'deeply impressed by a paper he read in a

[4] Ibid., pp. x, xi.

[5] Graham Balfour, *The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson* (1901), II, 13.

French scientific journal on sub-consciousness', and that this paper and Deacon Brodie 'gave the germ of the idea that afterwards developed into the play, was used again in the story of *Markheim*, and finally, in a hectic fever following a hemorrhage of the lungs, culminated in the dream of Jekyll and Hyde.'[6] Then, too, there had been *The Travelling Companion*, an earlier version of the Jekyll theme destroyed by Stevenson as 'a foul, gross, bitter ugly daub . . . a carrion tale!'[7] It was, perhaps, a tale that could have been the literary production of a character (or self) like Mr Hyde.

Jekyll and Hyde is the portrait of a double consciousness, of a 'divided self'; it is a study that is both universal and characteristically Scottish, the product of a peculiarly Scots 'divided consciousness' to use Edwin Muir's well-known notion.[8] Fascinated by the idea of the double as found in the life and strategies of Deacon Brodie, Stevenson himself also lead something of a double life in the strict, Calvinistic confines of nineteenth-century bourgeois Edinburgh: as a student and young man in the city he and his friend, Charles Baxter, would use a benign doubleness to deal with the pressures of high bourgeois existence; they assumed the liberating roles of Johnson and Thomson, heavy-drinking, convivial, blasphemous iconoclasts, whose sense of humour would have been a little too strong for the Stevensons' Heriot Row drawing-room. David Daiches has commented that the Johnson-Thomson (sometimes Johnstone-Thomson) play was, for Stevenson, 'associated with the whole Jekyll-and-Hyde syndrome';[9] in these masks they could full-bloodedly enjoy those pleasures denied to Stevenson and Baxter, and to Dr Jekyll.

The motif of the double is crucial, too, to Scottish fiction where it is linked specifically with the idea of diabolic possession as well as with that division of the self resulting from the harsher and more repressive forms of Calvinism. James Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824) is the

[6] Mrs R. L. Stevenson, 'Prefatory Note', Tusitala Edition, V, xvi.

[7] Roger G. Swearingen, *The Prose Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson: A Guide* (1980), p. 62. See also, 'A Chapter on Dreams', p. 208 below.

[8] Edwin Muir, *Scott and Scotland: The Predicament of the Scottish Writer*, Introduction by Allan Massie (Edinburgh, 1982), p. 9f.

[9] David Daiches, *Literature and Gentility in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1982), p. 82.

most brilliant realization of the theme in the early part of the century with its portrayal of doubleness not only in content but also in narrative method: the story is divided between an 'editor' and the 'sinner' himself; and there are some particularly effective Scots interventions which insist upon a non-rational, alternative, possibly diabolic interpretation of the events recorded as well as the rational response offered by the editor. From Stevenson's own work, the Scots story 'The Merry Men' (1887) offers the portrait of Gordon Darnaway, a man divided and possessed, as, vampire-like, he derives fresh life from the many shipwrecks he witnesses on the dangerous Scottish coast-line where he has made his home; in *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889) Stevenson takes the idea of doubleness and possession and presents them within a study of fraternal relationship and rivalry between the brothers James and Henry Durie; in the 'Tale of Tod Lapraik' in *Catriona* (1893) there is a prime example of Stevenson's interest in the double motif with its characterization of Tod, part-weaver, part-incubus. In non-Scots tales, too, the double motif develops in Stevenson's *œuvre*, in stories such as 'Markheim' and 'Olalla'; but it is in *Jekyll* that we find the strongest and earliest realization of the theme.

Jekyll and Hyde is in many ways a characteristically nineteenth-century text: on one level it is a clear response to the constrictions of Scottish Victorianism and to bourgeois Edinburgh; it also has a firm place in the century's literature of the double alongside works such as Dostoevsky's *The Double* (1846) and Wilde's *Dorian Grey* (1891). As Rosemary Jackson has commented in her study of fantasy, 'fantasies of recidivism (a relapse into crime) multiplied in Victorian England after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) . . . Recidivism and regression to bestial levels are common post-Darwinian fantasies.'[10] A few years before *Jekyll and Hyde*, another Scottish writer, George MacDonald, included this interchange in his children's story, *The Princess and Curdie* (1883):

'. . . Have you ever heard what some philosophers say—that men were all animals once?'

[10] Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1981), p. 116.

'. . . But there is another thing that is of the greatest consequence—this: that all men, if they do not take care, go down the hill to the animals' country; that many men are actually, all their lives, going to be beasts. People knew it once, but it is long since they forgot it.'[11]

This story, with its horror of the man who is 'travelling beastwards', is characteristically fearful of a Darwinian regression: MacDonald negotiates with such a fear by means of a benign (and at times saccharine) religious belief. Stevenson confronts the Darwinian elements directly in *Jekyll and Hyde*, employing a very striking cluster of images stressing the bestial and animalistic: Hyde is described as 'hissing' like a snake (p. 18); he is a nameless 'thing' (p. 45); moves 'like a monkey' (p. 47); acts with 'mere animal terror' (p. 48) and is seen after one transformation 'sorely contorted and still twitching' (p. 49); and Jekyll awakes one morning, when the metamorphoses have become uncontrollable, to find 'a swart growth of hair' on his hand, the mark of Hyde (p. 67); later, Jekyll describes his double as 'the animal within me licking the chops of memory' (p. 71) and a 'caged' and 'apelike' creature that cannot be denied (p. 75). As the narrative progresses the animal imagery increases and the post-Darwinian nightmare intensifies until, in Jekyll's 'Statement', the images reach their most fearful. The legal framework (the 'Statement') cannot contain the disquieting material of the nightmare regression; it is Jekyll, of course, who sees Hyde most emphatically in bestial terms rather than the other characters who have some experience of his alter ego.

A story of a divided self, *Jekyll and Hyde* is also an excellent example of literary fantasy: critical discussions of fantasy have laid especial stress on the key importance of subversion. Roger Caillois, for example, writes: 'The fantastic is always a break in the acknowledged order, an irruption of the inadmissable within the changeless everyday legality.'[12] This applies well to Stevenson's 'shilling shocker': on its surface *Jekyll and Hyde*

[11] George MacDonald, *The Princess and Curdie* (1883: Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1966), p. 69.

[12] Roger Caillois, *Images, Images* (1965), p. 15, as quoted in Jackson, op. cit., p. 21.

records a break with legality in the manner the story is structured, divided initially between two characters who are pillars of Reason and Establishment—Utterson, the lawyer, and Lanyon, the Doctor, with Enfield as the third narrator. Neither Utterson nor Lanyon is able to assimilate the events of the story into his known reality; at the end of the first chapter both try to retreat from the 'bad story' (p. 11); they agree to close the matter, implying that they would, were it possible, close the path to a new kind of awareness upon which they have embarked. The story, however, does not allow them this kind of control.

The first section is a masterpiece of narrative unease, an effect at which Stevenson excels. The building itself, by virtue of its windowless state, promotes this impression; the cheque is signed with an unmentionable name; Hyde resists specific description and there is a supernatural suggestion about his undefined comings and goings. As a doctor carrying out 'unscientific' researches, Jekyll literally upsets Lanyon's sense of order and rightness, whilst the irregularities of his will disquiet the lawyer. Thus Jekyll's actions challenge these pillars of bourgeois society and, at the same time, question the reader's rational assumptions.

Unease and uncertainty, too, are caused by the nature of the men who are called upon to tell the story, to bear witness. As Masao Miyoshi has pointed out, Utterson has a past that is not blameless; he also lacks fellow-feeling and avoids asking uncomfortable questions. Similarly, Lanyon avoids distressing issues by a very closely-guarded, cautious control. Thus, 'The important men of the book, then, are all unmarried, intellectually barren, emotionally stifled, joyless.'[13] They are also men who only partly understand the events in which they are implicated; they do not understand the 'bad story', and it is this, so foreign to his lived life, that ultimately undermines and kills Dr Lanyon as his life is 'shaken to its roots' (p. 59) and he dies. Stevenson consistently, throughout his work, exploits daring narrative structures; the split narrative of *Jekyll and Hyde* looks forward to the more full-ranging narrative experiments of *The Master of Ballantrae* (1889),

[13] Masao Miyoshi, *The Divided Self* (New York, 1969), p. 297.

recalls the divisions of *Treasure Island* (1883) and links with those of *Kidnapped* (1886) and *Catriona* (1893).

In the latter, David Balfour in a moment of intense disillusion about the ways of the political world, and the unjust conduct of the trial of James of the Glens (James Mhor) at Inverary in 1752, comments: 'James was hanged . . . He had been hanged by fraud and violence, and the world wagged along, and there was not a pennyweight of difference; and the villains of that horrid plot were decent, kind, respectable fathers of families, who went to kirk and took the sacrament!'[14] It was this duality (whether in the form of a split between an outer surface and an inner reality or between a social façade and private role) that was to preoccupy Stevenson throughout his literary life from his youthful acquaintance with Deacon Brodie's 'Double Life' onwards; he makes the young David Balfour experience duality in *Kidnapped* and, to a greater extent, in *Catriona*; and it is a preoccupation that comes to the fore in *Weir of Hermiston*, a book that has justly been described as Stevenson's 'last word on duality' in every sense.[15]

An important link between *Jekyll* and *Weir* comes in the portrayal of the father-son relationship: Hyde is very much Jekyll's creation, his son and creature, in the tradition of other Gothic fantasies such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). 'Jekyll had more than a father's interest; Hyde had more than a son's indifference' (p. 68), writes Jekyll in his 'Statement' and this pairing is consolidated in the text (see notes e.g. to pp. 64, 75). It is here, as well as in the portrayal of Scotland and a Scottish sensibility, that the autobiographical relevance of the two texts comes to the fore. Stevenson's relationship with Thomas Stevenson, although affectionate, was often uneasy, and 'the thunderbolt of paternal anger' was all too painfully on occasion aimed at the son's attitudes and actions. There was, for instance, the great crisis with his father about the Society formed by Louis, Bob Stevenson, Charles Baxter and others, whose constitution

[14] *Catriona*, Swanston Edition, XI, 197.

[15] Edwin M. Eigner, *Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition* (Princeton, 1965), p. 227.

opened with the words, 'Disregard everything our parents taught us.'[16] Filial relationships, with varying degrees of tension and distress, recur throughout Stevenson's fiction in, for instance, *The House of Eld*, *The Story of a Lie*, *The Strange Adventures of John Nicholson* and *The Wrecker*, as well as very centrally in *The Master of Ballantrae* and, last of all, in *Weir*.

In *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*, Stevenson drew the portrait of a fine 'Scots character' in David Balfour, a young man with whom he himself had something considerable in common; but David's father was dead and buried at the outset of his son's adventures; and it was not until *Weir*, written in Samoa shortly before his own death, that Stevenson engaged with a young man like himself in a difficult paternal relationship—Archie Weir, son of Lord Hermiston. In October 1892, he started work on the novel, telling Sidney Colvin that its title 'ought' to be 'Braxfield' (after Robert MacQueen, Lord Braxfield, the inspiration for Hermiston) but that, since such a title was 'impossible', it would be called one of a number of alternatives, possibly *Weir of Hermiston*. He tells Colvin, too, that the book is set in the areas about 'Hermiston in the Lammermuirs and in Edinburgh' in the year 1812.[17] On 1 December 1892, he writes to Baxter:

> . . . I have a novel on the stocks to be called *The Justice-Clerk* [another possible title for *Weir*]. It is pretty Scotch, the Grand Premier is taken from Braxfield—(Oh, by the by, send me Cockburn's *Memorials*)—and some of the story is—well—queer. The heroine is seduced by one man, and finally disappears with the other man who shot him . . . Mind you, I expect *The Justice-Clerk* to be my masterpiece. My Braxfield is already a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, and so far as he has gone *far* my best character.[18]

[16] See Daiches, *Literature and Gentility* op. cit., p. 82.

[17] Letter to Sidney Colvin, 28 October 1892, Swanston Edition, XXV, 260.

[18] Letter to Charles Baxter, 1 December 1892, Swanston Edition, XXV, 270–1. W. E. Henley points out that the name Weir would have been specially significant for R.L.S. as being that of the legendary Scottish Major Weir (*c.* 1600–70) who was an extremely religious man, a Lieutenant in the army sent by the Covenanters to protect the Ulster Colonists in 1650 and later a Major in Lanark's army: he was secretly engaged in a number of crimes and, believed to be a warlock, was burned in 1670 together with his sister. For Henley's comment, see E. V. Lucas, *The Colvins and Their Friends* (1928), pp. 247–48.

Intermittent work on the book went on towards the end of 1892 and throughout 1893, but sustained writing of *Weir* did not really get under way until early in 1894 and, even then, there were interruptions whilst Stevenson worked on *St Ives*, the adventures of a French prisoner held captive in Edinburgh Castle during the Napoleonic Wars. In a letter to Colvin of February 1894, Stevenson describes having re-read his story, *The Ebb-Tide*: 'It gives me great hope, as I see I *can* work in that constipated, mosaic manner, which is what I have to do just now with *Weir of Hermiston*.'[19] On 6 February, Isobel Strong (Stevenson's step-daughter and his amanuensis) recorded in her Journal that she and Louis had been working for several days on the novel; then, there was one more hiatus whilst they continued with the adventures of St Ives; and finally, in September 1894, Isobel reported that they had been working 'like steam-engines' on *Weir*.[20]

On 3 December, the day of Stevenson's death, Lloyd writes that, 'He wrote hard all that morning of the last day; his half-finished book, Hermiston, he judged the best he had ever written, and the sense of successful effort made him buoyant and happy as nothing else could.'[21] At this time, Charles Baxter was en route for Samoa; when he returned to Britain he took the unfinished manuscript with him. Edited by Sidney Colvin, it appeared in four instalments in the magazine *Cosmopolis* from January to April 1896, and the first book edition appeared in the same year.

The book that Stevenson felt promised to be his best attracted mixed responses: friends of whom Colvin asked advice about its publication were uniformly enthusiastic; W. E. Henley and Henry James both felt that *Weir* was worthy of immediate publication; J. M. Barrie commented that 'here it seems to me that he *has* done it, here is the big book'.[22] Arnold Bennett remarked in his journal, 'The mere writing of "Weir of Hermiston" surpasses all

[19] Letter to Sidney Colvin, February 1894, Swanston Edition, XXV, 383.
[20] Swearingen, op. cit., p. 175.
[21] Lloyd Osbourne, 'Account of the Death and Burial of R. L. Stevenson', Tusitala Edition, XXXV, 185.
[22] E. V. Lucas, op. cit., p. 248.

Stevenson's previous achievement.'[23] Contemporary reviewers, however, were more chary: some objected to the publication of a fragment; there were criticisms of Colvin's handling of the ending; the thorough-going Scottishness of the novel provoked some hostility; and there was a tendency to agree with E. Purcell who wrote: 'Rich as it is in those perfections of which Stevenson was a supreme master, "Weir of Hermiston" would never have been a great novel, for a great novel he could never have written.' He adds more generously, however, 'The great novel never emerged, but in its stead what a roll of successes, and in such various styles!'[24]

Weir may not indeed be the finished masterpiece envisaged by critics such as Purcell but, even in its fragmentary state, it has its own individual 'roll of successes'; it is an intense and, at times, brilliant portrayal of duality and division, both personal and public, a fitting conclusion to a career that was early on distinguished by *Jekyll and Hyde*. Stevenson himself said that the novel was 'pretty Scotch'; Sidney Colvin concluded his note on the book saying that 'Surely no son of Scotland has died leaving with his last breath a worthier tribute to the land he loved.'[25] *Weir*, above all, is a text that asks the reader to consider what being 'pretty Scotch' meant to Stevenson, to join him in addressing a question that he could consider with maturity only at a distance of several thousand miles, in Samoa. Some years earlier he had dealt with 'The Scot Abroad' in his book *The Silverado Squatters* (1883): 'Scotland is indefinable; it has no unity except upon the map. Two languages, many dialects, innumerable forms of piety, and countless local patriotisms and prejudices, part us among ourselves more widely than the extreme east and west of that great continent of America.'[26] In *Weir*, Stevenson sets his exploration of personal division and rebellion (portrayed in the son, Archie) against a background of national and historical division. Of all Stevenson's work, *Weir* is most aware of Scottishness, of Scotland's languages and dialects,

[23] Maixner (ed.), op. cit., p. 465.
[24] Ibid., pp. 474, 475.
[25] Sidney Colvin, 'Editorial Note', *Weir of Hermiston* (1896), p. 286.
[26] 'The Scot Abroad', *The Silverado Squatters*, Swanston Edition, II, 194.

history and literary heritage (at times, the novel reads like a roll call of honour of the great literati of the past); and it is in *Weir* that he gives this awareness its most mature and fullest expression. If we look simply at the opening of the book we note at once that Stevenson sets the scene with reference to some of the most turbulent and divided times of Scottish history—the Covenanting period. With a few telling allusions, the reader is reminded of one of the most tortured of Scotland's religious splits, the results of the 'innumerable forms of piety' in the land.

The opening, too, lays stress on those characters about whom history has been strongly divided, men who have called forth widely differing responses: Claverhouse who, in folk memory and some fiction, is 'bloody Clavers' but who is also commemorated in Scotland's song as 'Bonnie Dundee'; and George MacKenzie, known by many as 'bloody MacKenzie' but who was also a reputed literary figure, the founder of the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh (today, the National Library of Scotland) and a much more complex personality than his sobriquet suggests. Such characters demand a response that appreciates their duality; and this is, above all, the case, too, with Judge Hermiston, modelled on Braxfield, a man whose name 'smack[ed] of the gallows' but who also had 'a sneaking kindness for any unpopular person'.[27] It is for Archie in the novel to try to come to terms with the contradictions of a father who is 'the brutal judge and the industrious, dispassionate student' (p. 108).

Historical and political divisions are matched in the text by an exploration of division in the literary world. Among others, the book draws on two Scottish figures who are profoundly associated with duality on a number of different levels: James Hogg and Robert Burns. In life, both these men exploited a kind of duality in creating a mask, a consciously-constructed persona to suit their audiences. Burns presented himself both as a 'professional Don Juan' and as literary darling of Edinburgh bourgeois society; Hogg created himself both as raw, Ettrick shepherd and as aspiring, genteel litterateur; and

[27] 'Some Portraits by Raeburn', *Virginibus Puerisque*, Swanston Edition, II, 389.

what is more both wrote in these and other, variant guises in full knowledge of what they were doing.[28] Both writers, too, have aroused very different reactions, as diverse as those prompted by political men such as Claverhouse and MacKenzie. We could say that *Jekyll and Hyde* is a simplification or reduction (I mean the notion, not the book itself, which is extremely consciously and artistically constructed) of the much more subtle dualities explored in *Weir of Hermiston*.

It would seem then that Scottishness and doubleness, division and duality are synonymous in Stevenson's work, that the ideas coincide on political, historical and literary levels. It is an idea that is registered very strongly indeed in the language and the linguistic divisions of the novel. Judge Braxfield was distinguished in his own time by his Scots. Henry Cockburn describes him thus (in *Memorials*, the book which Stevenson asked Baxter to send him in Samoa whilst he was working on *Weir*):

> But the giant of the bench was Braxfield. His very name makes people start yet.
>
> Strong built and dark, with rough eyebrows, powerful eyes, threatening lips, and a low growling voice, he was like a formidable blacksmith. His accent and his dialect were exaggerated Scotch; his language, like his thoughts, short, strong, and conclusive.
>
> Illiterate and without any taste for refined enjoyment, strength of understanding, which gave him power without cultivation, only encouraged him to a more contemptuous disdain of all natures less coarse than his own. Despising the growing improvement of manners, he shocked the feelings even of an age, which, with more of the formality, had far less of the substance of decorum than our own. [He refers to the first half of the nineteenth century.][29]

The broad Scots of Hermiston, Stevenson's version of

[28] See also Emma Letley, ' "The Management of the Tongue": Hogg's Literary Uses of Scots', *Papers Given at the Second Conference of the James Hogg Society* (forthcoming, 1987).

[29] Henry Cockburn, *Memorials of His Time*, ed. Harry A. Cockburn (Edinburgh, 1909), pp. 104–5.

Braxfield, is an important part of *his* resistance to the 'growing improvement of manners' of his time. In Stevenson's own youth, too, the use of broad Scots was itself a gesture of defiance against genteel, Edinburgh values. The masks employed by him and Baxter of Johnstone and Thomson often involved such broad Scots, as here when Johnstone writes to 'Thomson in Gaol': 'Ye've been, since ever 'at I kent ye, a drunkard, a whoremonger, a blasphemer, and mair that I wouldnae like to name, you bein' whaur ye are and your letters likely opened.'[30]

Archie Weir in the novel is linguistically the opposite of the young Stevenson: his rebellion against his father is expressed in English; it is only as a child that he speaks Scots apart from very occasional lapses towards the end of the fragment. With his mother he employs Scots forms as he tries to understand the logic of Hermiston's position; if judging is a sin, how is it that his father is a judge:

> 'I can't see it,' said the little Rabbi, and wagged his head.
> Mrs Weir abounded in commonplace replies.
> 'No, I canna see it,' reiterated Archie. 'And I'll tell you what, Mamma, I don't think you and me's justifeed in staying with him.' (p. 92)

Despite his mother's remonstrances, Archie still clings to the idea that his father is 'crooool' (p. 92).

The 'pretty Scotch' quality of the book is clearly seen here, as elsewhere, in the language. In childhood conversations with his mother, Scots is established as Archie's language of intimacy with her; the language in its pronunciation features is also a sign that he has at least some affinity with his broad Scots father (an affinity that persists, although without linguistic signs, in his manhood however hard he may try to deny it). With the death of Jean Rutherford, the constant 'tender' influence on Archie's life is denied; she leaves him with 'a shivering delicacy, unequally mated with potential violence' (p. 98). It is this duality that causes the tragedy of Archie Weir; and it is the legacy of genteel tenderness from

[30] *RLS: Stevenson's Letters to Charles Baxter*, ed. De Lancey Ferguson and Marshall Waingrow (1956), p. 143.