of its values are embodied in Stevenson's double essay 'Talk and Talkers' (Memories and Portraits). Gosse noted that two of the best among the talkers in the 1880s were 'R.L.S. and his wonderful cousin R.A.M.S.' ('The Savile Club', Silhouettes (1925) 375–80).

5. Charles Brookfield, the actor (1857–1913), also recalled his bizarre get-up: 'His hair was smooth and parted in the middle and fell beneath the collar of his coat; he wore a black flannel shirt, with a curious, knitted tie twisted in a knot; he had Wellington boots, rather tight, dark trousers, a pea-jacket and a white sombrero hat (in imitation, perhaps, of his eminent literary friend, Mr W. E. Henley). But the most astounding item of all in his costume was a lady's sealskin cape, which he wore about his shoulders, fastened at the neck by a fancy brooch, which also held together a bunch of half a dozen daffodils' (Random Reminiscences (1902) 30–1).

Sealed of the Tribe of Louis

ANDREW LANG

From Adventures among Books (1905) 42–52. Andrew Lang (1844–1912), poet, essayist, historian, came from an old Border family at Selkirk, where his father was sheriff-clerk. From his earliest days he was fascinated by myth and balladry. His education, referred to briefly here, was at Edinburgh Academy, prior to Stevenson’s arrival, followed by St Andrews and Oxford, where he became a fellow of Merton College (1868). His prolific output included works on folklore, such as Myth, Ritual and Religion (1899), on Greek literature, several books of verse, anecdotal memoirs, and contributions to Scottish history; among his biographies the best known is Life and Letters of J. G. Lockhart (1896). He was one of the founders of the Psychical Research Society and its President (1911). Lang’s initial response to Stevenson was lukewarm, but friendship grew, and Lang paid tribute on his death. (See ‘The Late Mr. R. L. Stevenson’, Illustrated London News, 5 Jan 1895; ‘Robert Louis Stevenson’, Longman’s Magazine, Feb 1895, and ‘Recollections of Robert Louis Stevenson’, North American Review, Feb 1895). Stevenson was similarly wary of Lang: ‘too good-looking, delicate, Oxfordish . . . a la-de-dady Oxford kind of Scot’ (quoted in Knight, Treasury, 104). They were friendly enough by the summer of 1881, however, for Stevenson to solicit a testimonial from him in support of his bizarre attempt to gain the chair of History and Constitutional Law at Edinburgh University. Two days before his death, Stevenson wrote thanking Lang for a picture of Lord Braxfield (1722–99) needed for his portrayal of Lord Adam Weir in Weir of Hermiston (1896).
Like Keats and Shelley, he was, and he looked, of the immortally young. He and I were at school together, but I was an elderly boy of seventeen, when he was lost in the crowd of 'gytes', as the members of the lowest form are called. Like all Scotch people, we had a vague family connection; a great-uncle of his, I fancy, married an aunt of my own, called for her beauty, 'The Flower of Ettrick'. So we had both heard; but these things were before our day. A lady of my kindred remembers carrying Stevenson about when he was 'a rather peevish baby', and I have seen a beautiful photograph of him, like one of Raffael's children, taken when his years were three or four. But I never had heard of his existence till, in 1873, I think, I was at Mentone, in the interests of my health. Here I met Mr Sidney Colvin, now of the British Museum, and, with Mr Colvin, Stevenson. He looked as, in my eyes, he always did look, more like a lass than a lad, with a rather long, smooth oval face, brown hair worn at greater length than is common, large lucid eyes, but whether blue or brown I cannot remember, if brown, certainly light brown. On appealing to the authority of a lady, I learn that brown was the hue. His colour was a trifle hectic, as is not unusual at Mentone, but he seemed, under his big blue cloak, to be of slender, yet agile frame. He was like nobody else whom I ever met. There was a sort of uncommon celerity in changing expression, in thought and speech. His cloak and Tyrolese hat (he would admit the innocent impeachment) were decidedly dear to him. On the frontier of Italy, why should he not do as the Italians do? It would have been well for me if I could have imitated the wearing of the cloak!

I shall not deny that my first impression was not wholly favourable.1 'Here,' I thought, 'is one of your aesthetic young men, though a very clever one.' What the talk was about, I do not remember; probably of books. Mr Stevenson afterwards told me that I had spoken of Monsieur Paul de St Victor, as a fine writer, but added that 'he was not a British sportsman'. Mr Stevenson himself, to my surprise, was unable to walk beyond a very short distance, and, as it soon appeared, he thought his thread of life was nearly spun. He had just written his essay, 'Ordered South', the first of his published works, for his 'Pentland Rising' pamphlet was unknown, a boy's performance.2 On reading 'Ordered South', I saw, at once, that here was a new writer, a writer indeed; one who could do what none of us, nous autres, could rival, or approach. I was instantly 'sealed of the Tribe of Louis', an admirer, a devotee, a fanatic, if you please. . . .