

**VIRGINIBUS  
PUERISQUE,  
AND OTHER PAPERS**

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Virginibus Puerisque, and other papers by Robert Louis Stevenson

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**ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON**

**VIRGINIBUS  
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VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE

AND OTHER PAPERS

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR.*

AN INLAND VOYAGE.

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UNDERWOODS: POEMS.

MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS.

*(With Mrs. Stevenson)*

MORE NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS: THE DYNAMITER.

# VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE

AND OTHER PAPERS

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



*SECOND EDITION*

LONDON

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1887

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MY DEAR WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY,

We are all busy in this world building Towers of Babel; and the child of our imaginations is always a changeling when it comes from nurse. This is not only true in the greatest, as of wars and folios, but in the least also, like the trifling volume in your hand. Thus I began to write these papers with a definite end: I was to be the *Advocatus*, not I hope *Diaboli*, but *Juvenialis*; I was to state temperately the beliefs of youth as opposed to the contentions of age; to go over all the field where the two differ, and produce at last a little volume of special pleadings which I might call, without misnomer, *Life at Twenty-five*. But times kept changing, and I shared in the change. I clung hard to that entrancing age; but, with the best will, no man can be twenty-five for ever. The old, rusty convictions deserted me, and, along with them, the style that fits their presentation and defence. I saw, and indeed my friends informed me, that the game was up. A good part of the volume would answer to the long-projected title; but the shadows of the prison-house are on the rest.

It is good to have been young in youth and, as years go on, to grow older. Many are already old before they are through their teens; but to travel deliberately through one's ages is to get the heart out of a liberal education. Times change, opinions vary to their opposite, and still this world appears a brave gymnasium, full of sea-bathing, and horse exercise, and bracing, manly virtues; and what can be more encouraging than to find the friend who was welcome at one age, still welcome at another? Our affections and beliefs are wiser than we: the best that is in us is better than we can understand; for it is grounded beyond experience, and guides us, blindfold but safe, from one age on to another.

These papers are like milestones on the wayside of my life; and as I look back in memory, there is hardly a stage of that distance but I see you present with advice, reproof, or praise. Meanwhile, many things have changed, you and I among the rest; but I hope that our sympathy, founded on the love of our art, and nourished by mutual assistance, shall survive these little revolutions undiminished, and, with God's help, unite us to the end.

R. L. S.

DAVOS PLATZ, 1881.

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