

The works of Robert Louis Stevenson, as widely varied as *The Treasure Island*, "Markheim" and *The Ebb-Tide* are deeply immersed in social, psychological and moral issues peculiar not only to the Victorian age but also relevant to our own time. His is the very benign, unpretentious and fatherly view of mankind common to all great thinkers and insightful artists. In his prose he explores the character of human mind with its deformities and incapacities as well as its virtues, for to be true to life is, in Stevenson's own words, much more estimable than to idealize it. An honest critique of social illnesses is worth a great deal more than mere show of goodness, prudence and morality often required by the publishers and expected by the reading public of Victorian era.

The present thesis concerns itself both with Stevenson's theoretical concepts and the practice of his writing. It discusses the motivation, realization and reception of the prevalent themes of Stevenson's prose: duality of one's character, internal struggle against social pressure, assumed respectability and criticism of oppressive policies. Along with these, it also deals with the man's need to stay truthful to his nature, a concept Stevenson defends with some energy both in his essays and his work.