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Box 32, Folder 783
Edwin J. Beinecke Collection of Robert Louis Stevenson
Series II Manuscripts

Manuscripts by Robert Louis Stevenson
"The Master of the House Tusitala," poem (6566) / undated

VII.

Abaddin Tusi talks

I meamble, in the populous house apart,
Sit snugly, chambered; and my silent art
Uninterrupted, unremitting ply,
Before the dawn by morning lamplight, by
The glow of smeltering noon, and when the sun
Dips past my western ^{peak} hill, and day is done:
So, heading still over my trade of words,
I hear the morning and the evening birds,
The morning and the evening stars behold.

10 So there apart I sit, as once of old,
Napier in signet merchandise; and my
Bum, innocent aches in horse and husbandry
Wander apace. ~~What~~ What ails the Boss? they ask.

Him, richest of the rich, an endless task
Before the earliest birds as servants stir
Calls, and detains him day-long prisoner.

He, whose innumerable dollars hewed
His cleft in the brace and devil-haunted wood
And broke therein, for seen to aens and allies,

20 His many-windowed, painted palace rise,
Red-roofed, blue walled, a rainbow on the hill,
A wonder in the wild-wood glade: He still,
Nuttin'Kable Abaddin, dawn and dark,
Scrubbles and scribbles like a German clerk.

We see the fact, but tell, O tell us why?
My mesend washerman and wire butler cry,
And from their lips the unmeasured questions drip:
How can he live that does not keep a shop?

30 And why does he, being acclaimed as rich,
not ~~share~~ ^{share} with other gentry on the beach?

But halloo, impudently hoarse,
In the cold, uncanny wood, haunt of the fleeing alone!

The sun and the loud rain here alternate:

Here in the unfathomable bush, the great

Voice of the wind makes a magnanimous sound;

Here too, ~~by~~^{no} doubt, the shooting dines around.

To be a deity; here, in the twilight stream

That flows above the forest, frequent gleam

The jewel-eyes of crawfish. There he goes:

40. Grant them! and can the thing be understood?

Not ~~at~~ this white chief, whom no distress compells,

Far from all company, ~~less~~ in the mountain dwells?

And finds a manner of living to his wish

Apart from high society - and sea fish?

~~Not there, with him, a well-descended man,~~

~~We linger and labour in this rustic place?~~

~~Not still, in dread and peril, we support~~

~~The neighbourhood of Boggles? And, as at court,~~

~~One village, and two families, chiefs attend~~

50. ~~What his pots and pans and garden end?~~