

STEVENSON, EDWARD
IRENAEUS PRIME-
("XAVIER MAYNE";
1868-1942)

American novelist and scholar.

Born in Madison, New Jersey, and educated in the United States, he began to write for the press while still in school. He was admitted to the New Jersey bar but never practiced. Stevenson was a member of the staff of the *Independent*, *Harper's Weekly*, and other magazines, and gained a wide reputation as musical, dramatic, and literary critic. He specialized in foreign, including European and Oriental literatures and claimed fluency in nine languages. Down to 1900 he divided his time between the United States and many parts of Europe, then settled permanently abroad out of dislike for the homophobia of contemporary American society, ultimately dying in Europe in 1942. He wrote many novels and short stories, several of which broach the homosexual theme but in the innocuous guise of "male friendship." In a boys' book about Bonnie Prince Charlie, *White Cockades* (1887), there is "half-hinted" an erotic liaison between the prince and a rustic youth.

Under the pseudonym "Xavier Mayne" he published in Naples in 1908 what was perhaps the first explicit homosexual novel by a native-born American: *Imre: A Memorandum*. The novel's simple plot describes the love affair between the thirty-year-old Oswald who is spending a leisurely summer of language study in Hungary and the twenty-five-year-old Imre, a Hungarian cavalry officer.

More important was his nonfiction book *The Intersexes: A History of Similosexualism as a Problem in Social Life* (Rome, 1908), the first large-scale survey in the English language of the subject of homosexuality from all aspects. It was based not just upon his reading of nearly everything that had been published until then in the homophile movement press and in the psychiatric literature, but

also upon his first-hand observations of the homosexual scene in the major cities of Europe and the United States, with much folklore and gossip thrown in for good measure. The author describes the mores of the gay subculture of that era, from the nobleman in his salon to the hustler on the street, with an objectivity that is free of both polemic and condemnatory bias. He alludes to many all-but-forgotten incidents and scandals that made the metropolitan newspapers, and names scores of illustrious figures of the past and present as Uranians or Uraniads (lesbians). Stevenson adheres to the line of Magnus Hirschfeld and the Scientific-humanitarian Committee that homosexuality is inborn and unmodifiable, that homosexuals should not be forced to don "masks" to hide from would-be persecutors, and that religion and the law are powerless to extirpate a predisposition of human nature. So thorough is the volume that not a few of the topics broached on its more than 600 pages have yet to be investigated by modern scholars. As the work of a participant observer, *The Intersexes* remains a precious collection of fact and commentary that anticipates Donald Webster Cory's *The Homosexual in America* of 1951, its first American successor.

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Warren Johansson

STOICISM

Founded by Zeno of Citium (335-263 B.C.), Stoicism became the leading philosophical school under the Roman emperors, until the triumph of Neoplatonism in the third century. Insisting in the trying times of the Hellenistic monarchies that even poverty, pain, and death are as nothing to the eternal soul, Stoics vanquished their materialistic rivals, the

Epicureans, who stressed pleasure rather than virtue as the aim of life.

Almost all earlier Stoics, sometimes labeled the First Stoa, praised homosexual love and shocked most Greeks by claiming that, contrary to the convention that one should cease loving a boy once he sprouted a beard, one should keep one's *eromenos* until he reached his twenty-eighth year. Paenatius and other Greeks introduced Stoic doctrines, which appealed to the Latin sense for *gravitas* and endurance of hardships, to the Scipionic circle in Rome. Perhaps fearing the wrath of old-fashioned *patresfamilias*, who disapproved of Greek love and arranged the marriage of their sons during their teens to girls of 12 or 13, in contrast to the practice of upper-class Greeks to postpone marriage to 30 and then take brides whose ages ranged from 15 to 19, they omitted the emphasis on boy-love. Aristocratic Roman women lived with their husbands and circulated in society, in contrast to Greek women who were secluded, shut away in *gynaikeia* (women's quarters). Aristocratic Roman women thereby attained a far higher status than Greek women had and fostered the emphasis of later Stoics on marriage. Often designated the Second Stoa, most of the later Stoics deemphasized homosexual love and some, notably the Roman Musonius Rufus in the first century, demanded reciprocal fidelity to one's wife. Others, however, like the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (reigned 161–180), remained bisexual. The slave philosopher Epictetus (ca. 50–ca. 135) demonstrated the Stoic doctrine that one's station in life was indifferent, only one's virtue mattered.

Many have seen Stoic emphasis on the soul and on virtue and restraint of appetites as a harbinger of Christianity. Indeed, Patristic writers from Clement of Alexandria (150–215) to St. Augustine (354–430) dressed up Christian doctrine in Stoic phrases to convert the upper classes. But while Stoic philosophers, like pagan physicians, recommended moderation in

sexual activity as in diet and exercise to improve the body and mind, most Christian Fathers advocated complete chastity and total sexual abstinence. Christians wished to transcend nature, while Stoics preferred to live in harmony with it. To control sexual urges, Christians mortified the flesh, often in the deliberate attempt to achieve male impotence and female frigidity, states that Greco-Roman physicians treated as diseases to be cured. Christians condemned sodomy with the Stoic phrase, "against nature." The evolution from uninhibited pagan sexuality through Stoic restraint to Christian asceticism and chastity that some philosophers and historians claim to detect is thus more apparent than real, more superficial than fundamental, one of vocabulary rather than essence.

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William A. Percy

STONEWALL REBELLION

This event, which took place in New York City over the weekend of June 27–30, 1969, is significant less for its intrinsic character than as a symbol of self-assertion for the gay liberation movement. So successfully has the symbol been propagated that it has largely, though not completely, obscured the history of the preceding century of heartbreakingly slow and arduous work on behalf of homosexual emancipation. The Stonewall Rebellion was a spontaneous act of resistance to the police harassment that had been inflicted on the homosexual community since the inception of the modern vice squad in metropolitan police forces, but it sparked a much greater, indeed national phenome-