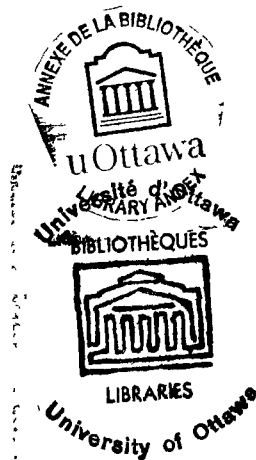


THE REVIVAL OF THE RONDEAU IN ENGLAND IN
THE YEARS FOLLOWING 1860, AND THE LEADER-
SHIP OF SIR EDMUND GOSSE IN THIS REVIVAL

by

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of the University of Ottawa in partial
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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Frank Martin Tierney was born August 2, 1930, in Ottawa, Canada. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature from the University of Montreal, Canada, in 1959, and a Master of Arts degree in English Literature from the University of Montreal in 1961.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the present thesis is four-fold: first, to show that there is a significant revival of the rondeau in England during the 1860's and 1870's; second, to reveal the nature and the principal causes of this revival; third, to determine the significance of the contribution of Sir Edmund Gosse to this revival; and fourth, to determine, through analysis of some of the rondeaux written by Gosse and Austin Dobson, the essential characteristics of the rondeau as a poetic form.

Substantial evidence provided in both primary and secondary materials attests to a significant revival of the rondeau following 1860. Presentation and examination of this evidence to establish that there is such a revival constitutes the first purpose of this thesis. This revival is attested to by at least two major works which are produced during what is regarded as the time of the revival. In 1877, Gosse publishes the article, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms

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of Verse."¹ This work is written, quite apparently, to promote the revival. In his article, Gosse states that the revival is already underway and that many poets, simultaneously, and unknown to one another, begin using the rondeau form after the mid-nineteenth century.

In the following year, 1878, W. Davenport Adams publishes the anthology Latter Day Lyrics.² In the preface

¹Sir Edmund Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," Cornhill Magazine, London, XXXVI (July, 1877),

²W. Davenport Adams, ed., Latter Day Lyrics, London, Chatto and Windus, 1878. Other works written during the revival that suggest that the French fixed forms are in use and becoming more popular are Andrew Lang, ed., Ballads and Lyrics of Old France, London, Longmans and Co., 1881; Robert Bridges, Poems, London, B. M. Pickering, 1873; Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Poems, London, F. S. Ellis, Ltd., 1870, which contains three translations from François Villon's, Le Grand Testament; John Payne, Intaglios, London, B. M. Pickering, 1871, which was dedicated to Théodore de Banville, and Payne, Songs of Life and Death, London, H. S. King and Co., 1872; which includes a translation from Théodore de Banville, "Ballad of Common Folk," and several of Payne's exercises in French fixed forms; Austin Dobson, Proverbs in Porcelain and Other Verses, London, H. S. King & Co., 1877, which contains examples of French fixed forms; Dobson, Old-World Idylls and Other Verses, London, K. Paul Trench, Trübner and Co., 1893; Andrew Lang, Ballades in Blue China, London, C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1880 and 1881; Algernon Charles Swinburne, Poems and Ballads, London, J. C. Hotten, 1866; Swinburne, A Century of Roundels, London, Chatto & Windus, 1883; Dobson, Vignettes in Rhyme and Vers de Société, London, Henry S. King & Co., 1873; Arthur William Edgar O'Shaughnessy, Songs of a Worker, London, Chatto & Windus, 1872, 1881.

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to his anthology, Adams states that the "old French measures" have recently been reintroduced into English poetry.¹ The "old French measures" are the French fixed poetic forms, one of which is the rondeau. Adams' comment quite conclusively demonstrates awareness of what may be considered a revival of the fixed forms in general and the rondeau in particular. Adams presents evidence for the revival in three ways: by his statement in the preface that the fixed poetic forms from France have been reintroduced into England; by having in the anthology examples of fixed forms that have been written during this revival; and, finally, by asking Dobson to write a definition of the fixed forms because they have been so long out of use in England that they are unknown to most readers.

Studies after the time of the revival confirm the revival of the rondeau after 1860. Such a study is Helen Louise Cohen, Lyric Forms From France.² Cohen confirms the reintroduction of the French fixed forms into English literature after 1860: first, she states that the forms are out of vogue in England for four centuries preceding the

¹Adams, Latter Day Lyrics, p. vi.

²Helen Louise Cohen, Lyric Forms From France: Their History and Use, New York, Harcourt Brace, and Company, 1922. See also L. E. Kastner, A History of French Versification, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1903.

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nineteenth century; second, she explains the beginning of the revival in England; third, she traces the history of the forms from their origin in both England and France through to the mid-nineteenth century, and this history reveals that the forms are little used for the four hundred years preceding the mid-nineteenth century; fourth, she defines the forms; fifth, she identifies some of the leaders in the revival; and, finally, she presents an anthology of the fixed forms that are written during the revival. These works by Adams, Gosse, and Cohen present substantial evidence that a revival of the fixed forms in general takes place in the mid-nineteenth century. However, they do not discuss, in sufficient detail, the nature of the revival of the rondeau in particular. The present thesis should present fuller, more comprehensive evidence that there is a significant revival of the rondeau as a part of the general revival of the French fixed forms in England.

The second purpose of this thesis is to determine the principal causes of the revival. Primary evidence is provided by Gosse in his Manifesto of 1877 that may explain significant causes of the revival. Gosse enumerates poem forms that are being used by English poets from the beginning of the nineteenth century through to the revival, and he argues that the dominance of blank verse produces a reaction

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that prepares the way for the reintroduction of fixed forms into England. He contends that the dominant interest in didactic literature in England from the beginning of the century to the 1860's is repugnant to some of the Victorian writers and causes a reaction that assists the revival. This reaction takes the form of concern for art for its own sake and a preoccupation with form and hard clear lines in poetry. Gosse shows that a revival of the fixed forms in France earlier in the nineteenth century, has a significant influence on the revival in England in the nineteenth century. Cohen expresses substantially the same point of view as that expressed by Gosse. Adams does not discuss the causes in any significant detail. The present thesis will develop more fully an explanation of the nature and causes of the revival and demonstrate that there may be a cause of the revival that is no more than hinted at by Gosse and Cohen; that is, the "art for art's sake" movement in France which is promoted by Théophile Gautier (1811-1872). This thesis will establish the interrelation of the "art for art's sake" movement and the reintroduction of the fixed forms in general, and the rondeau in particular, into England.

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after 1860.¹

The third purpose of this thesis is to examine the role of Edmund Gosse in the revival of the rondeau in England. Gosse's Manifesto is a significant "apologia" for the revival of the forms in general. It is not, however, concerned with the revival of the rondeau in particular. Adams' anthology, Latter Day Lyrics, contains examples of the forms in general, without any emphasis on the rondeau in particular. Dobson's essay on these forms in Adams' anthology, does not discuss the poets who make a significant contribution to the revival of the rondeau. Finally, Cohen gives an overview of the poets who contribute to the general revival, but she does not present details on those poets who

¹Such an interrelation is suggested, in passing, by Karl Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents of the 1890's, New York, Random House, Inc., 1966; Jerome Hamilton Buckley, The Victorian Temper, New York, Random House, Inc., 1964; Ivor Evans, English Poetry in the Later Nineteenth Century, London, Methuen Co., Ltd., 1933; John Drinkwater, The Eighteen Sixties, London, Cambridge University Press, 1932; Gosse, French Profiles, London, William Heinemann, Ltd., 1905; Gosse, The Life of A. C. Swinburne, Bonchurch Edition, Vol. XIX, London, William Heinemann Ltd., 1927; Gosse, Silhouettes, London, William Heinemann, Ltd., 1925; Holbrook Jackson, The Eighteen Nineties, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1922; Frederic O. Musser, Strange Clamor, Detroit, Mich., Wayne State University Press, 1965; S. M. Ellis, "Austin Dobson," Fortnightly Review, (October, 1921), 640-650; Gosse, "Austin Dobson," Quarterly Review, (January, 1922), 225-242; James K. Robinson, "A Neglected Phase of the Aesthetic Movement: English Parnassianism," PMLA, LXVIII (September, 1953), 733-754; Robinson, "Austin Dobson and the Rondeliers," MLQ, XIV (1953), 31-42.

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make major contributions to the revival of the rondeau. This thesis will show in detail the function that Gosse plays in the revival of the rondeau.

The final purpose of this thesis is to analyse some rondeaux written by Gosse during the revival in order to reveal the three significant conclusions about the nature of the revival: first, what kinds of subject matter are contained in these rondeaux and whether this subject matter is in the tradition of the rondeau form or whether Gosse introduces new themes that are significantly different from those that are generally used in the tradition of the form. The second conclusion will reveal what types of rondeaux are used by Gosse; that is, whether he employs the traditional form of the rondeau, or whether he uses some variations of the traditional form, or whether he uses both traditional form and variations of the traditional form. The third conclusion will assess the general quality of the poetry produced by Gosse during the revival. Analysis of the kind needed to determine and to reveal the quality of the poetry has not previously been done.

Thus, this thesis will establish that a significant revival of the rondeau takes place in England after 1860; it should determine the nature and causes of the revival; it should make clear the kind and extent of leadership Gosse

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provides in the revival of the rondeau; and, finally, it should demonstrate the specific achievement of Gosse in his writing of rondeaux, provide for an understanding and judgment of his rondeaux, and reveal the essential character of the rondeau itself.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN, DEVELOPMENT AND DEFINITION OF THE RONDEAU

Section 1

The Origin and Growth of the Rondeau in France

The purpose of the present study is to explain the literary phenomenon of the rather sudden and widespread revival of the rondeau in the late 1860's and 1870's in England. Such an explanation involves recognition of the rondeau's immediate antecedents or origins, determination of the historical development of the literary form of the rondeau, and defining the rondeau that appears in England during the late 1860's and 1870's.

As a part of the necessary explanation of the phenomenon of the revival of the rondeau, the present section tries to make clear how the rondeau form originates, where it is initially employed, how it develops out of its original forms, and who of the major poets make use of the form.

Existing scholarship on the development of the rondeau and its revival in England, while not being exhaustive

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or adequate, provides a foundation upon which to build. Kastner, in A History of French Versification, makes a detailed study of French versification and discusses the origin and development of the fixed forms of French poetry, including the rondeau. Cohen, in Lyric Forms From France, elaborates somewhat upon the study made by Kastner of the fixed French forms and studies the origin and development of refrain poetry in England.

Cohen makes a fuller study of origins of the refrain poetry than Kastner. In speculating about the beginning of refrain poetry, she reiterates the common belief that earliest use of the refrain in the literature of most countries predates any historical records, that, in fact, it appears in preliterate or primitive cultures, growing, there, out of the folk or tribal animistic rituals and that in later, more highly developed cultures it continues in the expression of non-literate, unsophisticated people in folk choral song which she considers may be the earliest form of all poetry. Cohen traces the origin of the rondel, or rondeau, back to the choral song: "If we judge from the analogy of other primitive peoples, it is very certain that sophisticated and artistic poetic forms, like the ballade and the rondel, which employ a regular refrain, are in the direct

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line of a long descent from choral folk-songs, in which the people of the village cooperated with an accomplished leader in raising the dance-song which accompanied their movements."¹ What Cohen calls the rondel develops into what is later called the rondeau.

Speculation about the growth of the primitive dance songs into more complicated forms leads Cohen to recognize a general pattern of possible development: first, the earliest dance song is composed of single lines that alternate with the refrain. Second, the number of lines is increased and rhyme is introduced. Third, the added lines are adapted to the music of the dance. Fourth, these verses are structurally designed to be rhythmically compatible with the rest of the verses. Fifth, the refrain is added for variety with only the requirements of rhyme determining the position and form of the refrain in the stanza.² Extant dance songs reflect old popular songs of non-literate folk. The dance songs as they are known today, however, have generally been produced by the courtly poets and the trouvères who, no earlier than the thirteenth century, adapted them for aristocratic and sophisticated audiences. Cohen shows that

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 6.

²Ibid., pp. 6-7.

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evidence of the primitive folk dance-songs may be found in the extant refrains which she says have been recognized as fragments of earlier poetry: "The oldest text to contain such refrains is Guillaume de Dôle, written between 1210 and 1215, an aristocratic romance describing seigneurial celebrations. This romance is interspersed with lyric fragments!"¹ Evidently the dance-songs with their characteristic refrains have been the ancestors of such fixed forms as the rondeau.

Cohen's conclusions about the origins of the rondeau agree with those of Kastner who considers that what is now called the rondeau has its beginning in thirteenth century France "as an accompaniment to the dance called the ronde or rondel" which, according to him, exists in the western provinces of France when he publishes his book in 1903; he describes it thus: ". . . the dancers joined hands and went round in a circle according to the time of the song, the soloist and chorus taking alternate parts, while a minstrel not infrequently accompanied the whole song on a kind of violin called the viole."²

The form-name rondeau has in modern times replaced the form-name rondel, which is the name of the early dance. Kastner explains that names for the primitive rondeau are

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 7.

²Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 249.

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rondets, or dances, and rondets de carole, or dances to singing. He says that rondets and rondets de carole are found in romances of the thirteenth century such as the Roman du Châtelain de Coucy¹ and Adenet le Roi's (c.1240-c.1300) Cléomadès.²

In form, these works resemble earlier literary rondels of the thirteenth century by Guillaume d'Amiens and Adam de la Halle, the latter of whom first uses the name rondel.³ Kastner sets forth the technical features of these early literary rondels:

These can be divided into three short strophes: the first composed of two or three lines, rarely of four; the second of a single line followed by the first line of the first strophe, forming a refrain; the third of as many lines as there are in the first strophe, followed by the repetition of the whole of the first strophe as a refrain. The lines can have as few as two syllables and as many as eleven, and need not all be of the same measure. Although in this early period its intimate connexion with music causes the rondel to assume great variety of structure, yet it is noticeable that the type which received the name

¹This work was written in the last quarter of the thirteenth century by either Jakemon Sakesep or Jacques Bretiaus, two French poets of the last half of the thirteenth century. See Urban Tigner Holmes, Jr., A History of Old French Literature from the Origins to 1300, New York, F. S. Crofts & Co., 1937, p. 272.

²This work was written between 1274 and 1282. See footnote one, above, Holmes, A History of Old French Literature, p. 262.

³Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 249.

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of triolet¹ [Kastner's footnote]¹ at the end of the fifteenth century, and has come down to us unchanged under that name, preponderates to a large extent. Its structure is represented by the following scheme: AB|aA|abAB, in which the capital letters correspond to the refrain-lines. As a rule the lines are all octosyllabic in this favourite type.²

Kastner cites a rondel by Guillaume d'Amiens as an exemplification of the technical features characteristic of the rondel:

Hareu! commant m'i maintendrai
Qu'Amors ne m'i laissent durer?

Apansez sui que j'en ferai;
Hareu! commant m'i maintendrai

A ma dame consoil prendrai
Que bien me le savra doner.
Hareu! comment m'i maintendrai
Qu'Amors ne m'i laissent durer^{2?3}

Kastner relates how, during the fourteenth century, the rondeau changes "from a musical composition to a purely literary genre following certain rules." Kastner refers to Eustache Deschamps' Art de Dictier (1392), which

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, pp. 249-250. Kastner's footnote number one relating to triolet reads: "The name triolet occurs for the first time in La Chasse et le Depart d'Amours (circa 1485) of Octavien de Saint-Gelais and Blaise d'Auriol. Cf. the edition of 1509, cc. i. v^o."

²Ibid., pp. 249-250.

³Ibid., p. 250. Kastner's footnote number two reads: "Paul Heyse, Romanische Inedita, p. 54 sqq." Italics Kastner's.

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differentiates three kinds of rondeau.¹ The first kind, rondel sangle, or simple rondeau, he notes, is the form of Guillaume d'Amien's eight line rondel that he considers an exemplification of the early literary form of the rondel mentioned above. The rondel sangle continues from the thirteenth century until it becomes the triolet in the fifteenth century, the name by which it is known today:

Toute joye est descendue sur my,
Quant j'ay oy de ma dame nouvelle,
Car elle m'a appelé nom d'amy.
Toute joye est descendue sur my.
Lors a mon cuer et tout mon corps frémi;
Amours en moy par ce se renouvelle:
Toute joye est descendue sur my,
Quant j'ay oy de ma dame nouvelle.²

The second kind of rondeau is a thirteen line poem which Kastner says is "peculiar to the fourteenth century, [and] presents the following arrangement: ABA|abAB|abaABA, or ABB|abAB|abbABB"³ (the capital letters correspond to the refrain lines):

Beau fait aler ou chastel de Clermont,
Car belle y a et douce compaignie,
Qui en dançant et chantant s'esbanye.

Les dames la tresbonne chiere font
Aux estrangers: si convient que je dye:

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 250. Eustache Deschamps' tripartite division is also referred to by Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, pp. 52-53. Italics Kastner's.

²Ibid., pp. 250-251.

³Ibid., p. 251.

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Beau fait aler ou chastel de Clermont,
Car belle y a et douce compaignie.

Une en y a qui les autres semont
En toute honour et en joyeuse vie.
C'est paradiz; et pour ce a tous escrie:
Beau fait aler ou chastel de Clermont,
Car belle y a et douce compaignie,
Qui en dançant et chantant s'esbanye.¹

The refrain in lines one, two, and three is repeated as shown above by the letters ABA in the first arrangement and ABB in the second.

The third type, the rondel double or double rondeau, is a sixteen line poem. Kastner speculates about the origin of the term double and comments: "The third type, called rondel double, probably because each rhyme combination is repeated twice, is constructed thus: ABBA|abBA|abbaABBA, or ABAB|abAB|ababABAB:"²

Joyusement, par un tresdoulx joir,
En joyssant menray vie joyeuse,
Comme celui qui se doit resjoir
Et joye avoir en la vie amoureuse.

Si joyeux sui, chascuns le puet oir
A mon chanter; tresplaisant, gracieuse,
Joyusement, par un tresdoulx joir,
En joyssant menray vie joyeuse.

Rien ne me faut quant je vous puis veir,
Tresdouce fleur, nouvelle et precieuse;
Si veil courroux et tristece fuir,
Chanter pour vous et de vois doucereuse:
Joyusement, par un tresdoulx joir,

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 251.

²Ibid., p. 251.

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En joyssant menray vie joyeuse,
Comme celui qui se doit resjoir
Et joye avoir en la vie amoureuse.¹

Kastner emphasizes Deschamps' importance in the fourteenth century development of the rondel simple and the rondel double, not only by seeing him as significant for his promulgation of theory of the literary form of the rondeau in his Art de Dictier, but also by presenting his works as exemplifications of all three types of the rondeau and by noting his variations of form, such as his rondeau quatrain (a short rondeau double form).² Noteworthy here is the evidence of prescription of fixed forms for the composition of the rondeau and also, even in Deschamps' work, the evidence of variations of forms, even though these forms may themselves have their own prescribed fixity of form. Variations

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 251. Cohen, in reviewing the development of the rondeau in France, repeats Kastner with but slight addition or alteration. She, too, refers to Eustache Deschamps' Art de Dictier (1392) for distinctions in the varying rondeau forms that have developed out of earlier forms. She cites two of the same poems that Kastner gives as exemplification of the three types of rondeau and her third citation closely resembles that given by Kastner. See her Lyric Forms From France, pp. 52-53. She notes, pp. 57-58, that "various forms of the rondeau were universally to be found in the religious drama of the Middle Ages," and that "In the miracles and mysteries the rondels were always sung."

²Ibid., p. 251. Kastner notes that Jean Froissart (c.1337) also wrote rondeaux, but they are generally identical to the rondeaux simples already discussed.

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of forms of the musical composition of the rondel or rondeau may well have continued as variations in form in the literary compositions in the process of the transformation from the musical to the literary forms. Such variations may have been quite natural a continuity of use of forms; sanction continuing use of them by Deschamps, the very person perhaps most aware of promulgation of rules for the new and strictly literary form of the rondeau suggests, quite significantly, possible future development of the rondeau form.

Fourteenth century distinctions of type of rondel as rondel sangle and rondel double (or rondeau simple and rondeau double) continue into the fifteenth century. These types are marked by their own fixity of form. In the works of Christine de Pisan (c.1363-c.1430), Kastner notes a variation of form of consequence for the evolution of the literary form of the rondeau. He views her rondeaux doubles, in their varied form, as significant:

. . . not so much because they offer examples of rondeaux having as many as eight lines in the first strophe, either all of the same length or of unequal length . . . as on account of a tendency, of the highest importance in the evolution of the rondeau, to curtail the refrain. Instead of repeating half of the first strophe at the end of the second, and the whole of the first strophe at the end of the poem, it becomes usual at this period, especially with rondeaux that have more than five lines in the first strophe,

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to repeat only one or two lines of the latter at the end of the second and third strophe.¹

Kastner notes the manner in which Pisan diminishes the refrain:

Que me vault donc le complaindre
Ne moy plaindre
De la douleur que je port
Quant en riens ne puet remaindre?
Ains est graindre
Et sera jusqu'a la mort.

Tant me vient doulour attaindre,
Que restraindre
Ne puis mon grant desconfort;
Que me vault donc le complaindre?

Quant cil qu'amoye sanz faindre
Mort estraindre
A voulu, dont m'a fait tort;
Ce a fait ma joye est estaindre,
Ne attaindre
Ne poz puis a nul deport;
Que me vault donc le complaindre?²

Neither Kastner nor Cohen shows clearly or adequately the significance of her manner of curtailment of the refrain. According to conventional practice in the fourteenth century, the refrain at the end of the second strophe would have been half of the first strophe and at the end of the third strophe it would have been all of the first strophe. Pisan uses only

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 252. Cohen, in Lyric Forms From France, p. 54, agrees with Kastner on this historical point, as she does on most details of the origin and development of the rondeau.

²Ibid., p. 252. Italics supplied.

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the first line of the first strophe for the refrains completing the second and third strophes. Quite clearly she does not seem to intend or expect the reader to extend the refrain in the manner of earlier folk practice: development of meaning of the poem neither requires nor allows extending the refrain. What she has done with the refrain seems to be a definite movement away from the earlier choral nature of the refrain in musical forms of the rondeau and, in this movement, to be a reduction of vestiges of folk participation or involvement in the rondeau composition, meaning, and experience. She marks decisively the change of the rondeau from musical to literary form. She gives the refrain a form and function in the rondeau that anticipates development through the next centuries to the fixed rondeau form of the nineteenth century in France and England.

Pisan's reduction of the refrain in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century may be viewed as different from the kind of reduction of refrain accounted for and described by Kastner as being made somewhat later in the fifteenth century:

. . . copyists, instead of writing out the full refrain, were content to put down the first word or two or three words, and leave the reader, who was acquainted with the rondeau-forms, to fill in the rest of the refrain for himself. But when the readers had lost touch with the real nature

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of the rondeau they no longer understood the purpose of this abbreviation, and the refrain-character of this kind of poem was lost sight of. At first this mutilated refrain, called rentrement by the theorists of the time, seems to have been confined to rondeaux in decasyllabic lines, but already in the beginning of the sixteenth century it was used in all kinds of rondeaux, excepting the old rondel simple or triolet, to judge by a remark in the Art et Science de Rhetorique (1539) of Gracien du Pont, which teaches that the rondeau in general doibt rentrer et reprendre les deux premiers lignes du premier couplet ou bien le premier mot et aulcune foys le premier et le second. [fol. xxiii, V^o.] Very soon after, the rentrement completely ousted the full refrain.¹

What Kastner describes as probably having taken place may well account in part for the cutting down of the refrain to an even shorter form than the one-line refrain of Pisan's rondeau. The "mutilated refrain, called rentrement," that Kastner speaks of most surely becomes the artfully abbreviated refrain already allowed in the fifteenth century and finally required in composition of the rondeau. Study of evidence supplied by Kastner in citation of works and comment upon them strongly suggests conscious artful cutting down of the refrain with no expectation of extension of the given refrain into any more of the line or strophe from which it is taken. This would mark an even greater movement away from earlier musical form of the rondeau and a more advanced

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, pp. 253-254. Italics Kastner's.

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stage in the development of the literary form of the rondeau. Consideration of rondeaux of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries supports the conclusion that consciously artful reduction of the refrain and change of its function in the rondeau parallel, at least, the less artful, more or less incidental rentrement described by Kastner and that they more than likely represent the main course of development of the use of the refrain during these centuries.

Kastner explains "two special shortened forms of the rondeau" that develop as a consequence of the shortening of the refrain and show what forms survive or fail to survive the sixteenth century:

. . . From the rondeau quatrain or rondeau double of Deschamps (abba|abBA|abbaABBA) of sixteen lines there evolved, by substituting two rentrements for the six refrain-lines, a rondeau of twelve lines which was known at this period as rondeau simple, in opposition to a second shortened form, which evolved from a rondeau of twenty-one lines (aabba|aabAAB|aabbaAABBA) by reducing the eight refrain-lines to two rentrements. This form of fifteen lines, which appropriated the name of rondeau double, and which is now called rondeau simply, replaced all the other types in the sixteenth century, and is now the sole survivor of the many rondeau-forms. The rondeau simple of twelve lines is not found later than the early part of the sixteenth century.¹

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 254. Italics Kastner's.

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Kastner says that the rondeau is popular during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries but that, in the first few decades of the sixteenth century, it loses favour with all but a few of the major poets. Kastner cites the achievement of a number of composers of rondeaux, the best of whose rondeaux he considers but "little inferior to those of Clément Marot (1496-1544)," who so distinguishes himself for his achievement in all of the fixed French forms as well as for his formulation of critical theory of the developing French forms. Kastner lists Jean Marot (1450-1524), Jean Bouchet (1475-1555), Victor Brodeau (d. 1540), and Roger de Collerye (1494-1538).¹ The rondeau is not in vogue in Clément Marot's time (1496-1544), and it is ignored by Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585), Joachim du Bellay (1522-1560), and others of the French Pléiade. It may well have been supplanted by the sonnet, for, as Cohen says: ". . . when the Palinode of Rouen was reorganized under the authority vested in the princes and members, by a bull of Pope Leo X, in 1597, it was ordered that henceforth the sonnet should take the place of honor previously enjoyed by the rondeau, and that the rondeau was no longer to be considered in order in the Puy de Rouen."²

¹Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 255.

²Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 60.

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In the first half of the seventeenth century, the rondeau is used by the précieux poets. These poets write in a style which is often laboured, affected, consciously pretty, and over refined.¹ During this same period Vincent Voiture (1598-1648) composes rondeaux that earn him a reputation along with his great predecessor Clément Marot as being unsurpassed in this type of poetry. Kastner praises Voiture's rondeaux for their extraordinary brilliancy and wit but recognizes that they lack Marot's simplicity and grace.² Voiture may well have contributed greatly to the revival of the rondeau in France. Cohen cites a letter by Voiture to a friend in 1638: "I can't be sure whether you know what a rondeau is. I've done three or four that have fired the wits to try their hand at them. It's a kind of verse that lends itself very well to raillery."³ Cohen cites Pierre Corneille (1606-1684), who composes two rondeaux, Isaac de Benserade (1613-1691), who produces Ovid's Metamorphoses in rondeaux in 1676 at the request of King Louis XIV, and the Englishman

¹René Bray, La Préciosité et les Précieux, édition Albin Michel, 22, Rue Huyghens, Paris, 1948, pp. 13-16. Cohen notes that centers of popularity of the rondeau were the salons; see Lyric Forms From France, p. 60.

²Kastner, A History of French Versification, p. 256. See, also, Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 59.

³Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 60.

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Anthony Hamilton (1646-1720), who produces rondeaux in French. She says that during the reign of King Louis XIV (1648-1715) there are only a few rondeaux written, that the form is ignored at the end of the eighteenth century, and that there are no rondeaux written during the first empire (1804-1814).¹

Kastner sketches development of the rondeau in the nineteenth century, noting that the French Romanticists help to revive the form in the early part of the century. Two of the leaders in the revival are Alfred de Musset (1810-1857) and Théodore de Banville (1823-1891). Both writers produce rondeaux of thirteen lines with refrain, the type being employed in England during the revival of the rondeau in the late 1860's and 1870's. Banville also writes rondeau quatrains in imitation of Charles d'Orleans (1391-1465). An important French poet following Banville is Maurice Rollinat (1853-1903), who writes over one hundred rondeaux and publishes them in his Dans les Brandes (1877) and in his Les Névroses (1883). He uses both the fifteen and the thirteen line rondeau forms.²

All of the French rondeau writers of the nineteenth century revival seem particularly conscious of the rondeau as

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 61.

²Kastner, A History of French Versification, pp. 256-258.

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a literary art form and also keenly interested in critical theory and practice; this is evidenced, for example, by Banville's theoretical work as well as by his poems themselves.¹

¹See Théodore de Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, Paris, Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1909.

Section I
The Origin and Growth of the Rondeau in France

Pre-historic	Thirteenth Century	Fourteenth Century	Fifteenth Century	Sixteenth Century	Seventeenth Century	Eighteenth Century	Nineteenth Century
Musical → Primitive culture Refrain poetry, originates in folk animistic rituals.	→ Musical → Accompanied to dance called rondel or rondel.	→ Literary → Great variety of rondel forms. Beginning of cur- tailed refrain, or rondelant.	→ popular → Curtailed refrain in all rondelux.	→ unpopular → Sonnet replaces rondel in popular- ity.	→ unpopular →	generally ignored	→ popular →
		<u>Rondeau Double</u> Rondeau of 16 lines A } Refrain B } A } a } b } a } A } Refrain a } b } a } A } Refrain B } a } b } a } A } Refrain B }	<u>Rondeau Simple</u> Rondeau of 12 lines a } b } b } a } a } b } A } Refrain a } b } b } a } A } Refrain	<u>Rondeau Simple</u> not used after sixteenth century.			
Rondeau originates in choral song with single lines alter- nating with re- frain	Becomes Rondel Simple. Named Rondel by Adam de la Halle. <u>Rondel Simple</u> 8 lines A } Refrain B } a } A } Refrain B }	Continues in use as varied Rondel Simple in this century <u>Rondeau of 21 lines</u> This century only a } a } b } b } a } a } b } A } Refrain A } B } a } a } b } b } a } A } Refrain A } B } a } a } b } b } a } A } Refrain A } B }	Continues in use. Named Triolet for first time in <i>La Chasse et Départ d'Amours d'Amour</i> . Triolet becomes a fixed form in this century. <u>Rondeau of 15 lines</u> called <u>Rondeau Double</u> . a } a } b } b } a } a } b } A } Refrain a } a } b } b } a } A } Refrain	Triolet →	Triolet →	Triolet →	Triolet →
Line Refrain Line Refrain Line Refrain etc.				→ <u>Rondeau Double</u> → replaces all other types of rondelux in the sixteenth century and is sole survivor of the min/rondeau forms.	→ <u>Rondeau</u> → Name <u>Rondeau Double</u> replaced by <u>Rondeau</u> . The <u>Rondeau</u> is referred to as thirteen lines plus refrain.	→ <u>Rondeau</u> →	→ <u>Rondeau</u> → revived (1870's)
		<u>Rondeau of 13 lines</u> This century only A } Refrain A } a } b } A } Refrain B } a } b } a } A } Refrain A } B }					
	Composers	Major Poets	Major Poet	Major Poets	Major Poets		Major Poets
	Courtly Poets Trouvères Oldest Text Guillaume de Dole 1210-1215 Audience: Aristoc- ratic sophistication.	Christine de Pisan Lustiche Deschamps	Christine de Pisan	Clement Marot Jean Marot Jean Bouchet Victor Ronsard Ronsard de Collery	Précieux Poets Vincent Voiture Pierre Corneille Isaac de Benoit Anthony Maitland		Alfred de Vigny Théophile Gautier Paul Verlaine Charles d'Orléans Maurice Rollinat

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Section 2

The Development of the Rondeau
in England

The main purpose of this section is to determine the course of development of the rondeau in England from its general origin to its revival in the nineteenth century. The rondeau form being used during the revival in England is the product of an evolution which begins in the middle ages. Its general origin of a folk or pre-literate nature may well be considered to parallel that described in connection with the study of origins of French refrain poetry.¹ Its specifically English development needs to be determined by finding answers to such pertinent questions as these: When is the rondeau form first used in England? Who are some of the major English poets who contribute to the development of the form? What are some of the major forms through which the rondeau evolves? And how, in reference to the foregoing questions, and is the development of the rondeau form in England related to the development of it in France?

Consideration will be limited to contribution of the main writers of the rondeau and to significant changes that

¹See above, Chapter One, Section One, pp. 10-13.

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these writers make in the rondeau form as it evolves. Consideration will include: first, the rondeaux of Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400), because they are the earliest noteworthy examples of the rondeau form in English literature; second, a rondeau by Thomas Hoccleve (1368-1450), composed in the rondeau form used by Chaucer; third, a rondeau by John Lydgate (1370-1450), because it is one of the first examples in English literature of the curtailed refrain; fourth, a rondeau written by Sir Thomas Wyatt (1502-1542), because it is similar in form to those composed during the revival in England; fifth, a rondeau by Charles Cotton (1630-1687), because it is one of the first rondeaux in the precise form used during the revival; and last, rondeaux used to express political satire and published in the eighteenth century publication, The Rolliad.

Eustache Deschamps, a French contemporary of Chaucer, writes one hundred and seventy-one rondeaux.¹ Chaucer quite surely knows Deschamps' poems. He travels on the continent, draws upon French literary sources, and no doubt is well aware of the use being made of the rondeau in France. Chaucer is the first English poet of stature to use the rondeau

¹John Livingstone Lowes, "The Art of Geoffrey Chaucer," Proceedings of the British Academy, London, Oxford University Press, 1930, XVI, 299-326, 299.

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form. Cohen observes that he "called them roundels, [and that] in form they resemble one type of the early French ron-del."¹ His works contain numerous brief references to the rondeau form, one single rondeau, and one rondeau sequence. Chaucer refers to the rondeau, or roundel as he calls it, in The Prologue to The Legend of Good Women; Alceste, "the worthieste quene," is defending Chaucer the poet against charges made by the god of love that Chaucer has "reneyed" (renounced or disregarded) the god's "lays" and general laws. Alceste pleads that Chaucer has done nothing that should aggrieve the god and declares that instead he has served the god (and the god's queen) and so deserves protection; for, she says,

. . . wel I wot, with that he can endyte
He hath maked lewed folk delyte
To serven yow, in preysynge of youre name.
He made the bok that highte the Hous of Fame,
And ek the Deth of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And the Parlement of Foules, as I gesse,
And al the love of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebes, thogh the storye is knowen lite;
And many an ympne for your halydayes,
That highten balades, roundeles, vyrelayes;
And, for to speke of other besynesse,
He hath in prose translated Boece,
And of the Wretched Engendrynge of Mankynde,
As man may in pope Innocent yfynde;
And mad the lyf also of Seynt Cecile.

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 66. Chaucer, it may be noted, uses the French ballade form much more extensively than the rondeau form.

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He made also, gon is a gret while,
Orygenes upon the Maudeleyne,
Hym oughte now to have the lesse peyne;
He hath mad many a lay and many a thyng.¹

Significance of the "many an ympne," including roundels, that she says he has made for the god's "halydayes," may be noted in the context of Alceste's defence and of the god's approval or disapproval of them. The "halydayes" may be either holy-days or feast days or festivals; the "ympne" is a lyric that sometimes has its generic sense of "hymn." Alceste is recognized as the "dayesye," "hertes rest" of the god of love, and rightful inspiration to Chaucer's greatest writings. These writings Alceste says Chaucer must write to his Queen Anne--and here Chaucer is suggesting, in a kind of dream, at least, that the mythical goddess-queen Alceste and England's Queen Anne are one.

Chaucer tells, earlier in the Prologue, of a tribute to the "dayesye" that may be noted here:

. . . ryght anon as that they gonne espye
This flour, which that I clepe the dayesye,
Ful sodeynly they stynten alle atones,
And knelede adoun, as it were for the nones.
And after that they wenten in compas,
Daunsynge aboute this flour an esy pas,

¹The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F[rank] N. Robinson, 2nd ed. Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Riverside Press, 1961, ll. G. 402-420, pp. 492-493; italics mine.

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And songen, as it were in carole-wyse,
This balade, which that I shal yow devyse.¹

The ballade, rather than the roundel, is being used "carole-wyse," the singing accompanying the "Daunsinge aboute this flour an esy pas." The "esy pas" and the rhythm of the ballade indicate appropriately worshipful action that could well be simultaneously folk-like and aristocratically court-like in nature. The dance may well have its origins in the folk ronde; here it is, even with its spontaneous and simultaneous response and expression, formally courtly and sophisticated. The ballade tribute, as it is said to be used here, may well be thought of as being like the "many an ympne" (including "Roundels") Chaucer has made for the god's "halydayes." As it is devised and sung as the act of tribute, the ballade is simultaneously folk-like and court-like in impulse and expression. In its literary ballade form, the ballade is consciously artful creation by the poet Chaucer; and Chaucer, it may be noted, is using the ballade tribute, "songen, as it were in carole-wyse," as part of the content or material that is being put into the substantial form of the whole literary work.

¹The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ll. G. 195-202, p. 488; italics mine.

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Chaucer refers to the roundel in The Knight's Tale:

Whan that Arcite hadde romed al his fille,
And songen al the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fil sodeynly,
As doon thise loveres in hir queynte geres,
Now in the crope, now down in the breres,
Now up, now down, as boket in a welle.
Right as the Friday, soothly for to telle,
Now it shyneth, now it reyneth faste,
Right so kan geery Venus overcaste
The hertes of hir folk; right as hir day
Is gereful, right so chaungeth she array.
Selde is the Friday al the wowke ylike.¹

Arcite, smitten with love of Emelye and filled with the exuberance of the Maytime season, has gone from the Court in early morning "for to doon his observaunce of May, / Remembryng on the poynt of his desir; / He on a courser, startlynge as the fir, / Is ridden into the feeldes, hym to pleye."² His "pleye" has consisted of his roaming in grove and fields, singing in high good spirits, and gathering "wodebinde or hawethorn-leves" to weave into a "gerland" to offer to "faire fresshe May" and, at the same time, to his Emelye. His "pleye" constitutes his "observaunce to May" and also an enactment by him of courtly love address and tribute to Emelye--even though she is not with him. Singing "al the roundel lustily" may be made up of all of his "pleye";

¹The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ll. 1528-1539, p. 32; italics mine.

²Ibid., ll. 642-645, p. 31.

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surely it is, at the very least, the roundel dance accompanied by the roundel song ("carole-wyse") with Arcite singing and dancing in love tribute to Emelye, whose presence Arcite, in his love, imaginatively makes real.¹ Arcite changes from his love tribute to a love lament or complaint, "a studie," or a philosophical consideration of his own particular condition in his love and of himself or man in his more general condition, determined here largely by institutions of courtly love and chivalry. The use that Chaucer makes of the action concerning the roundel provides focus and then direction for building the meaning and experience of the whole tale of Arcite, Emelye, and Palamon and the larger meaning and experience of the general condition that is given substantial form in the whole work.

In The Franklin's Tale, Chaucer refers to the roundel as one of the song forms the squire, Aurelius, employs to give expression to his unrequited love for Dorigen:

[Aurelius] despeyred; no thyng dorste he seye,
Save in his songes somewhat wolde he wreye
His wo, as in a general compleynyng;
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved no thyng.
Of swich matere made he manye layes,
Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes,

¹Arcite's singing and dancing the roundel tribute to Emelye may be compared with the train of the god of love singing and dancing the ballade tribute to Alceste in The Prologue to The Legend of Good Women.

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How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,
But langwissheth as a furye dooth in helle;
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
In oother manere than ye heere me seye,
Ne dorste he nat to hire his wo biwreye,
Save that, paraventure, somtyme at daunces,
Ther yonge folk kepen hir observaunces,
It may wel be he looked on hir face
In swich a wise as man that asketh grace;
But nothyng wiste she of his entente.¹

Aurelius is the courtly lover, "lusty squyer, and servaunt of Venus," and he conducts his love suit as the courtly lover would. Dorigen, the object of his love, does not act in the manner of courtly love convention when finally Aurelius declares his love to her; she rejects his suit and remains faithful to her husband:

". . . now, Aurelie, I knowe youre entente,
By thilke god that yaf me soule and lyf,
Ne shal I nevere been untrewe wyf
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit;
I wol been his to whom that I am knyht."²

Dorigen's husband, Arveragus, is just as much bound in faithful married love to Dorigen as she to him. Chaucer, as he builds the meaning and experience of the tale, compels sympathy and approval for Dorigen and Arveragus in their married love and fidelity; he does not allow such sympathy or

¹The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ll. 943-959, pp. 137-138; *italics mine*.

²Ibid., ll. 982-986, p. 138.

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approval for Aurelius for all Aurelius' accomplishments in the art of courtly love.

Chaucer makes use of the roundel in The Parlement of Foules to build the meaning and experience of the work as a whole. He does this through the dream allegory of the "parlement of foules" that he has as the substance of the poem. He can, quite appropriately and conventionally, bring the celebration of the recurrence of spring to culmination in the ritualized formality of the roundel--even if the celebrants are the myriad black and golden foules in their "blisse and joy" and "showting, whan hir song was do." He can comment on the celebrants, even translating their "showting" into the literary form of the roundel. He says as a kind of introduction to the roundel:

But fyrst were chosen foules for to synge,
As yer by yer was alwey hir usaunce:
To synge a roundel at here departynge,
To don to Nature honour and plesaunce.
The note, I trowe, imaked was in Fraunce,
The wordes were swiche as ye may heer fynde,
The nexte vers, as I now have in mynde.¹

Line three, "To synge a roundel," identifies the poem that follows as a rondeau. Line four, "To don to Nature honour and plesaunce," gives a purpose for singing (and dancing)

¹The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ll. 673-679, p. 318; italics mine.

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the roundel like that given by Arcite "to doon his obser-
vaunce to May," in The Knight's Tale. Line five, "The note,
I trowe, imaked was in Fraunce," gives credit to France as
the source of the rondeau. Such indication of source rein-
forces the point made in section one, that the rondeau form
originates in medieval France. Quite surely, Chaucer knows
continental European literature, and, therefore, it seems
significant that he associates the rondeau only with France.

Cohen speaks of the French phrase, "Qui bien aime a
tard oublié," which precedes the roundel:

The roundel is preceded by the French phrase, "Qui
bien aimé a tard oublié" (when once one has loved
it takes a long time to forget). This phrase is
found recurring frequently in the poetry of the
fourteenth century. Before Deschamps it was used
by Moniot de Paris in a hymn to the Virgin. It
occurs also in the works of Machault. In its
place at the head of the roundel in the Parlement
of Foules, it indicates the tune to which the
poem is to be sung. . . . In this song which the
"foules" chant we find the echo of rustic dances
celebrating the return of radiant spring to the
countryside after a long, dark winter.¹

She notes that the phrase, "Qui bien aime a tard oublié,"
echoing as it does the French poets, helps to establish that
Chaucer is influenced by France in his use of the roundel

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 68.

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because the phrase suggests the tune to which the poem is to be sung, it undoubtedly confirms the musical nature of the form and also relates this poem to earlier rustic dances. Cohen's comment provides support for the origin and development of the rondeau.¹ This is the roundel:

"Now welcome, somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres wedres overshake,
And driven away the longe nyghtes blake!

"Saynt Valentyn, That art ful hy on-lofte,
Thus syngen smale foules for thy sake:
Now welcome, somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres wedres overshake.

"Wel han they cause for to gladen ofte,
Sith ech of hem recovered hath hys make,
Ful blissful mowe they synge when they wake:
Now welcome, somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres wedres overshake,
And driven away the longe nyghtes blake!"²

The poem contains thirteen lines and three stanzas. Each stanza has a different number of lines: the first, three lines; the second, four lines; and the third, six lines. The first two lines of stanza one are repeated as lines three and four of stanza two; the whole of stanza one is repeated as the final three lines of the third stanza. This repetition of lines produces the refrain. The rhyme scheme is ABB|

¹See above, pp. 10 ff, for treatment of origin and development of the rondeau.

²The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ll. 680-692, p. 318.

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abAB|abbABB. This roundel is similar in structure to that of the French poet Eustache Deschamps discussed in section one.¹ It is also similar in substance and style. Cohen says of this poem and of Merciles Beaute: "They are not only thoroughly conventional in the matter, but the images and phraseology follow closely the practices of Chaucer's contemporaries in France."²

Chaucer makes use of the roundel form in composing Merciles Beaute: A Triple Roundel.³ Each of the three parts of this work may be considered a roundel complete in itself. The three separate roundels combine, however, to build a meaning and experience fused and entire as one whole meaning and experience greater than what would be the meaning and experience of the roundels as separate roundels merely or even as a sequence of roundels. In substance and style, Merciles Beaute recalls Petrarchan sonnet substance and style; in these and in form, it follows or parallels at least the work of contemporary or slightly earlier French poets. It seems, then, to be more than a sequence, merely; it may, however, in its position among the ballades, envoys,

¹See above, Chapter One, Section One, pp. 14-18.

²Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 66.

³The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, p. 542.

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complaints, proverbs, and other forms have significance as part of a sequence as well as a single work. Merciles Beaute is a literary roundel rather than one that by its nature requires "carole-wyse" presentation. This seems true, even though the form of each of the roundels making the "triple roundel" is identical to that of the roundel from The Parlement of Foules discussed above:

Merciles Beaute

A Triple Roundel

[Captivity]

Your yen two wol slee me sodenly;
I may the beautee of hem not sustene,
So woundeth hit thourghout my herte kene.

And but your word wol helen hastily
My hertes wounde, while that hit is grene,
Your yen two wol slee me sodenly;
I may the beautee of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouthe I sey you feithfully
That ye ben of my lyf and deeth the quene;
For with my deeth the trouthe shal be sene.
Your yen two wol slee me sodenly;
I may the beautee of hem not sustene,
So woundeth it thourghout my herte kene.

II

[Rejection]

So hath your beautee fro your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availleth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

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Giltles my deeth thus han ye me purchaced;
I sey you sooth, me nedeth not to feyne;
So hath your beautee fro your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availleth not to pleyne.

Allas! that Nature hath in you compassed
So greet beautee, that no man may atteyne
To mercy, though he sterve for the peyne.
So hath your beautee fro your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availleth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

III

[Escape]

Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

He may answere, and seye this and that;
I do no fors, I speke right as I mene.
Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene.

Love hath my name ystrike out of his sclat,
And he is strike out of my bokes clene
For evermo; [ther] is non other mene.
Sin I fro Love escaped am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Sin I am free, I counte him not a bene.

Explicit.¹

Each of the roundels contains thirteen lines and three stanzas. Stanza one is the refrain; lines one and two of this stanza are repeated as lines three and four of the second stanza; the whole of stanza one is repeated as the final three lines of the third stanza. Although Chaucer does not

¹The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, p. 542.

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give a title to each poem in the sequence, some anthologies use "Captivity" for poem number one; "Rejection" for poem two; and "Escape" for poem three.¹ Robinson includes this sequence in the section "Short Poems of Doubtful Authorship."² Most critics accept it, however, as Chaucer's work. Chaucer clearly uses a French source for Merciles Beaute. However, there is some controversy about which French poet has influenced him. Walter W. Skeat believes that a roundel by Guillaume d'Amiens has suggested Merciles Beaute; Lowes discards this theory, however, by indicating that the only resemblance between the two poems is a single phrase. He compares lines from this sequence with lines from two poems of Deschamps and points out significant parallels;³ here is his comparison:

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, pp. 66-67.

²The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, p. 920. Robinson gives the manuscript for this sequence as MS Pepys 2006, Magdalene College, Cambridge University. This MS was printed by the Chaucer Society. Robinson notes that the refrain lines are not written out in full in the manuscript.

³See Lowes, "The Chaucerian 'Merciles Beaute' and Three Poems of Deschamps," Modern Language Review, V. (1910), London, Cambridge University Press, 33-39. This parallel is also shown by Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, pp. 67-68.

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The corresponding lines of
Chaucer's Merciles Beaute:

Deschamps' poems:

Your yēn two wol slee me
sodenly;
I may the beauté of hem not
sustene,

Comment pourra mon corps
durer
Ne les douls regars endurer

So woundeth hit through-out
my herte kene.

De voz biaux yeux?
Se bon espoir ne me fait
mieulx
Que je n'ay, il me faut
finir.

En traiant m'ont voulu
navrer
Jusqu'au cuer, par leur
regarder

And but your word wol helen
hastily

Tres perilleux;
Dont du trait ne puis
respasser,

My hertes wounde, whyl that
hit is grene,
Your yēn two wol slee me
sodenly . . .

Mais m'en convendra
trespasser.
Ayde moy, Dieux!

So hath your beauté fro
your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availleth
not

Fay que Pitié vueille garder

to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy
in his cheyne.

Et bon espoir reconforter
Mon plaint piteux;
Car se Dangier le despoteux

Me nuist, je doy bien demander
Comment pourra etc.¹

This comparison indicates similarities between the poems.

Lowes shows that the third section of the sequence is a para-
phrase of a rondeau written by Deschamps.² Lowes'

¹Lowes, "The Chaucerian 'Merciles Beaute' and Three
Poems of Deschamps," pp. 33-34. Lowes' italics.

²Ibid., p. 36.

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conclusions confirm Chaucer's use of the French poets for his source of Merciles Beaute and for the rondeau forms.

Cohen cites Thomas Hoccleve (1368-1450) as the next important poet to use the rondeau form. She comments that his "rowndel is a clumsier welcome to summer than Chaucer's. The scribe who set down the lines did not trouble to repeat the refrain in full, though the poem is evidently like Chaucer's roundels in structure."¹ This is the rowndel:

[Rowndel, or Chanceon to Somer.]

[1: Burden.]

Somer, þat rypest mannes sustenance
With holsum hete of the Sonnes warmnesse,
Al kynde of man thee holden is to blesse!

[2]

Ay thankid be thy freendly gouernance,
And thy fresssh look of mirthe & of gladnesse!
Somer &c

[3]

To heuy folk / of thee the remembraunce
Is salue & oynement to hir seeknesse.
For why / we thus shul syng in Cristemesse,
Somer &c²

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 69.

²Hoccleve's Works, 1. The Minor Poems, ed. Frederick J. Furnival, Early English Text Society, London, Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Limited, 1892, p. 60. On this same page, Furnival gives the MS as Phillips MS. 8151 (formerly Prince Henry's, Son of James I). Leaf 3: Vellum, ab. 1450 A.D.

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Completely written out, the poem would read:

Somer, þat rypest mannes sustenance
With holsum hete of the Sonnes warmnesse,
Al kynde of man thee holden is to blesse!

Ay thankid be thy freendly gouernance,
And thy fressh look of mirthe & of gladnesse!
Somer þat rypest mannes sustenance
With holsum hete of the Sonnes warmnesse.

To heuy folk of thee the remembraunce
Is salue & oynement to hir seeknesse.
For why we thus shul synge in Cristemesse,
Somer þat rypest mannes sustenance
With holsum hete of the Sonnes warmnesse,
Al kynde of man thee holden is to blesse!

The structure of Hoccleve's roundel is identical to that of Chaucer's roundels described above. Hoccleve may have been aware of the French uses of the form at this time and possibly influenced by them, or he may have been influenced by Chaucer, or he may have been influenced by both the French poets and Chaucer. Whatever the influence may have been, however, he does use the form in the tradition that Chaucer has established in England.

Cohen says that, after Hoccleve, John Lydgate (1370-1450) makes use of the roundel form in a roundel which celebrates Henry VI's entry into London after his coronation in France.¹ This roundel is composed of stanzas thirty-one and

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 69.

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thirty-two in a poem containing seventy-six stanzas and an envoy. Stanza thirty introduces the roundel:

(30)

Thes sevyn virgyns, off siht most heavenly,
With herte, body, and handes reioysynge,
And off othir cheris appered murely
For the Kyngis gracious home komyng;
And ffor gladness they beganne to synge,
Most aungelyk with heavenly armonye,
This same roundell, which I shall now specyfye:

(31)

"Sovereayne Lorde, welcome to youre citee;
Welcome, oure Ioye, and oure Hertis Plesaunce,
Welcome, oure Gladnesse, welcome, oure Suffisaunce,
Welcome, welcome, riht welcome mote ye be.

"Syngyng to-fforn thy ryall Mageste,
We say off herte, withoute variaunce,
Sovereayne Lorde, welcome, welcome ye be.

(32)

"Meire, citezenis and alle the comounte,
At youre home komyng now out off Fraunce,
Be grace relevyd off theyre olde grevaunce,
Syng this day with grete solempnyte,
Sovereayne Lorde, welcome to youre citee."¹

In its structure, Lydgate's roundel resembles Chaucer's and Hoccleve's rondeaux. The poem contains twelve lines and

¹Henry Noble MacCracken, "King Henry VI's Triumphal Entry Into London, 21 Feb., 1432," The Minor Poems of John Lydgate, Early English Text Society, London, Oxford University Press, 1934, pp. 637-638. MacCracken gives the MS "MS Cotton, Julius, B. 11, leaves 89 to 100 back," p. 630.

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three stanzas. In stanza two, the refrain line, which usually is line four in this stanza, is not repeated; the missing line is "Welcome, oure Iove, and oure Hertis Plesaunce." In stanza three, this same refrain line is missing; the refrain is usually line six in the stanza. It has been noted, above, that the roundels of Chaucer and Hoccleve do not have the refrain lines written out in the manuscripts --this also appears to be the case with Lydgate's poem. When this refrain line is included, the poem contains fourteen lines--one more than the poems of Chaucer and Hoccleve. This additional line changes the structure of the stanzas. The number of lines in Lydgate's stanzas is as follows: stanza one, four lines; stanza two, four lines; stanza three, six lines. Chaucer's and Hoccleve's stanzas are composed of the following lines: stanza one, three lines; stanza two, four lines; stanza three, six lines. The fourteenth line in Lydgate's roundel is added to stanza one. Lydgate's roundel, therefore, resembles the rondeaux written by his two predecessors. The difference is Lydgate's addition of a fourteenth line.

Cohen, in her discussion of Lydgate's roundel, comments: "If Lydgate wrote this rondel as a fourteen-line poem with curtailed refrain, as it has been reconstructed, he

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occupies in the history of the English rondeau a position similar to that of Christine de Pisan in France."¹ It has been shown in section one of this chapter that Kastner attributes the shortening of the refrain, in the French rondeau, to Pisan. Cohen attributes it, in England, to Lydgate. Determination of the validity of Cohen's statement seems extraneous to this thesis; however, it may be important to observe the possibility that Lydgate, for reasons of convenience merely, may not have repeated the refrain in his manuscript. It has been shown that Chaucer and Hoccleve have not repeated the refrains in their manuscripts. Lydgate is not the first English poet to ignore the repetition of the refrain in his manuscript.

The next significant poet to use the form is Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542). No major writers produce rondeaux between the time of the fifteenth century poets and Wyatt; Cohen says that Wyatt "was a student of Chaucer and he knew the lyric forms and commonplaces of Provençal, French, and Italian poetry alike. One of Wyatt's rondeaux is an offensive attack on Anne Boleyn in the vein of the medieval

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 70. See above, Chapter One, Section One, pp. 18-20.

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French satires against women."¹ The rondeau referred to by Cohen is [What No Perdy]:

What no perdy ye may be sure!
Thinck not to make me to your lure,
With wordes and chere so contrarieng,
Swete and sowre contrewaing;
To much it were still to endure;
Trowth is tryed where craft is in ure;
But though ye have hade my hertes cure
Trow ye I dote withoute ending?
What no perdy!

Though that with pain I do procure
For to forgett that ons was pure,
Within my hert shall still that thing
Unstable, unsure, and wavering
Be in my mynde withoute recure?
What no perdy!²

This poem is a significant change in form from that which is used by Wyatt's predecessors. Cohen says it is the form being used in France in Wyatt's time and generally accepted as the standard: thirteen lines, "rhyming aabbaabR | aabbaR, with an unrhymed refrain consisting of the first half of the first line repeated after the eighth line and after the thirteenth."³ This form is used in the revival in England in the

¹Cohen, Lytic Forms From France, p. 70.

²The Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt, ed. A. K. Foxwell, New York, Russell & Russell, Inc., 1964, I, 11. Foxwell points out that the verse is found in the manuscript between the Calais Period (1528-1932) and the satires (1536-1937).

³Cohen, Lytic Forms From France, p. 71.

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nineteenth century, with the difference only that this rondeau has two stanzas, instead of the three that are generally employed by the English revivalists. The French influence on Wyatt is obvious. A. K. Foxwell, editor of Wyatt's poems, believes that this rondeau is written earlier than 1532-1533; Wyatt includes it with his court poems in light verse. Foxwell considers that "[This rondeau] is one of the few original poems, struck from the heart, giving us a brief glimpse of Wyatt's personality in emotion, not 'remembered in tranquillity' but struck red-hot from the grain that formulated the passion of the heart in moments of strong feeling."¹ The major point to be made about this poem is that it is similar to the type which is used during the revival in the nineteenth century.

Somewhat more than a hundred years later, another significant poet, Charles Cotton (1630-1687), writes an important rondeau. Gosse claims it is "an ungallant appeal against matrimony."² Cohen calls it an "attack against the ladies."³ It employs a satirical tone similar to that sometimes used by Sir Thomas Wyatt. This is the rondeau:

¹Foxwell, ed., Poems of Thomas Wyatt, II, 9.

²Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 61.

³Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 71.

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[Thou Fool! If Madness Be So Rife]

Thou fool! if madness be so rife,
That, spite of wit, thou'lt have a wife,
I'll tell thee what thou must expect--
After the honeymoon neglect,
All the sad days of thy whole life;

To that a world of woe and strife,
Which is of marriage the effect--
And thou thy woe's own architect,
Thou fool!

Thou'lt nothing find by disrespect,
Ill words i' th' scolding dialect,
For she'll all tabor be, or fife;
Then prythee go and whet thy knife,
And from this fate thyself protect,
Thou fool!¹

This structure is a modification of the two-stanza form used by Wyatt. Cotton's poem is divided into three stanzas and has, therefore, precisely the stanzaic structure of the rondeau generally used during the revival. The rhyme scheme is a, a, b, b, a; a, b, b, R; b, b, a, a, b, R. This rhyme differs from the scheme generally being used during the revival in the third stanza only where it has a rhyme scheme a, a, b, b, a, R. Thus by the mid-seventeenth century the standard rondeau form is in use. It remains substantially in this form to the time of the revival of the rondeau form in the late nineteenth century.

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 71.

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Interest in satire continues into the eighteenth century. The chief vehicle for satirical rondeaux is the political publication, the Rolliad 1784; the principal objects of the satire are members of the William Pitt ministry.¹ The attacks against William Pitt and his followers begin after their election in 1784; they are first published in the "Morning Herald" and "Daily Advertiser" in 1784. The Oxford Companion to English Literature contains a brief explanation of the satires and of the Rolliad:

The authors, members of the "Esto Perpetua" club (q.v.), are not known with certainty, but among them were Dr. French Laurence, who became Regius professor of civil law at Oxford; George Ellis, the antiquary; General Richard Fitzpatrick; and Lord John Townshend. The satires originally took the form of reviews of an imaginary epic, "The Rolliad" which took its name from John Rolle, M.P., one of Pitt's supporters, and dealt with the adventures of a mythical Norman duke, Rollo, his ancestor. These were followed by "Political Eclogues," "Probationary Odes" for the vacant laureateship, and "Political Miscellanies," all directed to the same purpose, the ridicule of the Tories. A complete collection was published in 1791.²

Use of the Rolliad as a vehicle for rondeaux is referred to by Gosse in his Manifesto. Gosse believes that the earliest

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 71.

²The Oxford Companion to English Literature, comp. and ed. Sir Paul Harvey, 3rd ed., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1958, pp. 675-676.

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set of rondeaux is found in the Rolliad; he describes the work as a collection of satires and confirms the date of publication as 1784; in addition, he writes that the objects of the attacks are the Pitt ministry; Gosse discusses the authors of these rondeaux: "The pieces were anonymous, but I find from MS sources that the only part of the book bearing upon our inquiry--namely a set of pure rondeaux--was composed by Dr. Laurence, the friend of Burke. These are five in number, and they are all most carefully and accurately constructed on the model of Voiture. Of these satires on North, Eden, Pitt, and Dorset--some of them indelicate and all of them virulent . . ."¹ Gosse refers to a rondeau written by Alexander Pope; unfortunately, he does not quote it, but he does give an anonymous rondeau:

[Around The Tree]

Around the tree, so fair, so green,
Erewhile, when summer shone serene,
Lo! where the leaves in many a ring
Before the wintry tempest's wing
Fly scattered o'er the dreary scene:

Such, North, thy friends. Now cold and keen
Thy winter blows; no sheltering screen
They stretch, no graceful shade they fling
Around the tree

¹Gosse, "A Plea For Certain Exotic Forms of Verse,"
p. 61.

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Yet, grant, just Fate, each wretch so mean,
Like Eden--pining in his spleen
For posts, for stars, for strings,--may swing
On two stout posts in hempen string!
Few eyes would drop a tear, I ween,
Around the tree.¹

The stanza structure is identical to that of Cotton's rondeau: three stanzas composed of five lines in stanza one, three lines in stanza two, and five in stanza three. The rhyme scheme is a, a, b, b, a; a, a, b, R; a, a, b, b, a, R. This is the structure and rhyme scheme used in the nineteenth century rondeau.

Ample evidence attests to the importance of the Rolliad. Cohen quotes two specimens from this work--the first rondeau is "Of Eden Lost"; the second is "A Mere Affair of Trade":

[Of Eden Lost]

Of Eden lost, in ancient days,
If we believe what Moses says,
A paltry pippin was the price,
One crab was bribe enough to entice
Frail human kind from virtue's ways.

But now when Pitt, the all-perfect sways,
No such vain lures the tempter lays,
Too poor to be the purchase twice,
Of Eden lost.

¹Gosse, "A Plea For Certain Exotic Forms of Verse,"
p. 61.

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The Dev'l grown wiser, to the gaze
Six thousand pounds a year displays,
And finds success from the device;
Finds this fair fruit too well suffice
To pay the peace and honest praise,
Of Eden lost.

[A Mere Affair of Trade]

A mere affair of trade to embrace,
Wines, brandies, gloves, fans, cambricks, lace;
For this on me my Sovereign laid
His high commands and I obeyed;
Nor think, my lord, this conduct base.

Party were guilt in such a case,
When thus my country, for a space,
Calls my poor skill to Dorset's aid
A mere affair of trade!

Thus Eden with unblushing face,
To North would palliate his disgrace;
When North, with smiles, this answer made:
"You might have spared what you have said;
I thought the business of your place
A mere affair of trade!"¹

Again, the form is essentially the same as that used by Cotton: three stanzas, thirteen lines, and a rhyme scheme a, a, b, b, a; a, a, b, R; a, a, b, b, a, R. Cohen suggests that Dr. Laurence was the author of these satirical attacks. The success of the Rolliad, and the interest shown by the readers in the rondeaux published in it, encourages other writers to use this form. The result was the frequent

¹Cohen, Lytic Forms From France, pp. 71-72.

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appearance of rondeaux in various periodicals at the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, Gosse judges that they are "always, as far as I have seen, of the meanest merit."¹

The origin and development of the rondeau in England may be summarized briefly. Chaucer is the first major English poet to use the rondeau form. His roundels clearly reflect the influence of France. In the late fourteenth century and during the first half of the fifteenth century, Thomas Hoccleve writes roundels, using the same form that Chaucer uses before him, and John Lydgate writes roundels, adding a fourteenth line to the form. A significant change is found in the rondeau of the sixteenth century poet Sir Thomas Wyatt; Wyatt's rondeau contains only two stanzas and has the curtailed refrain that characterizes the form being employed during the revival. The seventeenth century rondeau of Charles Cotton is typical of the three stanza poem used during the revival; this form is known in the nineteenth century as the standard, or traditional, rondeau. The rondeau does not change significantly from the seventeenth century through the revival. In the eighteenth century the rondeau

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 61.

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is used primarily for political satire and most rondeaux are published in the imaginary epic, the Rolliad. Rondeaux continue to be written at the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, the rondeau form drops from popular use from the early nineteenth century until the late 1860's. In this decade, writers begin, simultaneously, spontaneously, and widespreadly, in England, to use the rondeau form again and continue to use it with enthusiasm and conscious critical and aesthetic adherence to it to the end of the century.

Section 2
The Development of the Rondeau in England

Pre-History	Fourteenth Century	Fifteenth Century	Sixteenth Century	Seventeenth Century	Eighteenth Century	Nineteenth Century
	Numerous references and use of the form by Chaucer.	Used by some major poets.	Restricted use	Restricted use	Very restricted use	Revival
Musical →	Literary →					
Origin of the rondeau may well parallel the folk or preliterate nature of the origin of French refrain poetry.	Chaucer the first major English poet to use rondeaux, calls his poems <u>rowndels</u> . References to <u>rowndels</u> : <u>The Prologue to the Legend of Good Women</u> , ll. 402-420. <u>The Franklin's Tale</u> , ll. 943-959. 13 lines A] B] Refrain B] a b A] B] Refrain a b b A] B] Refrain B] <u>Merciles Beaute: A Triple Roundel</u> , same structure and rhymes as <u>The Parlement of Fowles</u> .	<u>Thomas Hoccleve's</u> rondeaux, called <u>rowndels</u> identical to Chaucer's <u>rowndels</u> . <u>John Lydgate's</u> rondeaux, called rondels resemble Chaucer's and Hoccleve's rondeaux: 12 lines, curtailed refrain: A] B] Refrain b a a b A] Refrain a b b a A] Refrain	<u>Sir Thomas Wyatt</u> a student of Chaucer, Wyatt uses a 13 line form similar to that used in France at this time: e.g., "What No Perdy" a a b b a a b A] Refrain a a b b a A] Refrain	<u>Charles Cotton</u> uses a three stanza rondeau, a modification of Wyatt's two stanza rondeau: 13 lines, e.g., "Thou Fool! If Madness Be So Rife" a a b b a a b A] Refrain a b b b a a b A] Refrain	<u>Rowliad</u> Political Satires attacking the Pitt ministry. Same form as Cotton's rondeaux but the eighteenth century rondeaux contain the rhyme scheme used during the revival in France and England. Form used during the revival in England. 13 lines a a b b a a b A] Refrain a a b b a a b A] Refrain	Rondeau → of 13 lines. Form that is revived in the late 1860's.

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Section 3

The Causes of the Revival

The French fixed forms in general and the rondeau in particular are not popular with English poets from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the early 1860's. But then from the mid-1860's through the rest of the century, the forms are used by many English poets. The revival of these forms in the late 1860's is both sudden and widespread.

Existing scholarship assists in determining the reasons for the revival.¹ For example, Cohen's Lyric Forms From France (1923) attributes the revival of the fixed forms to literary conditions in both France and England in the late 1860's. She notes that, in France, the fixed forms are in vogue during the two decades preceding 1860. In England, the poets are searching for forms in which to express their reactions to the reality that constitutes their world. With the coincidence of these two literary conditions, the English poets find that the fixed forms in use in France are

¹Two works that suggest some of the causes of the revival but do not describe them in detail are: James K. Robinson "A Neglected Phase of the Aesthetic Movement: English Parnassianism," pp. 733-754; James K. Robinson, "Austin Dobson and the Rondeliers," pp. 31-42.

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particularly appropriate and suited to their needs, so they adopt the forms from France for their own use.

In the introduction to the anthology, Aesthetes and Decadents of the 1890's (1966), Beckson attributes the re-introduction of the fixed forms in France to the French Aesthete and Decadent movement.¹ This movement is initiated by Théophile Gautier in the 1830's.

In a study now in progress on the revival of the triolet in England of the late 1860's, Paul J. Marcotte holds that the interest in the triolet during this period may be partially attributable to the interest that many Victorian writers have in the literature of medieval England. They know the triolet which is actually one of the medieval rondeau forms. Marcotte discusses the need of the English poets in the late 1860's for a wider variety of forms and contends that both the triolet and the rondeau fill this need.²

Edmund Gosse, in "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse" (1877), points to both the need for new forms in England in the late 1860's as the cause of the revival and

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xx.

²Marcotte discusses the triolet in "An Introduction to the Triolet," Inscape, V, No. 11 (Autumn, 1966), and "More Late-Victorian Triolet Makers," Inscape, VI, No. 11 (Spring, 1968). The form is discussed below, p. 63 of this section.

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the contemporary use of these forms in France as the source for the forms.

These four writers help explain the causes of the revival of the fixed forms in general and the rondeau in particular in England of the late 1860's. Determining what these causes are involves ascertaining what literary conditions in England from the beginning of the nineteenth century through to 1860 produce a climate that demands such a widespread simultaneous reintroduction of fixed poetic forms into England. It involves, also, ascertaining how the English poets happen to turn to France in their revival of the fixed poetic forms.¹

The literature of the Victorian age contributes to the need for a revival of the fixed forms in England because of the prevalent moral overtones and didacticism in much of the poetry and prose of the great Victorian writers and even more because of the constant imitation of the blank verse produced by Tennyson and Browning, imitation that generally results in inferior poetry.

Moral overtones in the poetry of Tennyson are clearly seen even in some of his most popular works: "The Palace of

¹The significance of Gosse's contribution to the revival and why he makes a contribution will be discussed in Chapter Two below.

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Art" (1832-1842), "Of Old Sat Freedom on the Heights" (1834-1842), "Ulysses" (1842), "Locksley Hall" (1842), "In Memoriam" (1852), and others. This same tone is found in some of Browning's most popular poems: "Saul" (1842-1853), "Rabbi Ben Ezra" (1864), "Caliban Upon Setebos" (1864), and others. Matthew Arnold has many poems that have a pervasive moral tone: "Empedocles on Etna" (1852), "A Summer Night" (1852), "The Buried Life" (1852), "The Forsaken Merman" (1849).

Many of the major Victorian prose writers produce didactic works: Thomas Carlyle attacks the current conditions in England in Sartor Resartus (1833-1834), Chartism (1839), On Heroes and Hero-Worship (1840-1841), and Past and Present (1843). John Henry Newman attacks the liberalism of the age in his Idea of a University (1852). John Stuart Mill's On Liberty (1859) expresses his belief that the problems facing the age could be solved, to a large extent, if greater freedom were allowed the masses. John Ruskin begins his literary career as an art critic with his work Modern Painters (1843-1860). He believes that art must be moral and that art must come from a moral society. This belief causes him to leave art criticism for social reform. As a result, many of the works that follow Modern Painters have strong moral convictions: The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849), The Stones

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of Venice (1851-1852), Unto This Last (1860), and others. Matthew, Arnold attacks the Victorian age for its cultural poverty: Culture and Anarchy (1869), Friendship's Garland (1871). Arnold believes that literature is both a criticism of life and a means of cultural elevation. Marcotte notes this reaction to this literary condition of England:

To the sensitive souls of the artistically inclined, the world of the politician and the businessman and even the world of the priest and educator were rapidly turning into extremely uncongenial jungles, and art was being utterly compromised by the well-meaning many who were using it as a bulwark against the, seemingly irresistible trends of the times.¹

Not all of the literature of the Victorian age is didactic, but there is a sufficient amount of it produced by major and minor writers alike to cause a reaction by some of the young writers the major part of whose literary careers comes after 1850. One manifestation of this reaction that has an indirect influence on the revival of the rondeau is the tendency of many Victorian writers to turn away from their own age. Some writers look back to the literature of the Middle Ages, some writers look across the channel to the literature of contemporary France, and some writers do both. All of these writers are being exposed to the fixed forms

¹Marcotte, "An Introduction to the Triolet," p. 25.

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because the forms are in use in the literature of both Medieval England and contemporary France.

The growth of interest in the Middle Ages is stimulated by a writer such as Cardinal Newman, whose Tracts for the Times (1833-1841) is just one example of the uncovering of the past. With this work Newman emerges as the major spokesman for Anglo-Catholicism. Carlyle, in Past and Present (1843), praises the Middle Ages and disparages contemporary England. One of the most influential promoters of the Middle Ages is John Ruskin, whose work Pre-Raphaelitism (1851) is important in its strong defence of the Pre-Raphaelite painters and poets who are revolting against the art conventions of the Victorian age and attempting to emulate the predecessors of Raphael (1483-1520). Dante Gabriel Rossetti, one of the leaders in the Pre-Raphaelite movement, combines interests in medieval art and contemporary French literature. His translation of Villon's "To Death, of his Lady" (1870) manifests his interest. Rossetti is a good friend and literary confrère of many of the English poets who have a direct influence on the revival of the fixed forms in England: Swinburne, Gosse, Dobson, and others. These writers manifest greater affinity for and interest in the literature of France than the literature of medieval England. Quite

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probably Rossetti's interest in both literatures helps stimulate the revival of the fixed forms by passing on to the English revivalists the influences that he has received from both of these sources.

Another stimulus to the revival of the fixed forms is the reaction against inferior poetry being written by English poets in imitation of the blank verse of Lord Alfred Tennyson and Robert Browning. There is an obvious need for refreshing new verse forms. One manifestation of this imitation is seen in some of the poems that are produced by writers of the Spasmodic School. These writers frequently employ blank verse. Their verse is often used to express passions that are poor imitations of great blank verse writing before them. Jerome Hamilton Buckley appraises their style:

Though they often produced striking figures of speech, compelling metaphors, suggestive similes, they were repeatedly carried away, like some of the Renaissance poets whom they revered, by their own embellished images, their own laborious conceits. Careless of larger wholes, most of them were nonetheless almost pedantically concerned with specific detail, with accurate reference and esoteric allusion.¹

Buckley's essay is a general condemnation of this movement. However, probably one of the most clear manifestations of

¹Buckley, "The Spasmodic School," The Victorian Temper, p. 43.

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the weakness of the movement is its brief duration. Poetry of the Spasmodic writers is initiated by Philip James Bailey in 1839 with his poem Festus; influence of the movement ends in approximately 1855, with the publishing of Alexander Smith's Life Drama and Other Poems. Buckley cites Sydney Dobell (1824-1874) as one of the most extreme of the Spasmodic poets, commenting particularly on The Roman (1850) and Balder (1854). Buckley condemns many of Dobell's poems: he says that Dobell's "Later lyrics [are] in loose verse paragraphs, formless, digressive, [and] shamelessly sentimental . . ."¹ He disapproves of The Roman, a long blank-verse epic expounding the causes of freedom. He considers Balder, which is also in blank verse, the most extreme product of the Spasmodic School.

Undoubtedly blank verse loses much of its attractiveness for many of the poets after the 1850's because of the manner in which it is used by such inferior poets as the Spasmodics. Cohen substantiates this, contending that one of the causes for the reappearance of these forms in English literature is "the monotony produced by the lesser imitators of Tennysonian blank verse and other characteristic measures

¹Buckley, "The Spasmodic School," p. 43.

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of the great Victorians."¹ Cohen does not cite specific examples, but she may well be referring to such poets as the Spasmodics.

Another important source for confirmation of the dominance of blank verse and the inferior imitations of Tennyson is given by Gosse:

The worship of Milton by Keats, of Milton through Keats, pushed to an extravagant excess, set the Spasmodic School in motion; blustering blank verse, studded with unconnected beauties of fanciful phrase, formed the instrument for these brilliant discords . . . the whole school passed into thin air . . . leaving a baneful influence, a tradition of formlessness behind it. . . . By a curious coincidence, however, all these writers, except in part Mr. Browning, began to adopt blank verse as their favourite instrument.²

Gosse considers that Tennyson employs blank verse with the highest proficiency but that hundreds of imitators of Tennyson's blank verse and of Browning's vigor, "proceeded no further than effeminacy in the first instance and ruggedness in the second."³

Quite clearly, the reintroduction of the fixed forms into England in the late 1860's is caused, in part, both by the didacticism of the literature of the

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 78.

²Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 54.

³Ibid., p. 54.

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Victorian age and by the dominance of inferior imitations of the blank verse of Tennyson and Browning. English poets at this time are in need of a literary movement that is free from conscious moral overtones such as an aesthetic movement and also of a stabilizing of poetic form such as would be effected by adherence to the fixed forms. Contemporary French writers are working in an already well established aesthetic tradition with their verse composed with quite strict adherence to the rules of fixed poetic forms.

The revival of the fixed poetic forms in England is primarily the result of the somewhat earlier revival of the fixed forms in France. Revival of these forms in France is initiated as early as the 1830's as a part of the French "art for art's sake" movement. This movement is a reaction against the Romantic Movement prevailing in France from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Both France and England experience Romantic movements in their literature. In both countries, the movement exists in embryo from the mid-eighteenth century, and by the turn of the nineteenth century it has become the dominant literary movement in both countries.

One manifestation of French Romanticism is the concept of art for progress' sake. This idea is implicit in

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the works of the great French Romantic, Victor Hugo.¹ A French reaction against morality in art is initiated in the 1830's. What this reaction develops into provides the impetus and pattern for the English reaction against morality in literature initiated by the Pre-Raphaelite movement in the late 1840's.

Stimulation for the English Aesthetic Movement comes from Swinburne's Poems and Ballads (1866) and Walter Pater's Studies in the History of the Renaissance (1873). The movement flowers and then decays in England in the 1890's. France and England have the same general literary problems. France demonstrates that the problems may be solved by the kind of discipline provided by an aesthetic movement with its use of "clear hard lines in poetry," that is, the fixed forms. Ample evidence supports the conclusion that the English poets consciously follow the lead of the French poets. Initially, they follow as individual poets, not as an organized movement. The aesthetic revival in England has to wait for Pater's Studies in the History of the Renaissance (1873) before it takes on

¹See Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xix.

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the formal appearance and nature of a movement. The fixed forms have to wait for Gosse's Manifesto (1877) before the revival achieves a semblance of unity.

Cohen considers that "The revival of the . . . rondeau . . . is a phase of the romanticism which expressed itself so variously in nineteenth-century French literature. The poetic sons of Victor Hugo, far from slavishly following his type of revolt, appear to have prided themselves generally on the 'dissidence of their dissent.'"¹ The French aesthetes attack the bourgeoisie as early as the 1830's. Beckson notes that ". . . [the Aesthetes] declared that the bourgeoisie was not only their natural enemy but also their sport, for in order to demonstrate their moral superiority, they would have to shock and dazzle the dull and muddy mettled middle classes--épater le bourgeois."² This is the attitude and thought behind the "art for art's sake" movement, and it resembles the attitude and thought expressed both in Swinburne's Poems and Ballads (1866) and in the writings of the English decadent poets of the 1890's.

The public pose of Wilde is strikingly similar to that of the foremost leader of the aesthetic movement in

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 78.

²Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xviii.

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France, Théophile Gautier (1811-1872). Beckson states Gautier's role in initiating this movement in France:
". . . the English needed only to turn to Théophile Gautier (1811-1872), who, more than any other figure of the nineteenth century, had publicized the idea of 'art for art's sake'--l'art pour l'art--and who had developed shocking as a fine art."¹

Beckson notes that already at the age of nineteen Gautier declares himself "not in complete sympathy with Hugo's belief in art for progress' sake" and feels that "Hugo, like other leading Romantics . . . was debasing art by lending his pen to humanitarian causes."² Beckson points out Gautier's "opposition to the idea of l'art utile" in the introduction to his poetry Albertus (1832): "In general, when a thing becomes useful, it ceases to be beautiful,"³ he declares, and humanitarian art is useful; therefore,

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, pp. xviii-xix. French artists use the term l'art pour l'art as early as 1804 to describe their disinterestedness in art. The German philosopher Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804) uses the term to describe what he calls "purposiveness without purpose." The term has changed slightly in meaning by the late 1820's in France. At that time l'art pour l'art is used to designate the theory of art of artists who are hostile to didactic art.

²Ibid., p. xix.

³Gautier, cited in Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xix.

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humanitarian art is not beautiful. He repeats this concept in the preface to his novel Mademoiselle de Maupin (1835): "Nothing is really beautiful unless it is useless, everything useful is ugly, for it expresses a need and the needs of man are ignoble and disgusting, like his poor weak nature. The most useful place in the house is the lavatory."¹

Out of Gautier's approach to art evolves the concept of the supremacy of form in the act of artistic creation and in the work of art that is created, and this concept is central and basic in the approach and attitude of the "art for art's sake" movement that Gautier initiates as early as 1830. It will be seen below² that fundamental in Gautier's concept of beauty in art is that the work of art, in poetry just as in sculpture, be expressed in hard clear lines, the lines that are required, actually, in the fixed forms. In all of his pronouncements concerning beauty and usefulness in art, Gautier insists upon the requirement of art's being "art for art's sake," and along with this he repeatedly comments on the "inutility of art," doing so with an obvious intent to shock the reader. The inutility

¹Gautier, cited in Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xix. Italics are Beckson's.

²See below, p. 76.

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of art is clearly stated, "Nothing is really beautiful unless it is useless . . ." The intent to shock is clear; and the shock successful. Its success is partially achieved by means of the example of the lavatory. However, the greater shock for the bourgeoisie sensibilities is the novel itself, Mademoiselle de Maupin. It is a novel of sexual perversion. Beckson quotes Mario Praz's designation of it as "the apologia of lesbian love" and "the Bible of the Decadence."¹

Swinburne is an enthusiastic follower of Gautier. Swinburne may also be the first decadent in the Decadent Movement in nineteenth century England. In 1866, thirty-one years after Mademoiselle de Maupin is published, Swinburne publishes his Poems and Ballads. Some of the poems, like Gautier's, contain elements of sexual perversion. They are considered decadent poems by such contemporaries as John Morley, who in an anonymous attack in the Saturday Review, August 4, 1866, calls Swinburne a "libidinous laureate and an apostle of despair."² The strong influence that Gautier has on Swinburne is important for the English revival of the fixed forms. The French Aesthetes promote the use of fixed

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xxii.

²Albert C. Baugh, A Literary History of England, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948, pp. 1479-1482.

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forms. Swinburne adopts both the French aesthetic principles as practiced by Gautier and the use of the fixed forms. It is noted above that Swinburne publishes rondels and ballads as early as 1866, eleven years before Gosse publishes his Manifesto.

Another English disciple of Gautier is Oscar Wilde (1856-1900). Wilde quite clearly is the English counterpart of Gautier in projecting a public image of extravagant aestheticism. The exotic colors of Wilde's clothes recall similarly exotic unconventional dress of Gautier, particularly his pink waistcoat which he wore, as he himself says, at the premiere of Hugo's Hernani to shock the bourgeois audience.¹ Both men believe that their aesthetic public image will attract attention, shock the general public, and make themselves popular, and both succeed in their efforts. Wilde expresses ideas which echo Gautier. In his "Preface" to The Picture of Dorian Grey (1891), for example, Wilde sets forth principles of "art for art's sake" substantially and even verbally similar to principles Gautier asserts both in Albertus (1832) and in Mademoiselle de Maupin (1835). Wilde confirms the significant influence that Gautier and the French Aesthetic Movement have on the English Aesthetes.

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xix.

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The French Movement contains the fixed forms. These forms are taken to England as early as 1866 at the time of the English Aesthetic Movement.

Gautier, more than anyone else, is responsible for the particular association of aestheticism and the fixed poetic forms in the French revival of the fixed forms in the nineteenth century. In his work Victor Hugo (1835), Gautier expresses the idea that form is supreme. This concept becomes central to Parnassianism. Beckson has recorded Gautier's main concept: ". . . the difference between a block of stone and a statue lay in its form, that the poet, too, was a sculptor, for he carved ideas and images out of words. The separation of form from content was . . . incomprehensible, for 'Une belle forme est une belle idée.'"¹ Gosse reiterates this concept in his Manifesto for the English revival; in fact, most of the principles set forth in the Manifesto are the same as those principles of art originated by Gautier. Gautier's concern for form in art is exactly the concern that the English Parnassians express in the late 1860's. In the 1830's Gautier makes his initial plea for disinterestedness in art. English poets such as

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xix.

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Dobson, Lang, and Gosse express a desire for the same objectivity approximately thirty years later.

An essential difference, however, marks the art products of Gautier and those of the English Parnassians. Gautier's work is, in part, decadent; that is, his publicly stated motive is to shock the general public. The Parnassians are not necessarily decadent; their publicly stated motive is to produce beautiful works of art that express significant subject matter by means of fixed forms. Gosse's Manifesto is explicit on this point. The French manifesto for a return to form in poetry is presented by Gautier in his poem "L'Art" which is published in Emaux et camées (1858). Beckson says that "he [Gautier] issued a manifesto urging poets to avoid easy rhythms and to forge hard, clear lines. . . . [for] Art required the chisel and the file."¹ Gautier's severe criticism of all art that contains any conscious moralizing and his condemnation of spontaneity in art which so characterizes the French Romantics finds a parallel in the condemnation of moralizing and spontaneity in Gosse's Manifesto.²

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xx.

²See below, Chapter Two, Section Two, pp. 147-149.

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Gautier's manifesto, "L'Art," is translated freely by Dobson in his poem "Ars Victrix" (1876). Beckson believes that Dobson's poem ". . . provided the English Parnassians with a manifesto."¹ "L'Art" and "Ars Victrix" are significant in the revival of the fixed forms in their respective countries. Comparison of the two poems reveals so marked a similarity in substance, form, and style, generally and specifically, that the conclusion may well be made that Dobson quite consciously and artfully follows Gautier, preserving as he does so the essential poem as he renders it into the new poem in his own English voice. In effect, Dobson gives Gautier's manifesto to an English reading audience, affirming as he does so that he approves and accepts Gautier's principles and rules and attesting to the adaptability of the fixed poetic form to English use. Dobson's avowal of influence implicit in his translation of Gautier's poem extends to adherence to Gautier's principles and rules in other works by him. How pervasively formative the influence of the manifesto may be in the work of other English poets may be judged by determining whether other English Parnassians give evidence of being directly influenced by

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xx.

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Gautier's poem "L'Art" or of being indirectly influenced by this poem through Dobson's free translation of it in "Ars Victrix."

Here is Gautier's poem:

L'ART

Oui, l'oeuvre sort plus belle
D'une forme au travail
Rebelle,
Vers, marbre, onyx, émail.

Point de contraintes fausses!
Mais que pour marcher droit
Tu chausses,
Muse, un cothurne étroit.

Fi du rythme commode,
Comme un soulier trop grand,
Du mode
Que tout pied quitte et prend!

Statuaire, repousse
L'argile que pétrit
Le pouce
Quand flotte ailleurs l'esprit;

Lutte avec le carrare,
Avec le paros dur
Et rare,
Gardiens du contour pur;

Emprunte à Syracuse
Son bronze où fermement
S'accuse
Le trait fier et charmant;

D'une main délicate
Pour suis dans un filon
D'agate
Le profil d'Apollon.

Peintre, fuis l'aquarelle,
Et fixe la couleur

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Trop frêle
 Au four de l'émailleur
 Fais les sirènes bleues,
 Tordant de cent façons
 Leurs queues,
 Les monstres des blasons;
 Dans son nimbe trilobe
 La Vierge et son Jésus,
 Le globe
 Avec la croix dessus.
 Tout passe.--L'art robuste
 Seul à l'éternité,
 Le buste
 Survit à la cité.
 Et la médaille austère
 Que trouve un laboureur
 Sous terre
 Révèle un empereur.
 Les dieux eux-mêmes meurent,
 Mais les vers souverains
 Demeurent
 Plus forts que les airains.
 Sculpte, lime, ciselle;
 Que ton rêve flottant
 Se scelle
 Dans le bloc résistant!¹

The poem is a plea for hard, clear lines in poetry, and the plea extends to all of the arts, poetry, painting, and sculpturing, to produce works in forms that are as firm as marble, onyx, and enamel. The result is to be art productions that outlast the lives of kings and cities. Gautier strives to

¹Gautier, Emaux et camées, Paris, Librairie Droz, 1945, pp. 130-132. The French may be translated as Enamels and Cameos.

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achieve this impression of hardness and clarity by using such images as porcelain, gems, marble statues, and carved cameos. Beckson makes an important point about the extent of Gautier's desire for artistic purity and autonomy in art: ". . . Gautier employed what the Romantics had called transposition d'art by which poetry, for example, attempted to suggest the effects produced by the other arts. Sonnets were called pastels; and pastels sonnets. Thus, in Emaux et camées, 'Symphonie en blanc majeur' is designed to suggest a musical composition."¹ Some of the French poets respond to this manifesto by reviving the French fixed forms. Foremost among the leaders in the French revival is Théodore de Banville. His work is discussed later in this section.

Dobson's free translation of "L'Art" contains the spirit of the revival that is expressed by Gautier; here is Dobson's poem:

ARS VICTRIX

(Imitated from Théophile Gautier)

Yes; when the ways oppose--
When the hard means rebel,
Fairer the work out-grows,--
More potent far the spell.

O POET, then, forbear
The loosely-sandalled verse,

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xx.

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Choose rather thou to wear
The buskin--strait and terse;--

Leave to the tiro's hand
The limp and shapeless style,
See that thy form demand
The labour of the file.

SCULPTOR, do thou discard
The yielding clay,--consign
To Paros marble hard
The beauty of thy line;--

Model thy Satyr's face
For bronze of Syracuse;
In the veined agate trace
The profile of thy Muse.

PAINTER, that still must mix
But transient tints anew,
Thou in the furnace fix
The firm enamel's hue;

Let the smooth tile receive
Thy dove-drawn Erycine;
Thy Sirens blue at eve
Coiled in a wash of wine.

All passes. ART alone
Enduring stays to us;
The Bust outlasts the throne,--
The Coin, Tiberius;

Even the gods must go;
Only the lofty Rhyme
Not countless years o'erthrow,--
Not long array of time.

Paint, chisel, then, or write;
But, that the work surpass,
With the hard fashion fight,--
With the resisting mass.¹

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, ed. Alban Dobson, London, Oxford University Press, 1923, pp. 141-142.

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The poem indicates French influence on the English revival of the fixed forms. It constitutes evidence that Dobson expresses the same plea for form in all of the arts and for form in poetry in particular as that which Gautier expresses in his poem "L'Art." The title, "Ars Victrix," seems particularly meaningful for the revival: it may be translated from the Latin as "Technique Conquers." Dobson's title, more specifically than Gautier's, stresses the dominance of technique over formlessness in poetry. Content of the poems by both Gautier and Dobson insists upon this dominance. Dobson pleads with the poets to ignore formless verse, to endure the difficulties of "the labour of the file." Like Gautier, Dobson extends his entreaty to the sculptor and the painter. He argues for the permanence of art that can be insured by artful adherence to the rules of form. Dobson's Complete Poetical Works reveals that he implements the spirit of his imitation of Gautier's "L'Art." Dobson composes many poems in the tradition of the fixed forms. "Ars Victrix" is first published with a series of poems entitled A Case of Cameos (1876). Gautier uses the word "camée" in Emaux et camées, the title of the volume that contains "L'Art." The word "camée" suggests hard, clear lines. In 1877, Dobson produces a volume of verse titled Proverbs in Porcelain. The

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word "Porcelain" in this title is used to describe the fixed forms contained in the volume. Quite certainly Dobson follows Gautier's advice to avoid spontaneity and unrestrained expressions in poetry such as are characteristic of the Spasmodics discussed above.

Dobson, it may be noted, dissociates himself from the decadent influences of Gautier and of writers of the decadent movement in England. His epitaph, "In After Days," is a significant reinforcement of both his freedom from the decadent movement and his use of fixed forms. Lines eleven and twelve attest to his faithfulness to principles of "art for art's sake": "He held his pen in trust / To Art, not serving shame or lust."¹ His use of the traditional rondeau form for his epitaph emphasizes his interest in fixed forms.

Gautier, quite clearly, is a principal influence on the revival of the fixed forms in England. This influence is seen in the works of Dobson, one of the most important poets in the English revival, even though he rejects the decadent element in Gautier's poetry and theory.

Edmund Gosse also plays a major role in the revival in England; he issues the Manifesto for the English revival

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson,
p. 481.

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of the fixed forms, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse" (July, 1877), which displays the spirit, the principles, and the very language of Gautier's manifesto "L'Art," and Dobson's imitation of "L'Art." Gosse quite clearly adopts Gautier's aesthetic principles and provides a significant bridge between the French and English revivals of the fixed forms. The English Manifesto is so important in the revival that it will be examined separately below in Section Two of Chapter Two.

Gautier has a general but major influence on the revival in England by insisting that poetry be purified of moral intrusions and by making a plea for hard clear lines in poetry.¹ Another French poet, Théodore de Banville (1823-1891), exerts a significant particular influence on this revival by using and promoting the use of the French fixed forms. Banville is most influential in both France and England, but because this thesis is primarily concerned with the revival in England, Banville's influence on French literature will be paid but little attention at present. In 1862, he publishes a volume of poems titled Améthystes.²

¹Beckson, ed., Aesthetes and Decadents, p. xx.

²Banville, Poésies Complètes, Vol. II: Les Exilés, Odelettes, Améthystes, Rimes, Dorées, Rondels, Les Princesses, Trente-six Ballades Joyeuses, éd., Eugene Fasquelle, Paris, Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1907.

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This title, which refers to the gem amethyst, probably is a response to the demand of Gautier's manifesto for hard clear lines. The volume contains many fixed forms. Amétheystes is probably known to such leaders in the revival in England as Swinburne, Dobson, and Gosse. All are travelling in France during the 1860's, and all are fluent in the French language.

In 1872, Banville publishes a work that is most important for the revival in England: Petit Traité de Poésie française. This work contains the essay "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe."¹ In this essay, Banville makes at least three significant points that are directly concerned about the revival: first, that the poet should produce sharply defined images; second, that poetry is at once painting, music, eloquence, and statuary; and third, that poets should reintroduce the fixed forms, such as the triolet, rondeau, and ballade.² English Parnassians adhere to these three rules.

Gosse reiterates all three of these points in his Manifesto (1877), five years after the Petit Traité. Some

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," pp. 185-228.

²Ibid., pp. 261-263, 9, 228. .

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fixed forms appear in England before Banville publishes his Petit Traité in 1872. Swinburne's rondels, for example, appear as early as 1866 in his Poems and Ballads. However, the main body of fixed forms in England is produced and appears in circulation after 1872, the year of the printing of Banville's Petit Traité. In 1873, Gosse publishes a rondeau-sonnet sequence which contains eight rondeaux. Dobson publishes the majority of his fixed forms after 1872. Quite probably, both the extensive discussions and the definitions of the French fixed forms in the Petit Traité, which are contained in the essay "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," and the poems in this volume stimulate the English revival.

The formative influence of Banville's Petit Traité is attested to in that in 1925, three years before Gosse's death and fifty-three years after the date of the Petit Traité, Gosse publishes an essay on Banville in which he attributes the greater part of the revival in England to the influence of the Petit Traité. Gosse declares that both in poetic theory and in composition Swinburne, Dobson, and Lang manifest clearly a pervasive influence of Banville's Petit Traité on their work.¹ This influence is clear in Gosse's

¹Gosse, "Théodore de Banville," Silhouettes, pp. 347-348.

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Manifesto, which will be discussed below. In his essay on Banville, Gosse is explicit and emphatic about Banville's influence: "The 'Petit Traité de Poésie Française,' of 1872, was a revelation to the men who were then young, and whose part in the evolution of English poetry, though greatly undervalued today, will inevitably recover its honourable prestige."¹ Gosse is one of the leaders in the English revival of the fixed forms, one of the main rondeau writers of the revival, and one of the most articulate of theorizers on the art of the fixed forms. And he credits the "revelation" of the fixed forms to Banville.

Gosse's opinion is reinforced by several contemporary poets who correspond in 1911 with Cohen when she is compiling data about the revival for her book Lytic Forms From France (1923). The poets are Edward Dowden (1843-1913), Andrew Lang (1844-1912), Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), Edmund Gosse (1849-1928), and Austin Dobson (1840-1921). These poets are all important contributors to the revival. Cohen's correspondence with Dowden reveals that he believes Banville ". . . taught modern poets to unite lyrical impulse with the

¹Gosse, "Théodore de Banville," Silhouettes, p. 348.

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most delicate technical skill."¹ Dowden acknowledges that Banville brings technical skill to the English poets, and this skill is at least one of the solutions to the problem of inferior blank verse which has been produced by so many of the nineteenth century English poets. Dowden's opinion is reinforced by Lang who believes that Banville is ". . . careful in form rather than abundant in manner [and that his fixed forms] poured forth with absolute ease and fluency."² Lang's remark suggests that Banville influences the English poets both by his abstract technical knowledge and by the quality of his poems. Stevenson is lavish in his praise of Banville: "When De Banville . . . revives a forgotten form of verse . . . he does it in the spirit of the workman choosing a good tool . . . and not at all in that of the dilettante, who seeks to renew bygone forms of thought and make historic forgeries . . ."³ Stevenson's statement confirms Banville's contribution to the revival in England: first, that he does in fact revive the French fixed forms and by so doing is one of the French poets who brings them to the attention of the English poets; second, that he is a good

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 79.

²Ibid., p. 79.

³Ibid., p. 79.

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technician and, therefore, exposes the English poets to the correct traditional forms; and third, that he is sincere in his work and as a result his English contemporaries incline to take him seriously.

In a letter¹ that Cohen receives from Gosse (1911) is an important reference to Banville's Trente-six Ballades Joyeuses (1872)² as one of the chief influences on the revival. Gosse is certain that this book has had a strong effect on Swinburne, Lang, himself, and probably Dobson, and Henley. Gosse explains the English poets' susceptibility to the influence of Banville: "But a desire for the support of a more rigid and disciplined meter was in the air, and we all independently and simultaneously seized upon the French forms of which Banville gave the precise rules in his Petit Traité."³ Gosse's comment constitutes confirmation that, because of the condition of English poetry up to the revival of the fixed forms, many of the English poets recognize the need for more disciplined meter and many of them are looking for leadership. Initially, Gautier helps the English poets both to identify their problem of spontaneous undisciplined

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, pp. 82-83.

²Banville, Poésies Complètes, II, 346-401.

³Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 82.

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poetry and to point to the solution of hard clear lines. Banville follows Gautier and gives the English poets, in his Petit Traité, the precise forms in which to produce hard clear lines.

A final letter that attests to the formative and pervasive influence of Banville on the revival in England is written to Cohen by Dobson (1911): "I was attracted to the French forms because I was seeking to give a novel turn to the lighter kinds of verse which I had then been writing. Some time between 1873 and 1877, I chanced on the Odes Funambulesques (1857) of Banville, whose essays in this kind gave me the hint I wanted. I tried most of the forms in the Proverbs in Porcelain of 1877."¹ Dobson affirms, first, that he agrees with Gosse that a search for novel types of verse is in the air; second, that new forms of verse are actually being written before Banville's work appears; third, that the Odes Funambulesques direct Dobson to the French fixed forms: and fourth, that Dobson employs these forms in Proverbs in Porcelain. Dobson's Proverbs in Porcelain have been shown, above,² to have been influenced by Gautier's plea for hard,

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 83.

²See above, pp. 82-83.

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sharp, clear images; Dobson's letter, above, shows that Banville's fixed forms also influence Proverbs in Porcelain. Dobson's comments about his Proverbs in Porcelain provide significant proof of the important influence of these two French writers on the English revival.

When Gosse writes his essay on Banville in 1925, he believes that the interest in the beautiful poetry that has been produced by the revivalists has passed. However, he believes that when public taste returns to beauty and melody, Banville will be popular again, for ". . . diamonds are sure to be retrieved, even though for a generation they are lost in the mire . . ."¹ Gosse uses the term "funambulesque" to describe Banville. The word is from the title of Banville's volume Odes Funambulesques.² Funambule means "rope-dancer." Gosse is quite clear about the quality of Banville's verses: ". . . no versifier has ever lived who achieved more marvelous feats on the lyrical trapeze than he. He even did himself an injustice by his extreme agility, since the public is volatile, and soon grows tired of an exhibition of mere

¹Gosse, "Théodore de Banville," Silhouettes, p. 348.

²Banville, Poésies Complètes, Vol. I: Odes Funambulesques, Occidentales, Idylles Prussiennes, éd., Eugène Fasquelle, Paris, Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1909.

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nimbleness. An incredible performance in the air may become wearisome through its own apparent lack of effort, and a reaction comes in favour of walking slowly on flat ground, even with the aid of a stick . . ."¹ Gosse concludes his praise of Banville by emphasizing the sincerity with which Banville employs rhyme to blend with the subject in order to produce a harmonious whole.²

Cohen confirms Banville's leadership in the English revival, saying that ". . . in England Banville was beyond doubt the one man responsible for the renewed vogue of old refrain poetry."³

¹Gosse, "Théodore de Banville," Silhouettes, p. 348.

²Ibid., p. 349.

³Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 80.

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Section 3
The Causes of the Revival

	1780-1830	1830's	1840's	1850's	1860's	1870's	1880's	1890's
French Literature a Major Cause.	Romanticism → Didactic "Art For Progress' Sake" Hugo →	Romanticism reacted against initiating an "Art for Art's Sake" movement. Gautier reacts against Hugo. Considers form supreme. Advocates hard clear lines, shock. Albertus 1832. <u>Mademoiselle de Mucan</u> 1835. Victor Hugo 1835.	Reaction → continues.	Gautier → "L'Art" 1858. Art requires the chisel and the file. Gautier influences Swinburne, Gosse, Dobson, and others	Concern for form influences Banville <u>Amethystes</u> 1862. Banville influences Dobson, Gosse, and others.	Banville defines French fixed forms in <u>Petit Traité</u> 1872. Influences Gosse, Dobson, and others. <u>Trente-six Ballades Joyeuses</u> 1873. Influences Gosse, Dobson, and others. <u>Odes Funambulesques</u> 1857 influences Dobson.		
English Literature a Major Cause.	Major Causes: One → Two → Three → Four →	Major writers showing interest and finding the rondeau in Middle Ages: Newman, Carlyle, Ruskin. Didacticism of major Victorian Writers: Poets: Tennyson, Browning, Arnold. Prose Writers: Carlyle, Newman, Mill, Ruskin, Arnold. Blank verse dominates: Tennyson, Browning. Spasmodics begin literary movement 1839.	PreRaphaelite Brotherhood influenced by Middle Ages; D.C. Rossetti translates Villon. PreRaphaelite Brotherhood react against didactic literature. Spasmodic poets produce poor imitation of blank verse of Tennyson & Browning.	Interest in Middle Ages continues. PreRaphaelite Brotherhood interested in art for its own sake; D.C. Rossetti uses French fixed forms. Poor imitation of blank verse motivates many poets to search for new forms; they find French fixed forms.	Interest in Middle Ages continues. Swinburne's <u>Poems & Ballades</u> 1866. Aesthetic, decadent, and fixed forms. Influenced by Gautier's philosophy to "shock" and write "hard clear lines."	Gosse's rondeau-sequence "Fortunite Love" 1873. Dobson's "Ars Victrix" 1876 imitation of Gautier's "L'Art" 1858. Gosse's <u>Manifesto</u> 1877. Influenced by Gautier and Banville. Dobson's <u>Proverbs in Porcelain</u> 1877. Influenced by Gautier & Banville. No manifestation of decadence in rondeaux of Gosse & Dobson.	Rondeau continues in use. Rondeaux written by many poets, e.g., Henley, Stevenson, Lane, Dowden, Dobson.	Rondeau continues in use. Major user of rondeau form in this period is Dobson.

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Section 4

The Rondeau Defined and Analysed

In Paris in 1872, Théodore de Banville publishes his Petit Traité de Poésie Française; in it, in the chapter on the French fixed forms, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," Banville gives the rules for the traditional rondeau.¹ Many of the English poets visit France during the French revival of the fixed forms and hence are probably directly exposed to these forms and to Banville's critical work; Banville's Petit Traité circulates in England after 1872 and is known to the English revivalists. In his essay in Latter Day Lyrics Dobson attests to English writers of the revival having such knowledge and acquaintance.² Gosse and Dobson, the two major promoters of this form in England, promulgate rules for the typical rondeau similar to those given by Banville.³

In his remarks that precede his definition, Banville says,

¹Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, pp. 185-228.

²Austin Dobson, "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," Latter Day Lyrics, pp. 340-341.

³See below, pp. 99-102.

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Le Rondeau n'a pas que la naïveté; il a encore la légèreté, la rapidité, la grâce, la caresse, l'ironie, et un vieux parfum de terroir fait pour charmer ceux qui aiment notre poésie (et en elle la patrie) à tous les âges qu'elle a traversés.¹

Analysis of English rondeaux will reveal whether these traits of the French rondeau also distinguish the rondeaux of the major revivalists in England. Banville's definition of the rondeau may well be quoted in its entirety because it needs to be compared with the definitions given by the English revivalists to determine if these English poets define the rondeau according to the French tradition or if the English writers deviate from the tradition in any way. Banville's complete definition may, in fact, be used as the standard against which the rondeaux may be analysed in the present thesis to determine if these poems are in the tradition of the French rondeau form or if they are in an English tradition different from the French as set forth by Banville.

This is Banville's definition:

Le Rondeau peut être écrit en vers de dix syllabes avec césure à la quatrième syllabe, ou en

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," pp. 203-204. Banville's remarks may be translated as follows: The Rondeau does not just have the needed charm, it also has the lightness, the rapidity, the grace, the soft touch, the irony, and the sensually perfumed earthiness which is apt to charm those who love our poetry through every age it has passed.

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vers de huit syllabes.

Il peut commencer par un vers masculin ou par une vers féminin.

Il est écrit sur deux rimes.

Il contient, dans son ensemble, treize vers, et se compose:

1^o De trois strophes, dont la première et la troisième ont chacune cinq vers, et dont la seconde a trois vers;

2^o D'un REFRAIN, que constituent le premier mot ou les premiers mots du premier vers, et qui s'ajoute--sans que ses syllabes finales riment avec rien--au bout de la seconde strophe et au bout de la troisième strophe.

Peu importe que ce Refrain se termine par un son masculin ou par un son féminin, et on n'a nullement à s'en inquiéter.

Le Refrain ne compte pas dans le nombre des vers, et en effet il n'est pas un vers. Il est plus et moins qu'un vers, car il joue dans l'ensemble du Rondeau le rôle capital.¹

Banville's definition is generally self-explanatory.

The function and significance of the refrain needs fuller, more adequate explanation. Banville's definition is

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," pp. 206-207. Banville's remarks may be translated as follows: The rondeau can be written in decasyllabic lines with caesura at the fourth syllable, or in octosyllabic lines. It can begin with a masculine or feminine end rhyme. It is written in two rhymes. It contains thirteen lines composed of the following: three stanzas of which the first and the third contain five lines and the second three lines; the refrain consists of the first word or words of the first line, which is added without rhyming with anything to the ends of the second and third stanzas. It is not important that it has either a masculine or feminine ending, and one should not be concerned about it. The refrain is not counted as a line and indeed is not a line. It is both more or less than a line for it plays a major role in the total expression of the poem.

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followed by an important discussion which supplies this needed explanation:

Il en est à la fois le sujet, la raison d'être et le moyen d'expression. Car ce n'est que pour répéter trois fois ce mot persuasif ou cruel, ce n'est que pour lancer au même but l'une après l'autre ces trois pointes d'acier qu'on les ajuste au bout des strophes, qui sont à la fois le bois léger et les plumes aériennes du trio de flèches que représente le Rondeau.¹

This explanation of the predominance of the refrain over the stanzas is important. The meaning of the poem depends on the refrain and this meaning is subject to any changes that the refrain may produce as it is repeated following each stanza. The significance of the refrain is emphasized by Banville's explanation of it as the raison d'être of the poem and by his comparison of it to the steel tips of the arrow. Finally, the subordination of the stanzas to the refrain is stressed by the comparison of it to the wooden shafts of the arrows.

Another question arises about the refrain--how does it unify the poem? Banville answers this:

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," p. 207. The French may be translated as follows: It [the refrain] is at the same time the subject, the raison d'être, and the means of expressing the rondeau. For it is only in order to repeat three times the persuasive or cruel word, it is only in order to shoot at the same target, three steel tips one after another that are affixed to the ends of the stanzas. The stanzas themselves are the light wooden shafts and aerial plumes of the trio of arrows that constitute the rondeau.

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Mais qui fait de ces trois flèches un tout, un trio? C'est que tour à tour elles viennent frapper à la même place et s'enfoncer dans la même blessure.

Pour faire venir et bien venir le Refrain, pour qu'il apparaisse trois fois avec un aspect différent et dans une lumière nouvelle, tous les moyens sont légitimes (pourvu que l'effort soit ingénieusement dissimulé, car toute difficulté vaincue devient pour le poète le contraire d'un mérite, pour si peu qu'on sente ou qu'on aperçoive la trace de l'outil!) et on a le droit de se permettre même ... le calembour!¹

It appears that the refrain is repeated to reinforce and support the main theme in the poem and that there should be just one main theme expressed in the poem. The refrain is to appear under a different guise each time it is used. It would also seem, according to Banville, that almost any artistic use of the refrain, including punning, is acceptable.

Banville concludes his discussion of the refrain with the following comparisons:

En somme dans le Rondeau, le Refrain doit ressembler à un de ces clowns dont les bonds effrénés

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," p. 207. The French may be translated: But what is it that makes these three arrows into a unity, a trio? It is that each time the refrain is repeated it strikes the same place and sinks into the same wound. In order that the refrain strike, and strike well, so that it appears thrice with a different aspect, and under a new light each time, all means are legitimate so long as the attempt is ingeniously dissimulated, because for every difficulty that the poet overcomes in using the refrain, he is unsuccessful if his use of it appears artificial. The poet also has the right to use the refrain as a pun.

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déconcertent les prévisions instinctives de notre regard, et qui nous apparaissent cassés en zig-zag comme des éclats de foudre, au moment où nous nous attendons à les voir frétilants dans le sable comme des couleuvres, ou furieusement lancés en l'air comme des oiseaux.¹

Thus the element of surprise is an essential part of the character of the refrain.

In 1877, five years after Banville's work appears in France, Gosse publishes a definition of the rondeau, and in 1878 Dobson publishes a similar definition; both Gosse and Dobson give clear and comprehensive definitions of the rondeau form.

Gosse, in his Manifesto of July 1877, sets forth what has by his time become the established definition of the rondeau, descriptively noting history and special qualities of this form and prescriptively noting rules and requirements of its composition: "The rondeau is of all the forms under discussion the one which has hitherto shown the most vitality in England; it has not the extreme antiquity of the others, and

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," p. 208. The French may be translated: In summarizing this discussion of the rondeau, the refrain should resemble one of those clowns who make dashes and disconcerts the instinctive response of our eyes and who seems to us to be zig-zagging like bolts of lightning at the moment when we expect to see them wriggling on the sand like bright snakes or violently thrown into the air like birds.

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seems especially adapted to crystalline modern wit as the sonnet to enclose modern reflections."¹ Gosse turns to Clément Marot, whom he considers "the earliest master of the rondeau," he attributes the present form of the rondeau to him, and then he gives a definition of the rondeau form:

The rondeau is a poem written in iambic verse of eight or ten syllables, and in thirteen lines; it must have but two rhymes. It contains three stanzas, the first and third of which have five lines, and the second three; there is also a refrain, consisting of the first word or words in the first line, added, without rhyming with anything, to the ends of the eighth line and of the thirteenth line. It has been well said that this refrain is at the same time "plus et moins qu'un vers"; for though it is not counted as a line, it forms the most salient point of the poem, and gives movement to the whole. The French have always been justly proud of this airy creation.²

It is interesting to see that Gosse's definition is identical with that of Banville.

In 1878, in Latter Day Lyrics, the first anthology of French fixed forms to be published during the revival in England, Dobson sets forth his definition of the rondeau and supports it with specific concrete examples of French and English rondeaux. He also translates a rondeau from the French that is, in itself, a statement and demonstration of

¹Gosse, "A Plea For Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 59.

²Ibid., pp. 59-60.

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characteristic substance, form, and style of the rondeau. This is the principal part of Dobson's definition:

" . . . the modern Rondeau is a modification of the rondel. It is made up of thirteen lines with two rhymes and two unrhyming refrains, generally the first half of the first line, sometimes only the first word. As in the Rondel, the lines fall into three groups, a first of five lines, a second of three (and refrain), a third of five (and refrain). The usual sequence of the rhymes is a,a,b,b,a; - a,a,b (and refrain), . . ."¹ This definition reiterates those given by Banville and Gosse; Dobson has simply added a part of the typical rhyme scheme. With his definition Dobson includes a rondeau which was written by Victor Brodeau; it is written in ten syllable lines although most modern rondeaux contain eight syllables. This is the poem:

Au bon vieux temps, que l'amour par bouquets
Se demenoit, et par joyeux caquets,
La femme etoit trop sottte, ou trop peu fine:
Le temps depuis, qui tout fine et affine,
Lui a montre a faire ses acquets.

Lors les seigneurs etoient petits naquets [garcons];
D'aulx et oignons se faisoient les banquets;
Et n'etoit bruit de ruer en cuisine,
Au bon vieux temps.

Dames aux huis n'avaient clefs ni loquets;
Leur garderobe etoit petits paquets

¹Dobson, "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," p. 340.

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De canevas, ou de grosse etamine:
Or, diamants, on laissoit en leur mine,
Et les couleurs porter aux perroquets,
Au bon vieux temps.¹

This rondeau contains the characteristics of the typical form.

Dobson discusses a shorter rondeau of ten lines which is used by a number of outstanding poets such as Clément Marot, Villon, and Voiture. This form has a rhyme scheme a, b, b, a; a, b, R; a, b, b, a, R. An example of this shorter rondeau is D. G. Rossetti's translation of the "Lay, ou plustot Rondeau," written by Villon and contained in his Grand Testament:

¹Victor Brodeau, ["Rondeau"], in Dobson, "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," p. 341. An approximate translation of this poem is as follows:

In the good old days, when love used to make itself
known by bouquets, and pleasant chats,
Woman was too silly, or not subtle enough;
Since then, time which refines everything,
Has shown her how to make conquests;

The lords were then like little boys;
Feasted on garlic and onions;
And it was never a question of making a lot of fuss
in the kitchen,
In the good old days.

Ladies had neither keys nor locks on their doors;
Their wardrobe consisted of a few pieces
Of coarse material, or of thick linen;
Gold and diamonds were left in the mine,
And the colours were left to parents,
In the good old days.

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Death, of thee do I make my moan,
Who had'st my lady away from me,
Nor wilt assuage thine enmity
Till with her life thou hast mine own;
For since that hour my strength has flown.
Lo! what wrong was her life to thee,
Death?

Two we were, and the heart was one;
Which now being dead, dead I must be,
Or seem alive as lifelessly
As in the choir the painted stone,¹
Death!

Dobson points out that the rondeau is particularly well suited to express brief emotions, love, and sportive or any light lyrical theme, and that it adapts well to playful irony or satire.² Thus, Dobson's definition of the rondeau is the same as that of Banville in France and Gosse in England.

There are other sources³ for definitions of the rondeau but all agree with Banville, who is the principal

¹D. G. Rossetti, "Lay, ou plustost Rondeau," in Dobson, "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," p. 341. The title of this poem may be translated as follows: "Lay, or Rather Rondeau."

²Dobson, "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," p. 341.

³Some of the sources that may be consulted are Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, Pierre Larousse, Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX^e siècle, Paris, Pierre Larousse, 1875. George Saintsbury, Historical Manual of English Prosody, Vol. 1, London, MacMillan and Company Limited, 1910. William Flint Thrall and Addison Hibbard, A Handbook to Literature, revised and enlarged by C. Hugh Holman, New York, The Odyssey Press, 1960.

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promoter of the fixed forms in France, and with Gosse and Dobson, who are two of the chief promulgators of these forms in England.

These definitions are supported by an example of the rondeau form which was written by Dobson and published in the Spectator, on October 14, 1876.¹ This rondeau, "'You Bid Me Try,'" warrants particular consideration in the present study because it is an early work of Dobson who is one of the poets most influential in the revival of the form in England, because Dobson has behind his work that of Voiture who is considered one of the great French authorities on the rondeau, and because the rondeau-speaker is in effect creating the rondeau:

'YOU BID ME TRY'

You bid me try, BLUE-EYES, to write
A Rondeau. What!--forthwith?--to-night?
Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true;--
But thirteen lines!--and rhymed on two!
'Refrain,' as well. Ah, hapless plight!

Still, there are five lines,--ranged aright.
These Gallic bonds, I feared, would fright
My easy Muse. They did, till you--
You bid me try!

That makes them eight. The port's in sight;--
'Tis all because your eyes are bright!

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson,
p. 518.

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Now just a pair to end in 'oo'--
When maids command, what can't we do
Behold!--the RONDEAU, tasteful, light,
You bid me try!¹

1876.

In his comment on this rondeau, Dobson notes that "Lope de Vega and Hurtado de Mendoza wrote sonnets on Sonnet-making; Voiture imitated them as regards the Rondeau. These lines are a paraphrase of Voiture and have hitherto appeared in the Notes to Collected Poems."² Voiture, as has been indicated earlier in Chapter One, uses the rondeau form extensively.³ Dobson's "'You Bid Me Try'" is a rondeau-paraphrase of Voiture's rondeau "XXIII." Voiture's poem may be seen in comparison with Dobson's paraphrase of it; here is Voiture's rondeau:

[RONDEAU]

XXIII

Ma foi, c'est fait de moi: car Isabeau
M'a conjuré de lui faire un rondeau,
Cela me met en une peine extrême.
Quoi! treize vers, huit en eau, cinq en ème!
Je lui ferois aussitôt un bateau.

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson,
p. 327.

²Ibid., p. 496.

³See above, Chapter One, Section One, p. 24.

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En voilà cinq pourtant en un monceau,
Faisons en huit, en invoquant Brodeau,
Et puis mettons par quelque stratagème:
Ma foi, c'est fait.

Si je pouvois encor de mon cerveau
Tirer cinq vers, l'ouvrage seroit beau.
Mais cependant je suis dedans l'onzième,
Et si je crois que je fais le douzième,
En voilà trieze ajustés au niveau:
Ma foi, c'est fait.¹

Voiture composes his rondeau in the traditional metric form of iambic lines of ten syllables with caesura, thirteen lines and refrain, and two rhymes: a,a,b,b,a; a,a,b,R; a,a,b,b,a,R. Dobson uses the metric form of iambic lines of eight rather than ten syllables; use of either the eight or the ten syllable line is sanctioned by traditional rule and practice. Voiture uses both as does Dobson; Voiture's rondeau "XXIV," it may be noted, is in eight syllable verse: "Ma foi, que d'un fin diamant / Pris au trésor du firmament, / ..." Dobson has the same rhyme pattern in his rondeau that Voiture has in his. Voiture and Dobson use the same stanzaic pattern, the first and third stanzas having five lines and the second stanza having three lines. Both use refrains which are made of the first two feet of the first line and added, without rhyming with any line, to the ends of the eighth and thirteenth

¹Oeuvres de Voiture, Lettres et Poésies, éd. M. A. Ubicini, Tome Second, Genève, Slatkine Reprints, 1967, pp. 314-315.

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lines. Dobson, in using the substance of the rondeau by Voiture, is using substance conventionally appropriate to the rondeau. The substance which makes the meaning and experience of both rondeaux is the making of a rondeau. In both rondeaux, the act of making the rondeau is the act of making a love address or love tribute (courtly-wise) to a lady; the successful rondeau-making functions as the love address and also as the proof of the sincerity of the poet's address and his proficiency in making the address. The essential form of the rondeau makes the rondeau-making and the accomplished rondeau appropriate expression of the relationship of the man and his lady. The lady deserves, requires, impels, and enables the rondeau-making response and act. Creative submission to the discipline of the rondeau form allows and enables the appropriate rondeau-making expression. In general, the substance of the two rondeaux is the same even though Voiture and Dobson work somewhat differently in building the meanings of their rondeaux.

The refrains they use exemplify the difference of their focus: Voiture begins "Ma foi, c'est fait de moi: car Isabeau / M'a conjuré de lui faire un rondeau"; Dobson begins "You bid me try, BLUE-EYES, to write / A Rondeau."¹ Voiture

¹Italics are supplied to indicate refrain.

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focuses immediately on the requirement of the rondeau-speaker of proof of his very honour in his avowals to the lady Isabeau: "Ma fois, c'est fait ... " suggests more at stake than "You bid me try, BLUE-EYES, . . . " even though the opening statement by Dobson's rondeau-speaker also implies a test or proof of proficiency in rondeau-making.

Both Voiture's and Dobson's rondeau-speakers express the difficulty and pain for them of the test or task required of them. Voiture's rondeau-speaker declares "Je lui ferois aussitôt un bateau," "un bateau" most difficult to pilot and bring around to port, a difficulty that he describes in terms of his progress in the rondeau as "cinq [vers] pourtant en un monceau." Dobson's rondeau-speaker protests his "hapless plight," confronted as he is with the task of writing the rondeau "forthwith," "to-night," with all its difficult structural requirements, the "Gallic bonds" he fears until the lady's influence eases the bonds for him and enables him to progress in his rondeau-making so that he can see that "the port's in sight" (This is Dobson's only use of the boat analogy from Voiture's rondeau). Voiture's rondeau-speaker, in the difficulty of his task, disciplines himself with the requirements of the rondeau form "en invoquant Brodeau." He is enabled then to progress in his rondeau-making with a

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sense of coming to a successful end--there is a simultaneous sense of bringing the rondeau to successful completion and of bringing the boat successfully to port.

The obvious or explicit progress is that of the lines of the rondeau: "... je suis dedans l'onzième, / Et si je crois que je fais le douzième, / En voilà trieze ajustés au niveau." The rondeau-speaker has said that if he can make the rondeau lines right, then "l'ouvrage seroit beau."

Along with the sense of the progress of the rondeau lines is a sense of the progress of the boat especially in "je suis dedans" and "En voilà trieze ajustés au niveau." He may have the boat (as well as the eleventh line) "dedans"--at home; he may have the boat "ajustés au niveau"--adjusted or reconciled in or to the water level, riding safe in port; and he may have in the same image the rondeau lines "ajustés au niveau"--made in accordance with the rondeau standards. The sense of having the boat "ajustés au niveau" fuses with the sense of having the rondeau lines "ajustés au niveau," and the resulting effect is the sheer buoyancy and lightness so much a necessary quality of the rondeau meaning and experience.

The rondeau-speaker has his rondeau. But the final refrain has to be added: "Ma foi, c'est fait," and this

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brings back into focus the initial impetus for the rondeau-making act and the rondeau which in its artistry makes and proves the love address. At the beginning of the rondeau, the rondeau-speaker with the requirement and inspiration of Isabeau fatefully addresses himself, as he must, to the test and proof of himself in his "rondeau-making" capability: "Ma foi, c'est fait de moi."¹ At the end of line eight, the refrain of "Ma foi, c'est fait" signifies that the rondeau-speaker and -maker has committed himself in his test to the disciplines of the traditional rondeau form in the proof of his capability. With this refrain, the sense of initial apprehension and fatefulness may be felt to have changed to a sense of firm and hard determination and disciplined commitment. And then, when the test has been passed and the proof made--with the rondeau made appropriately, artistically "au niveau," the final refrain "plus et moins qu'un vers," or than all the lines of the rondeau even, plays "dans l'ensemble du Rondeau le rôle capital."² It re-directs the opening phrase of the rondeau and the previous refrain in their rôles in shaping the meaning and experience of the

¹Italics are supplied for point of emphasis.

²Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," p. 206.

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rondeau and it puts into new and illuminating unifying focus all the materials of the rondeau. It effects at this moment, precisely, a buoyant, exhilarating sense of being in the accomplishment and satisfaction after the test and proof: it repeats in echoed sense the first phrase with its condition for the rondeau-speaker and the first refrain with its hard and determined effort and commitment for him; and, with the sense of having come "au niveau" of boat and rondeau in meaning and experience, it presents him securely light and free out of the early condition of the rondeau and at the same time securely established, through the rondeau-speaking-making test and proof, in his relationship with Isabeau. Indeed, it is the final refrain that brings back into focus the realization that it has been the compelling and enabling influence of Isabeau that has worked upon the rondeau-maker in his bringing his rondeau into its final substantial form. It is precisely because the final refrain in its recollections contains but, in its own contextual condition, transmutes the meaning and experience of the previous refrain that it functions as it does to effect, finally, the total and unified meaning and experience of the rondeau, and that it

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can be as Banville says of it, "à la fois le sujet, la raison d'être et le moyen d'expression."¹

Voiture's rondeau exemplifies the French rondeau made "au niveau": in substance, form, and style, it has "la légèreté, la rapidité, la grâce, la caresse, l'ironie, ..." ² traditionally the required effects of the rondeau. Dobson, in making a rondeau-paraphrase of Voiture's rondeau "XXIII," quite certainly tries to make his rondeau exemplify in substance, form, and style the traditionally required effects of the rondeau. He knows Voiture, of course, and it may be noted that Banville says this about Voiture: "Le grand, l'unique maître du Rondeau est Voiture, qui se l'est approprié pour jamais; et qui donc eût fait les Rondeaux les plus charmants du monde, si ce n'est celui qui avait le droit de les faire pour Mademoiselles de Bourbon, de Rambouillet, ... et que remerciaient toutes ces lèvres de rose en fleur."³ Dobson, it is noted above, as early as 1874 is familiar with French rondeaux and is aware of Banville's definition of the

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," p. 207.

²Ibid., p. 203.

³Ibid., p. 204.

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rondeau in his Petit Traité de Poésie Française.¹ His rondeau itself, "'You Bid Me Try,'" evidences his knowledge of the requirements of the rondeau form, his intent to exemplify these requirements in his own rondeau, and perhaps also his intent to emulate the achievement of Voiture. The rondeau-speaker declares in conclusion to his rondeau-making effort: "Behold!--the RONDEAU, tasteful, light, / You bid me try!"

Dobson obviously tries to adhere to the requirements of the rondeau form. An approximate scansion of his rondeau may help to determine the manner in which he works within the requirements of the traditional metric form of the rondeau. No attempt will be made to compare metric patterning of Dobson's "'You Bid Me Try'" and Voiture's "[Rondeau] XXIII" in as much as word accent stresses in the French are negligible compared with the heavy stresses in the English; general rhythmic effects may be noted when comparison is pertinent or significant. A tentative scansion of this

¹See Chapter Two, Section Three, pp. 192-193, for discussion of the 1874 meeting of Dobson and Gosse on the occasion of Dobson's reading a rondeau.

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rondeau follows below:¹

You bid me try, BLUE-EYES, to write
A Rondeau. What!--Forthwith?--to-night?
Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true;--
But thirteen lines!--and rhymed on two!
'Refrain,' as well. Ah, hapless plight!

Still, there are five lines,--ranged aright.
These Gallic bonds, I feared, would fright
My easy Muse. They did, till you--
You bid me try!

That makes them eight. The port's in sight,--
'Tis all because your eyes are bright!
Now just a pair to end in 'oo'--
When maids command, what can't we do
Behold-- the RONDEAU, tasteful, light,
You bid me try!

¹The following symbols will be used in scansion:

- / designates an accented syllable;
- ∪ designates an unaccented syllable;
- // designates a syllable with a secondary accent;
- ^ designates a hovering accent;
- ^ designates an imperfect foot;
- // designates a caesura;
- :: designates a strong, but not regular caesura pause;
- | designates the division between feet.

General source for the symbols is Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, "Notes of Versification," Understanding Poetry, New York, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964, pp. 562-570.

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Dobson organizes his rondeau into iambic lines of eight syllables. Within the formal metrical pattern of the iambic beat or regular iambic rhythmic movement, sense imposed stresses and word accents or stresses produce movement simultaneous with or identical to the abstract metrical rhythmic pattern of movement when they do not vary from the regular metrical beat; when they vary from it, they produce changes in the metrically regular pulsing movement that the metrical pattern sets as the expected movement of the verse. Simultaneity of formal metrical rhythms and natural sense rhythms produces a sense of physiological equilibrium or quiescence or general comfortableness. Lack of simultaneity of expected formal metrical rhythms and natural sense rhythms disturbs the equilibrium or quiescence or comfortableness.

The lack of simultaneity of expected formal metrical rhythms and natural sense rhythms is pronounced in the movement of the opening stanza of Dobson's rondeau. Sense stresses in the opening phrase "You bid me try" vary somewhat from the stresses that produce the regular iambic beat; all four syllables (each a word here) require stress, the first as much or more than the regularly more heavily stressed second syllable and the third but slightly less than the fourth. (The effect is one of countering an iambic beat with

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a beat that is more like a spondaic beat but that is doubtful in its character as a spondee because of the hovering disposition of stress or accent and because the rhythmic movement that establishes itself in the poem is iambic.) Normal word accent makes the next two syllables, "BLUE-EYES," equal in stress; sense stress dictates that they be more strongly stressed than the syllables of the first two feet, and the more strongly even because of the capitalization of all the letters of the word(s). "BLUE-EYES," a nominative of address here, breaks into and stops for the moment the statement being made in the opening line; at the same time sense and accent stresses force a stronger than usual pause or break of rhythmic movement between the preceding metric feet and this the third metric foot of the line. So heavy is the stress in "BLUE-EYES" that a break in movement occurs after "BLUE-EYES" as strong as the pause that precedes it. The pauses are not required by metric deficiencies of the line, for, in fact, the line is heavy with the stronger than usual stresses of its first three metric feet; yet, over-full though the line is metrically or rhythmically, interruption and non-completion of the sense of the line forces a running on one and a half feet into the second line after the metric foot "to write" which though regular as an iambic foot seems weak

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after the preceding strong feet: "You bid me try, BLUE-EYES, to write / A Rondeau." "A Rondeau," itself, is over-full with its heaviness of stress and is in effect added stress and heaviness for the first line of the poem even though it belongs in the second line. (Variance from the expected metric rhythms is already producing effects that bear upon developing meaning and experience.)

The second line is even heavier in stress than the first line. Sense and accent make all syllables strongly stressed. Ejaculatory utterance increases the stress and forces two abrupt stops and these are in addition to a stop that follows "A Rondeau," the first foot and a half of the line, and in addition to what are in effect stops at the end of the line and after the first foot of the next line: "A Rondeau. What!--forthwith?--to-night? / Reflect." The stops seem to make the syllable stresses heavier and the word or syllable stresses emphasize the stops. Movement is at the same time uncomfortably propelled and interrupted until the full stop that comes with "Reflect." "Some skill I have, 'tis true;--" moves with somewhat less variance from the regularly expected iambic metric beat than there has been so far, and there seems to be some momentary relaxation rhythmically in the movement; the statement is rather stilted

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and affected in its indirectness, however, and somewhat uncertain in the disposition of stress in the natural sense rhythms in their relation to the formal metric rhythms.

In lines "But thirteen lines!--and rhymed on two! / 'Refrain,' as well. Ah, hapless plight!" the conjunction of metric and sense rhythms resembles in effect that of "What!--forthwith?--to-night? / Reflect." Sense and accent stresses are almost as heavy. Expostulatory (rather than ejaculatory) utterance increases the stress and forces medial and end stops that are more abrupt than the caesural and end stops of more regular rhythmic movement of the line. The stops are fewer, it is true, because the thought units consist of two feet rather than one as in the earlier line--elliptical expression makes for almost unrelieved stress in the lines considered here. In the final thought unit of the stanza, "Ah, hapless plight!" sense and word accent make the normally unstressed first syllable of the first foot the most heavily stressed syllable in the two-foot thought unit. The effect of the stress on "Ah" is more of heaviness than of strength; in its combination with "Ah," the normally stressed and strong first syllable of "hapless" seems weakened even though it still bears stress; after the heavy stress of "Ah, hap-," the more regularly stressed foot "-less plight" seems diminished in stress and strength. "Ah, hapless plight" is

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separated from the feet "'Refrain,' as well" by a pause that is prolonged and heavy in effect because of the end-stopping of thought in the phrase and even more because of the heavy stresses on all four syllables; it is separated from the line that follows by its own end-stopped thought and by its peculiar stress and heaviness. The separation leaves the phrase isolated in its disturbed sense and accent rhythms.

The movement of the whole first stanza, it may be noted, is marked by excess of sense and accent stress and by excess of stops or pauses that break or interrupt the rhythmic movement. Excesses in feet or lines are not compensated for in other feet or lines; no foot has less than normal stress--almost all have more; all lines have more than normal stress and more than normal pause or stop. Stops are accentuated by heavy punctuation that in most instances indicate emotional heightening of some kind (e.g., by use of the exclamation and interrogation marks) and also some prolonging of the pause (this by use of the dash). Elliptical expression produces the effect of increased stress; so too does unexpected capitalization--as in "BLUE-EYES"; so too does obvious understatement such as "Some skills I have, 'tis true"; so too do accumulating magnifications of "difficulties" confronting the rondeau-speaker-maker. What happens

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when the rondeau-speaker says "BLUE-EYES" may be examined here. A rather playful or affectionate pet-name used here as a nominative of address, "BLUE-EYES" interrupts the quite formal statement: "You bid me try to write a Rondeau." With the device of capitalization of the letters of the word, this pet-name is heightened in stress, and "BLUE-EYES" assumes an elevated position and condition even though she still remains Blue-Eyes rather than an Eglantine. The transformation wrought here ingeniously through exaggeration sets the perspective for the progress of the rondeau-making, the performing of the task imposed by "BLUE-EYES." In such perspective and with such direction, the rondeau-speaker-maker artfully plays in seeming excess and exaggeration, building the meaning and experience of the rondeau-making performance. Extreme consternation and apprehension would appear to be his state of mind as he is confronted with the requirement of the rondeau-making performance, yet there persists an undercurrent that is more playful than serious or really apprehensive.

Stresses in the next stanza continue to be heavy and in excess of required stress in the rhythmic movement; each line has an added and unrequired pause. There is less variance from expected rhythmic beat, however. Tone changes

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in the first line: "Still, there are five lines,--ranged aright" displays a sense of surprised success and tentative optimism. Focus in this stanza is on the progress of the rondeau with the influence of "BLUE-EYES" on both the rondeau-maker and the rondeau-coming into substantial form. Everything so far builds up a sense of the improbability of the rondeau-speaker's being able to write the required rondeau. He admits his fear of the "Gallic bonds," the constraints imposed by the disciplines of the French form for the rondeau. His admission, "They did," is particularly effective after the full stop that precedes it and with its abrupt and unexpected stop before continuing, "till you-- / You bid me try!" The pauses before and after "They did" seem to isolate the phrase and put in emphatic focus with it all the rondeau-speaker's fears of incapability. And with the admission made, another is made and this in a gesture of homage to the lady "BLUE-EYES." The gesture is worked ingeniously: in "They did," the slightly greater stress on "They" causes a slight declination in the movement--the pause allows this declination and then it allows an upward movement rhythmically in "till you--" marked as "till" is with a strong stress, though a stress somewhat less strong than that on "you--." The upward movement is suspended, not discontinued,

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then, by the pause before the repetition, "You," in "You bid me try." Italics assist here in elevating "You," though more subtly and naturally than capitalization works to elevate "BLUE-EYES" earlier in the rondeau. Here, in the pause before "You," the rondeau-speaker is as if formally in the presence of the lady in an acknowledgement of her enabling and inspiring influence.

The third stanza begins with a statement of completion of eight of the thirteen lines and of confident anticipation of completion of the rondeau: "That makes them eight, The port's in sight;--" Tone is now confident and gracefully complimentary. Movement in its general regular iambic rhythmic beat is smooth and easy in accompaniment to the comfortable, gracefully light, and playful mood. Undisturbed general simultaneity of metric and natural sense rhythms produces a state of being of light and comfortable balance and easy control. He proceeds in making the rondeau now, swift and free and competent within the disciplines of the rondeau-making and the lady's requirement that he make the rondeau:

'Tis all because your eyes are bright!
Now just a pair to end in 'oo'--
When maids command, what can't we do
Behold!--the RONDEAU, tasteful, light,
You bid me try.

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In these lines, with deft and delicately tasteful compliment, he attributes his success to the inspiriting, enabling influence of his lady. In playful exaggeration, he avows in line twelve that there is nothing that a man cannot do at the request or command of a lady. This line, in its regular metrical and sense rhythms, seems completed at the end of the line, but lack of terminal punctuation runs the thought into the next line: "When maids command, what can't we do / Behold!--" The sentence as structured in line twelve fits easily in the regular rhythm of the line; the run-on of thought into line thirteen works a surprise as it works a change in structure, thought, and rhythm of the "sentence." When "Behold!--" (and what follows it, in fact) is experienced as a part of the sentence of line twelve, its grammatical function in the sentence makes its position in the sentence out of place or order: in normal sentence order it should be either "[You] behold what [is there] that we can't do" or "Behold! what can't we do." Its not being preceded by a comma ties it to the sentence in the manner of the first more than in the manner of the second of the two sentence orders suggested. Disruption of normal sentence order produces stress that disturbs the regularity of movement of the whole sentence unit. But the general rhythmic regularity of

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line twelve is, in fact, experienced. The sense of the regularity remains, and it seems that this regularity will continue into the next line because there is no end punctuation; there is, however, a sense of completion of the sentence. The simultaneous experience of completion and continuance of movement before the strongly stressed "Behold!--" makes in effect a sense of movement downward and then immediately upward to a position that is held by the prolongation of the second syllable. The dash also prolongs the holding of position. Sense dictates, furthermore, that the position be held for beholding what is to be beheld: "the RONDEAU, tasteful, light, / You bid me try." "Behold!--," with an intermixing of function in what precedes and what follows it, with the peculiar stress it has in the rhythmic progression of the lines, and with its contextual sense, creates the instance of formal ceremonial presentation and tribute: the "RONDEAU" accomplished (and elevated as it is, in the effect of the moment) "tasteful, light" [because] "You bid me try." Here, just as in Voiture's rondeau, the refrain functions to create the final unified meaning and experience of the rondeau. With its recollection of the sense of apprehension of the opening phrase of the rondeau, "You bid me try," the final refrain shows the accomplished

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"RONDEAU" the far greater achievement and the influence of "BLUE-EYES" the far greater force in the achievement. With its recollection of the experience of freedom from apprehensive fear made possible by the inspiring and enabling influence of "BLUE-EYES," the refrain sees the successful RONDEAU-making as testimony of "BLUE-EYES'" power and establishes her right to the tribute of the final achievement of the "RONDEAU." With these recollections, in the context of the ceremonial presentation of the "RONDEAU" as the tribute to "BLUE-EYES," the final refrain puts into unifying focus materials that have been building the meaning and experience of the rondeau.

Dobson succeeds in making "'You Bid Me Try'" achieve effects traditionally required of the rondeau.

Section 4
The Rondeau Defined and Analysed

This chart contains the ballade family, the Sestina, and the Villanelle

	Ballade Family					Sestina	Villanelle
	Ballade Type 1 Type 2		Double Ballade	Ballade A Double Refrain	Chant Royal		
Number of Lines	28	35	43 or 60 without en- voi; 52 or 65 with envoi.	28	60	39	19
Number of Stanzas	3	3	6	3	5	6	6
Number of Lines in Stanza	8	10	8 or 10	8	11	6	Stanza 1-5 = 3 lines; stanza 6 = 4 lines.
Number of Rhymes	3	4	3 or 4	3	5		2
Rhyme Scheme all stanzas	a,b,a,b,b,c,b, c.	a,b,a,b,b,c,c, d,c,d.	like the bal- lade.	a,b,a,b,b,c, b,c.	a,b,a,b,c,c,d, d,e,d,e.	*	Stanzas 1-5 = a,b,a; stanza 6 = a,b,a,b.
Envoi	yes	yes	optional	yes	yes	yes: called tornada	none
Number of Lines in Envoi	4	5	4 or 5	4	5	3	
Rhyme Scheme of Envoi	b,c,b,c.	c,c,d,c,d.	like the bal- lade.	b,b,c,c.	d,d,e,d,e.		
Refrain	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	none	yes
Position of Refrain as a Line	3,16,24,28.	10,20,30,35.	Last line of every stanza and last line of envoi where there is one.	4,3,12,16,20, 24,28,28.	11,22,33,44,55, 60	none	
Special Features	Address to roy- alty or divin- ity at begin- ning of envoi.	Address to roy- alty or divin- ity at begin- ning of envoi.		Like ballade envoi. All mid-stanza refrains alike. All refrains at end of stan- za alike.		*The envoi repeats the terminal words of the preceding stanza, normally with word 1 on the interior of line one, 2 the termi- nal of line one; 3 interior of line two, 4 terminal of line two; 5 inter- ior of line three, 6 terminal of line six. 1,2,3,4,5,6 6,1,5,2,4,3 3,6,4,1,2,5 5,3,2,6,1,4 4,5,1,3,6,2 2,4,6,5,3,1 The terminal word of each line in the first stanza is repeated in five different positions in stan- zas 2-6. Numbers represent the terminal word of each line.	The refrain lines are the first (R ¹), and third (R ²), of the first stanza. R ¹ = refrain of second stanza; R ² = refrain of third stanza; R ¹ = refrain of fourth stanza; R ² = refrain of fifth stanza; R ¹ and R ² are the third and fourth lines of the sixth stan- za.

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The Origin, Development, and Definition of the Rondeau

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Section 4
The Rondeau Defined and Analysed

This chart contains the rondeau family. Rondeau type one is the subject of this thesis.
(Cf. Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, pp. 92-97.)

	Triolet	Roundel	Rondel		Rondeau		Rondeau Redoubled
			Type 1	Type 2	Type 1	Type 2	
Number of Lines	8	9	14	13	13	10	24
Number of Stanzas	1	3	3	3	3	2	6
Number of Rhymes	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Rhyme Scheme Stanza 1	A, B, a, A, a, b, A, B.	a, b, a, R;	*A, B, a, b;	A, B, b, a;	a, a, b, b, a;	a, b, b, a, a, b, R;	a, b, a, b;
Stanza 2		b, a, b;	*b, a, A, B;	a, b, A, B;	a, a, b, R;	a, b, b, a, R.	b, a, b, a;
Stanza 3		a, b, a, R.	*a, b, a, b, A, B.	a, b, b, a, A.	a, a, b, b, a, R.		a, b, a, b;
Stanza 4							b, a, b, a;
Stanza 5							a, b, a, b;
Stanza 6							b, a, b, a, R.
Length of Refrain	Two lines	Same as rondeau, but refrain always rhymes with b.	Two lines	Two lines	First word or first part of first line.	First word of first line.	First stanza R ¹ , R ² , R ³ , R ⁴ , and half of line one repeated.
Position of Refrain as a Line	A used as lines 1, 4, and 7. B repeated as lines 2, and 8.	The first part of the first line repeated after line 3 and line 9.	A used as lines 1, 7, and 13. B used as lines 2, 8, and 14.	A used as lines 1, 7, and 13. B used as lines 2, and 8.	First part of line one repeated after lines 5, and 13.	First word of first line repeated after lines 6, and 10.	R ¹ is refrain of stanza 2; R ² is refrain of stanza 3, R ³ is refrain of stanza 4; R ⁴ is refrain of stanza 5. First part of line one of stanza one repeated after sixth line.
			*Any rhyme order may be followed providing only two rhymes are used.				

Section 4
The Rondeau Defined and Analysed

Refrain

1. Refrain is not counted as a line. It is more and less than a line more than a line because the poem depends on it for its meaning; less than a line because it is the first word or words of the first line; in this poem it is "You bid me try."

2. Refrain predominates over stanzas.

3. Rondeau depends on Refrain for meaning.

4. Refrain focuses meaning of the stanza and of the rondeau.

5. Refrain changes meaning of poem each time it is used.

6. Refrain is raison d'être of the rondeau.

Refrain shoots three times at the sure target.

7. Refrains are like steel tips of arrows.

8. Stanzas are like wooden shafts of arrows.

9. Three stanzas, or arrows, are unified by the Refrain which repeats the essential idea expressed in the poem but repeats it under a different guise each time.

10. In order that the Refrain appear thrice with a different aspect all poems are legitimate as long as the attempt is ingeniously dissimulated, punning is acceptable.

11. Refrain should produce surprise or illumination in the reader.

12. Refrain does not rhyme with any line in the poem.

13. Refrain may have masculine or feminine ending.

General Characteristics

1. Charm, lightness, rapidity, grace, soft touch, irony, "sensuously perfumed earthiness."

2. Decasyllabic or octosyllabic lines.

3. Caesura at the fourth syllable.

4. Masculine or feminine end rhymes.

5. Two rhymes.

6. Rondeau contains thirteen lines.

7. Three stanzas:
Stanza 1 - 5 lines.
Stanza 2 - 3 lines.
Stanza 3 - 5 lines.

Number of lines Rhyme Scheme

1

a

You bid me try, BLUF-EYES, to write

2

a

A Rondeau. What!--forthwith?--to-night?

3

b

Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true;--

4

b

But thirteen lines!--and rhymed on two!

5

a

'Refrain,' as well. 'th, hapless plight!

6

a

Still, there are five lines,--ranged aright.

7

a

These Gallic bonds, I feared, would fright

8

b

My easy muse. They did, till you--

Refrain

r

You bid me try!

9

a

That makes them eight. The port's in sight,--

10

a

'Tis all because your eyes are bright!

11

b

Now just a pair to end in 'oo'--

12

b

When maids command, what can't we do

13

a

Behold,--the RONDEAU, tasteful, light,

Refrain

r

You bid me try!

Refrain like steel tip of arrow.
Stanza one like wooden shaft of arrow.

Stanza two is like wooden shaft of arrow.

Refrain like steel tip of arrow.

Stanza three like wooden shaft of arrow.

Refrain like steel tip of arrow.

Arrow One

Arrow Two

Arrow Three

CHAPTER II

SIR EDMUND GOSSE,
A LEADER IN THE REVIVAL

Edmund Gosse is born of French Huguenot parents in London, September 23, 1849, and dies in London May 16, 1928.¹ His early family environment is a blend of French and English influences in culture, language, and literature. These influences may have helped to determine the course of his development and career. He struggles the first half century of his life for recognition as a man of letters, but during his later life and during the early twentieth century he is highly regarded both as a literary critic and as a journalist. He maintains a column in the Sunday Times until a few weeks before he dies.²

Gosse writes both prose and poetry and his writings are not limited to English subjects. He is noted for

¹Linette F. Brugmans, ed., The Correspondence of André Gide and Edmund Gosse 1904-1928, London, Peter Owan, 1960, p. 7.

²Evan Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, London, William Heinemann, Limited, 1931, p. 507.

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bringing foreign literature to England. He writes critical essays on the literature of many foreign countries, including Holland, Scandinavia, and France. His interest in French literature makes him aware of contemporary French poets who are using the French fixed forms, and he knows the reasons for the French Aesthetic Movement.

Conditions of Gosse's parentage, life, and work make it not at all surprising that he makes a contribution to the English revival of the fixed poetic forms. His French ancestry and training clearly incline him to a general interest in French literature. Gosse himself makes clear his particular interest in nineteenth century French literature, especially in the revival of the fixed forms in contemporary France, and he argues for a similar revival in contemporary England to help revitalize English poetry which he considers is in danger of abandoning all forms for blank verse.¹ His early home environment contributes to his interest in French culture, language, and literature and consequently perhaps to the revival in England of fixed poetic forms. Gosse and his parents read and study French literature, and they speak French and study the language.

His position as assistant librarian in the Department of Printed Books of the British Museum from 1867 to 1875

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 54.

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provides the opportunity for developing a love of books and good literature. This love manifests itself in a general interest in the literature and literary history of many countries, but most particularly of the contemporary literature of France and England. He believes that English writers should adopt and use any forms and styles of foreign literature that will improve their own literature. In keeping with this belief, he works to promote the French fixed forms in England in order to revitalize and enrich English poetry.¹ As translator to the Board of Trade from 1875 to 1904, Gosse continues to be in contact with the French language. In his position as librarian to the House of Lords from 1904 to 1914, Gosse works again with books--Gosse, it may be noted, is often called a bibliophile. As Clark Lecturer in English Literature at Trinity College, Cambridge, from 1884 to 1890, he has an appointment which is, in effect, recognition of his being a distinguished authority in English and other literatures. A manifestation of his literary interest and concern is his active leadership in promoting the revival of the fixed forms during the years 1873 through 1877. Also attesting to his interest in literature are his meetings and correspondence with many literary personalities from England

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 55.

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and other countries, and his encouragement of many of these people to produce works of literature.

Quite certainly Gosse's life and work manifest his dedicated and prolonged interest in literature and make quite understandable his concern about the revival of the French fixed forms in England. The present chapter will examine Gosse's contribution to this revival. In order to facilitate this examination, the chapter is divided into the following sections: "Links with France," "The Manifesto," "The Significance of Gosse's Leadership in the Revival," and "Rondeaux."

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Section 1

Links with France

The purpose of this section is to substantiate that Gosse believes that late nineteenth century English literature in general and the revival of the fixed forms in particular are influenced by the literature of France. Gosse's qualification to make the judgement he does about French influences on the revival may be established by evidence of significant manifestations of his knowledge of French literature. Providing these manifestations may be his travels to France; a lecture Gosse gives on February 10, 1904, and a banquet French literary and artistic personages give to recognize his contributions to French culture and literature; his correspondence with André Gide; his publications on French topics; his letter, September 25, 1916, in which he speaks of the honour shown him by the Académie française; and honours awarded him by the University of Strasbourg. The Manifesto, which contains evidence of French influences on the revival in general, will be discussed below in Section Two of this chapter.

Gosse has roots deep in French soil. Brugmans points out that, ". . . [Gosse's] general attachment to France lost nothing by his awareness of his own Huguenot

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ancestry."¹ Charteris explains that Gosse visits France almost every summer, beginning in 1871, with the intention of learning all that he can possibly learn about the country's literary or artistic condition and achievements.² Charteris notes that "there were few villages in certain broad areas of France about which [Gosse] could not give legend and verse, details and directions. He was . . . inexhaustible in his researches, and leaving no stone unseen which could be credited with a literary or artistic association."³ Through his study and research in France, Gosse becomes particularly qualified to see similarities and differences between the literatures of France and England. He comes to recognize the general influence of French literature on English literature and the particular influence of the French revival of the fixed forms on the English revival which follows the French by approximately three decades.

These influences are made clear by Gosse in a lecture which he gives in Paris February 10, 1904, on the occasion of a banquet given in recognition of his contribution to French

¹Brugmans, The Correspondence of André Gide and Edmund Gosse, p. 7.

²Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 35.

³Ibid., p. 35.

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letters.¹ Gosse discusses the general parallel but independent growth in the literature of France and England and emphasizes the direct influence of France on the revival of the fixed poetic forms in England in the late 1860's. The parallel but independent growth is in the language and literature of both countries:

. . . We have to deal with the influences mutually exercised on one another by contemporary literatures of independent character and long-settled traditions. In the case before us, we have one great people [English] building up for the expression of their joys and passions a language out of Anglo-Saxon materials, and another great people [French] forging out of low Latin a vehicle for their complicated thoughts. The literatures so created have enjoyed a vivid and variegated vitality for century after century, never tending the one towards the other, neither at any time seriously taking a place subordinate to the other, nor even closely related. The image that may help to suggest to us what it is that we must look for in observing the mutual influences of French and English literature upon one another is that of two metallic objects, of different colour, pursuing a long parallel flight through space. We are not to count upon their touching one another, or their affecting the direction or speed of either, but we may expect, on occasion, to observe along the burnished side of the one a dash of colour, reflected from the illuminated surface of the other.²

¹Brugmans, The Correspondence of André Gide and Edmund Gosse, p. 6. The banquet which was held on February 9, 1904, was attended by the most important personages of the Parisian literary and artistic world. A select group was decided upon and the dinner was held in the then famous Restaurant Durand.

²Gosse, "The Influence of France on English Poetry," French Profiles, p. 332.

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Gosse stresses here that the literatures of France and England have influenced each other at various times throughout the history of both countries. The influence of French literature upon English literature can be seen in the revival of the rondeau in England in the late 1860's. The excellent image of two metallic objects reflecting on one another reinforces his point.

Gosse comments upon the grace of the French language which lets French poetry reflect the tongue of the French people, while the poets of England "have almost always had to struggle against a complete dissonance between their own aims and interests and those of the nation."¹ Gosse makes what quite likely is an allusion, either accidentally or intentionally, to the materialism and cultural poverty of the Victorian age, conditions which produce a public generally quite indifferent to poetry. Materialism and cultural poverty, it has been noted,² are two of the conditions against which some of the nineteenth century poets react; these conditions cause these poets to look to foreign literature for new "colour." Gosse suggests that France is one of the countries to which they look. They find that the

¹Gosse, "The Influence of France on English Poetry," p. 333.

²See above, Chapter One, Section Three, pp. 61-63.

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fixed forms have been revived in France as early as the 1840's and are still most popular in France in the 1860's and 1870's. The English poets borrow the idea of the revival; then they employ the various fixed forms, including the rondeau.

Gosse speaks of the effects of the English poets borrowing from literature alien to their own:

. . . The result . . . has been to make our poets, at critical epochs, sensitive to catch the colour of literatures alien from their own. In the healthier moments of our poetry we have gained brightness by reflections from other literatures, from those of Greece and Rome, from those of Italy and Spain and France. In moments when our poetry was unhealthy it has borrowed to its immediate and certain disadvantage from these neighbours. But it will, I think, be found that in the latter case the borrowing has invariably been of a coarser and more material kind, and has consisted in a more or less vulgar imitation. The evil effect of this will, I believe, be found to be as definite as the effect of the higher and more illusive borrowing is beneficial.¹

Gosse quite evidently considers that the borrowing of the fixed forms from France in the 1870's by the English poets makes for one of the "healthier moments" in the literary history of England. Therefore, this borrowing produces the beneficial effect described in the closing sentence of the above quotation: ". . . the effect of the higher and more illusive borrowing is beneficial." Gosse does not identify

¹Gosse, "The Influence of France on English Poetry," pp. 334-335.

any of the "unhealthy" periods in English literary history when the English poets borrow to their disadvantage. The material just quoted from his lecture suggests English borrowing of the fixed forms; and, in the context of the two passages which follow, the passage becomes a clear confirmation of the revival.

Gosse suggests the conditions under which the poets of one country look to another for "ornaments of form":

. . . it is precisely when the poets of a country desire to clothe in new forms the personal sensations which are driving them to creative expression, that they are very likely to turn to a neighbouring literature, which happens to be at a stage of aesthetic development, different from their own, for superficial suggestions. The ornaments of form which they bring back with them, when they are in this healthy and lively condition, are what I describe as "colour."¹

Gosse describes here the condition that causes the English poets of the late 1860's to look to foreign countries for new forms. He notes that blank verse is the dominant form being used in England during the Victorian Age. It will be shown below, in Section Two of this chapter, that hundreds of poets are imitating the blank verse of Tennyson and Browning and producing very inferior poetry.² These poor imitations

¹Gosse, "The Influence of France on English Poetry," p. 335.

²Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 54.

precipitate a search for new forms, or as Gosse says, new "colour." The English poets believe that these new forms will assist them to produce good poetry. Gosse says that the country borrowing will ". . . turn to a neighbouring literature, which happens to be at a stage of aesthetic development, different from their own, for superficial suggestions." France is at a different stage of aesthetic development from that of England in the late 1860's; Théophile Gautier has initiated an "art for art's sake" movement between the years 1830 and 1835. One effect of this movement is the use of clear, hard lines in poetry. In France, the desire for clarity and firmness results in the revival of the fixed forms. The use of these forms is recognized by the English poets as a possible solution to the problem of inferior poetry which is a manifestation of the slavish imitation of the blank verse of Tennyson and Browning. The English poets borrow these "ornaments of form" and initiate the revival.

Gosse suggests that the greatest French influence in the nineteenth century is from those poets who stimulate the revival of French forms in England:

Much lesser talents than his [Monsieur Hugo], however, have offered in the latter years of the century a colour to a certain school of our poets, and it is in Théophile Gautier and Théodore de Banville that our English Parnassians found something of the same aesthetic stimulus that their

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predecessors of the fourteenth century found in Guillaume de Machaut and Eustache Deschamps.¹

This passage confirms that France is at a different stage of aesthetic development in the late 1830's than that of England, that Gautier and Banville are two major influences in the revival in France, and that the English poets find "aesthetic stimulus" in the French revival of the fixed forms.²

Gosse delivers the lecture just discussed twenty-seven years after the publication, in 1877, of his Manifesto for the English revival. In 1904, he has not forgotten the significant link between the French Parnassians who produce the revival in France in the late 1840's and the English poets who promote and stimulate the revival in England in the late 1860's. Gosse's lecture is important evidence that he believes that English poetry in general and the revival of the fixed forms in particular have been formatively influenced by the literature of France. On the day following his lecture before the Académie française, Gosse is the guest

¹Gosse, "The Influence of France on English Poetry," p. 362. Gosse, in reviewing French influence upon English literature from the fourteenth century through the nineteenth century, disputes Swinburne's crediting Victor Hugo with influencing English literature in the nineteenth century.

²The importance to the revival of Gautier and Banville is discussed above; see Chapter One, Section Three, pp. 71-92, and Chapter One, Section Four, pp. 94-99. Gosse uses Banville's definition of the French forms in his Manifesto of July 1877; see Section Two of the present chapter.

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of honour at the dinner mentioned above. Brugmans sums up why the distinguished French group wish to honour Gosse: first, because his preoccupation with French culture dates from the beginning of his literary career and is well known in both England and France; second, because he is an enthusiastic follower of Banville as well as being a dedicated and eager Parnassian; and finally, because he is so intensely and enduringly interested in French literature and promotes it with English audiences, and commends emulation of it by English writers.¹

Also confirming Gosse's knowledge of French writers and French literature is his correspondence with André Gide. Brugmans records over a hundred letters between Gosse and Gide from the time of their meeting February 9, 1904, at the dinner in Gosse's honour; they correspond regularly from 1904 until Gosse's death, May 16, 1928. The content of these letters testifies to Gosse's deep and remarkable interest in French writers and French literature.²

Further confirming Gosse's knowledge of French literature are his critical and analytical writings on French subjects. He publishes at least four important works on

¹See Brugmans, The Correspondence of André Gide and Edmund Gosse, p. 7.

²Ibid., passim.

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French culture and literature: French Profiles (1914), which is composed completely of essays on French topics; France et Angleterre: L'Avenir de leurs Relations intellectuelles (1918); Three French Moralists, and the Gallantry of France (1918); and Some Literary Aspects of France in the War (1919). The only one of these which contains comments concerning the revival is French Profiles; it contains Gosse's lecture discussed above. The other works witness his general approval and knowledge of French literature.

Recognition of his association with French literature is the honour accorded him by the French Government and the Académie Française for his knowledge of and contribution to French literature. In 1916, Gosse is invited by the French Government to visit both the French front and the city of Reims. The Government hopes that the visit to the front by this eminent literary man will help the morale of some of the French soldiers. Charteris writes that the invitation is a tribute to Gosse in "recognition of the part he had played towards the literature of France."¹ The invitation and the tribute confirm the respect which is accorded to Gosse by his French literary contemporaries. This tribute is reinforced by a dinner given for Gosse by the Académie française during

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 397.

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this same trip to France. Gosse writes an enthusiastic letter about the dinner to Earl Spencer, September 25, 1916. In it he declares, ". . . I have been (what I believe no other Englishman has ever been) entertained at dinner by the Académie Française. . . . The French are the most glorious people in the world. I have always suspected it and now I know it. . . ." ¹

Finally, confirming Gosse's links with France is the honour awarded him by the University of Strasbourg. Charteris writes that Gosse is constantly in touch with French literature and with French authors; that his life ". . . was stirred by a passionate attachment for la douce France for her prose and poetry equally with her cities and forests, her byways and rivers . . ." ² One of the results of his contribution to French literature is an invitation in 1921 from the University of Strasbourg to deliver a lecture and to receive the honour of being cited for his outstanding contribution to French literature; reportedly, an audience of two thousand persons enthusiastically approved his lecture and the honour accorded him by the University.

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 400.

²Ibid., pp. 466-467.

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It is not surprising that, with his thorough knowledge of French literature, with his sensitive and perceptive apprehension of French poetry, and with his close association with contemporary French poets who are using the French fixed poetic forms, Gosse is well qualified and particularly inclined to promote the revival and use of the fixed poetic forms in England.

Section 2

The Manifesto

The revival of the fixed poetic forms in England in the late 1860's is generally considered to have been given impetus and direction by a similar revival in France some three decades earlier. In England, a particular influence on the revival is a Manifesto which Gosse publishes in The Cornhill Magazine in July, 1877, under the title "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse."¹ Gosse writes other essays on the revival; however, as will be demonstrated in this chapter, the Manifesto is of such singular importance, formatively, that it may well receive treatment separate from other works. His other works in the interest of the promotion of the fixed forms in general and the rondeau in particular will be discussed below in Section Three.

The purpose of this section is to determine the significance of Gosse's Manifesto as a document that seriously attempts to promote the revival of the French fixed forms, particularly the rondeau. Determining the significance of this document will help to make clear the kind of leadership Gosse provides towards the revival and the significance of his leadership. In the Manifesto, Gosse concerns himself

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," pp. 53-71.

particularly with the function of the poet, the technical characteristics of English poetry at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the reaction to the early nineteenth century by the poets of the latter half of the century, the beginning of the revival, and the need for significant subject matter to be expressed through the rondeau form.

Gosse begins his "plea" with some consideration of the function of the poet:

When the poetess Louise Bertin put to Alfred de Musset the still unanswered question "What is poetry?" she received a celebrated rejoinder, the last and perhaps the happiest clause of which is:

D'un sourire, d'un mot, d'un soupir, d'un
regard
Faire un travail exquis.

The answer was far from satisfying the demand of Mdlle. Bertin, but as a definition of, not poetry indeed, but the function of a poet, it left little to be desired. To make immortal art out of transient feeling, to give the impression of a finite mind infinite expansion, to chisel material beauty out of passing thoughts and emotions,--this is the labour of the poet; and it is on account of this conscious artifice and exercise of constructive power that he properly takes his place beside the sculptor and the painter.¹

This repeats Gautier's emphasis on the supremacy of form in the creative process in the making of "immortal art out of transient feeling . . ." It reiterates the concept of aestheticism or Parnassianism urged by Gautier, doing so in

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 53.

the same general stylistic manner and using even Gautier's striking images for presenting the creative act or process.

Austin Dobson presents the same concept of Parnassianism in his poem "Ars Victrix" in 1876, the year before Gosse issues his Manifesto for the English Parnassians. Dobson's "Ars Victrix" is a faithful imitation or free translation of Gautier's poem "L'Art," which is considered Gautier's manifesto for the French Parnassians. Dobson does not call his poem a manifesto, but the poem substance is a reiteration of the substance of Gautier's "L'Art," and so it does bring Gautier's concepts of art to an English audience. Gosse repeats Gautier's essential principles of art, taking them from the full range of Gautier's expressions of artistic theory and description of the creative process. Gosse more specifically than Dobson urges Gautier's concepts for adoption by English writers. He does so in what he presents as the Manifesto, the public declaration and exhortation to action; and he presents this Manifesto as a plea persuasively urgent in appeal. Similarities of substance and style may be aimed at directing readers to Gautier and the part he plays in the French revival of fixed forms. Quite clearly Gosse (and perhaps Dobson too) attempts seriously to transplant the French "Aesthetic Movement" into England and tries zealously to promote the use of fixed forms in English poetry.

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He argues that poetry is one of the fine arts, that the poet's work is essentially plastic, and that the great poets of the past are noted for their production of poetry, and not merely for their ability to reflect, and they are noted for their creation of art, not merely for their contemplation.¹ Gosse considers that because poetry is a fine art, the spontaneous and undisciplined expression of poetry is generally of little artistic value. Just as untaught musical talent is inartistic, so poetic improvisation is most often inartistic. He condemns many of the poets of nineteenth century England because they are too often poetic warblers who merely improvise.² He concludes ". . . when little pain is taken little pleasure results."³ Gosse insists that the poet's work is in its essence plastic, and in this he reiterates concepts from Gautier's two pleas for an aesthetic revival in France, Victor Hugo and "L'Art." Here again Gosse is clearly issuing his Manifesto in keeping with the ideas which are presented in France by Gautier to promote the "Aesthetic Movement" and the revival of the fixed forms. Gosse does not make a claim of originality for

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 53.

²Ibid., p. 53.

³Ibid., p. 53.

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the ideas in his Manifesto. Instead, in his very reiteration of Gautier, he may be trying to make English readers very much aware of Gautier and contemporary French literature of the Aesthetic Movement and to enforce upon them the realization that the French fixed forms could be used to enrich English literature.

Gosse contends that the great poets of the past produce poetry and creations; that they do not simply reflect and contemplate. The latter may imply criticism of the Victorian didactic literature written to solve its social and cultural problems. Gautier makes the same criticism in his poem "L'Art." Both men react against intrusions of morality and social political ideas in literature.

Gosse takes note of the principle that as a rule no generation follows slavishly or with exactitude the beliefs and practices of its immediate predecessors and, with such a perspective, he examines the technical characteristics of English poetry at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He notes that Tennyson is influenced by the ". . . philosophic simplicity of Wordsworth and the sensuous beauty of Keats, with a small admixture of Shelley's music."¹ The Spasmodic school is influenced by Milton through Keats.

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 54.

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This school, with its rough blank verse, inconsistent fanciful phrase, and poverty of style, quickly passes out of existence without leaving any positive formative influence on subsequent decades. Keats influences Browning, but Browning's poetry has more vigour than grace. Tennyson, the Spasmodics, Browning, and the majority of the early Victorian poets use blank verse as their favourite form. And Tennyson's excellent use of this verse is so influential that

. . . there seemed a danger that our poetry would for a time abandon all other forms as completely as the age of Addison gave up all for the heroic couplet of Pope; the result being, of course, more disastrous in the modern instance, because it is so much easier to produce bad blank verse than bad rhymed decasyllables. The delicacy of Mr. Tennyson and the vigour of Mr. Browning was aped by hundreds of imitators, who proceeded no further than effeminacy in the first instance and ruggedness in the second.¹

Gosse observes that blank verse can be used with facility by few poets and that most nineteenth century poets imitating Tennyson and Browning produce inferior poetry. Hence, in the presence of a debilitating rather than enabling mode, many English poets who experience the need to create also experience the need for new forms in which to present their creations. There are too few new forms in England which can fill this need. This serious condition is what Gosse is

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 54.

concerned about in his Manifesto and it is what he recalls precisely in his lecture in Paris, twenty-seven years after the Manifesto, when he says that the English poets who are experiencing this condition look to France for the new forms they need. Thus, the 1904 lecture confirms the significance of the Manifesto as a document that provides impetus for the revival in England by identifying the problem that English poets are having and revealing the source of forms that can revitalize their creative activity. Quite clearly, Gosse demonstrates significant leadership for the revival in issuing his Manifesto at the time and in the manner that he does.

Gosse, in his awareness of the condition of poetry in the latter half of the nineteenth century, is certain that a reaction against the condition must come and that in fact it does come.¹ It comes earliest on the part of such poets as Algernon Charles Swinburne, William Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Christina Rossetti. Gosse writes that the technical methods of these poets differs greatly from those of their predecessors. He does not give examples of this difference. However, each of these Victorian poets produces poems in the tradition of the fixed poetic forms. Swinburne,

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," pp. 54-55.

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for instance, publishes two rondels in his Poems and Ballads, Series One (1866); both poems are called simply "Rondel."¹ Morris writes ballads such as these: "The Chapel in Lyonesse" (1856), "The Eve of Crecy" (1858), "The Blue Closet" (1858), "Sir Giles' War-Song" (1858).² Rossetti writes the ballad "Sister Helen" (1854),³ the rondeau "To Death, of His Lady" (1870),⁴ a translation from Villon, and the sonnet sequence The House of Life, which contains sonnets from as early as 1869.⁵ Christina Rossetti writes her sonnet "Remember" (1849)⁶ and she employs the sonnet form frequently in later years; one example is her sonnet sequence Monna Innominata (1881).⁷

Gosse recognizes the reaction to blank verse that comes in the mid-nineteenth century. He also notes that the

¹Swinburne, Poems and Ballads, pp. 218, 259.

²E. K. Brown and J. O. Bailey, eds., Victorian Poetry, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1962, pp. 577-625.

³Ibid., pp. 475-479.

⁴Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 367.

⁵Brown and Bailey, eds., Victorian Poetry, p. 509.

⁶Ibid., p. 530.

⁷Ibid., pp. 540-543.

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poets who make the reaction have a common aim: "Their aim, sometimes only too prominently expressed, is evidently to escape triviality and poverty of phrase; they recognize the value of unhackneyed words, whether realistically homely or pendentically ornate."¹ This aim is realized by producing verse that is "rich in colour, supple, vehement."² Much of the poetry by the poets just mentioned is certainly "rich in colour, supple, vehement." The ballads of Morris, for example, employ correlatives from the Middle Ages that produce rich poetic imagery, passion, and energy and even more that help to put in substantial form meaning that is intensely vital. D. G. Rossetti and Morris are members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and they find, often, in Pre-Raphaelite times, materials and modes that inspire them to revitalizing poetic or artistic meanings.

Gosse continues his "plea" in the Manifesto for the use of form in English poetry, insisting that in the history of English Literature, order producing law has always been better than anarchy. He states that the discipline of specific form usually produces art of higher quality--a form, for example, such as the sonnet which has been universally approved by great writers of previous ages. Rules for a

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 55.

²Ibid., p. 55.

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poetic form serve to discourage the incompetent workman but to encourage and stimulate the competent artist. Hence, Gosse urges writers to cultivate the fixed verse forms which have flourished in the early days of contemporary French poetic literature.¹ The rondeau is one of the forms he advocates.

Whether it is Gosse who provides the initiating impetus for the revival of the fixed forms in England or some other writer--Dobson, for example--may well be given consideration at this point. So too may the question of the significance of the Manifesto as a stimulating and impelling formative force in the revival.

In the Manifesto itself, Gosse speaks of the initiation or origination of the revival in England:

In point of fact, the movement I advocate has begun on all sides, with the spontaneity of an idea obviously ready to be born. I myself, without suggestion from any acquaintance, but merely in consequence of reading the early French poets, determined to attempt the introduction of the ballade and the rondeau. But, to my great surprise, I found that I had no right to claim the first invention of the idea. First on the one hand, then on the other, I discovered that several young writers, previously unknown to me and to one another, had determined on the same innovation. For sometime the idea was confined to conversation and private discussion. But these forms are now being adopted by a still wider circle, and the movement seems so general that the time has come to define a little more

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 56.

exactly what seems to be desirable in this matter and what not.¹

Here, in the Manifesto, Gosse confirms his conscious assumption of leadership in the revival by advocating the re-introduction of the fixed forms into England. He points out that this movement has had spontaneous initiation--that, in fact, neither a single poet nor group of poets initially plans, organizes, or implements this revival. He insists upon the existence of ". . . an idea obviously ready to be born." Far from being mere vague generalization, this "idea" suggests a clear and meaningful sense of contemporaneity of condition and event, particularly in the perspective of the condition of France in the late 1830's and the condition of England in the late 1850's. Extension of Gosse's analogy of the revival being "born" is that the literary condition of England in the late 1850's is fertile ground for the French fixed forms; these forms are both the seeds and the fruit of the literary condition of France in the late 1830's.

The poets of France have the solution to the kind of problem which the English poets are experiencing. Many of the English poets who play a direct role in the English revival--Swinburne, Dobson, and Gosse himself, as main

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 56.

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examples--have French backgrounds, are bilingual, and visit France frequently.

Swinburne's French background comes from both of his parents. His mother, Lady Jane Henrietta, fourth daughter of the Earl of Ashburnham, has been partly brought up in France and has a native taste for French literature.¹ His father has a French background which can be traced back to the eighteenth century. Swinburne's grandfather, John Edward Swinburne, is born in Bordeaux and educated in France. John Edward Swinburne has a strong interest in French language and literature. This interest seems to have been passed on through his son to his grandson, Algernon Swinburne. Evidence of Swinburne's interest in French literature and particularly the fixed forms is seen as early as 1866 when he published his Poems and Ballads; this work contains a number of the fixed forms; it is published seven years before Gosse's first published rondeaux.

Dobson's paternal grandmother is French. S. M. Ellis publishes an interview that he has had with Dobson on January 17, 1914. Pertinent here is one of the comments from this interview: "His [Dobson's] paternal grandmother was French, and he considered this fact accounted for his own

¹See Georges Lafourcade, Swinburne: A Literary Biography, New York, Morrow, 1932, p. 9.

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love of French literature and Gaelic forms of verse, such as the rondeau, triolet, and villanelle."¹ Part of Dobson's education is in a French school where the courses are conducted in French.² Ellis' point about this French influence is significant in regard to the revival. Clearly, Dobson does not need an external stimulus to cause him to use the fixed forms. He does not need a Manifesto by Gosse or by anyone else; he is self motivated, as is Swinburne. Dobson knows and uses the rondeau form before he meets Gosse, and in fact he publishes rondeaux before Gosse does. Gosse's French background has been discussed above. Swinburne, Dobson, and Gosse have a direct influence on the revival by producing French fixed forms themselves.

Other influences, indirect as well as direct, have bearing on the revival. An indirect influence is the popularity of vers de société in England of the 1860's. This light verse emphasizes form. As early as 1867, vers de société appears in the volume Lyra Elegantiarum. Evidence of the general popularity of French literature in England at this time is seen in 1872, when Andrew Lang publishes Ballads and Lyrics of Old France. The former is published

¹Ellis, "Austin Dobson," p. 641.

²Ibid., p. 642.

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ten years before the Manifesto and the latter five years before the Manifesto. Hence, Gosse presents an accurate description of the beginning of the revival, that is, that the fixed forms are an ". . . idea obviously ready to be born." The fixed forms, actually, have been circulating among the English poets for at least five years before the publication of the Manifesto.

With regard to his own becoming interested in the rondeau, Gosse says it has been ". . . merely in consequence of reading the early French poets . . ." This particular response on Gosse's part is not surprising when one recalls his wide knowledge of French literature.

The part of the Manifesto that has been discussed so far, four pages actually, constitutes what may properly be regarded as the "plea." Gosse ends this section with his comment, ". . . the time has come to define a little more exactly what seems to be desirable in this matter and what not." To define these forms is one of the chief purposes of his Manifesto, and Gosse defines the rondel, the rondeau, the triolet, the ballade, and the chant royal.¹ The definitions take up fifteen pages, while the apology for the revival covers only four.

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," pp. 56-71.

These definitions appear to have been of great value in the revival, for the year following the Manifesto, there appears the anthology, Latter Day Lyrics (1878), edited by W. Davenport Adams. The anthology contains what seems, at least, to reflect the influence of the Manifesto: the first collection of French fixed forms that are written by English poets during the revival and an essay by Austin Dobson titled "Some Foreign Forms of Verse." Dobson presents definitions of the French fixed forms similar to those given in the Manifesto the preceding year. Dobson's definition of the rondeau has been discussed above.¹ Latter Day Lyrics appears to be a response to Gosse's plea for a revival of the fixed forms. No documents other than the Manifesto concerning the revival are in circulation at this time.

No certain evidence is at hand to establish that Dobson and Adams are influenced by Gosse or that they are aware of the Manifesto as they are preparing their own works. It is probable, however, that Dobson is aware of the Manifesto. Dobson and Gosse meet in 1874, three years before the Manifesto is published. At this time, they discuss the rondeau in particular and the fixed forms in general; from this time on they exchange ideas on poetry quite frequently.

¹See above, Chapter One, Section Four, pp. 100-101.

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This point is elaborated upon below in Section Three.¹ Although it appears that Gosse's article may have been an effective influence, at least in regard to the anthology and Dobson's essay, it must be remembered that Banville's Petit Traité is in circulation in England five years before the Manifesto is published;² the Petit Traité contains definitions of the fixed forms. Gosse quite certainly is aware of the Petit Traité. This probability is strengthened by his being held in high regard by his contemporaries for his knowledge of both French and English literature and by his knowing personally many of the poets of both France and England.

Gosse's probable knowledge of Banville's work does not nullify the need for the English manifesto that he issues. If, however, Banville's Petit Traité is current knowledge in England, Dobson and Adams are probably aware of Banville's definitions of the fixed forms.

Why Gosse writes his Manifesto when the revival is already well underway and the forms have already been defined both for France and England may be explained in part by Gosse's sincere interest in good literature; and his conviction that use of the French fixed forms could quite

¹See below, Chapter Two, Section Three, pp. 193-204.

²See above, Chapter One, Section Three, p. 85.

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surely provide English writers with a solution for their problem of form. He may well believe that his Manifesto can encourage, stimulate, and possibly unify a revival already underway, but which can be helped in its development and perpetuation. Gosse's desire to be recognized as an important literary man among literary men may have motivated him to make himself known as the central figure of the revival. Whatever his reasons for issuing his Manifesto, Gosse does provide leadership in the revival by publishing it. It is the only document in the revival that makes a plea for the widespread use of the fixed forms; it is the only document that attempts to unify the movement and to develop the movement into a conscious revival of the fixed forms. It is the only document that gives a clearly stated objective for the revival, to solve the problem of inferior poetry in contemporary England by the reintroduction of the fixed forms into English poetry. The question of the depth and duration of Gosse's interest in the revival is a subject that will be treated in Section Three of this chapter.

The final point of Gosse's Manifesto is that the matter to which the poet wishes to give substantial form should be significant:

Form itself is of no use whatever if there be no matter for the form to enclose. There could plainly be composed pure rondeaux . . . in nonsense verses, poems that would have all the

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exterior distinction of style, with no interior meaning at all. Sooner than arrive at such a conclusion, let us throw up all form whatever . . .¹

Gosse declares that these forms can help to improve the condition of poetry in England just as they have done in France in the revival of the fixed forms there. Poets with the highest artistic capabilities may produce in vital, brilliant, exquisitely tooled form their poetic meaning and experience. Poetasters, hopefully, will shy away from the creative task, incapable of the disciplines of the fixed forms. Finally, Gosse warns against superficial use of the forms, insisting upon the need of a fusion of significant form and significant matter. Gosse issues his Manifesto in a tone of prevailing urgency and serious concern. His attitude bespeaks a deep and sincere conviction in the compelling need for the revival of the fixed forms for poetry.

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 71.

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Section 3

The Significance of Gosse's Leadership
in the Revival

Gosse, in his Manifesto of July 1877, clearly and firmly establishes himself as a leader in the revival in England of the fixed poetic forms from France. The purpose of the present section is to ascertain the nature of Gosse's involvement in the revival and his persistence in the promotion of the forms, particularly the rondeau form. An attempt is made to determine whether Gosse tries to promote the revival and use of the rondeau and other fixed forms by means other than the Manifesto, for example, by other publications, letters, lectures, personal or professional associations; whether he has precise knowledge and mastery of the rondeau and other forms; whether his interest in the revival and promotion of the forms is of long and continuing duration; and whether he is regarded as an effective promoter, historical and critical authority, and successful user of the forms.

Source materials that may be used in the attempt to determine the nature and significance of Gosse's leadership and activity in the revival and use of the forms include

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records of his life and work;¹ his own records of people and events, e.g., his ledger or "Book of Gosse,"² his journal or diary³ of approximately one hundred pages of manuscript which he keeps while he is Librarian to the House of Lords (1904-1914), and his collection of notes in the University of Leeds Library on literary and other important figures; his personal

¹The principal work that contains details of Gosse's life and work is Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse. It must be noted that not all of Gosse's letters are included in Charteris' collection. The Appendix to this thesis contains correspondence between the writer and the University of Leeds, Leeds, England, which holds Gosse's documents in the Brotherton Collection. An attempt was made to borrow all of the pertinent material contained in the Collection; see the writer's letter dated 22nd of October, 1968, and reply from the University of Leeds dated 25th October, 1968. Answers to points one, four, and six reveal no evidence of rondeaux or Gosse's interest in the French fixed forms. Points two, three, and five are requests for material that cannot be loaned by the library.

²Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 86-87, records that Gosse "kept a ledger in which he entered every guest entertained from the date of his marriage [August 12, 1875] to the last year of his life," and that from early in 1876 the ledger "becomes a useful indicator; every phase of literary and artistic culture is represented by some name in it. Swinburne, Andrew Lang, Thornycroft, Onslow Ford, Alfred Parsons, MacColl, Abbey, Comyns Carr, Herkomer, W. D. Howells, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Sidney Colvin, Robert Browning, Marzials--even Churton Collins, so soon to be his severest critic and to threaten his self-confidence--appear constantly among his guests."

³Ibid., pp. 292-294 et passim.

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and literary associations and correspondence;¹ and his literary interests and achievements. The proposed attempt of this section will not be an exhaustive examination of materials that might be pertinent. Consideration of materials, selectively, will aim to make clear the nature of Gosse's involvement in the revival and his persistence in promotion, use, and interest in the forms, particularly the rondeau.

It has been shown, above, that the Manifesto is an important document in the revival; the zeal and urgency that inhere in his plea indicate that Gosse must be deeply and enthusiastically involved in the attempt to revive the fixed poetic forms and to promote their use in England. It may well be expected, then, that he will continue in his interest and his effort. His "plea" is for all the fixed poetic forms: "the rondel, the rondeau, the triolet, the villanelle, the ballade, the chant royal," and the sonnet, the group that, he says,

. . . comprises in the earliest and latest literature of France a large proportion of what is most precious, most lyrical, and most witty in national verse. Each has a fixed form, regulated by traditional laws, and each depends upon richness of rhyme and delicate workmanship for its successful

¹Some of Gosse's correspondence is contained in Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse; some in a Gosse collection at the University of Leeds; and some in the Brotherton Collection at the University of Leeds.

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exercise. The first three are habitually used for joyous or gay thought, and lie within the province of jeu-d'esprit and epigram; the last [four] are usually wedded to serious or stately expression, and almost demand a vein of pathos.¹

Gosse regards the sonnet "the finest" of the forms and expresses a particular fondness for the triolet and the rondeau but he voices delight and approval for all the forms.² His collections of poems show that he works with all of the forms and with variations of them, and most characteristically, perhaps, with the ballade and the sonnet.

Gosse uses the sonnet more frequently than any other of the forms. He uses it in innumerable variations but all of these are variations that would be allowed and encouraged by strict French convention and practice as explained by Banville and exemplified in the sonnets of great French sonnet writers such as Ronsard and du Bellay. Gosse's use of the sonnet evidences the influence of the traditional English sonnet form and use; it evidences equally or even more the influence of the French use of the sonnet form. One of Gosse's early uses of the form is in his sequence, "Fortunate Love--In Sonnets and Rondels." The love sonnet sequence

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 57.

²Ibid., p. 62.

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recalls Elizabethan love sonnet sequences. The combination of sonnets and rondeaux in Gosse's sequence with the interrelation of qualities of both sonnet and rondeau produces a quality different from that of the Elizabethan sonnet sequence. Later analysis of this sequence will demonstrate Gosse's mastery of sonnet and rondeau forms.

In his use of the ballade form, Gosse displays knowledge and mastery of all the intricacies of the form. Two of his ballades may be mentioned here, an early one of some time before 1873, "The Ballade of Dead Cities: To A[ndrew] L[ang],"¹ and a later one of about 1891, "Théodore de Banville (Ballade): For the Funeral of the Last of the Joyous Poets."² The first of these is a ballade in lines of eight syllables and the second a ballade in lines of ten syllables. Both adhere to the conventional rules pertaining to masculine and feminine rhymes, rhymes of the lines, caesuras, and stanzaic organization; each exemplifies the requirements of form and substance of the envoi for the ballade in the eight or the ten syllable line as pertinent, and each does so "classiquement" and "symboliquement," as Banville says is

¹Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, London, William Heinemann, Ltd., 1911, pp. 83-84. The poem appeared originally in Gosse's collection, On Viol and Flute, 1873.

²Ibid., pp. 284-285. Banville died in 1891.

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required.¹ Ballades of both eight and ten syllable lines are considered "regular" ballades. Gosse may well be expected to compose ballades at the time when efforts are being made to establish the fixed forms in England (about 1874); it is noteworthy that some twenty years later he composes a ballade and does so with the same adherence to formal requirements that he displays at the time of the revival of the fixed forms. Gosse addresses the early ballade to Andrew Lang, one of the members of the group who works for the revival of the forms in the 1870's. Gosse addresses the later ballade to Théodore de Banville, on the occasion of his funeral in 1891, in honour of Banville's accomplishments in his use of the forms and in recognition of his contribution to the revival and establishment of the forms in England. The very act of composing a tribute in a form with what Gosse in his Manifesto speaks of as the "excessively difficult rules of the ballade" bespeaks a high regard for the poetic form and for the person honoured by it.

When, in his Manifesto in 1877, Gosse wishes to demonstrate the nature of the chant royal with a contemporary English "pure example," he can find only his own poem composed in the form of the chant royal, "The Praise of

¹See Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, pp. 188-192.

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Dionysus--Chant Royal: To A[ustin] D[obson]."¹ He points out that Marot is the great master of the form and that the form "has rarely been used in modern French, except by the infinitely skilful de Banville."² Banville says, "Le Chant Royal est un très-beau poème, excellent parmi ceux que nous a légués la vieille muse française, mais qui n'a guère pu survivre, car il doit non-seulement être adressé à un Dieu, à un Roi ou à un Prince, mais ne célébrer que des mystères divins."³ Gosse comments that "if the ballade be elaborate, the Chant Royal is the final tour-de-force, the ne plus ultra of legitimate difficulty in the construction of a poem."⁴ He notes also that "Eustache Deschamps wrote both, and confounded the one with the other."⁵ Gosse keeps clear distinctions in using the two forms and displays mastery of both. In substance, the poem allegorizes as "des mystères divins"

¹Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, pp. 63-64. Gosse follows the rules for the chant royal more strictly than does Dobson, particularly in the form and substance of the envoy. See, for example, Dobson's chant royal, "The Dance of Death," in The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, p. 349.

²Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 69.

³Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, p. 221.

⁴Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 69.

⁵Ibid., p. 69.

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the inspiration and creation of poetry, and, in the "Envoi," the service of Gosse and Dobson as two celebrants in the rites honouring the "Prince of the flute and ivy," the vine-god "whose ivory arms hold up the golden lyre." That Gosse addresses this poem to Dobson and presents himself and Dobson as "servants" who "with no frigid lips our songs compose, / And deathless praises to the vine-god sing" seems particularly fitting in that Gosse and Dobson are engaged in efforts to promote the revival of the fixed forms in the years following their meeting in 1874.

Gosse uses the villanelle, though not so frequently as Dobson does. Gosse's "Villanelle"¹ ("Little mistress mine, good-bye!") develops in correct tercets with the two required rhymes, masculine and feminine, properly disposed in the tercets and in the closing quatrain. Gosse achieves the effect that Banville says the villanelle should have: "Et rien n'est plus chatoyant que ce petit poëme. On dirait une tresse formée de fils d'argent et d'or, que traverse un troisième fil, couleur de rose!"²

Gosse uses the triolet in the manner and spirit suggested by Banville: "Le Triolet est une des conquêtes de

¹Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 117. This villanelle is included in Gosse's On Viole and Flute, 1873.

²Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, p. 213.

notre temps, qui non-seulement l'a renouvelé et se l'est assimilé, mais qui a donné un mouvement, une force comique et un éclat qu'il n'avait jamais eu autrefois. ... Petit poème bon pour la satire et l'épigramme et qui mord au vif, faissant une blessure nette et précise."¹ Gosse on occasion at least seems to use this form for more spontaneous expression than he does most of the other forms. Charteris includes a number of Gosse's letters which have triolets or epigrams in the manner of the triolet accompanying the letter or a part of the letter itself.² Some of his triolets follow the rules for the composition of the triolet and some are rather free adaptations (especially when they are parts of letters, it seems), and some are "snatches," as it were, that start as triolets. Generally, they are not so much in the manner "agiles et gracieux," as Banville says they may be,³ but in a manner more robust and comic or satirical. Gosse uses them in excited and informal communication, sometimes with people close to him like Dobson or the English sculptor Hamo Thornycroft.

¹Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, p. 212.

²Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 98, 103, 111, for examples.

³Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, p. 211.

Gosse, it has been noted above, has a special fondness for the rondeau. His definition and explanation of the rondeau form in his Manifesto evidences his full knowledge of the history and nature of the rondeau form,¹ yet he works with what seems to be greater variation from conventional form in his use of the rondeau than in any of the other forms, except perhaps the sonnet form. The nature of his seeming variations will be considered in detail in analyses of the rondeaux following the present section.

Here it may be noted that the greatest variations seem to be in the rondeaux of the sequence, "Fortunate Love--in Sonnets and Rondels":² the rondeaux are not written on two rhymes, but follow instead the pattern of rhyme of the sonnets of the sequence. The rondeaux are not divided, stanzaically, into the conventional three parts of the rondeau--this, however, is a matter of appearance in the printed form rather than of actual organization of the substance of the poem. Two of the rondeaux are in fourteen rather than thirteen lines--Rondeaux VI. "In the Grass" and VIII. "By the Well." Because the rondeaux are in combination with the

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," pp. 59-62. Compare Gosse's definition with Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," pp. 203-208.

²Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, pp. 14-33. The sequence first appeared in On Viol and Flute, 1873.

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sonnets to make the whole work "Fortunate Love--in Sonnets and Rondels," variations from conventional form of either the rondeaux or the sonnets have to be considered in the light of the sequence as an artistic whole. Such consideration will be made in the analyses below. Quite probably, it may be noted now, increased formal subtleties and intricacies that may result from the variations may function to create intensified or magnified artistic experience.

The only variation from conventional rondeau form Gosse makes in "Rondeau" is that the three strophes are not divided, visibly, as stanzas. Otherwise the rondeau is composed, regularly, in lines of eight syllables in two rhymes with unrhyming refrains. This is the poem:

RONDEAU

If Love should faint, and half decline
 Below the fit meridian sign,
 And shorn of all his golden dress,
 His royal state and loveliness,
 Be no more worth a heart like thine,
 Let not thy nobler passion pine,
 But, with a charity divine,
 Let Memory ply her soft address
 If Love should faint;
 And oh! this laggard heart of mine,
 Like some halt pilgrim stirred with wine,
 Shall ache in pity's dear distress,
 Until the balms of thy caress
 To work the finished cure combine,
 If Love should faint.¹

¹Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 95.

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A later rondeau of Gosse's, "Rondeau, from the French of Mme. Deshoulières. 'Entre deux draps,--'" is given by Charteris as one that accompanies a letter to Dobson, supposedly in 1879--Charteris does not include the letter:¹

RONDEAU

from the French of Mme. Deshoulières.

"Entre deux draps--"

Between two sheets of linen fair and white
 Fresh lavendered, and folded smooth and light,
 The charming Idris of the shining eyes,
 Loyal and prudent, eloquent and wise,
 Nestles till noon in downy soft delight,
 To censure others' tastes I have no right,
 Yet seems it scarcely seemly in my sight
 To loiter lonely in such wanton guise
 Between two sheets,
 Since treacherous Love most nimbly wings his flight
 To her, who, dreaming, squanders day as night;
 For other joys the solitary sighs,
 And soon, without a struggle, virtue dies,
 When beauty lets her wandering thoughts alight
 Between two sheets.²

The poem is dated October 8, 1879. The date of the letter is unknown. However, Charteris includes the reference to the letter and the poem between two letters in The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse. The first letter is dated

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 119. The rondeau does not appear in The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse.

²Ibid., p. 119. Antoinette Deshoulières, née Duligier de la Garde, was a French poetess who was born in 1638 and died in 1694.

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October 7, 1879;¹ the second is dated October 21, 1879.² Because Charteris' general method is to show the letters in chronological sequence according to date on which the letters are written, it seems safe to assume that the letter shown above is written between these dates and on a date close to that shown at the bottom of the poem; that is, October 8, 1879. This poem is a translation from the French of Antoinette Deshoulières; an analysis of this poem will be made in section four of this chapter. It is important to acknowledge at this point that this poem is firmly in the tradition of the rondeau formally and substantially with only the variation that the three strophes are not divided, visibly, as stanzas. The poem has all the features of the three stanza rondeau otherwise; it is composed, regularly, on two rhymes with unrhyming refrains in lines of ten syllables. It manifests that Gosse knows the rondeau form, is remarkably sensitive to the nature of the rondeau, and has complete mastery of requirements of the rondeau form.

Gosse, at the time of his publication of his Manifesto early in July of 1877, composes a rondeau which he

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 117.

²Ibid., pp. 119-120.

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sends to Dobson with a letter dated July 5, 1877:

The serious necessity of some shifting of meaning in the refrain of a rondeau has so oppressed me of late, that sleep and rest have left me, and it is wholly owing to this disinterested anxiety that I have become the wreck you see me. At last, however, the impossible has been done. Turn the page, old kiddlewink, and enjoy the exquisite distinction of this little chef-d'oeuvre. . . . I hope my lines are properly arranged, I have no model to hand.

THE POET AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE

In rose-lit air and light perfume,
The well-appointed breakfast-room
Delights us as we tread the stair;
The loaves are beautiful and fair
(As Wordsworth puts it), crust and crumb;
The coffee hath an odour rare;
But most I love the sticky stare
Of pickled mackerel, grand and dumb,
In rows.

And while these dainties we consume
Let educated youth prepare,
Flushed with new science like a bloom,
In our rapt hearing to declare,
How many little eggs there are
In roes.¹

The letter indicates that Gosse composes the rondeau immediately before he writes the letter, and the substance of the letter suggests that it is written as a reaction to the conditions of some intensive concern or involvement with treatment of rondeaux either of a creative or an analytical nature. It seems certain that Gosse's experience is somehow

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 100.

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connected with activity related to the completion for publication of his Manifesto. It is possible that Gosse may have been composing other rondeaux at this time--no others, it must be admitted, are cited by Charteris and no others of this time are included by Gosse in his Collected Poems of 1911, but the Collected Poems do not contain "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," either. It is quite possible that there are other unpublished rondeaux and poems of other forms.

The tone of the letter is one of heady satisfaction and high spirits--a kind of elation and affection as Gosse commands his friend Dobson, whom he addresses as "old kiddie-wink," to "enjoy [with him] the exquisite distinction of this little chef d'oeuvre." Surely Gosse expresses a sense of accomplishment here, and surely he is sharing the delight of it with someone familiar and close in work and friendship with him. The rondeau will be analyzed in section four below. Here, it may be noted that Gosse may have a just sense of achievement in this work. The rondeau has what may be pointed to as variations from usual conventions of form of the rondeau; none of these variations, however, are ones that do not have precedent in work or theory of Banville as Gosse himself points out in the Manifesto:

It should be remembered that it is a great point in writing humorous or serio-comic rondeaux that there should be a play of words in the

refrain. For instance, Théodore de Banville addresses one to Désirée Rondeau, in which the refrain "Rondeau" at one time refers to the lady's name and at another to the form of verse. I notice that the young poet Jean Richepin, in his new volume Les Caresses, carries this quite into the region of punning, for he begins a rondeau "votre beau thé" and ends it "votre beauté." It will be difficult in English to carry out this custom without losing some of the distinction and delicacy which are the indispensable qualities of this kind of poetry; to be the least vulgar would be absolutely destructive to the success of such writing, but I think a play upon words in the refrain should be attempted.¹

Gosse composes the rondeau, "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," regularly, in lines of eight syllables on two rhymes with unrhyming refrains. Two instances of the a-rhymes (crumb and dumb) and one of the b-rhymes (are) may not be quite perfectly rhyming with the other a and b rhymes represented in perfume (a) and stair (b). The rhymes are close, however--perhaps even right rhymes; if they are not exact or correct rhymes, it may be that their difference, slight as it is, contributes the more functionally to building the meaning of the poem and the experience of it. Later analysis will attempt to make clear the effectiveness of these rhymes.

In this rondeau, the refrains have the same sound but are three different words: "In rose-lit air," "In rows," and

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 62.

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"In roes." According to Banville, Gosse, and Dobson, the refrain may be used in at least three different ways. Seven rondeaux published by Banville illustrate variations. The first three poems contain the same type of refrain as that used by Gosse in "The Poet at the Breakfast Table,"--refrains that have the same sound but are three different words with three different meanings; here are Banville's poems:

Adieu, Paniers.

Lyre d'argent, gagne-pain trop précaire,
Dont les chansons n'ont qu'un maigre salaire,
Je vous délaisse et je vous dis adieu.
Mieux vaut cent fois jeter nos vers au feu
Et fuir bien loin ce métier de galère.

En vain, ma lyre, à tous vous saviez plaire;
Vous déplaîsez à ce folliculaire
De qui s'enflamme et gronde pour un jeu
Lire.

Vous n'avez pas, hélas! de caudataire.
Vous n'enseignez au fond d'aucune chaire
Le japonais, le sanscrit et l'hébreu.
Cédez, ma mie, à ce critique en feu
Dont les arrêts ne peuvent pas se faire
Lire.

Arsène.

Où sait-on mieux s'égarer deux, parmi
Les myrtes verts, qu'aux rives de la Seine?
Séduit un jour par l'Enfant ennemi,
Arsène, hélas! pour lui quitta la saine
Littérature, et l'art en a gémé.

Trop attiré par les jeux de la scène,
Il soupira pour les yeux de Climène,
Comme un Tircis en veste de Lami-
Housset.

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Oh! que de fois, oeil morne et front blêmi,
 Il cherche, auprès de la claire fontaine,
 Sous quels buissons Amour s'est endormi!
 Houlette en main, souriante à demi,
 Plus d'une encor fait voir au blond Arsène
 Où c'est.

Madame Keller.

Quel air divin caressa l'amalgame
 De ces lys purs qui nous chantent leur gamme?
 Plus patient que les doigts du Sommeil,
 Quel blond génie avec son doigt vermeil
 De cette neige a su faire une trame?

Ses dents pourraient couper comme une lame
 Les dents du tigre et de l'hippopotame,
 Et son col fier à du marbre est pareil.
 Quel air!

Ovide seul, dans un épithalame,
 Eût pu monter son vers que rien n'entame
 A la hauteur de ce corps de soleil;
 Junon, Pallas, Vénus au bel orteil,
 Même Betti, le cèdent à madame
 Keller.¹

A second type of refrain is the use of words or phrases identical in sound and spelling but with different meanings; two of Banville's seven rondeaux are of this type:

Mademoiselle Page.

Page blanche, allons, étincelle!
 Car, ce rondeau, je le cisèle
 Pour la reine de la chanson,
 Qui rit du céleste Enfançon
 Et doucement vous le musèle.

¹Banville, Oeuvres de Théodore de Banville: Odes Funambulesques. Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, éd., 1892, pp. 202-207.

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Zéphyre l'évente avec zèle,
 Et, pour ne pas vivre sans elle,
 Titania donnerait son
 Page.

Le bataillon de la Moselle
 A sa démarche de gazelle
 Eût tout entier payé rançon.
 Cette reine sans écusson,
 C'est Cypris, ou Mademoiselle
 Page.

A Désirée Rondeau.

Rondeau frivole où ma rime dorée
 Vient célébrer une femme adorée,
 Dis ses attraits dont s'affole chacun,
 Et ses cheveux pleins d'un si doux parfum,
 Qu'eût enviés la Grèce au temps de Rhée.

Dis les Amours qui forment sa chambrée;
 Et dis surtout à notre muse ambrée
 Que son éloge aurait mieux valu qu'un
 Rondeau!

Dis qu'en son nid, si cher à Cythérée,
 Notre misère est souvent préférée
 Au sac d'écus d'un Mondor importun,
 Et que toujours, pour le poète à jeun
 S'ouvrent les bras charmants de Désirée
 Rondeau.¹

The third and seemingly simplest of the refrain patterns is a repetition of the same words or phrases, with the same sound, spelling, and meaning, but with subtle shifting of meaning contextually. Banville uses such refrains in two of his seven rondeaux. One of them, "Brohan," follows:

¹Banville, Odes Funambulesques, pp. 198-199, 208-209.

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Brohan.

Sa mère fut quarante ans belle.
 Dans ses yeux la même étincelle
 D'amour, d'esprit et de désir,
 Quarante ans pour notre plaisir
 Brilla d'une grâce nouvelle.

Le même éclat paraît en elle;
 C'est par cela qu'elle rappelle
 Notre plus charmant souvenir,
 Sa mère.

Elle a les traits d'une immortelle.
 C'est Cypris dont la main attelle
 A son chariot de saphir
 Les colombes et le zéphyr;
 Aussi l'Enfant au dard l'appelle
 Sa mère.¹

Two of about fifty rondeaux by Dobson have refrains that are composed of different words or phrases. The refrains of "To Brander Matthews," 1884 (later than Gosse's poem), are "In vain to-day," "In vain to-day," and "In vein to-day." The refrains of "Rose, in the Hedgerow Grown," 1876 (a year before Gosse's poem), are "Rose, in the hedgerow grown," "And my heart with a hope unknown / Rose," and "O my love!--my own / Rose!"² The latter of these follows:

¹Banville, Odes Funambulesques, pp. 200-201. See, also, "Rolle n'est plus vertueux," pp. 196-197.

²The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, pp. 386, 390.

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ROSE, IN THE HEDGEROW GROWN

Rose, in the hedgerow grown,
 Where the scent of the fresh sweet hay
 Comes up from the fields new-mown,
 You know it--you know it--alone,
 So I gather you here to-day.

For here--was it not here, say?--
 That she came by the woodland way,
 And my heart with a hope unknown
 Rose?

Ah yes!--with her bright hair blown,
 And her eyes like the skies of May,
 And her steps like the rose-leaves strown
 When the winds in the rose-trees play--
 It was here--O my love!--my own
 ROSE!

Precedent set by two such authorities as Banville and Dobson supports Gosse's using words of different meanings and even spellings for the refrains in "The Poet at the Breakfast Table." Later analysis will attempt to show that what Gosse does with these refrains helps to make the rondeau the "little chef-d'oeuvre" that Gosse says it is. Tentative conclusion may be, at the least, that Gosse conforms to rule and practice set forth and exemplified by authorities on the rondeau form.

Gosse does not restrict his concern for poetic form to the "exotic forms of verse" that he advocates in his Manifesto. From the earliest days of his literary career, he shows, as Charteris notes, his inclination to and promise of "mastery of form which distinguishes his subsequent verse.

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. . . his delight in varying metrical schemes. . . . [and his] extraordinary knowledge of old forms of versification."¹ He is early associated with poets who are interested in poetic form, belonging, as Charteris comments, "to the company of poets," poets like Swinburne and Rossetti, whom he meets in 1871, and Morris, whom he meets in 1872.² His long and close relationship with Swinburne is one of the consequences of his early literary interests and associations. Gosse manifests interest in French forms of verse, as well as English forms, before he meets Swinburne, it is true, but Swinburne may well stimulate him in his interest and use of the French forms. Certainly Gosse looks to Swinburne and Rossetti as two of his masters; evidence of his attitude to them abounds in Gosse's correspondence and also in poems of his that honour them. An example is his sonnet, "To Dante Gabriel Rossetti," of August 1871, in which he pays homage to Rossetti as the "Master, whose very names have godlike power / Of song and light divine."³

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 30-31 et passim. Charteris is referring to the years in the late 1860's and early 1870's.

²Ibid., pp. 32-34, 36-38, 66. Note Gosse's connection with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

³The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 112. See, also, pp. 289-290: "Dante Gabriel Rossetti," a sestina adaptation commemorating Rossetti's death, Easter Sunday, 1882.

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In 1911, it may be noted, Gosse looks back to the time of his earliest finding and determining his poetic "voice" and technique as "of 1872, or of a still earlier date."¹ In 1873, he brings out his collection of poems, On Viol and Flute. He includes in this collection the French forms that he advocates in his Manifesto four years later--the chant royal, the ballade, the sonnet, the villanelle, the triolet, and the rondeau. (What he calls rondels in "Fortunate Love--in Sonnets and Rondels" are rondeaux.) He also includes in this or later collections poems in other French forms, e.g., the ode, the elegy, the chanson, the conte, the madrigal, the fable, the eclogue, the idyll, the sestina, and others. For the most part, he follows rules and requirements of the forms strictly and easily, particularly when he works with the most intricate or difficult of forms. This he does with regard to technical matters and also to matters of the essential or unique nature of the form. In his "Sestina,"² for example, Gosse adheres to all requirements of the French Sextine: he follows exactly the rules described

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. vi.

²Ibid., pp. 103-104. The poem is included in On Viol and Flute, 1873.

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by Banville for the form and exemplified in a sestina by F. de Gramont.¹

Normally the *sestina* is a regular poetic form comprised of six stanzas of six lines each followed by a three line envoi. The lines are usually alexandrines, but on rare occasions the tetrameter or pentameter line may be found. Banville, crediting Gramont with the creation of a device to regulate the pattern of the lines,² fails to take into account the fact that though the *sestina* properly has no rhyme, it does make use of a regular pattern of word repetition as a substitute for rhyme. As a substitute, it should follow the same principle as that commonly understood in the establishing of identification of rhyme patterns.

The pattern of the *sestina* is relatively simple, once the principle of word repetition is established as a substitute for rhyme and once the pattern of repetition is recognized as a disciplined poetic form. To insure that the principle of word repetition is used as a substitute for rhyme and to insure that it will not be considered as

¹Banville, "De Quelques Curiosités Poétiques," in Petit Traité de Poésie Française, pp. 229-239.

²Cf. Banville, "De Quelques Curiosités Poétiques," pp. 234-236.

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rhyme, numbers are used instead of letters to demonstrate the principle of order that establishes the pattern. The terminal word of each line in the first stanza is labelled in order: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. This establishes the identification of those words that are going to recur in subsequent stanzas as the terminal words of each line in each of the succeeding five stanzas and in the three line envoi. Each succeeding stanza following the first repeats a pattern of terminal word order based on the preceding stanza: last word of line 6 of the preceding stanza becomes the last word of line 1 in the new stanza; the last word of line 1 of the preceding stanza becomes the last word of line 2 of the new stanza; the last word of line 5 of the preceding stanza becomes the last word of line 3 of the new stanza. The last word of line 2 of the preceding stanza becomes the last word of line 4 of the new stanza; the last word of line 4 of the preceding stanza becomes the last word of line 5 of the new stanza; and the last word of line 3 of the preceding stanza becomes the last word of line 6 of the new stanza. The terminal word pattern of stanza two may then be charted as 6, 1, 5, 2, 4, 3; the pattern of stanza three will be 3, 6, 4, 1, 2, 5; of stanza four it will be 5, 3, 2, 6, 1, 4; of stanza five 4, 5, 1, 3, 6, 2; and of six 2, 4, 6, 5, 3, 1. A repetition of the

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principle would give a seventh stanza of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or a repetition of stanza one. The sestina, however, is a six stanza poem with a three line envoi, but the envoi derives essentially from the established pattern by repeating the terminal words of the preceding stanza, normally, with word 1 in the interior of line one of the envoi and word 2 as the terminal word of line one; word 3 in the interior of line two and word 4 as the terminal word of line two; and word 5 in the interior of line three and word 6 as the terminal word of line six.

The pattern of the sestina is then established, in its normal form, as

Stanza 1:	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Stanza 2:	6, 1, 5, 2, 4, 3
Stanza 3:	3, 6, 4, 1, 2, 5
Stanza 4:	5, 3, 2, 6, 1, 4
Stanza 5:	4, 5, 1, 3, 6, 2
Stanza 6:	2, 4, 6, 5, 3, 1
Envoi:	2, with 1 interior, 4, with 3 interior and 6, with 5 interior

Gramont's envoi follows this pattern. There are, however, common variants of the envoi one of which uses 1, 3, and 5 as the terminal words and 2, 4, and 6 as the interior words and another of which uses 5, 3, 1 as the terminal words and 2, 4, and 6 as the interior words; Gosse follows this pattern.

The following table shows the patterns of the sestinas by Gramont and Gosse:

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Stanza 1:

1 rose 1
 (feuillages)
 2 love 2
 (soleil)
 3 heart 3
 (volages)
 4 sang 4
 (rivages)
 5 rhyme 5
 (vermeil)
 6 woe 6
 (sommeil)

Stanza 2:

1 woe 6
 (sommeil)
 2 rose 1
 (feuillages)
 3 rhyme 5
 (vermeil)
 4 love 2
 (soleil)
 5 sang 4
 (rivages)
 6 heart 3
 (volages)

Stanza 3:

1 heart 3
 (volages)
 2 woe 6
 (sommeil)
 3 sang 4
 (rivages)
 4 rose 1
 (feuillages)
 5 love 2
 (soleil)
 6 rhyme 5
 (vermeil)

Stanza 4:

1 rhyme 5
 (vermeil)
 2 heart 3
 (volages)
 3 love 2
 (soleil)
 4 woe 6
 (sommeil)
 5 rose 1
 (feuillages)
 6 sang 4
 (rivages)

Stanza 5:

1 sang 4
 (rivages)
 2 rhyme 5
 (vermeil)
 3 rose 1
 (feuillages)
 4 heart 3
 (volages)
 5 woe 6
 (sommeil)
 6 love 2
 (soleil)

Stanza 6:

1 love 2
 (soleil)
 2 sang 4
 (rivages)
 3 woe 6
 (sommeil)
 4 rhyme 5
 (vermeil)
 5 heart 3
 (volages)
 6 rose 1
 (feuillages)

Envoi

interior

1 love
 (feuillages)
 2 sang
 (volages)
 3 woe
 (vermeil)

terminal

2 1 rhyme 5
 (soleil) 2
 2 heart 3
 (rivages) 4
 3 rose 1
 (sommeil) 6

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The sextine is not one of the old French forms but a nineteenth century form created from the Italian form of Petrarch by F. de Gramont, "en tromphant d'innombrables et de terrible difficultés. ... [et] composée dans toute la rigueur des règles, et où la forme type de ce poème est précisée dans toute sa pureté classique."¹ Gosse is aware of the origin of the form, for he prefaces his own sestina with "Fra tutti il primo Arnaldo Daniello / Gran maestro d'amor.--Petrarch." Gosse composes his sestina "dans toute la rigueur des règles [de M. de Gramont]."

Gosse works most frequently with the traditional forms and is doing so before the 1874 and 1876 appearances of Banville's Petit Traité de Poésie Française in England. Gosse, in correspondence with Cohen in 1911, speaks of the influence of Banville's Petit Traité on him, Swinburne, Lang, Dobson, and Henley, and of his having written in 1876 a "letter of adoring inquiry" and having received "in return a long letter of sympathy and advice from Théodore de Banville." Gosse sets 1870 as the date of the introduction of the forms into England.² His Manifesto in 1877, follows Banville and, in the treatment of poetry as one of the fine

¹Banville, "De Quelques Curiosités Poétiques," p. 230.

²Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, pp. 82-83.

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arts, it recalls Gautier.¹ Gosse seems always to be at home with the French forms. He works with these forms with a sense of the importance of the discipline of poetic form. In his Manifesto, Gosse notes that "the literary opinion of the time is generally in favour of exact form in literature."² He says "I myself, without suggestion from any acquaintance, but merely in consequence of reading the early French poets, determined to attempt the introduction of the ballade and the rondeau. But, to my great surprise, . . . first on one hand, then on the other, I discovered that several young writers, previously unknown to me and to one another, had determined on the same innovation."³ He expresses his intention to define "the traditional and unique characteristics of the exotic forms which it seems desirable to adopt into English poetry."⁴

The innovations of Gosse and other young poets date from 1870,⁵ or even from as early as 1866 when Swinburne

¹See above, Chapter One, Section Three; compare this with Gosse's discussion of poetry as a fine art.

²Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 56.

³Ibid., p. 56.

⁴Ibid., p. 56.

⁵See Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, pp. 81-89, for a detailed outline of the work of Swinburne, Gosse, Robert Bridges, Dobson, Lang, W. Davenport Adams, Henley, Stevenson, and others, in reviving and establishing the fixed forms in England. Also, see Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, Chapter VIII, pp. 95-104.

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produces two rondeaux or rondels as he calls them. Individually these writers initiate and propel the movement of the revival of the forms with their own creative activity, and in less than a decade they succeed in effecting the revival of the forms and even in establishing them so well that it has been said that the "ballade and the rondeau, at least, are completely acclimated"¹ and, further, that

. . . the group which included Austin Dobson, Andrew Lang, Edmund Gosse, Algernon Charles Swinburne, and W. E. Henley were so successful in spreading the contagion of their enthusiasm for the forms and in adapting the forms to the requirements of English poetry, that many of their contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic were moved to follow their example. Thus English letters came again into this charming legacy from medieval France.²

These writers become personal and literary friends, it seems, through their common literary interests; surely they are in their literary affinities a group in their enthusiasms and efforts in behalf of the revival.³

One of Gosse's earliest and longest personal and literary friendships is with Dobson, and the association grows

¹Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 91.

²Ibid., p. 78.

³Ibid., et passim. See also James K. Robinson, "A Neglected Phase of the Aesthetic Movement: English Parnassianism," pp. 733-754. Charteris' whole work, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, evidences Gosse's friendships and associations of this kind.

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quite by chance out of a mutual interest Gosse and Dobson have in the rondeau. In 1874, three years before the publication of the Manifesto, Gosse meets Dobson and hears him read a rondeau. The following is Charteris' recording of the incident:

Early in 1874 [April] he met for the first time Austin Dobson, who in 1873 had published his "Vignettes in Rhyme." In "An Appreciation," printed by Mr. Alban Dobson in his volume, Austin Dobson, Some Notes, Gosse has described the circumstances of the meeting so eventful for the two writers. It took place at the house of Mr. Peter Taylor, M.P. for Leicester, whose wife had inaugurated a Pen and Pencil Club to which authors and artists came to read or display their respective contributions. . . . On the April evening when Gosse, newly admitted to the circle, was present, some dreary readings had led up to the recital by Austin Dobson of a piece which Gosse at once recognised as a "rondeau in the French form elaborately defined by Théodore de Banville in the 1874 reprint of his Petit Traité de la Poésie Française." When the party broke up, Gosse approached the author of the piece, and shyly observed that he noticed that in the verses recited Banville's rules had been followed. They wandered into the night together, and it was only after several hours, passed "in a kind of dream" and absorbed by metrical discussions, that they parted.¹

The meeting referred to is significant because it brings together two poets who are interested in the revival of the rondeau, and who, unknown to each other, have been writing rondeaux. This incident supports Gosse's remark in his

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 81-82.

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Manifesto that many poets, unknown to each other, have been using the fixed forms in the early 1870's.¹ Dobson's Vignettes in Rhyme (1873), which is mentioned above, does not contain rondeaux. Dobson's first rondeau is published in the Spectator, February 1876. The rondeau that Dobson is reciting at this meeting is not identified. It is not surprising that Gosse recognizes that the poem that Dobson is reading is a rondeau in the French form defined by Banville; Charteris records that "Since the day when as a clerk in the British Museum [1867-1875] he had sent . . . a letter addressed to Théodore de Banville expressing his profound admiration for the poet, he had never ceased to keep in touch with current French literature."² The year before his meeting with Dobson, Gosse has published nine irregular rondeaux as part of "Fortunate Love--In Sonnets and Rondels," a sonnet-rondeau sequence which appears in On Viol and Flute (1873).

Charteris specifically records only this meeting of Gosse with Dobson on the subject of the rondeau. However, from the exuberant tone of Gosse's recollection of this

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 56.

²Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 466.

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initial meeting with Dobson and from the lengthy discussion that they have during that night about metrics, it may probably be assumed that other meetings follow on the subject of the rondeau, particularly since the rondeau is the French form Dobson most favours and uses not only at the time of its greatest popularity in the late 1870's but all the rest of his life.¹ Charteris reinforces this assumption that Gosse and Dobson develop a close association that continues through the rest of their lifetime; he comments that from the time of this initial meeting in 1874 Gosse and Dobson work closely together on literary and personal matters for forty-eight years, till the time of Dobson's death in September 1921.² Charteris explains that Gosse and Dobson criticize and promote each other's work, that they are both dedicated to literary craftsmanship and scholarship.³ They work together in many meetings and by continuing correspondence, undoubtedly discussing the rondeau among other literary matters. The closeness of Gosse's association

¹See James K. Robinson, "Austin Dobson and the Rondeliers," p. 39, and The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, passim, and "Bibliographical Index," pp. 516-517.

²Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 82; see, also, James K. Robinson, "Austin Dobson and the Rondeliers," pp. 31, 34 (n 10, n 11, n 13).

³Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 82.

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with Dobson is attested to by Gosse's "An Appreciation [of Dobson]," contained in Alban Dobson's work on his father,¹ by Gosse's essay, "Austin Dobson,"² in which he stresses the interest in the revival that he shares with Dobson, by his discussions of Dobson in numerous other works, by their correspondence, and by the many poems they write about, in dedication to, or in commemoration of each other.

Consideration of some of the correspondence and works may show the way in which Gosse and Dobson work together. Two letters of Gosse to Dobson later in the year of their first meeting (August 26, 1874, and October 11, 1874)³ suggest some of the interest and activity of the two poets. Gosse is advising Dobson about efforts to get some of his poems accepted by journals and magazines with which he has contacts; both letters speak of the beginning and growing reputations of the two poets. Gosse in his connections with the Examiner has been using his influence to promote the

¹Gosse, "An Appreciation," in Alban Dobson, Austin Dobson: Some Notes, London, Oxford University Press, 1928, pp. 34-35.

²Gosse, "Austin Dobson," Quarterly Review, pp. 53-66.

³Cited in Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 83-85.

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poems of members of their circle, the "younger men," as he calls them. Charteris says that the first of these letters is the first "in a correspondence which failed to be daily only by reason of the two writers meeting so frequently."¹ Other letters speak of their efforts in poetry and their exchange of works for each other's appraisal and enjoyment. Early in 1876 (April 4th), Gosse writes of the pleasure of their company of the previous evening, of his sextain he has been copying to send to Dobson, and of poems ["some absurd works" he calls them] that he plans to forbid circulation of.²

It is interesting to note that often the letters speak of meetings even of the same date as the letters themselves. Often, too, the letters are accompanied by poems; often a poem constitutes the letter and often the letter changes from prose utterance to poetic utterance. An example of the latter is Gosse's letter of February 21, 1877, to Dobson, in which he thanks Dobson for ". . . your note on me in your book, [and] the pleasure and pride I feel in being associated with work so admirable and destined . . . to be so famous," and then breaks into a triolet that he says "certain curious coincidences of correspondence" have inspired:

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 83.

²Ibid., pp. 101-102.

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Four old women weave aesthetics,
 Toss the web across, across;
 Shuttling with a golden tettix,
 Four old women weave aesthetics,
 Bastard prose in pseud' poetics,
 Symonds, Pater, Dowden, Gosse,
 Four old women, weave aesthetics,
 Toss the web across, across.¹

The letters frequently seem to be the continuing of the conversation of the day or evening, the sharing of response to occasions or events or people or poetry, or the manifesting of association in art and living. The conditions of art and life seem so prevailingly one for Gosse that his responses to them are of a piece; letters and talk and poetry (and other works) are indicators and effects of these responses.

Gosse and Dobson, in their long association, consider each other friend and brother and neighbour--and do so particularly and continuingly in the matter of literary interest and performance. Tone and substance of letters and works bear out this association. Dobson, in 1876, addresses the following sextain to Gosse:

Gossip, may we live as now,
 Brothers ever, I and thou,
 Us may never Envy's mesh hold,
 Anger never cross our threshold;

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 97-98.

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Let our modest Lares be¹
 Friendship and Urbanity.

Gosse, in June 1885, looks back upon the first ten years of their association, years marked by involvement in the revival and promotion of the fixed poetic forms:

TO AUSTIN DOBSON

Neighbour of the near domain,
 Stay awhile your passing wain!
 Though to give it more your way,
 Take a gift from me to-day!
 From my homely store I bring
 Signs of my poor husbanding;--
 Here a spike of purple phlox,
 Here a spicy bunch of stocks,
 Mushrooms from my moister fields,
 Apples that my orchard yields,--
 Nothing,--for the show they make,
 Something,--for the donor's sake;
 Since for ten years we have been
 Best of neighbours ever seen;
 We have fronted evil weather,
 Nip of critic's frost, together;
 We have shared laborious days,
 Shared the pleasantness of praise;
 Brother not more close to brother,
 We have cheered and helped each other:
 Till so far the fields of each
 Into the other's stretch and reach,
 That perchance when both are gone
 Neither can be names alone.²

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, p. 384. This poem is one of a group of eight poems, the first of which is entitled "To Edmund Gosse" and the others "To the Same." They are not grouped chronologically. Dates of composition of the poems are 1878, 1877 (a rondeau concerning state of poetry), 1887, 1891, 1885, 1876, 1900, and 1899. All relate to their mutual and individual interests in literature, particularly the creative faculty and process.

²The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. [127].

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Dobson, in 1892, writes, commemoratively, of their work of earlier days in his poem "'Sat Est Scripsisse' (To E. G., With a Collection of Essays)":

This Book you see before you, this masterpiece of Whim,
Of Wisdom, Learning, Fancy (if you will, please attend),--
Was written by its Author, who gave it to his Friend.

For they had worked together,--been Comrades of the Pen;
They had their points at issue, they differed now and then;
But both loved Song and Letters, and each had close at
heart

The hopes, the aspirations, the 'dear delays' of Art.

And much they talked of Measures, and more they talked
of Style,
Of Form and 'lucid Order,' of 'labour of the File';
And he who wrote the writing, as sheet by sheet was penned
(This all was long ago, Sir!), would read it to his
Friend.

They knew not, nor cared greatly, if they were spark
or star;
They knew to move is somewhat, although the goal be far;
And larger light or lesser, this thing at least is clear,
They served the Muses truly,--their service was sincere.¹

Dobson points specifically to the nature of the involvement that he and Gosse have had in the revival, promotion, and use of the fixed poetic forms. His recollection of their talk recreates their concern theoretically and practically with matters of poetic form; the language and substance point to French theorizers about the fixed forms, particularly Gautier and Banville, and of course to the pronouncements that he and

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, pp. 307-308.

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Gosse make in the interest of promoting the revival and use of the forms in England. His recollection recreates some of the ardour and compulsion of the engagement that he and Gosse have had. Dobson concludes his poem:

Though cold is now their hoping, though they no more
aspire,
They too once had their ardour--they handed on the
fire.¹

Though these last lines may suggest that Dobson and Gosse may have ceased in their hopes and aspirations, the early part of the poem muses that "some new Reader" may respond to the verse, and the last line itself suggests that their influence may be continuing in the works of newer poets to whom they have "handed on the fire."

Gosse, in 1911, in presenting his newly collected poems for a new generation of readers, reiterates Dobson's hopes that the verse may have that quality "which alone keeps verse alive." Gosse says:

. . . I put them [his collected poems] forth with a strange timidity. They pleased once: it is at least just possible that they may please again. There is nothing in which fashion alters so rapidly as it does in poetry. I have followed every successful change in it with curiosity, and I believe with sympathy. I shall know myself to be old indeed when I can no longer vibrate to the music of the latest poets of our race, and I have not yet found that I am unable to respond to their

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, p. 308.

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challenge. But I should make a vain pretence if I presumed to work upon their lines; I admire them in their advance, but I do not attempt to follow it. Any one who has the patience to turn over these pages will not need to be told that the voice is not of 1911--it is of 1872, or of a still earlier date--since my technique was determined more than forty years ago, and what it was it has remained.¹

Gosse and Dobson are not inactive in their efforts in the interest of poetry in the latter years of their lives. In 1913, Gosse delivers a lecture on "The Future of English Poetry," and it in turn inspires Dobson to compose the poem "On the Future of Poetry" in which he declares:

I stand upon the ancient way.

I hold it for a certain thing,
That, blank or rhyming, song must sing;
And more, that what is good for verse,
Need not, by dint of rhyme, grow worse.

I hold that they who deal in rhyme
Must take the standpoint of the time--
But not to catch the public ear,
As mountebank or pulpiteer;

That the old notes are still the new,
If the musician's touch be true--²

In 1920, in what Alban Dobson says is his father's last poem, Dobson writes this tribute:

TO EDMUND GOSSE

In darkening days, when old desires
Die slowly down, like fading fires,

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. vi.

²The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, pp. 460-461; 500.

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What cheers us most is still the cry
 Of those who look for larger sky,
 And find, with every cloud withdrawn,
 Fresh promise of an ampler dawn.
 Your voice of yore was joined with these,
 I wish you therefore Hope and Ease,
 Health, and continued power to please.¹

The high point in the association of Gosse and Dobson, it may well be, is the time of focus for each on the revival and promotion of the fixed poetic forms, and they demonstrate the closeness of their association in these times of significant focus by their communications with each other. Some of the poems and letters considered earlier in the present section exemplify this, none better perhaps than Gosse's letter and rondeau "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," that he sends to Dobson at the time of his Manifesto in early July of 1877.² The years of their intensified work for the revival in the 1870's are marked by poems addressed to each other and concerned most immediately with the revival. Dobson, in 1877, for example, composes the rondeau, "'With Pipe and Flute' (To E. G.)," in which he wishes,

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, p. 478. See also, "To E. G.," p. 476, a tribute to Gosse of somewhat earlier in the same year, wishing Gosse:

Strength to achieve while strength endures
 And, when the power to do is done,
 Remembered radiance in the sun!

²See above, pp.176-183. See, also, Charteris' account of Gosse's association with Dobson at this time, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 99-104.

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Ah! would,--ah would, a little span,
 Some air of Arcady could fan
 This age of ours, too seldom stirred
 With pipe and flute!¹

Gosse pays the highest of tributes to Dobson by addressing to him "The Praise of Dionysus--Chant Royal: To A. D.," using as he does, the most intricately difficult of the fixed poetic forms from France, a form reserved by tradition for the celebration of "mystères divins" and addressed "à un Dieu, à un Roi ou à un Prince."²

The association of Gosse and Dobson, all through their literary career after they meet in 1874, is memorable for its personal friendship and its creative productivity. The course of their association is indicated, not fully but amply at least, by their correspondence and poems as well as by other literary works. Both have associations with others of the revival group and of later times the same, essentially, as their association which has been sketched above. Such associations are amply and particularly attested to by amount and kind of correspondence and by works, just as in the case of Dobson.

The association of Gosse and Swinburne may well be noted here. On the same date, July 5, 1877, that Gosse

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson,
 p. 329.

²See above, pp. 168-170.

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writes to Dobson to share with him the occasion of his Manifesto, he writes to Swinburne to share the same occasion. The letters are different in tone and substance, and in their very difference may suggest the difference of relationship of Gosse with them. Charteris records the letter:

I send you the no. of the Cornhill containing my plea for rondeaux and ballades, and adorned with your exquisite ballades of which I become more and more enamoured. You will, I hope, be interested in the scheme and the purpose of the article, though there may be one thing and another which will meet with your disapproval. I shall take it as a specially friendly favour if you, who are so learned in the history of verse, will point out to me any sins of omission or commission in my historical part. In every case write to me about it, for I am half in despair. In all this battle for form . . . we fight as a mere handful against the whole army of Philistia.¹

The above letter, which has a copy of the Manifesto attached to it, is a personal plea to Swinburne for cooperation in promoting the revival. Gosse is obviously both enthusiastic and concerned at this time about the revival of the rondeau.

He is undoubtedly particularly eager to have the approval and even the active support of Swinburne in the "scheme and purpose" of his Manifesto as a part of the concerted attempt of the movement of the revivalists effectively and properly to establish the fixed forms. Gosse says in his

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 99-100.

Manifesto that "these forms are now being adopted by a still wider circle, and the movement seems so general that the time has come to define a little more exactly what seems desirable in this matter and what not. . . . [to make clear] what are the traditional and unique characteristics of the exotic forms which it seems desirable to adopt into English poetry."¹ Gosse, in making the plea to Swinburne quite apparently makes it to him as one of the group, the "mere handful [who are fighting] against the whole army of Philistia." Quite certainly the substance of Gosse's Manifesto is already intimately known by Swinburne, and most certainly, also, Swinburne is in accord with the "scheme and purpose" of the Manifesto. The close personal and professional association of Gosse and Swinburne at this time, the early part Swinburne has played in the revival of the forms, and the feeling of the revivalists of being a special group, the "mere handful," all may move Gosse to submit his plea to Swinburne for the special approval of the master and also perhaps to share it with him now that it has been made. Charteris' comments on the association of Gosse and Swinburne supports supposition of such motivation on the part of Gosse for sending Swinburne the copy of the "Plea." Charteris does

¹Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," p. 56.

not cite letters that provide evidence that Gosse has further communication with Swinburne regarding interests in the revival and promotion of the fixed forms. He does cite letters concerned with other matters,¹ and it is important to keep in mind that Gosse and Swinburne are in continuing close personal association until Swinburne retires to Putney in 1879 under the care of Theodore Watts-Dunton.² It is quite certain that correspondence in collections other than that compiled by Charteris--those at the University of Leeds Library, for example--gives evidence of continuing significant dialogue between them concerning the fixed forms. Cohen substantiates this, for she speaks of a letter Swinburne writes to Gosse in 1877 about his poem "The Complaint of Lisa":

Certainly if you talk of metrical inventions or innovations there is one [his "Complaint of Lisa"] of the hardest on record--a reduplicated inter-rhyming sestina . . . the twelve rhymes carried on even into the six-line envoy, as you will find if you look close for them in the fourth and tenth syllables of each line of it--or simply if you (having a poet's ear) read it out.³

¹See, e.g., Charteris, Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 116-117; see, also, pp. 153-154, two letters of Gosse to Swinburne, June 26, 1882, both of which evidence continuance of the old association of Gosse and Swinburne.

²Ibid., p. 131.

³Swinburne's letter is cited in Cohen, Lyric Forms From France, p. 88.

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Cohen also speaks of Swinburne's having written to Gosse on another occasion about the manner in which he writes what he refers to as "the ballad you like so much." Numerous references of this kind may be found in Charteris as well as Cohen. All, it is quite apparent, attest to discussions between the two by letter or in person about poetry, and frequently these discussions in some way focus on the fixed forms they are using and also wishing to promote in their time. Swinburne is the older poet, the master for Gosse, but Gosse and he quite certainly stimulate each other, advise each other, criticize (with approval and appreciation) each other's work, and, notably also, conceive literary projects of moment and significance.¹ Both Swinburne and Gosse range widely in their literary interests. Gosse's Life of Swinburne (1927) amply attests to a deep and enduring relationship. Gosse quite certainly continues to be engaged with others concerned about the progress of poetry, especially with the revived forms and these often as they are being adapted to English taste and need. His forty-eight year

¹See, e.g., Charteris, Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 98-99: Gosse's letter to Swinburne on plans for The Companion to the Playhouse, June 14, 1877; and another, pp. 117-118: regarding a new edition of British poets, April 10, 1879.

association with Dobson referred to above supports this conclusion.

Quite probably Charteris' collection does not include all the letters which might give evidence of the kind of promotion of the use of the forms that Gosse's Manifesto and Dobson's "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse" attest to. Incidental allusions abound, however, and Charteris suggests continuing interest and promotion of an active nature by Gosse and others of the group, and this on into the 1880's even in what Charteris speaks of as a literary "period of lull" and also a time when Gosse, "now a prominent literary figure, prolific in output, and widely sought after as contributor and lecturer,"¹ is engaged in other time-demanding activity; Charteris comments:

Andrew Lang's Ballads in Blue China had appeared in 1880; Swinburne . . . seemed for the moment to have fallen on a time of exhaustion; Banville's "feats of graceful metrical gymnastics" had set a fashion for the younger poets who were now busy with "French forms," with rondeaux, villanelles, triolets, and chant-royals, allusions to which abound in Gosse's letters; the Muses of Tennyson and Browning appeared quiescent; Meredith in 1883 was bringing out Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of the Earth--but Diana of the Cross-Roads had still to begin its career. . . . Andrew Lang, Austin Dobson and Gosse were pressing the claims of the younger poets.²

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 142-143.

²Ibid., p. 143.

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Gosse does not publish subsequent manifestos that aggressively promote the forms; the forms have been revived and they have been established. Further manifestos (or equivalents) are really not required of Gosse or any others of the group. Gosse and others do not, however, cease "pressing the claims of the younger poets," after the time of the greatest popularity of the fixed forms in England.

Long into the twentieth century, almost to the last of his days, Gosse encourages many of the young poets and promotes their work with a good measure of the zeal and vitality of his early career and with an authority, generosity, and interest that has grown with his own developing security of position creatively and critically. In creative and critical approaches to poetry, Gosse remains consistent to the last with his early principle of the importance of the discipline of poetic form. This consistency is evidenced by his "Epilogue," which he uses to close his Collected Poems of 1911:

EPILOGUE

Before my tale of days is told,
 O may I watch, on reverent knees,
 The Unknown Beauty once unfold
 The magic of her mysteries!

Before I die, O may I see,
 Clasp'd in her violet girdle, Spring;
 May April breezes blow to me
 Songs that the youngest poets sing!

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Old eyes are dull to sight unseen,
 Old ears are dull to songs unsung,
 But if the heart stay warm and green,
 Perchance the senses may keep young.

Howe'er it be, I will not quail
 To tell the lapse of years like sand;
 My faith in beauty shall not fail
 Because I fail to understand.

New arts, new raptures, new desires
 Will stir the new-born souls of men;
 New fingers smite new-fashioned lyres,--
 And O! may I be listening then.

The centaur crashes thro' the wood,
 And shoots his arrow there and thus:
 Shall I prefer my solitude
 Because his form be fabulous?

Shall I reject the green and rose
 Of opals, with their shifting flame,
 Because the classic diamond glows
 With lustre that is still the same?

Change is the pulse of life on earth;
 The artist dies, but Art lives on;
 New rhapsodies are ripe for birth
 When every rhapsodist seems gone.

So, if I pray for length of days,
 It is not in the barren pride
 That looks behind itself, and says,
 "The Past alone is deified!"

Nay, humbly, shrinkingly, in dread
 Of fires too splendid to be borne,--
 In expectation lest my head
 Be from its Orphic shoulders torn,--

I wait, till, down the eastern sky
 Muses, like Maenads in a throng,
 Sweep my decayed traditions by,
 In startling tones of unknown song.

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So, to my days' extremity,
May I, in patience infinite,
Attend the beauty that must be,
And, though it slay me, welcome it.¹

¹ The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, pp. 357-358.

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Section 4

Rondeaux

Eleven rondeaux written by Gosse are extant, as far as this writer can determine.¹ Nine are in his Collected Poems² and two are in his letters.³ The Collected Poems contain the poems from four volumes written between 1873 and 1894: On Viol and Flute (1873), New Poems (1879), Firdausi in Exile (1885), and In Russet and Silver (1894). Of these volumes, only On Viol and Flute contains rondeaux; it has the nine that are found in the collection. Gosse's rondeaux will be examined in the following order: first, "Fortunate Love: In Sonnets and Rondels," a sequence of eight rondeaux and twelve sonnets from On Viol and Flute; second, "Rondeau," a single poem from On Viol and Flute; third, "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," a rondeau contained in a letter to Austin Dobson in 1877; and finally, "Entre deux draps--," a rondeau written in 1879 and found in one of Gosse's letters to Dobson.

¹See appendix, pp. 306-312, which contains the writer's correspondence with the University of Leeds. This University holds "thousands of letters" written by Gosse which are contained in a general Gosse Collection and in the Brotherton Collection. The University, however, does not lend either of these collections, and, therefore, it is not certain that the collections do not contain rondeaux.

²The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, pp. 14-95.

³Charteris, pp. 100, 119.

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A. "Fortunate Love: in Sonnets and Rondels"

The sequence, "Fortunate Love: in Sonnets and Rondels," represents Gosse's earliest use of the rondeau. The sequence contains eight rondeaux and twelve sonnets.¹ Gosse uses the term rondel instead of rondeau. It is certain that the poems with refrains are not rondels because they follow the rondeau form more closely than they do the rondel form and also because they are all like a poem to which he gives the title "Rondeau." The rondeaux and sonnets are placed in the sequence as follows:

I.	Rondeau	"First Sight"
II.	Sonnet	"Elation"
III.	Sonnet	"In Church-Time"
IV.	Sonnet	"Dejection and Delay"
V.	Rondeau	"Expectation"
VI.	Rondeau	"In the Grass"
VII.	Sonnet	"Reservation"
VIII.	Rondeau	"By the Well"
IX.	Sonnet	"May-Day"
X.	Sonnet	"Mistrust"
XI.	Sonnet	"Eavesdropping"
XII.	Rondeau	"A Garden-Piece"

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, pp. 14-33.

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XIII.	Sonnet	"Confident Love"
XIV.	Rondeau	"Lover's Quarrel"
XV.	Sonnet	"Reconciliation"
XVI.	Sonnet	"The Fear of Death"
XVII.	Rondeau	"Experience"
XVIII.	Sonnet	"The Exchange"
XIX.	Rondeau	"Under the Apple-Tree"
XX.	Sonnet	"Epithalamium"

A very interesting and important point about the sequence is observed in passing but because of the scope of the problem that it suggests, it is left for study in the future. It is quickly noticed that the rondeaux and sonnets in this sequence are similar in structure. The following question arises out of this observation: is this particular use of the rondeau a modification of the sonnet or is the sonnet in this instance approaching the rondeau form? This question, it would seem, is worthy of a thorough study.

The sequence begins with the rondeau, "First Sight," which describes the beginning of love between the speaker and the lady. This is the poem:

I

FIRST SIGHT

When first we met the nether world was white
And on the steel-blue ice before her bower

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I skated in the sunrise for an hour,
 Till all the grey horizon, gulphed in light,
 Was red against the bare boughs black as night;
 Then suddenly her sweet face like a flower,
 Enclosed in sables from the frost's dim power,
 Shone at her casement, and flushed burning bright
 When first we met!
 My skating being done, I loitered home,
 And sought that day to lose her face again;
 But Love was weaving in his golden loom
 My story up with hers, and all in vain
 I strove to lose the threads he spun amain,
 When first we met.¹

Gosse organizes the rondeau in thirteen iambic lines of ten syllables each with refrain that is made of the first two feet of the first line and is added, without rhyming with any line, to the ends of the eighth and thirteenth lines. This poem breaks away from the traditional rondeau in using four rhymes instead of two (a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, R; c, d, c, d, d, R) and also in eliminating the conventional tripartite stanza structure. The substance of the rondeau is divided in conventional manner even though the division is not indicated by stanzaic divisions. A tentative scansion of this rondeau may assist in arriving at a proper experiencing of this poem:²

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 14.

²See, above, Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114, for explanation of symbols used in scansion.

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When first | we met || the neth | er world | was white
 And on | the steel | -blue ice || before | her bower
 I skat | ed in | the sun | rise || for | an hour,
 Till all | the grey | hori | zon, || gulphed | in light,
 Was red | against | the bare | boughs || black | as night;
 Then sud | denly | her sweet | face || like | a flower,
 Enclosed | in sa | bles || from | the frost's | dim power,
 Shone at | her case | ment, || and | flushed || burn | ing bright
 When first | we met!

My skat | ing be | ing done, || I loi | tered home,
 And sought | that day || to lose | her face | again;
 But Love | was weav | ing || in | his gol | den loom
 My sto | ry up | with hers, || and all | in vain
 I strove | to lose | the threads || he spun | a main,
 When first | we met.

This rondeau recreates the speaker's first meeting of the lady and his instantaneous falling in love with her. She appears at her casement when the wintry grey horizon is "gulphed in light," the "red aurora" later to be

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"flashed to gold" in the "Epithalamium." He sees her "sweet face like a flower" shining and "flushed burning bright," more bright and shining, in effect, than the sunrise red and gold. The brilliant image lingers with him even though he tries "to lose her face again." He realizes that "Love [is] weaving in his golden loom / [His] story up with hers."

The refrain focuses distinguishingly, strikingly on three distinct conditions or states: the rondeau-speaker's condition in the nether world of white, "steel-blue," "grey," and "black" before the lady appears at her casement; his condition in sunrise red and gold against "black as night" as the lady appears "like a flower," shining and "flushed burning bright"--the moment when he becomes the rondeau-lover and she his beloved; and condition when he "loiter[ing] home" realizes that "Love [is] weaving in his golden loom / [His] story up with hers, and all in vain / [He strives] to lose the threads." The refrain focuses finally and subtly to blend all three states working them into one unified meaning and experience.

Rhythmic progression has the general overall effect of harmonious simultaneity of coincidence of expected formal metrical rhythms and natural sense rhythms with easy, flexible variations of heightening sense stresses and varying occurrences of caesura pauses within the lines, these effectively adjusted to the developing meaning and experience

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of the rondeau-lover and his beloved on this occasion "when first they [meet]."

Three sonnets follow this first rondeau and each of these presents the lover in a particular condition in the progress of his love.

In the sonnet, "Elation," he ecstatically submits with "joy and yearning wild" to "Love / [Who] Rules uninvited, not to be controlled" in his "awakening spirit." Imagistically, his state is presented most particularly in the figure of "all the windows of the west [lying] ope, / Flooding the air with splendour undefiled" at sunset "in the mist of hope." General imagistic effects are a development of the shining red aurora condition of "When first [they] met." An air of holiness tinges the rondeau-lover's rapture as his heart and soul watch "the stately air with which [Love's] footsteps move." Here is the poem:

II

ELATION

Like to some dreaming and unworldly child
 Who sits at sunset in the mist of hope,
 When all the windows of the west lie ope,
 Flooding the air with splendour undefiled,
 And sees, by fancy in a trance beguiled,
 An angel mount the perilous burning slope,
 Winning the opal and the sapphire cope,
 And laughs for very joy and yearning wild;--
 So I, in whose awakening spirit Love
 Rules uninvited, not to be controlled,
 Am happiest when I struggle not, but hold
 My windows open and my heart above,

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Watching, with soul not bowed nor overbold,¹
The stately air with which his footsteps move.

This is a Petrarchan sonnet, containing fourteen lines, four rhymes, a b b a, a b b a, c d d c, d c; the dominant rhythmic movement is iambic pentameter. In substance, particularly, the sonnet continues the meaning and experience that begins to develop in the first rondeau.

In the next sonnet, the lover seeks out his beloved, "In Church-Time," and awaits her coming from the church, piping and singing as he waits. Her appearance "[leaves him] throbbing," "[leaves him] faint," his "dizzy brain dissolves and swims! / And all [his] body thrills with fond constraint!" The poem is an expression of compellingly thrilling but constrained desire. This is the sonnet:

III

IN CHURCH-TIME

I took my flute among the primroses
That lined the hill along the brown church-wall,
For she was there; till shades began to fall,
I piped my songs out like a bird at ease,
When suddenly the distant litanies
Ceased, and she came, and passed beyond recall,
And left me throbbing, heart and lips and all,
And vanished down the vistaed cypress-trees;
Ah! sweet, that motion of harmonious limbs
Drove all my folly hence, but left me faint!
Oh! be not, my desire, so wholly saint,
That I must woo thee to the rhythm of hymns!

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 15.

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Ah, me! my dizzy brain dissolves and swims!
 And all my body thrills with fond constraint!¹

The form is generally the same as that of the first sonnet.

Poem number four, "Dejection and Delay," another sonnet, further develops the lover's response to love. The lover chides himself for his impatience in his expectation of love in springtime "overflow with blossoming green fire."

This is the sonnet:

IV

DEJECTION AND DELAY

Canst thou not wait for Love one flying hour,
 O heart of little faith? Are fields not green
 Because their rolling bounty is not seen?
 Will beauty not return with the new flower?
 Because the tir'd sun seeks the deep sea-bower
 Where sleep and Tethys tenderly convene,
 While purple night unfurls her starry screen
 Shall sunlight no more thrill the world with power?
 True Love is patient ever; by the brooks
 He hath his winter-dreams, a fluent choir
 And waits for summer to revive again;
 He knows that by-and-by the woodland-nooks
 Will overflow with blossoming green fire,
 And swooping swallows herald the warm rain.²

The form is similar to that of the preceding sonnets.

The fifth poem, "Expectations," is a rondeau, the second in the sequence. The lover, in the "flower-time" of spring, yields to the compelling urge to find his beloved

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 16.

²Ibid., p. 17.

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in the midst of flowers and blossoms and enter into her dream of love; in his elated mood he imagines himself to be the very god of love:

V

EXPECTATIONS

When flower-time comes and all the woods are gay,
 When linnets chirrup and the soft winds blow,
 Adown the winding river I will row,
 And watch the merry maidens tossing hay,
 And troops of children shouting in their play,
 And with my thin oars flout the fallen snow
 Of heavy hawthorn-blossoms as I go,--
 And shall I see my love at fall of day
 When flower-time comes?
 Ah, yes! for by the border of the stream
 She binds red roses to a trim alcove,
 And I may fade into her summer-dream
 Of musing upon love,--nay, even seem
 To be myself the very god of love,
 When flower-time comes!¹

Gosse is faithful to the traditional form in using thirteen pentameter lines and the refrain. The refrain consists of the first two feet of the first line and is added, without rhyming with any line, to the ends of the eighth and thirteenth lines. The poem breaks away from the traditional rondeau in the use of four rhymes instead of two: a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, R; c, d, c, c, d, R; and in the elimination of the tripartite stanza structure.

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 18.

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A tentative scansion of the rondeau may assist in arriving at a proper experiencing of this poem:¹

// When flower | -time comes // and all | the woods | are gay,

When lin | nets chir | rup and | the soft | winds blow,

Adown | the win | ding ri | ver I | will row,

And watch | the mer | ry mai | dens tos | sing hay,

And troops | of chil | dren | shou | ting in | their play,

And with | my thin | oars | flout | the fal | len snow

Of hea | vy haw | thorn-blos | soms as | I go,--

And shall | I see | my love | at fall | of day

When flower | -time comes?

// Ah, yes! | for by | the bor | der of | the stream

She binds | red ros | es to | a trim | alcove,

And I | may fade | into | her sum | mer-dream

Of mu | sing u | pon love //, --nay, e | ven seem

to be | myself // the ve | ry god | of love,

When flower | -time comes!

This poem expresses the lover's expectation of summer, the sight of his lady, and the possibility of winning

¹See above, Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114, for explanation of symbols used in scansion.

her love. The amorous setting and the mood expressed by the poem are in complete harmony. The poem sensuously describes a summer day with its gay woods, singing birds, gentle winds, winding river, maidens, children, and blossoms, and with him fading in this setting into the dream of love of his beloved.

The formal pattern of this poem reinforces and enriches the theme. The rhyme scheme is rigid thus underlining the firmness of the optimistic tone. The poem is built upon two distinct waves of emotion. The first wave is expressed in the octave and refrain; the second in the sestet and refrain. The rhyme scheme of the octave is a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, R. This firmness and closeness of rhyme gives a unity of tone to the first eight lines and refrain. This unity assists in developing firmly the love meaning and experience theme. The desire for summer and the lady are linked and tied by this tight rhyme scheme of the octave. The sestet, lines nine to thirteen and refrain, continue developing the meaning and experience doing so in the new rhyme scheme. The sestet contains the optimistic expression that the poet will see the lady in summer. The rhyme scheme c, d, c, c, d, R, fuses meaning and experience of the poem into a tight, firm expression. The refrain does not rhyme with any of the lines. It has, among other functions in the poem, the function of separating the octave from the sestet and then

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finally fusing the experience and meaning of the whole rondeau.

"Expectations" makes an appropriate movement forward out of the constrained ecstasies and impatient yearnings for love of the lover since the beginning of his love. "Expectations" find fulfillment symbolically, recreatingly in the rondeau "In the Grass," especially in the figure "flame of grass" which combines with the exclamation of ecstasy to be the rondeau refrain, "Oh! flame of grass." This is the poem:

VI

IN THE GRASS

Oh! flame of grass, shot upward from the earth,
 Keen with a thousand quivering sunlit fires,
 Green with the sap of satisfied desires
 And sweet fulfilment of your sad pale birth,
 Behold! I clasp you as a lover might,
 Roll on you, bathing in the noonday sun,
 And, if it might be, I would fain be one
 With all your odour, mystery and light,
 Oh flame of grass!
 For here, to chasten my untimely gloom,
 My lady took my hand, and spoke my name;
 The sun was on her gold hair like a flame;
 The bright wind smote her forehead like perfume;
 The daisies darkened at her feet; she came,
 As Spring comes, scattering incense on your bloom
 Oh flame of grass!¹

An approximate scansion of the rondeau is used to assist in arriving at a proper experiencing of this poem:

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 19.

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Oh! flame | of grass, || shot up | ward from | the earth,

Keen with | a thou | sand qui | vering sun | lit fires,

Green with | the sap | of sa | tisfied | desires

And sweet | fulfil | ment of | your sad | pale birth,

Behold! || I clasp | you as | a lov | er might,

Roll on | you, || bathing in | the noon | day sun,

And, if | it might | be, || I | would fain | be one

With all | your o | dour, || mys | tery | and light,

Oh flame | of grass!

For here, || to cha | sten my | untim | ly gloom,

My la | dy took | my hand, || and spoke | my name;

The sun | was on | her gold | hair like | a flame;

The bright | wind smote | her fore | head like | perfume;

The dai | sies dar | kened at | her feet; || she came,

As Spring | comes, || sca | ttering in | cense on | your bloom

Oh flame | of grass!¹

This poem contains two major changes from the form of "First Sight," and "Expectations," the two earlier rondeaux in this

¹See above, Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114, for explanation of the symbols used in scansion.

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sequence. It is a fourteen line poem and it has six rhymes, a, b, b, a, c, d, d, c, R; e, f, f, e, f, e, R; this rhyme scheme contains two more rhymes than the four used in the first two rondeaux in this sequence and four more than the two rhymes used in the traditional rondeau form described in Chapter One.

The poem expresses the lover's ecstatic response in the memory of the first time his beloved touches him and speaks his name, when she comes to him "As Spring comes, scattering incense." The refrain "Oh! flame of grass" changes dramatically but subtly in creating meaning and experience of the rondeau. It epitomizes and concretizes the lover's ecstatic responses, flaming and shooting "upward from the earth, / Keen with a thousand quivering sunlit fires . . ." and springing actually from his condition of "sweet fulfilment." The refrain changes then to focus upon the lover's ecstatic embrace of the "flame of grass" as if it is his beloved and as if he is trying to become fused with the "odour, mystery and light" or very essence of the "flame of grass" as it seems to be an epitomization of his beloved. The refrain situation of the final refrain is the recreation of the occasion that provides the impulse for the experience of the flaming ecstasy. The beloved has about her the qualities of gold and flame (the sun upon her gold hair), brightness, perfume, and scattering incense, the qualities of

"odour, mystery and light" that the lover "would fain be one / With . . ."; and her qualities are scattered upon the "bloom" of the "flame of grass." The refrain focuses finally and subtly to fuse all three separate refrain situations into one intense unified meaning and experience.

The poem is particularly brilliant in its imagistic sensuous effects that come to focus in the "flame of grass" and that look backwards to the "red aurora" of the rondeau experience in "First Sight" and forward to the flash of the "red aurora" to "gold" in the experience to come in "Epithalamium." The poem may be seen in similar formal relation to the opening rondeau and closing sonnet in that it presents, as only one other poem of the sequence does, the formal structure of the rondeau in some respects and the formal structure of the sonnet in some respects. "By the Well" is this other poem. With the exception of these two poems, rondeaux of the sequence are composed of thirteen lines and refrains, and sonnets are composed of fourteen lines without refrains. "In the Grass" has the fourteen lines that distinguish the sonnet and also the refrains that distinguish the rondeaux.

"Reservation," the next poem, number seven in the sequence, is the fourth sonnet. The lovers are finally together. They experience the frustration and torment of

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unconsummated love and the thrill of expectation. This is the sonnet:

VII

RESERVATION

Her terrace looking down upon the lake
 Has corners where the deepest shadows are,
 And there we sit to watch the evening-star,
 And try what melody our lutes can make;
 Our reticent hearts with longing almost break,
 The while her gleaming eyes strain out afar,
 As though her soul would seek the utmost bar
 Where faltering sunset quivers, flake by flake;
 My forehead rests against the balustrade;
 My cheeks flush hot and cold; my eager eyes
 Are fixed on hers until the moon shall rise,--
 The splendid moon of Love,--and unafraid
 The utmost debt of passionate hope be paid,¹
 And all be given that now her heart denies.

The formal features of this poem are generally the same as those of the sonnets, "In Church-Time" and "Reconciliation," and rondeau, "Lover's Quarrel."

Poem number eight is the fourth rondeau. The progress of love of the sequence seems frustrated by the conflict between the lover's intensely passionate desires and his attempt to control these desires. This is the rondeau:

VIII

BY THE WELL

Hot hands that yearn to touch her flower-like face,
 With fingers spread, I set you like a weir
 To stem this ice-cold stream in its career,--

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 20.

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And chill your pulses there a little space;
 Brown hands, what right have you to claim the grace
 To touch her head so infinitely dear?
 Learn courteously to wait and to revere,
 Lest haply ye be found in sorry case,
 Hot hands that yearn!
 But if ye bring her flowers at her behest,
 And hold her crystal water from the well,
 And bend a bough for shade when she will rest,
 And if she find you fain and teachable,
 That flower-like face, perchance, ah! who can tell
 In your embrace may some sweet day be pressed,
 Hot hands that yearn!¹

This rondeau, as does "In the Grass," contains an additional line to produce a fourteen line poem. However, four rhymes are used instead of the six used in the poem, "In the Grass." The rhyme scheme is: a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, R; c, d, c, d, d, c, R. This rhyme scheme is similar to that of poem number one, the first rondeau in the sequence.

The ninth poem is a sonnet. The advice which the narrator gives himself in the preceding poem--to be patient in love--is demonstrated in this poem. The lover is building arguments to persuade the lady to respond to his love. The tone is subdued. He expresses the futility of dwelling upon the past and worrying about the future. He urges that lovers should learn from the birds and flowers to live for the present and love while they may. This is the sonnet:

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 21.

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IX

MAY-DAY

The Past is like a funeral gone by,
 The Future comes like an unwelcome guest,
 And some men gaze behind them to find rest,
 And some urge forward with a stifled sigh;
 But soft perennial flowers break forth and die,
 And sweet birds pair and twine a woodland nest;
 They, sifting all things, find the Present best,
 And garnish life with that philosophy.
 Like birds, like flowers, oh! let us live To-day,
 And leave To-morrow to the Fates' old fingers,
 And waste no weeping over Yesterday!
 Lo! round about the golden lustre lingers,
 The fresh green boughs are full of choral singers,
 And all the Dryades keep holiday.¹

With the exception of minor variations in rhyme scheme, the form of this sonnet is generally the same as that of the previous sonnets. It is, with the exception of the refrain, similar in technical features to the rondeau that opens the sequence, "First Sight."

Another sonnet comprises the tenth poem in the sequence. The narrator becomes aware of what may be a potential rival for the lady's love. He experiences a moment of apprehension, but is reassured by the lady's gentle touch. This is the first occasion in the sequence when there is an unsolicited gesture of love from the lady. The objective correlative pattern in the sonnet includes allusions to a medieval setting and the courtly love convention. Some

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 22.

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examples of these allusions are "court," "turret-pane," "Apollo," "Mars," "plumes," "Galloped," "rein," "man-at-arms." This is the poem:

X

MISTRUST

The peacock screamed and strutted in the court,
 The fountain flashed its crystal to the sun,
 The noisy life of noon was just begun,
 And happy men forgot that life was short;
 We two stood, laughing, at the turret-pane,
 When some Apollo of the ranks of Mars,
 Crimson with plumes and glittering like the stars,
 Galloped across below, and there drew rein.
 To see so confident a man-at-arms
 My heart sank suddenly from sun to shade,
 But she, who knows the least of Love's alarms,
 Laid one soft hand upon my throbbing wrist,
 And in her eyes I read the choice she made,
 And anger slumbered like a tired child kissed.¹

The form of the sonnet is similar to that of the preceding sonnets. The tone changes from apprehensiveness in the first ten lines to a sense of security in the remaining four lines.

Growth and confirmation of the lady's love is expressed in poem eleven, "Eavesdropping," a sonnet. Unseen by the lady, the lover watches and listens to her as she is reading Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde. He overhears his beloved vow to be true to him. This sonnet contains allusions to the courtly love convention: "May," "fair one,"

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 23.

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"yellow buoyant hair." The tone is passively amorous.

Tempo is regular and moderate. This is the poem:

XI

EAVESDROPPING

While May was merry in the leafy trees,
 I found my fair one sitting all alone,
 Where round our well the long light ferns had grown
 So high, so deep, that she was drowned in these,
 And her bright face and yellow buoyant hair
 Scarce peered above them, where she sat and read,
 Flecked by the leaf-lights wavering overhead,
 A great black-letter book of verses rare;
 Wherein old Chaucer, years and years ago,
 Wove the sad tale of Cryseide untrue,
 And Troylus yearning with a broken heart;
 At last she, sighing, shut the rhythmic woe,
 And let her sweet eyes dream against the blue,¹
 And swore she would love truly, for her part.¹

Again, the form of this sonnet is generally similar to the preceding sonnets. There are some particular changes in the rhyme scheme.

The rondeau, "A Garden-Piece," is used for the twelfth poem in the sequence. It is rondeau number five. It contains two major advances in the progress of love: first, the season changes from spring and the month of May in poem eleven to summer in this poem; and second, the poem expresses the lover's theft of a kiss, the first in this sequence of poems. The tone changes from a subdued expression in the previous poem to amorousness in this poem. This is the rondeau:

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 24.

XII

A GARDEN-PIECE

Among the flowers of summer-time she stood,
 And underneath the films and blossoms shone
 Her face, like some pomegranate strangely grown
 To ripe magnificence in solitude;
 The wanton winds, deft whisperers, had strewed
 Her shoulders with her shining hair outblown,
 And dyed her breast with many a changing tone
 Of silvery green, and all the hues that brood
 Among the flowers;
 She raised her arm up for her dove to know
 That he might preen him on her lovely head;
 Then I, unseen, and rising on tiptoe,
 Bowed over the rose-barrier, and lo!
 Touched not her arm, but kissed her lips instead,
 Among the flowers!¹

The following tentative scansion may assist in
 arriving at a proper experiencing of this poem:²

Amóng | the flówers | of sù | mē- | tī | she stóod,
 And un | dērneáth | the fīlms | and blós | sōms shónē
 Her fáce, || líke sōme | pomegrá | náte strá | ngē | ly grówn
 Tó rīpe | magníf | ícēnce | ín sō | litúde;
 Thē wán | tōn wīnds, || déft whis | pērers, || | hād stréwed
 Her shoul | ders wíth | her shí | níng hair | outblówn,
 And dyed | her breást | wíth mán | y a chán | gíng tōne,
 Of síl | verry grēen, || and ál | l the hūes | thát bróod
 Amóng | the flówers;

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 25.

²See above, Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114, for an explanation of the symbols used in scansion.

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She^u raised / her^u arm / up^u for / her^u dove / to^u know
 That he^u / might^u preen / him^u on / her^u love / ly^u head;
 Then I^u, // un^useen, // and ri^u / sing^u on / tiptoe,
 Bow^ued o^u / ver the / rose-bar^u / rier, // and lo!
 Touched^u not / her^u arm, // but^u kissed / her^u lips / in^ustead,
 Among^u / the^u flowers!

The refrain of "A Garden-Piece," "Among the flowers," focuses upon the condition of the lady, associating her with the summer-time loveliness of flowers. Frequently, she is associated with flowers as the love sequence develops. The first glimpse her lover has of her in "First Sight" is of "her sweet face [that shines] like a flower." In "By the Well," her face is seen as "flower-like." In most of the poems she is associated with flowers and the condition of flowers; this is particularly the case in "In Church-Time," in "Dejection and Delay," in "Expectation," and in "In Flame of Grass." Such association continues as the love sequence experience and meaning continue to develop. In "A Garden-Piece," she is shown as in the condition of flowers of summer-time. But her face is seen to shine "like some pomegranate strangely grown / To ripe magnificence in solitude." It is as if the ripening of their love, she appears to her beloved one with all the flower-time loveliness of air and hue and shine and the kiss the two exchange is over the rose-barrier.

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Poem number thirteen, "Confident Love," is a sonnet. As a result of their first kiss the lovers now have an understanding of the intensity of each other's love and desires. With confidence they taste love and are thrilled by their new relationship. This poem does not have the same degree of passion as that expressed in the preceding rondeau. This sonnet is more tranquil and serene, idyllic, even, in the sense of ancient Theocritus:

XIII

CONFIDENT LOVE

Now all day long we wander hand in hand
 And taste of love in many wondrous ways;
 And still my fingers tremble with amaze
 To find they rest in hers at her command;
 We sit together in the sweet corn-land,
 Her light head quivering on my sunburnt throat,
 The while the gold threads of her loose hair float
 Along my shoulder by the light wind fanned:
 And thus for many days we lightly played
 Shepherd and shepherdess with mimic crook,
 And sunned and shaded in the elm-tree's nook;
 Until the newness of our love decayed,
 And then we rose and left the heights and strayed
 Along the glen and down beside the brook.¹

Again, there is no substantial change in this form from that of the preceding sonnets.

Poems one to thirteen express the smooth development of love. In poem fourteen, "Lover's Quarrel," the happy course of their love is interrupted when the lovers have their first quarrel. The setting that is so conducive to

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 26.

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love's growth in the previous poems is in danger of becoming the environment for love's passing. This is the rondeau:

XIV

LOVER'S QUARREL

Beside the stream and in the alder-shade,
 Love sat with us one dreamy afternoon,
 When nightingales and roses made up June,
 And saw the red light and the amber fade
 Under the canopy the willows made,
 And watched the rising of the hollow moon,
 And listened to the water's gentle tune,
 And was as silent as she was, sweet maid,
 Beside the stream;
 Till with "Farewell!" he vanished from our sight,
 And in the moonlight down the glade afar
 His light wings glimmered like a falling star;
 Then ah! she took the left path, I the right,
 And now no more we sit by noon or night
 Beside the stream!¹

The structure of the rondeau is similar to that of the first rondeau of the sequence, "First Sight." The rhyme scheme varies slightly but not significantly from other rondeaux in the sequence; the pattern is a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, R; c, d, d, c, c, R.

"Lover's Quarrel" is followed by poem fifteen, a sonnet, "Reconciliation." The overwhelming power of their love forces the lovers together again. This is the poem:

XV

RECONCILIATION

But wandering on the moors at dawn of day,
 When all the sky was flushed with rosy hue,

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 27.

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I saw her white robe dabbled in the dew,
 Among the sparkling heather where she lay;
 Sobbing, she turned from me, and murmured "Nay!"
 Then rising from the ground, she strove anew
 To turn away, but could not stir, and flew
 At last into my arms the old sweet way;
 And Love, that watched us ever from afar,
 Came fluttering to our side, and cried, "O ye,
 Who think to fly, ye cannot fly from me;
 Lo! I am with you always where you are!"
 Yet henceforth are we twain and are not three,
 Though Love is on our foreheads like a star.¹

This is the same basic sonnet structure that is seen above.

This sonnet is followed by poem number sixteen, "The Fear of Death," another sonnet. Temporary separation of the lovers, which is expressed in poem fourteen, leads to apprehension about permanent separation by death. The contentment of this happy love relationship is momentarily threatened by the image of death. The power of love, however, in the image of the lady routs death and love remains secure and serene. This is the sonnet:

XVI

THE FEAR OF DEATH

Beneath her window in the cool, calm night
 I stood, and made as though I would have sung,
 Being full of life and confident and young,
 And dreaming only of young love's delight;
 Then suddenly I saw the gloom divide,
 And gliding from the darkest cypress-tree
 Death came, white-boned, and snatcht my lute from me,
 And sat himself, grimacing, by my side.
 Just then, as when the golden moon looks down
 On starless waters from a stony sky,
 My love's fair face shone out above on high;

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 28.

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Whereat I, fearing nothing of Death's frown,
 Turned smiling to salute her lovely head,
 And when I turned again, lo! Death had fled!¹

The form is similar to the other sonnets in the sequence.

Rondeau number seven, "Experience," is the seventeenth poem in the sequence. "Experience" provides an important development of the meaning and experience in the course of love--the permanence of love. The first eight lines and refrain set forth the judgment that true and lasting love is impossible. However, lines nine through thirteen and refrain contain the protestation of the lovers that real love is true and beautiful; they reject the negative opinion, secure and serene in the proof provided by their own experience. This is the poem:

XVII

EXPERIENCE

Deep in the woods we walked at break of day,
 And just beyond a whispering avenue,
 Where all the flowers were nodding, full of dew,
 We heard a sound of speaking far away;
 And turning saw a pale calm queen assay
 To tell that Love was cruel and untrue,
 To knots of girls in white robes and in blue,
 Who round her feet, while listening, lounged and lay,
 Deep in the woods;
 But we two crushed the moss with silent feet,
 And passed aside unseen; for what to us,
 Who knew Love's breath, and fanned its passionate heat,
 And laughed to hear our hearts' twin pulses beat,
 Were tuneless songs of maidens murmuring thus,
 Deep in the woods?²

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 29.

²Ibid., p. 30.

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Form is similar to the thirteen line rondeaux seen above. Rhyme scheme is identical to that of rondeau number twelve: a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, R; c, d, c, c, d, R.

The rondeau, "Experience," provides an appropriate preparation for the last three poems of the sequence with their happy completion of the course of love.

In "The Exchange," poem number eighteen of the sequence, the lovers exchange gifts in token of their betrothal. This is the sonnet:

XVIII

THE EXCHANGE

Last night, while I was sitting by her side,
 And listening to her bodice silken stir,
 And stroking her soft sleeves of yellow fur,
 I gave the sweet who is to be my bride
 A little silver vinaigrette, star-eyed,
 And chased with Cupids; and received from her
 The gold-embossed pomander-box of myrrh
 She pounced her white hands with at eventide.
 My sleep till dawn was all consumed with thirst,
 And passionate longing; then the great sun's light
 Burst through my flimsy dreams, and nothing tells
 Of all the joy that gladdened me last night,
 Except this little golden box that smells
 As her sweet hands did when I kissed them first.¹

The form is similar to the preceding sonnets.

Poem number nineteen is the last rondeau in the sequence. It is the culmination of love's growth. This is the poem:

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 31.

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XIX

UNDER THE APPLE-TREE

Against her breast I set my head, and lay
 Beneath the summer fruitage of a tree,
 Whose boughs last spring had borne for her and me
 The fleeting blossom of a doubtful day;
 That rose and white had tasted swift decay,
 And now the swelling fruits of certainty
 Hung there like pale green lamps, and fair to see,
 And I was strong to dream the hours away
 Against her breast:
 Her satins rustled underneath my head,
 Stirred by the motions of her perfect heart,
 But she was silent, till at last she said,--
 While all her countenance flushed rosy-red,--
 "Dear love! oh! stay forever where thou art,
 Against my breast!"¹

It is identical in general form to the preceding rondeau,
 poem number seventeen: thirteen lines and four rhymes a, b,
 b, a, a, b, b, a, R; c, d, c, c, d, R.

A tentative scansion may contribute to the proper
 experiencing of this poem:²

Against | her breast || I set | my head, || and lay
 Beneath | the sum-mer || fruit | age of | a tree,
 Whose boughs | last spring || had borne | for her | and me
 The fleet-ing | blossom || of | a doubt | ful day;

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 32.

²See above, Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114, for
 explanation of the symbols used in scansion.

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That rose | and white || had tas | ted swift | decay,
 And now | the swell | ing fruits || of cert | ainty
 Hung there | like pale | green lamps, || and fair | to see,
 And I | was strong | to dream | the hours | away
 Against | her breast:

Her sat | ins rust | led un | derneath | my head,
 Stirred by | the mo | tions of | her perf | ect heart,
 But she | was sil | ent, || till | at last | she said,--
 While all | her count | enance | flushed ros | y-red,--
 "Dear love! || oh! stay | forev | er where | thou art,
 Against | my breast!"

Within the formal metrical pattern of regular iambic rhythmic movement, sense imposed stresses and word accents produce movement that is generally almost simultaneous with what would be expected as the regular iambic pulsing beat. Caesura pauses vary in position consonantly with sense patterning within the lines. Slight, barely perceptible

additional stress on generally unstressed syllables of the iambic feet provides effects of slightly heightened tensions. Somewhat heavier stresses provide more heightened tensions. The heavier stresses coincide with suspended response and animation as in the line, "Hung there like pale green lamps, and fair to see," and with intense emotional response and animation as in the lines,

While all her countenance flushed rosy-red--
 "Dear love! oh! stay forever where thou art,
 Against my breast!"

The general rhythmical effect is one of equilibrium which is untroubled by the increased stresses because these stresses coincide with meaning that is heightened to states of joyous anticipation and elation, and these states account, even, for the general total harmonious and consonant effect. The lovers are serenely confident and secure in the certainty of their love; they are expectant of sanctified union in love that will be theirs "forever." At this time their love is "flushed rosy-red" anticipating being "flushed to gold."

The refrain, "Against her breast," focuses upon the lovers in the condition of anticipated union in love. The refrain at the end of the eighth line marks the lover's commitment to his beloved. The final refrain is the acceptance of the lover by the beloved and the giving of herself in total and eternal love to him, as she says, "Against my

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breast!" All refrain situations fuse in experience and pledge of sanctified marriage.

And this experience and pledge is solemnized in poem twenty, the sonnet that ends the sequence and makes fortunate the course of love that develops in the sequence. In this, their "Epithalamium," all the happy and hopeful effects and conditions of their course of love attend upon the lovers as they kneel "before the altar's gold rail"--all the flowers, colours, odours, songs, sounds, and Love with liliated hair transforming these to holy harmonies. In the holy event, with gracious sanction of the union, the condition of lover and beloved undergoes its mysterious change: "And so our red aurora flashed to gold, / Our dawn to sudden sun . . ."

XX

EPITHALAMIUM

High in the organ-loft, with liliated hair,
 Love plied the pedals with a snowy foot,
 Pouring forth music like the scent of fruit,
 And stirring all the incense-laden air;
 We knelt before the altar's gold rail, where
 The priest stood robed, with chalice and palm-shoot,
 With music-men, who bore citole and lute,
 Behind us, and the attendant virgins fair;
 And so our red aurora flashed to gold,
 Our dawn to sudden sun, and all the while
 The high-voiced children trebled clear and cold,
 The censor-boys went singing down the aisle,
 And far above, with fingers strong and sure,
 Love closed our lives' triumphant overture.¹

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 33.

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Twenty poems develop the meaning and experience of the course of love in the sequence to happy and fortunate union in marriage. The seasons form the background in time and condition for the progress of love. Poem one begins in a winter condition but is already developing out of the winter condition; poems two to five progress in a hopeful springtime condition; poems six to eleven are set in springtime blossoming; poems twelve through nineteen progress in summer flowering and ripening; poem twenty climaxes the progress in a time of summer fruitfulness. This background provided by the seasons is used in creating conditions and effects of the progress of love for the lover and his beloved, is used in providing figurative and imagistic matter, and is used in creating general harmonies consonant with the sequence progress of the love. Substance of the poem is appropriate for a love sequence, particularly one which is developed as the traditional sonnet sequence. The combining of sonnets and rondeaux to make the love sequence is a departure from traditional practice.

Gosse, as he combines sonnets and rondeaux in the sequence, seems to be adapting the rondeau form to blend with the sonnet form and at the same time to be preserving the refrain as a feature that most readily distinguishes the rondeau from the sonnet and also to be preserving the fourteen iambic pentameter lines of the sonnet as a distinguishing

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feature of the sonnet. Two of the eight poems that have refrains also have fourteen iambic pentameter lines: "In the Grass" and "By the Well." It is not easy to decide whether these two poems are sonnets or rondeaux; what is certain is that they both possess all the qualities and characteristics that are common to both the sonnet and the rondeau in the sequence and they have, in addition to these, the distinguishing features of both the sonnet and the rondeau, the refrain and the fourteen iambic lines. Generally, it seems, poems in the sequence that have fourteen lines are sonnets and poems that have refrains are rondeaux. Modification of number of lines to fourteen in the two rondeaux (rondeaux three and four) is appropriate for the expression of each rondeau; it also permits the structure of the rondeaux to blend with the structure of the sonnets to effect the harmonious expression of the whole sequence.

Elimination of the tripartite stanza structure in all of the rondeaux of the sequence is a significant change from the traditional form. It is, however, an appropriate change for the effective expression of the love theme in this sequence--the single stanza is structurally similar to the sonnet form; the forms blend harmoniously. Both contain the octave. The first four lines in all poems rhyme a, b, b, a. Lines five through eight in all poems contain only three

rhyming patterns: poems one, two, three, four, five, seven, eight, nine, twelve, fourteen, fifteen, and seventeen through twenty contain the a, b, b, a rhyme; poems six, ten, eleven, and sixteen contain rhymes c, d, d, c; poem number thirteen rhymes a, c, c, a. Both forms contain the sestet. The sonnet has the typical sonnet sestet. The rondeau has the spirit of the sestet, but the lines vary from five to six in the eight poems. In the five line rondeaux, however, the refrain functions to produce the effect of a sixth line. In the six line rondeaux, the refrain following verse fourteen does not detract from the impression of a sestet. With these two facts in mind--first, that some rondeaux have fewer lines than some sonnets, and second, ignoring the refrain--a comparison of rhyme scheme is significant. Rhymes are identical in rondeaux one, four and sonnet five: a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, c, d, c, d, d, c. A second group of identical rhymes is sonnets two, four, nine and rondeau number six: a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, c, d, d, c, c, d. Rondeaux two, five, seven and eight contain the same rhyme scheme: a, b, b, a, a, b, b, a, c, d, c, c, d. Each of the remaining poems has a minor variation in rhyme: sonnets one, three, six, seven, eight, ten, eleven, twelve, and rondeau number three. General conformity among the rhyme patterns in this sequence, contributes to the smooth continuity of expression from poems one through twenty. Thus, elimination of the tripartite

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stanza structure in these rondeaux permits them to blend harmoniously with the sonnet stanza. This blending assists in the effective expression of the progress of love in the sequence.

All of the rondeaux have iambic pentameter lines. The rondeaux written during the revival employ either tetrameter or pentameter lines. It is significant that iambic pentameter is the dominant meter used in both the rondeaux and the sonnets in this sequence. This similarity of meter in both forms helps to link the two forms for the smooth expression of the progress of meaning and experience in the love sequence. Gosse, in fact, skilfully modifies the traditional rondeau form to make the rondeaux blend with the sonnets.

The rondeaux and sonnets serve different and distinct functions. In general, the rondeaux carry the burden--the active, amorous, passionate desire for the lady. The sonnets generally function as support and balance for the rondeaux--they are contemplative and subdued and, generally, they are animated by the meaning and experience of the rondeaux and elaborate on or illuminate the crucial action presented in the rondeaux. Rondeau and sonnet forms are well used to express states and events in the progress of the love developing in the sequence. The rondeaux are generally intense

and dramatic. Passion and action are intensified by the repetition of the refrains. The sonnets are generally contemplative and tranquil. This can be seen in the first four poems of the sequence. The first rondeau employs a refrain that presents love at first sight: "When first we met." The three sonnets following this rondeau, "Elation," "In Church-Time," and "Dejection and Delay," express the narrator's response to love contemplatively and with minimal action. The rondeau presents the significant condition which animates meaning and experience and impels action. The three sonnets present the animated and impelled responses and action.

The next three poems follow the same pattern. Numbers five and six are rondeaux: "Expectations" and "In the Grass"; these are followed by number seven, the sonnet "Reservation." The rondeaux present passionate desire as an active movement towards realization of love. Refrains provide animating focus. In "Expectations," the refrain "When flower-time comes" activates expectation of love and, in repetition, intensifies passionate desire. The refrain in "In the Grass," "Oh! flame of grass," deepens the passionate tone of the poem. Both poems indicate the narrator's growing desire for the lady. The sonnet "Reservation" constrains the intense passion developing in the two rondeaux. It expresses

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restraint and frustration. It appears that the rondeaux contain the dominance of active, animating emotion, while the sonnets demonstrate a more controlled response to the condition of the lovers.

Poems eight, nine, ten, and eleven are composed of one rondeau and three sonnets. The pattern is consistent. In the rondeau, "By the Well," passionate desire is both constrained and given expression intensified with each repetition of the refrain, "Hot hands that yearn." The three sonnets that follow this rondeau are "May-Day," "Mistrust," and "Eavesdropping." None has the intense emotion given expression in any of the rondeaux. "May-Day" is a calm argument by the narrator in favor of love. "Mistrust" expresses the narrator's apprehension over a challenger for his lady's affections. "Eavesdropping" is a tranquil poem which describes the narrator overhearing the lady's oath to be true to him. This contrast between the intensity expressed in the rondeau and the sonnets is significant. The rondeaux are generally aggressive and unrestrained. The sonnets are generally contemplative and subdued.

The next rondeau, poem number twelve, "A Garden-Piece," is followed by a single sonnet, "Confident Love." This rondeau is a significant advance in the progress of love--it presents the first kiss of the lovers. The tone is

amorous. It is significantly enhanced by the sensuous refrain "Among the flowers." The sonnet describes the result of the kiss: a closer, more confident relationship than previously experienced by the lovers. The function of each form is clear: the rondeau focuses crucially on the major advance in the meaning and experience of developing love and the sonnet elaborates upon and illuminates the lovers' state.

These roles are repeated in the next three poems. Poem fourteen is a rondeau, "Lover's Quarrel"; poems fifteen and sixteen are sonnets, "Reconciliation," and "The Fear of Death." The rondeau is a crucial stage in the progress of love--the first quarrel between the lovers. The poem is intense, dramatic, and active in movement. The sonnet "Reconciliation" re-unites the lovers. "The Fear of Death" expresses apprehension about the prospect of permanent separation by death; and it has a contemplative, apprehensive tone. Both poems support and expand the advance in the progress of love which is produced by the rondeau.

The apprehensive tone of the last sonnet changes to a confidently, serenely secure sense of well-being in love in the next poem--the rondeau "Experience." This poem is a major advance in theme; the lovers agree that love can be true and beautiful. The sufficiency of each to each in their love is given focus by the refrain "Deep in the Woods."

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The sonnet following it, "The Exchange," grows out of the condition established in "Experience," which, with the next two poems, focuses upon the happy and fortunate culmination of the progress of love in marriage. In "The Exchange," gifts are exchanged in token of avowal of love.

Then the next poem, number nineteen, "Under the Apple-Tree," expresses love's full growth and ripeness; the lady asks the narrator to remain forever "Against my breast," in avowal accepting his love and promising hers in desire that is like his. This is the state to which the sequence has been building--the union in love of the lover and his beloved. This most important poem in the sequence is a rondeau and confirms the role of the rondeaux in the sequence--they carry the burden, or the crucial action and activation in the progress of love in the sequence. However, a twentieth poem is added. The condition in love of the lover and his beloved allows and requires the "Epithalamium," the final poem of the sequence. Again, poems eighteen, nineteen, and twenty reveal the relationship between the active burden which is carried by the rondeaux and the complement and support which are provided by the sonnets. Rondeau and sonnet blend and fuse to give unified expression to the meaning and experience of love in the sequence "Fortunate Love: in Sonnets and Rondels."

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Rondeaux

TITLE OF SONNET		ELUCID.	IN CHURCH-TITLE	DEJECTION AND DELAY	RESERVATION	MAY-DAY	TRUST	FAVES-DROPPING	CONFIDANT LOVE	RECONCILIATION	THE FEAR OF DEATH	THE EXCHANGE	EPITHALAMION.
Sonnet Number		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Position in Sequence		2	3	4	7	9	10	11	13	15	16	18	20
R	Line 1	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
H	2	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
Y	3	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
M	4	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
E	5	a	a	a	a	a	c	c	a	a	c	a	a
	6	b	b	b	b	b	d	d	c	b	d	b	b
S	7	b	b	b	b	b	d	d	c	b	d	b	b
C	8	a	a	a	a	a	c	c	a	a	c	a	a
H	9	c	c	c	c	c	e	e	d	c	e	c	c
E	10	d	d	d	d	d	f	f	e	d	f	d	d
M	11	d	d	e	d	c	e	g	e	d	f	e	c
E	12	c	c	c	c	d	g	e	d	c	e	d	d
	13	d	c	d	c	d	f	f	d	c	g	e	e
	14	c	d	e	d	c	g	g	e	d	g	c	e
Number of Lines		14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Number of Rhymes		4	4	5	4	4	7	7	5	4	7	5	5
Metrics		Iambic Pentameter	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same
Special Features		Sonnets 2, 4, and 9, (shaded columns), have identical technical features											

Chapter 2
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Section 4
Rondeaux

This chart contains the eight rondeaux and twelve sonnets from the sonnet-rondel sequence "Fortunate Love."

DEAUX	FIRST SIGHT				EXPECTATION	IN THE GRASS		BY THE WELL				A GARDEN-PIECE		LOVER'S QUARREL				EXPERIENCE		UNDER THE APPLE-TREE	
VETS		ELATION	IN CHURCH-TIME	DEJECTION AND DELAY			RESERVATION		MAY-DAY	LITRUST	EAVES-DROPPING		CONFIDENT LOVE		RECOIL-ATION	THE FEAR OF DEATH		THE EXCHANGE		EPI LAI	
ITION IN UNCE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
R	Refrain in line 1	When first we met			When flower-time comes	Oh! flame of grass		Hot hands that yearn				Among the flowers		Beside the stream			Deep in the woods		Against her breast		
H	1	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	
Y	2	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	
A	3	c	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	
E	4	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	
S	5	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	
C	6	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	
H	7	c	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	
E	8	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	
I	Refrain	When first we met!			When flower-time comes!	Oh flame of grass!		Hot hands that yearn!				Among the flowers,		Beside the stream;			Deep in the woods.		Against her breast:		
S	9	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	d	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	
H	10	a	d	d	d	d	f	d	c	f	f	d	e	d	d	f	d	d	d	d	
E	11	c	d	d	e	c	f	d	c	c	e	g	c	e	d	d	f	c	e	c	
I	12	d	c	c	c	c	e	c	d	d	g	e	c	d	c	c	e	c	d	c	
S	13	a	d	c	d	d	f	c	d	d	f	f	d	d	c	c	g	d	e	a	
E	14		c	d	e		e	d	c	c	g	g	e		d	g		c		e	
	Refrain	When first we met.			When flower-time comes!	Oh flame of grass!		Hot hands that yearn!				Among the flowers!		Beside the stream!			Deep in the woods?		"Against her breast!"		
Number of Lines	13	14	14	14	13	14	14	14	14	14	14	13	14	13	14	14	13	14	13	14	
Number of Rhymes	4	4	4	5	4	6	4	4	4	7	7	4	5	4	4	7	4	5	4	5	
Metrics	Iambic Pentameter	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	same	
Special Features	Poems 3, 7, 14, and 15, (shaded columns), have identical technical features except for the number of lines.																				
	Poems 1 and 9, (shaded columns), have identical technical features except for the number of lines.																				

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B. "Rondeau"

Gosse publishes "Rondeau" in 1873 in his volume On Viol and Flute. Here is the rondeau:

RONDEAU

If Love should faint, and half decline
 Below the fit meridian sign,
 And shorn of all his golden dress,
 His royal state and loveliness,
 Be no more worth a heart like thine,
 Let not thy nobler passion pine,
 But, with a charity divine,
 Let Memory ply her soft address
 If Love should faint;
 And oh! this laggard heart of mine,
 Like some halt pilgrim stirred with wine,
 Shall ache in pity's dear distress,
 Until the balms of thy caress
 To work the finished cure combine,
 If Love should faint.¹

Gosse writes it in the traditional rondeau form of iambic lines of eight syllables, thirteen lines, and two rhymes: a, a, b, b, a, a, a, b, R; a, a, b, b, a, R. The refrain consists of the first two feet of the first verse; it is added, without rhyming with any verse, to the ends of the eighth and thirteenth verses. The form is changed from the traditional structure only in the seeming elimination of the tripartite stanzaic structure. The octave is divided, actually, into two distinct sections of distinctive thought and rhyme units. The octave resembles, generally, the octaves of rondeaux and sonnets in Gosse's love sequence, "Fortunate Love--in Sonnets and Rondels."

¹The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse, p. 95.

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A tentative scansion may assist in arriving at an experiencing of this rondeau:¹

^ ^
If Love| should faint,|| and half| décline

^ ^ ^ ^
Below| the fit|| méridian sign,

^ ^ ^ ^
And shorn| of all|| his golden dress,

^ ^ ^ ^
His royal| state|| and loveliness,

^ ^ ^ ^
Be no| more worth|| a heart| like thine,

^ ^ ^ ^
Let not| thy nobler| passion pine,

^ ^ ^ ^
But, with| a charity| divine,

^ ^ ^ ^
Let Memory| ply|| her soft| address

^ ^ ^ ^
If Love| should faint;

^ ^ ^ ^
And oh!| this laggard heart| of mine,

^ ^ ^ ^
Like some| halt pilgrim| stirred| with wine,

^ ^ ^ ^
Shall ache| in pity's| dear| distress,

^ ^ ^ ^
Until| the balms|| of thy| caress

^ ^ ^ ^
To work| the finished| cure| combine,

^ ^ ^ ^
If Love| should faint.

¹See above, Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114, for explanation of symbols used in scansion.

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In the opening phrase, "If Love should faint," the expected iambic rhythmic movement is countered slightly but perceptibly. Sense and word accent stresses make "If" and "should" strong enough that they seem to take as much stress as "Love" and "faint,"--stress hovers somewhat uncertainly over the syllables in each foot. Stresses in the rest of the line, "and half decline," allow a regular iambic beat, with some prolongation of the last syllable, "decline." The rhythmic movement of the line is marked by a slight declination after the caesural pause. Lack of punctuation at the end of the line makes the thought of the line run on into the next line where stresses produce a repetition of this rhythmic movement. In the first half of the line, the first foot, "Below," has hovering strong stress, "the fit" has regular iambic stress and the pause that follows it is a normal medial caesural pause. In the last foot of the line, "meridian sign," there is an extra unaccented or unstressed syllable; this syllable does not seem to add stress or strength to the foot but seems instead to provide a kind of compensation for "the fit" in the second foot of the line to make for a feeling of repetition of the pattern of hovering stress of the preceding line and to make for an effect of there being a declination of movement in the second line and also to make the second line be in effect a declination of movement

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in the thought and rhythmic unit that the two lines compose.

Sense stresses influence rhythmic stresses and rhythmic stresses animate experience and meaning in the line and lines. In the lines just considered,

If Love should faint, and half decline
Below the fit meridian sign,

the effect of rhythmic declination interplays with the meaning and experience that is developing. Initial sense is the beginning of speculative consideration of the possibility of Love's becoming less, "should faint," "and [seemingly as consequence of this, or at least as action simultaneous with this] half decline" (italics supplied). The sense of diminishing or growing less that "decline" may have is disturbed by "half"--"If Love should grow less, and half grow less," in other words. Imagery in the second line, "the fit meridian sign," changes the meaning, even while allowing the disturbing sense already experienced to remain. The image suggests the highest point or zenith in the great celestial sphere (in an astronomical sense) and this is the point which "Love" has already reached and that is the "fit" or right point or plane for "Love." Line five explains "fit": "Be no more worth a heart like thine"; worthiness of the lady addressed, the object of the "Love," determines the elevation there must be. The elevated plane or condition of "Love," the

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"meridian" "fit" for it, provides context for reading "faint" as "grow dizzy" in the most high or rarified plane or in the most elevated condition of the "Love." It provides context for reading "half decline" as "half to fail in strength, or faint almost" in the dizzying experience.

It may be noted that the very astronomical point in space that provides definition for the condition of Love or that places "Love" in its "fit meridian sign" allows a sensation of lightness--of elevation and "headiness," and these in sense both tenuous and secure. This sensation, or the effect that is produced here, is actually a quality that is traditionally to be desired or even expected in the rondeau. This is true particularly in instances of its being associated with the making of gracefully light and delicate social compliment, as it is here in "Rondeau."

"Love" that is at the level of the "fit meridian sign" is of the zenith quality characterized by "his [Love's] golden dress, / His royal state and loveliness." The least dizzying or fainting state in the rarified, most elevated love condition and experience would, figuratively, leave "Love" (personified here both as the man loving and the love itself) shorn of this zenith quality and so in a state "Below the fit meridian sign" and this state would make him "Be no more worth a heart like [hers]."

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Sense and word accent stresses in "And shorn of all his golden dress, / His royal state and loveliness," repeat the rhythmic movement of the first two lines, creating the effect of the declination of love by heavy, somewhat prolonged stresses on "shorn," "all," "golden dress," royal state and loveliness." Line five, "Be no more worth a heart like thine," has the same slow slightly declining rhythmic movement and continues to create the sense of the almost faint, debilitated condition of Love, "If Love should faint." Heavy and emphatic sense and accent stresses on all syllables of "Be no more worth" slow the movement so that there is a rather heavy, halting sense of progression--even a kind of pulling or strain. This difficult movement has but a slight pause before progression with the more natural iambic beat of the last two feet of the line, "a heart like thine." The lighter stress of the last half of the line produces an effect of declination in stress which provides for the experience, kinaesthetically, of the somewhat faint condition of "Love."

In lines six to eight and refrain, the speaker, "Love," suggests that "If Love should faint" from "His" royal state, the lady's heart, which has the capability and capacity of a "nobler passion" than "His," can with a "charity divine" restore "Love" to "His royal state and loveliness."

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The superiority of the lady is indicated when "Love" says that she, whose very nature allows her to have a "charity divine," is able to work "His" cure--revive him from his faint condition and so enspirit him that he may be restored to capacity for love at "the fit meridian sign." Throughout the poem, the imagery used to create meaning and experience of Love and his Beloved give a sense of her superior nature, of a quality of divinity even that sets her above the royal state that is his when he is "worth a heart" like hers. She, in effect, is in a plane, a state above him unless his "Love" can have and maintain the capability and capacity for love, without becoming faint, at the "fit meridian sign." He asks her to remain at this most high and "fit meridian sign" and not to "pine" or grieve, "if [his] Love should faint," but in her "divine" power permit "Memory [to] ply" their loving, gently and persistently, in order to maintain her most elevated plane, and restore "Love" to this rarified level. Lines six through eight continue the rhythmic movement of the first five lines with a slightly quicker pulsing in six and seven. In line eight, the extra unaccented syllable in the second foot, "Let Mem-o-ry ply" provides a slight but unexpected variance in rhythmic pulsing.

Sense and word accent stresses in line nine continue the effect of the debilitated, slow or less than "fit"

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condition to be experienced "if Love should faint" and the lady should try to revive him. "And oh! this laggard heart of mine" contains a strong secondary stress on "And" followed by a full stress on "oh" and an exclamatory pause producing a full and intense but somewhat suspended stop; sense can make this stop a fusion of expectation, wonder, and pain. In "this lag-gard heart," all syllables are stressed strongly, heavily. In "lag-gard," the harsh guttural "g-g" sounds combine to force a heavy pause; the "-gard" sound forces another heavy pause before "heart." The effect of "laggard heart" is heavy and arresting, in sense and feeling creating "Love's" pain in his "faint" condition, from which he is about to be stirred, if the lady does not "pine" but works to "ply her soft address" to enspirit him and restore him to capability and capacity for making the fit love address to her. Heavy sense and accent stresses in the first part of the line continue the rhythmic pattern of preceding lines into line ten where rhythms interplay with sense in the line, "Like some halt pilgrim stirred with wine." Here the simile repeats, clarifies, and extends meaning and experience of the preceding line, "And oh! this laggard heart of mine," and focuses, intensifyingly, upon the painful sense of debilitation and need "Love" has in his faint condition. All syllables in the first three feet have heavy sense and accent

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stresses. In both sense and accent, "halt" stands out almost isolated in these feet; "stirred" also stands out, but with a different effect because of its following the lesser stressed "-grim" and moving to the unstressed "with." The sense of "laggard heart" is concretized in "halt pilgrim"--"Love" lame or limping, unable to move or at best, able to move but slowly, incapable of making the "fit" love address to the lady that he wishes to be able to make. The sense pause after "halt" intensifies the sense of "Love's" unfit condition. The "pilgrim" image is effective in the relationship it suggests between "Love," the speaker, as a pilgrim to the "divine" or goddess-like image of the lady. "Stirred with wine" suggests that he is "stirred" from his faintness by the lady's "wine" of love and that he desires to return to "fit" condition but is still "shorn of all his golden dress / His royal state and loveliness," so he "shall [continue to] ache in pity's dear distress." His state of fealty, devotion, and dependence on the lady's "charity divine" make him "ache in pity's dear distress," distress suffered pityingly, tenderly by the lady for him even as she is enspiriting him so he is "stirred with [her] wine" of love (revived somewhat) and impatient to renew his pilgrimage in devotion to the lady at "the fit meridian sign." His "ache" and impatience will continue "until the balms of [her] caress / To work the

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finished cure combine." The curative and restorative power is the gentle, soothing, enspiriting "balms" of the lady's acts and thoughts of love exemplified by her "caress."

In lines one through eleven, the general iambic rhythmic movement has an effect of declination in lines and sense units produced by heavier sense and accent stresses in the first two or three feet of the line than in the last one or two feet of the line. The rhythmic pattern varies from the regular iambic metric pattern that is expected. The varied pattern persists and establishes, in effect, an expected rhythmic pulsing. Variation from this expected rhythmic pulsing then causes unexpected effects in sensation and meaning of either momentary or longer duration. Lines six, seven, and eight, for example, have a generally quickened pulsation, and line eight has a momentary quickening in "Let Mem-o-ry ply" before the smooth, easy rhythm of "her soft address." Lines nine, ten, and eleven break the pattern of rhythmic pulsing established in the poem so far and in lines six through eight, particularly; in these three lines rhythmic movement is slow and heavily straining because of combinations of sense and accent stresses, of combinations of sounds in the lines and of the particular sense of enspiriting, debility, and struggle that the lines present. In the last of these lines there begins a change in movement that

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produces the effect of some easing of strain and stress because of "pity's dear distress." This effect continues into lines twelve and thirteen which move more freely and easily in a regular iambic movement that coincides with the relief of the "ache" because the curative "balms" of the lady's caress combine to restore "Love" to "the fit meridian sign, / . . . [his] golden dress, / [and] His royal state and loveliness." Line thirteen does not end in any metric or sense decline, but instead it ends, with surprise and illumination, in a rather sure and comfortable sense of equilibrium of meaning and sensation; and this becomes the more sure with the addition of the final refrain, which, with a feeling of separation from the preceding line and the poem itself so far, brings into focus a sense of the real and unwavering strength of "Love." Any likelihood of "Love's" declining becomes absolutely remote; speculation has only confirmed "Love's" capability and capacity at the "fit meridian sign" and has been testimony of the enspiriting power and influence of the lady--in effect, graceful compliment and tribute of Love to the lady.

Each refrain situation (line one, Refrain one, and final Refrain) has its own subtly special and particular distinction of meaning and experience according to its immediate contextual condition and has also the persisting meaning and

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experience that comes into final significant focus in the final refrain. In lines one through five, "If Love should faint" is the condition that would cause "Love" to lose "His" royal stature and "loveliness" and not to be worthy of the lady's "heart." The refrain following line eight blends contextually with lines six, seven, and eight to suggest action the lady may take to restore "Love" to "His" "fit meridian sign." She has the necessary curative power "If Love should faint."

Final use of the refrain, following line thirteen, gives meaning to lines nine to thirteen in particular and unifies all the materials of the poem. In lines nine through thirteen, "If Love should faint" is the cause of "Love's" "laggard heart" and of his becoming a "halt pilgrim" who will "ache" until the lady consents through "charity divine" so to enspirit him with love that he becomes restored in capability and capacity, revived from his faint condition to be in love with her at "the fit meridian sign." This refrain also sets the condition experienced by "Love" in lines one through five--debilitating and dethroning of "Love," and in lines six through eight it brings into focus the nature and power of the lady--"nobler passion," "charity divine." The refrain in "Rondeau" conforms to Banville's requirement that the refrain play "le rôle capital" in the rondeau, that "Il en est à la

fois le sujet, la raison d'être et le moyen d'expression"¹ of the meaning and experience presented in the rondeau. Each time the refrain occurs, it functions to shape and intensify the meaning and experience that is developing; it works in the manner of the steel tipped arrows Banville speaks of-- "Ce n'est que pour lancer au même but l'une après l'autre ces trois pointes d'acier qu'on les ajuste au bout des strophes, qui sont à la fois le bois léger et les plumes aériennes du trio de flèches que représente le Rondeau."² The refrain functions to determine the total final meaning and experience of the rondeau, and this it does with "la rapidité, la grâce, [et] la caresse" that are distinctive qualities of the rondeau. In "Rondeau," Gosse displays a fulness of knowledge and a fineness of sensibility for the mode of the rondeau form.

¹Banville, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," p. 207.

²Ibid., p. 207.

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C. "The Poet at the Breakfast Table"

"The Poet at the Breakfast Table," it may be recalled,¹ is the rondeau that Gosse sends to Dobson with a letter dated July 5, 1877, at the time of his publication of the Manifesto, perhaps even at almost the very date of the completion or the publication of the document. It may be recalled also that Gosse addresses a letter to Swinburne on July 5, 1877, specifically sharing with him the joy and excitement of the occasion of his publication of the Manifesto.² It seems that Gosse may well be writing to Dobson, moved by a similar impulse to share the achievement of the occasion, particularly since Gosse and Dobson are so closely related in their work in the revival at this time.³ The letter which accompanies the rondeau indicates that Gosse may have composed the rondeau in response to impetus from the condition of his having been most particularly absorbed or involved in consideration of the rondeau form and its

¹See above, Chapter Two, Section Three, pp. 175-177. See, also, Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 100.

²See above, Chapter Two, Section Three, pp. 204-205. See, also, Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, pp. 99-100.

³See above, Chapter Two, Section Three, pp. 192-204.

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requirements and perhaps also of requirements of others of the fixed French poetic forms. He has, at least, been giving his attention to the elusiveness of distinctions of the rondeau refrain. Tone of the letter suggests that it is with the headiest of high spirits, familiarity, and sheer joy that Gosse writes the letter to Dobson and sends with it his rondeau:

The serious necessity of some shifting of meaning in the refrain of a rondeau has so oppressed me of late, that sleep and rest have left me, and it is wholly owing to this disinterested anxiety that I have become the wreck you see me. At last, however, the impossible has been done. Turn the page, old kiddlewink, and enjoy the exquisite distinction of this little chef-d'oeuvre.

I hope my lines are properly arranged, I have no model to hand.

THE POET AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE

In rose-lit air and light perfume,
The well-appointed breakfast-room
Delights us as we tread the stair;
The loaves are beautiful and fair
(As Wordsworth puts it), crust and crumb;
The coffee hath an odour rare,
But most I love the sticky stare
Of pickled mackerel, grand and dumb,
In rows.

And while these dainties we consume
Let educated youth prepare,
Flushed with new science like a bloom,
In our rapt hearing to declare,
How many little eggs there are
In roes.¹

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 100.

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The oppression that he has been suffering, as he says, because of the "serious necessity of some shifting of meaning in the refrain of a rondeau" may well have been a matter of concentrated, intense effort concerning both theoretical speculation and creative achievement, the creative particularly because of his concern with the theoretical; this "oppression" may have been of a kind marked by the prolonged and concentrated effort he has been having to make to satisfy for himself the precise distinction in the very elusiveness of the rondeau nature and the rondeau refrain nature. Such speculation about the kind of the oppression that he refers to is warranted by his speaking of it as "disinterested anxiety"--a preoccupation with aesthetic matters in the present instance, quite likely, rather than a psychological preoccupation. Such speculation is also warranted by his declaration that "At last, however, the impossible has been done," and by his indication that what he refers to as the "impossible" that he has succeeded in doing is "the exquisite distinction of this little chef-d'oeuvre."

Gosse expresses such a sense of achievement with his composition of this rondeau that examination and analysis may well be directed towards determining why he should consider that this rondeau particularly has done the "impossible," that it succeeds in achieving the "exquisite

distinction" that he says it does. It may be recognized, of course, that while he may seem to be speaking of achievement here in comparison with previous achievement, he may also seem to be speaking of achievement "at last" in his composition of this one rondeau, of finally succeeding in getting "the exquisite distinction"--especially of the refrain. His use of the refrain is different here from what it is in the rondeaux of "Fortunate Love" and in "Rondeau." In these earlier rondeaux he uses as refrain a repetition of the opening phrase of the poem, making each repetition subtly become a somewhat new meaning in its particular fusion of recollected sense and new contextual condition. In such use of the refrain, he follows traditional and contemporary French and English practice. In "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," Gosse does not repeat the opening phrase to make the refrain; instead he uses two phrases which are like the opening phrase only in sound: "In rose-lit air," "In rows," and "In roes." Analysis of the poem may make clear how Gosse uses these phrases as refrain in building the meaning and experience of the rondeau.

Scansion of the poem may help to arrive at a proper experiencing of the poem:¹

¹Symbols used in scansion are given above, Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114.

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In rose-lit air and light perfume,
 The well-appointed breakfast-room
 Delights us as we tread the stair;
 The loaves are beautiful and fair
 (As Wordsworth puts it), crust and crumb;
 The coffee hath an odour rare;
 But most I love the sticky stare
 Of pickled macaroni, grand and dumb,
 In rows.

And while these dainties we consume
 Let educated youth prepare,
 Flushed with new science like a bloom,
 In our rapt hearing to declare,
 How many little eggs there are
 In roes.

Gosse's avowed indebtedness to Banville¹ and his close following of Banville's discussion of the rondeau in

¹See above, Chapter One, Section Three, p. 87; Chapter One, Section Four, p. 100; Chapter Two, Section One, pp. 139, 141; Chapter Two, Section Two, p. 160.

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his Manifesto¹ makes it not at all unlikely that he is quite aware of Banville's practise in using refrains of this kind.² Dobson uses a refrain of this kind in "Rose in the Hegderow Grown," 1876 (a year before Gosse's "Poet at the Breakfast Table").³ Clearly, Gosse works according to traditional and conventional practise in his use of the refrain in "The Poet at the Breakfast Table."

Gosse organizes the rondeau in conventional thirteen iambic tetrameter lines with refrain after the eighth and the thirteenth lines and with a rhyme pattern that is altered slightly from the conventional rondeau pattern of two rhymes and unrhyming refrain. The rhyme pattern of "The Poet at the Breakfast Table" is a, a, b, b, c, b, b, c, R; a, b, a, b, d, R. The typical rhyme pattern of the rondeau is a, a, b, b, a; a, a, b, R; a, a, b, b, a, R.⁴ The "a" rhymes have as

¹See above, Chapter One, Section Four, pp. 99-100.

²See above, Chapter One, Section Four, pp. 96-99. See, also, Banville, Odes Funambulesques, pp. 126-130.

³See above, Chapter Two, Section Three, pp. 182-183. See, also, The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson, p. 390.

⁴Italics in the rhyme pattern of "The Poet at the Breakfast Table" indicate the rhymes that displace the regular rhymes; italics in the typical rhyme pattern of a rondeau indicate the rhymes displaced by the half rhymes.

their rhymed sound "perfume"; the "b" rhymes have as their rhymed sound "stair." The "c" rhymes have as their rhymed sound "crumb"; the two "c" rhyming sounds occur, it seems, as near rhymes with the "a" rhymes "-ume," even though one of them replaces what would normally be an "a" rhyme sound and the other replaces what would be a "b" rhyme sound. The "d" rhyme sound is "are"; the "d" rhyme sound occurs, it seems, as a near rhyme with the "b" rhyme "stair," even though it replaces what would normally be an "a" rhyme sound. These three near rhymes disturb the fixed rhyming pattern, it is true, but the very disturbance they cause functions crucially in building the meaning and experience of the rondeau. These rhymes produce the effect that there have been no "sure returns of still expected rhymes"; their relationship to the regular "a" and "b" rhymes is established at the ends of the lines, and then occurrence of interior full "a" and "b" rhymes and near "c" and "d" rhymes along with alliterative vowel and consonant rhymes produce effects of consonant and assonant dissonances.¹

¹Main interior "a" - "c" rhyme sounds: "beautiful," "puts," "crust," "youth," "flushed," "new," Main interior "b" - "d" rhyme sounds: "air," "are," "Wordsworth," "odour," "mackerel," "our," "hearing," "there." Alliterative vowel and consonant sounds are frequent. Italics are used in the rest of this analysis to point specifically to matter in quotation that is being focused on in analysis or consideration.

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The near rhymes at the ends of lines coincide crucially with disturbances of the poetizing perspective "in rose-lit air"--with incongruous juxtaposing of the poetized condition with the actual condition that is poetized.

"Crumb" provides the first of these juxtapositions; "dumb" provides the second, and "are" provides the last. Each is in conjunction with other dissonant rhyming sounds, and each is associated, substantially, with the incongruity of relationships between poetized and unpoetized conditions.

Rhyming is tenuously, hoveringly uncertain and not, apparently, roughly or accidentally so but subtly, artfully so in order to produce effects that will combine with other effects to create the rondeau meaning and experience.

The rhythmic movement of the rondeau is of a kind with the rhyming pattern. Distribution of primary and near primary thought and word stresses in many of the iambic feet of the tetrameter lines produces an effect of hovering and uncertain stresses. As a part of the rhythmic progression, regular caesuras, caesura-like pauses, and end pauses play hoveringly in some of the lines producing effects of uncertainty, tenuousness, and insubstantiality.

Against the pattern of hoveringly uncertain rhyming and hoveringly uncertain rhythmic stresses, the refrain functions artfully to create the meaning and experience of the rondeau. "In rose-lit air" establishes the refrain base

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for the poem, and as it does so it creates the special quality of the poet's world--a special air to which a rose light is given instead of the ordinary unpoetic, unromantic light of day. "Rose-" is colour as it is suffused in air in the phrase "In rose-lit air"; with the addition of the rest of the line, "and light perfume," "rose" becomes associated with fragrance and also "light"-ness. "Light," in its fusion with "-lit" and "air," gives a quality to "perfume" and also to "rose-" and "air." Denotatively and connotatively, the meaning of "rose-" blends, shifts, grows, changes, fuses, and persists as it combines with "-lit," "air," "light," and "perfume"; and the meanings of words it combines with change and persist, similarly, even as they do in interplay with each other. The special "rose-" quality persists in a sense of hovering tenuousness and insubstantiality, of not quite certainty.

It is "in rose-" with its hovering associational meanings that the poet-"we" "tread[s] the stair" to the "well-appointed breakfast-room." Movement in the poet's world, "tread the stair," is poetic. Appointments of the breakfast-room are suffused with "rose-." Food is "beautiful and fair," of the "rose-" quality; the romantic or poetic nature is stressed with "As Wordsworth puts it" and is changed with the homeliness of the Wordsworthian "crust and crumb" elaboration. "Crumb" disturbs the pattern of the

"a" rhyming sound of "perfume" and "room" and dissonantly threatens to qualify the poetic "rose-lit" quality. Combining with the effects of the near rhyming of "crumb" are the dissonant effects of internal rhyme sounds preceding it in the line: "Wordsworth," near rhymes of "b" and "d" sounds; "puts" and "crust," near rhymes of "a" and "c" sounds. Up till this line, diction is of a quality consonant with the "rose-" quality. "Crust" and "crumb" are supposed to be poetic ("as Wordsworth puts it"), but they are not in effect consonant with the "rose-" quality. In the next line, "The coffee hath an odour rare," the romantic air prevails, with only the slight disturbance of sound of "odour," near rhyme of "air" and "are," before the regular full "b" rhyme "rare." Attitude in the next two lines continues consonantly with being "in rose-lit air" in spite of dissonant effects of rhyme and diction. The "c" rhyme "dumb," near rhyme of "a," or "perfume," displaces what should be the "b" rhyme "air"; "mackerel," near rhyme of "air" and "are," precedes it in the line--the line seems complicatedly dissonant. Images, "sticky stare / Of pickled mackerel, grand and dumb, / In rows," in the attitude of the poet-"I," persist in the poetic or romantic "air"--the poet-"I" loves the "sticky stare / Of pickled mackerel" as he sees them "grand and dumb, / In rows." What the poet-"I" sees with his romantic vision

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incongruously and dissonantly juxtaposes with what actually is.

"In rows" functions contextually as completion of lines seven and eight and as expected refrain at the end of the first eight lines of the rondeau. As the refrain, "In rows" maintains the sense of poetic quality of "In rose-lit air" of the first line. In both refrain situations, the poet-"I" poetizes actuality; the poetized quality of the first refrain situation, "In rose-lit air," is not disturbed but the poetized quality of the second refrain situation "pickled mackerel, grand and dumb, / In rows," is disturbed as the refrain focuses on the disparity between what is seen with the poetic vision and what this is, unpoetized.

The final refrain, "In roes," has in recollection the sense of being "in rose-lit air" of the first of the rondeau. Diction denotes continuing poetizing: "we consume" "these dainties" (the "pickled mackerel" with the "sticky stare" "grand and dumb, / In rows"). Both "we" and "educated youth" show poetizing attitude and vision as the youth "prepare / . . . to declare, / How many little eggs there are / In roes." The youth are "flushed with new science like a bloom," and will make their declaration "in our rapt hearing." The refrain has in recollection the poetized and unpoetized meanings of the second refrain situation, "In rows." In its own situation, the final refrain brings into focus the

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poetizing of "how many little eggs there are / In roes." And "In roes" recalls "In rose-lit air." "Flushed" and "bloom" imagistically recall "rose-" qualities from the first line and in doing so create the effect of the poetizing attitude of the "educated youth" who are making their declaration and also of the poet-"we" who receive the declaration with "rapt hearing." "In rows," after line eight, focuses on particular poetizing in the "rose-lit air" without specific repetition of "rose-" or "rose-lit" qualities. "In roes," with its particular recollection of "rose-" and "rose-lit" qualities from line one and with its close substantial relation to "In rows," puts the "In rows" situation in the state of being "in rose-lit air." The final refrain puts "In rose-" and "In rows" and the situations each has contextually into final unifying focus, preserving as it does so the distinct particular meanings and experience provided by each and creating a final total meaning and experience. In its particular shaping of the meaning and experience, the final refrain maintains precise distinctions of the very elusiveness of the rondeau refrain nature and of the rondeau nature itself.

The artfulness with which Gosse works the building of the meaning and experience of the rondeau give "The Poet at the Breakfast Table" the qualification for being considered a "little chef-d'oeuvre." Far from being incoherently

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conceived and developed, the rondeau meaning and experience are produced with artful and subtle control and discipline. The rondeau is, in effect, a demonstration of poetizing vision and perspective and as such it stands as a critical or aesthetic pronouncement.

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D. "Entre deux draps--"

"Entre deux draps--" ("Between Two Sheets") is the last rondeau written by Gosse that can be found in his accessible documents. It is dated the eighth day of October, 1879, and is sent in a letter to Austin Dobson. Charteris speaks of the letter but does not include it with the rondeau in his collection. Here is the rondeau:

RONDEAU

from the French of Mme. Deshoulières.

"Entre deux draps--"

Between two sheets of linen fair and white
 Fresh lavendered, and folded smooth and light,
 The charming Idris of the shining eyes,
 Loyal and prudent, eloquent and wise,
 Nestles till noon in downy soft delight.
 To censure others' tastes I have no right,
 Yet seems it scarcely seemly in my sight
 To loiter lonely in such wanton guise
 Between two sheets,
 Since treacherous Love most nimbly wings his flight
 To her who, dreaming, squanders day as night;
 For other joys the solitary sighs,
 And soon, without a struggle, virtue dies,
 When beauty lets her wandering thoughts alight
 Between two sheets.¹

An approximate scansion of this rondeau may assist in arriving at the meaning of the poem:²

¹Charteris, The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse, p. 119.

²See Chapter One, Section Four, p. 114, for explanation of symbols used in scansion.

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Between | two sheets || of lin|en || fair | and white
 ^ Fresh lav|endered, || and fold|ed || smooth | and light,
 The charm|ing I|dris || of | the shin|ing eyes,
 ^ Loyal | and pru|dent, || el|oquent | and wise,
 ^ Nestles | till noon || in dow|ny soft | delight.
 To cen|sure oth|ers' tastes || I have | no right,
 Yet seems | it scar|cely seem|ly || in | my sight
 To loi|ter lone|ly || in | such wan|ton guise
 Between | two sheets,
 Since treach|erous love || most nim|bly wings | his flight
 To her | who, || dream|ing, || squan|ders day | as night;
 For oth|er joys || the sol|itar|y sighs,
 And soon, || without | a strug|gle, || vir|tue dies,
 When beau|ty lets || her wan|dering thoughts || alight
 Between | two sheets.

Antoinette Deshoulières is a French poetess who was born in Paris on January 1, 1638, and died there on February 17, 1694. She is said to have become "a prominent literary figure after the publication of some poems in 1672 in the

Mercure galante. Voiture called her the best of French poetesses and by other admirers she was styled the tenth muse. Her salon was a meeting place for all the prominent literary figures of her day."¹ Gosse's translation of this poem is in iambic pentameter lines. The rhyme scheme is in the rondeau tradition of two rhymes: a, a, b, b, a, a, a, b, R; a, a, b, b, a, R. The refrain consists of the first two feet of the first line and is added without rhyming with any line to the ends of the eighth and thirteenth lines.

The first two feet of the first line, "Between two sheets," provide the refrain for the rondeau. All four syllables of these feet are strongly stressed with the effect of hoveringly uncertain stress and at the same time of a certain firmness, the latter because of the strength of stress, because of the pause provided by the caesura and because of the near regularity of iambic rhythmic movement of the rest of the line: "of linen fair and white." A light variant caesura occurs between "linen" and "fair and white," between the unstressed syllable "-en" and the stressed syllable "fair." This caesura-like pause has the effect of regularity even though it occurs within rather than at the end of a metric foot; it has this effect because sense stress is what causes the pause. The regular caesura is masculine

¹Encyclopaedia Britannica, Toronto, William Benton, 1962, VII, 258.

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because of the strength of stress before it; the added caesura-like pause seems masculine even though it follows an unstressed syllable. The whole line seems end-stopped in sense and masculine in the firm end-stopping, even though thought continues on into the next line. Imagistically, the line is sensuously but impersonally focused on "Between the sheets"; "linen fair and white" suggests clean, crisp sensuous details; suggestive qualities that may be provided by "Between" and "fair" are not yet perceptibly in play. The second line moves in the same rhythmic pattern as the first line and provides further details descriptive of the sheets; these details are, like the images of the first line, sensuously but impersonally focused on "Between two sheets": "Fresh lavendered, and folded smooth and light." The effect of "folded smooth and light" as qualification of "between two sheets" is one of buoyant lightness--a quality new in these opening lines, but one that is prepared for by the hovering effects of rhythmic stresses and of masculine and masculine-seeming caesura and caesura-like pauses.

And it is "between [these] two sheets" that "the charming Idris of the shining eyes, / Loyal and prudent, eloquent and wise, / Nestles till noon in downy soft delight." Rhythmic effects change in these three lines: Stresses are not as hoveringly strong as in the first two lines. The medial caesura pause after "The charming Idris"

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and before "of the shining eyes" (between two unstressed syllables) is a feminine pause. The caesura in the next line is masculine, but the first foot of the line has a feminine effect--a rest precedes the strongly stressed first syllable of "Loyal" and this, combined with the unstressed syllable "-al," diminishes the effect of strength in the initial foot of the line. The next line begins with a rhythmic effect similar to the effect of "Loyal." The opening stressed syllable "Nestles" is preceded by a rest and followed by the unstressed syllable "-tles"; "nestles" functions grammatically as predicate of "Idris," specifying, with complementing and qualifying adjuncts, Idris' condition "between [the] two sheets." "Nestles" combines with "in downy soft delight" to complement suggested effects of buoyant lightness produced by "between the sheets" and "fair and light" in the first two lines. The particular quality of "Idris," "charming," "eloquent," "of the shining eyes," and "wise" as well as "loyal and prudent," brings into focus and play more personally sensuous imagistic effects, transforming even the effects of the first two lines of the rondeau to more personal sensuousness. Suggested but not specified is the possibility that the rondeau-speaker may, as he is responsive to what he imaginatively conceives as the quality of the "charming Idris," be creating and attributing the more personally sensuous effects to the "charming Idris"--she undoubtedly

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charms him, stimulates him to be aware of her as he pictures her.

The next three lines move stiffly, rather straining-ly and suggest the rondeau-speaker's self-consciously (or playfully) censorious, prudish, but charmed or titillated response and attitude:

To censure other's tastes I have no right,
Yet seems it scarcely seemly in my sight
To loiter lonely in such wanton guise
Between two sheets;

sensuousness is just perceptibly changing to sensuality; and thought continues with rather specious seeming argument:

Since treacherous love most nimbly wings his flight
To her who, dreaming, squanders day as night.

"Treacherous love"--love that is belying and unreliable in nature--can slip into her "dreaming," her act of imaginatively bringing into consciousness and being, and can find her easy prey because of her "loiter-[ing] lonely [alone] in such wanton guise" and of her "squander-[ing] day as night [between two sheets]." And this is particularly true, he goes on, because

For other joys the solitary sighs,
And soon, without a struggle, virtue dies,
When beauty lets her wandering thoughts alight
Between two sheets.

So provocative of amorous awareness and responsiveness is the "charming Idris" in the sight or in the imagination of the rondeau-speaker that he imaginatively creates her

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condition "between [the] two sheets" and her response in that condition. He sees her "in downy soft delight," "loiter-[ing], lonely in such wanton guise," "dreaming," and "squander-[ing] day as night"--unrestrained in the experiences of her "dreaming." And this very "dreaming" is what brings "treacherous love" to her while at the same time her "dreaming" lets her with "wandering thoughts" fly out from "between two sheets" as she "sighs" "for other joys" and makes her finally "alight / Between two sheets" for "joys" in "downy soft delight." Imagistically, "alight" focuses on specific place, "between two sheets," and creates at the same time an effect of lightness and insubstantiality. With such an effect, there can be no substantiality for the suggestion that "without a struggle, virtue dies." Rhythmic movement of the last two lines also creates effects of lightness and insubstantiality. Stresses hover uncertainly and caesura and caesura-like pauses occur hoveringly, uncertainly. Pauses occur after "And soon" and after "without a struggle" in line twelve; the pause after "struggle" coincides with sense but breaks a metric foot. Pauses occur after "When beauty lets" and after "her wandering thoughts." The last pause isolates "alight" while it at the same time causes "alight" to run on into the final refrain.

Refrain meanings are subtly shifting in their own contextual situations and in their interacting situations.

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Such shifting of meanings makes tenuously uncertain and insubstantial all sensual suggestiveness concerning the virtue of the "charming Idris," but at the same time such shifting of meanings keeps constant and certain the provocative loveliness of the "charming Idris of the shining eyes" and does so even with the particular responsiveness of the rondeau-speaker to this loveliness, even with his seeming censoriousness. Indeed, the censoriousness itself is "seeming" as it is brought into play upon what "seems"--playfully, decorously less in censure than in compliment, less, even, in sensuality than in sensuousness. The very shifting and fusing and focusing of the rondeau meaning and experience distinguishes the rondeau as a work wrought with sensitivity and mastery in keeping with the essentially elusive nature of the rondeau refrain and the rondeau itself.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this last chapter is to give a general conclusion to the entire thesis and to indicate areas of further possible research.

In the first chapter, the origin of the rondeau is examined and its growth and development in both France and England is traced from the rondeau's origin through the nineteenth century; influences from France on the revival in England after 1860 are determined and the traditional rondeau is defined and analysed. Within this general area of investigation, it is found that the literary rondeau evolves out of the folk or tribal animistic ritual dance of preliterate primitive cultures and that the rondeau is first used as a literary form in thirteenth century France. During the thirteenth century it has great variety of structure; however, the dominant form is eight lines; this form is known from the fifteenth century until today as the triolet. In the fourteenth century, the rondeau is transformed from a musical composition to a literary form in all but dramatic poetry. Three forms dominate: the rondel sangle or simple rondeau,

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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a thirteen line poem, and the rondel double, or double rondeau. Only the simple and double rondeau forms are used in the fifteenth century. It is at this time that the refrain assumes its present abbreviated form. From this alteration two special shortened forms evolve: a twelve line poem known as the rondeau simple; and a fifteen line poem called rondeau double. The latter is now called simply rondeau; it is the dominant form from the sixteenth century until today. The rondeau has popular and unpopular periods. While it is widely used in the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the early sixteenth centuries, it is neglected from 1550 to 1600. It has a brief revival in the early seventeenth century but is generally ignored from about 1650 to 1800. Nineteenth-century Romanticists revive the form and it is used throughout the century. These writers are conscious of the rondeau as a literary art form and are interested in critical theory and practice. Banville is a leader as a critic and as a poet.

Chaucer is the first major English poet to use the form in England and his roundels clearly reflect the influence of France. In the late fourteenth century and during the first half of the fifteenth century, two important poets write roundels; the first, Thomas Hoccleve, uses the form that is employed by Chaucer; the second, John Lydgate, adds a fourteenth verse to the form. A significant change is

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found in the rondeau of the sixteenth-century poet Sir Thomas Wyatt; his poem contains only two stanzas and it has the curtailed refrain that is characteristic of the form employed during the revival. The seventeenth-century rondeau of Charles Cotton is typical of the three stanza poem used during the revival. This form is known in the nineteenth century as the standard or traditional rondeau. The form does not change significantly from this date through the revival. In the eighteenth century, the rondeau is used primarily for political satire and most rondeaux are published in the imaginary epic, the Rolliad. Rondeaux continue to be written at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The form, however, drops from popular use from the early nineteenth century until the years following 1860. Beginning in this decade and continuing through to the end of the century, the rondeau has a significant revival.

This revival has at least three significant causes, one in England and two in France. Many English poets react to the heavy moral overtones in much of the literature of the early Victorian age, and many writers are repulsed by the inferior poetry that is being produced by imitators of Tennyson and Browning. Théophile Gautier has a general influence on the revival in both France and England by initiating the aesthetic and decadent movement and by insisting that poetry contain hard clear lines and precise images. Gautier helps

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to produce the kind of literary climate that is favourable to the revival of fixed forms in France and England. Finally, Théodore de Banville provides the French and English poets with the definitions of the traditional fixed forms and with examples of these forms. Banville's definitions of these forms in general and of the rondeau in particular are in circulation in England after 1872. As a result of these three significant influences, the French fixed forms in general are revived in England, and the rondeau in particular is widely used.

Banville's definition and discussion of the rondeau is contained in his essay "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe."¹ His remarks are comprehensive and explicit in regard to the use of the traditional rondeau. In July 1877, Gosse publishes his manifesto for the revival of the French fixed forms in England.² This work contains a definition and discussion of the rondeau that is less comprehensive than Banville's in discussion of the form, but is identical to Banville's in the definition of the rondeau. In 1878, Dobson defines the rondeau in the first anthology of French fixed forms to be published during the revival.³ His definition

¹Banville, Petit Traité de Poésie Française, pp. 185-228.

²Gosse, "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse," pp. 53-71.

³Austin Dobson, "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," pp. 328-351.

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is identical to that of Banville and Gosse--Dobson simply adds what becomes the typical rhyme scheme. Each of these three men gives examples of the rondeau to support his definition. There are other sources for definitions of this form, each of which agrees with the definitions quoted from Banville, Gosse, and Dobson. All of these definitions are confirmed by an analysis of Dobson's rondeau, "You Bid Me Try." This poem is a paraphrase of a rondeau by Voiture which has as its theme the structure of the typical rondeau.

The second chapter evaluates Gosse's leadership in the revival of the rondeau by examining his association with France, his Manifesto, the variety of means he uses to promote the revival, and his rondeaux. It is shown that Gosse believes English literature is influenced by French literature in general, and that the English revival of the French fixed forms is influenced by the nineteenth century revival of these forms in France. It is confirmed that Gosse's beliefs are founded on a deep knowledge of French literature. Finally, it is shown that his knowledge of French literature is respected by the highest French literary authorities. Gosse is well qualified and particularly inclined to promote the revival and use of the fixed poetic forms in England. A noteworthy document that reveals the French influence on the revival and that confirms the reintroduction of the fixed forms into England after 1860 is Gosse's Manifesto.

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Gosse's Manifesto is one of the most important primary documents published in England on the subject of the revival and is a significant work for an understanding of the nature and importance of Gosse's leadership in this revival. His attitude toward the role of a poet is similar to that of Gautier, who is a major figure in the French "Art for Art's Sake" movement which began in the years following 1830--the poet must recognize the supremacy of form and must refuse to permit irrelevant intrusions of morality and social or political ideas into literature. Dobson reinforces this attitude in his poem "Ars Victrix" (1876), which is a translation of Gautier's poem "L'Art"--the manifesto for French Parnassianism.

In his Manifesto, Gosse describes two of the major conditions that produce a search for new forms in England between 1840 and 1870: first, the dominant form in use from the beginning of the nineteenth century through to the 1870's is blank verse, and, second, this form is used with facility by few poets such as Tennyson and Browning. Imitations of the blank verse of Tennyson and Browning most often produce inferior poetry. The result is a need for new forms in which the English poets can express their creations. The French fixed forms fill this need. Gosse supports his discussion of this problem in his Manifesto in a lecture that he gives in Paris in 1904.

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The dominance of blank verse produces a reaction in the mid-nineteenth century by such poets as Swinburne, Morris, D. G. Rossetti, and C. Rossetti, who use such forms as the ballade, rondel, rondeau, and triolet. These poets, some of whom are members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, enrich their poetry by using correlatives from the middle ages and by an abundance of color and detail.

Gosse defends the use of form in poetry by emphasizing that law has always been better than anarchy and that rules for a poem discourage the incompetent workman and encourage the competent; he argues, therefore, for the revival of the French fixed forms.

Initiation of the revival of the rondeau cannot be attributed to any one person in particular. Gosse's Manifesto is the most important single document in the revival and indicates his leadership. In it, Gosse declares that the revival has spontaneous initiation and that no single poet nor group of poets plan, organize, and implement this revival and that the revival is "an idea obviously ready to be born." This is a reference to the two literary conditions discussed above: that of England in the decades preceding the revival as fertile ground for the French fixed forms, and the "art for art's sake" movement in France following 1830 in which the fixed forms are popular. The French poets provide the solution to England's problem and English poets

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implement this solution. English poets involved in the revival have close ties with France and are strongly influenced by French literature. The apology for the revival of the fixed forms in the Manifesto is contained in only four pages while the definitions require fifteen pages; the brevity of the apology may indicate that the revival is already under way and does not require much more than an urging by Gosse for widespread revival and use of the forms.

Gosse's definition of the forms and his encouragement of their use may have an impact on his contemporaries. In 1878, the year following publication of the Manifesto, the first anthology of French fixed forms is published; it contains an essay by Dobson which defines the forms and promotes their use. Dobson's definition is the same as that given by Gosse. The anthology and Dobson's definitions of the fixed forms appear to be responses to Gosse's Manifesto, thus indicating Gosse's leadership in the revival.

Although the French fixed forms have been defined by Banville in his Petit Traité as early as 1872 and although the revival is underway in England during the beginning years of the 1870's, Gosse believes his Manifesto, which was not published until 1877, is a much needed document. It is the only document that attempts to encourage, stimulate, and unify the revival, that makes a plea for the widespread use of the form, and that gives a clearly stated objective for

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the revival by offering a solution to the problem of inferior poetry in England. Another reason for the publishing of the Manifesto may be Gosse's desire to be known as an important literary man among literary men.

Gosse believes that subject matter expressed in the fixed forms should be significant and he is not in favor of using the forms for nonsense verse. His Manifesto, therefore, is a sincere plea for the revival of fixed forms which would be used to express significant themes. This document has an urgent and serious tone.

The nature of Gosse's involvement in the revival and his persistence in the promotion of the forms, particularly the rondeau form, is discussed. Gosse promotes the revival and use of the rondeau and other fixed forms by means other than the Manifesto, e.g., by other publications, letters, lectures, and personal and professional associations. Gosse knows the history and nature of the rondeau, but he often works in variation from the traditional form. Such variation contributes to the artistic quality of the rondeau. Two of his rondeaux, "The Poet at the Breakfast Table" and "Entre deux draps--" are contained in his letters. The former reveals Gosse's great concern about the function of the refrain and his knowledge of its conventional use in rondeaux written in both France and England. In his Collected Poems (1911), Gosse uses the rondeau and other French forms such as

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the ode, the elegy, the chanson, the conte, the madrigal, the fable, the eclogue, the idyll, the sestina, and others. He knows and usually follows the rules and conventions of the forms.

Gosse's personal associations with such poets as Dobson, Lang, Swinburne, Henley, and others propel the revival and influence writers on both sides of the Atlantic. Particularly important are Gosse's associations in friendship and literary endeavour with Dobson and Swinburne especially as they are concerned with him in the revival and continuing promotion of the fixed poetic forms.

Gosse maintains an active interest in the fixed forms through the latter years of his life. This persisting interest in the discipline of poetic forms is evidenced by his "Epilogue" to his Collected Poems. Gosse clearly and firmly establishes himself as most important in his leadership in the revival, promotion, and use of the fixed poetic forms in England.

The sequence "Fortunate Love: in Sonnets and Rondels" (1873) contains twenty poems which develop the meaning and experience of the course of love from the lovers "First Sight" of each other to their marriage. This love theme is traditional material for the sonnet sequence. The combining of sonnets and rondeaux to make a love sequence, however,

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is a departure from conventional practice. Although the two forms are similar in this sequence, the rondeau retains the distinguishing refrain, and the sonnet contains traditional fourteen lines and iambic pentameter meter. An important change in the traditional rondeau is the elimination of the tripartite stanza structure in all of the rondeaux in the sequence. This change produces a structure that is similar to the structure of the sonnets in the sequence and the similarity contributes to the smooth continuity of expression from poems one through twenty. The rondeaux express active movement while the sonnets are generally contemplative. These functions blend to assist in the expression of love in the sequence.

Gosse's poem "Rondeau" (1873) is similar in structure to the rondeau form used in the sequence but is traditional in the number of syllables, lines, rhyme, and refrain. This poem displays Gosse's full knowledge and fine sensibility for the mode of the rondeau form.

"The Poet at the Breakfast Table" (1877) demonstrates Gosse's concern for the function of the refrain in the rondeau and indicates his close association with Dobson on the theory and practice of this form. Gosse uses the refrain artfully in building the meaning of the poem.

Gosse's translation of Deshoulières rondeau, "Entre deux draps--" (1879), is in the tradition of the form. The

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refrain is used skilfully to produce a subtle change in meaning each time it is repeated and it blends with the lines that precede it to assist in developing the meaning of this rondeau.

The present study does not exhaust the need for scholarly consideration of the work, achievement, and influence of Gosse. Fuller studies need to be made, e.g., of Gosse's relation to French writers, of pastoral manifestations, of verse and verse forms that constitute communication with friends and associates, of patterns of imagery, of critical theory exemplified in works, of the interrelation of poetic forms, of tone in Gosse's rondeaux. A comprehensive study of whether the rondeau approaches the condition of the sonnet or the sonnet approaches the condition of the rondeau in Gosse's sequence "Fortunate Love: in Sonnets and Rondels" remains to be done, for example. There is also, of course, a number of Gosse's contemporaries whose work has a part in determining the nature and magnitude of the revival of the rondeau during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Austin Dobson (1840-1921) is one of the most significant poets in the revival. His association with Gosse has been discussed briefly above.¹ Dobson may not show as much active leadership in the revival as Gosse does, but he

¹Chapter Two, Section Three, pp. 192-204.

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publishes many more rondeaux than Gosse. His Poetical Works contain twenty-eight rondeaux which are dated from 1876 to 1901 and approximately sixty-one which are published in the twentieth century;¹ he is interested in the revival and use of French forms in general. Dobson's son, Alban Dobson, believes that "His [Austin Dobson's] claim to posterity . . . will rest mainly on his poetry, and, in particular, upon the many French forms of verse, which he achieved probably with greater facility and more lasting success than any of his contemporaries."² Austin Dobson is considered such an authority on the French fixed forms that, when the first anthology which contains these forms is being planned in 1877-1878, he is invited to write an essay on the characteristics of these forms; this essay is published in the anthology.³ His rondeaux are worthy of careful study.

William Ernest Henley (1849-1903) is a member of the coterie concerned with the revival. Like Dobson, Henley publishes a larger number of rondeaux than Gosse. Henley's Works contain fourteen rondeaux;⁴ thirteen are the

¹The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson.

²A. T. A. Dobson, Austin Dobson Letterbook, Cleveland, Ohio, Rowfant Club, 1936, p. xviii.

³Austin Dobson, "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," Latter Day Lyrics, pp. 328-351.

⁴William Ernest Henley, The Works of William Ernest Henley, London, Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1920.

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traditional three stanzas and thirteen lines and one rondeau is a two stanza poem with thirteen lines.

Andrew Lang (1844-1912) is an enthusiast about French poetry and the revival of the rondeau. His Poetical Works¹ contain only five rondeaux but they are distinctive in their variation from the conventional forms of the rondeau. Two are rondeaux contained within modified ballade forms; Lang's subtitles for these poems are "Ballade en Guise de Rondeau." The remaining three rondeaux are significantly different from the traditional form. Lang is held in high regard by the coterie for his knowledge of French literature and for his metrical achievement; Gosse believes that Lang has absorbed the romantic part of French literature: "He dipped into the wonderful lucky bag of France wherever he saw the glitter of romance. . . . I think that his definite ambition was to be the Ronsard of modern England, introducing a new poetical dexterity."²

Besides these poets who are most active and distinguished in the revival, promotion, and use of the rondeau--Gosse, Dobson, Henley, and Lang--there are many other poets in England who use the rondeau after its revival in

¹The Poetical Works of Andrew Lang, edited by Mrs. Andrew Lang, London, Longmans, Green, and Company, 1923.

²Gosse, "Andrew Lang," Portraits and Sketches, London, William Heinemann, Ltd., 1912, p. 203.

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the late 1860's. Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909) publishes two rondeaux in 1866 that he calls rondels.¹ In 1883 he publishes A Century of Roundels² which contain one hundred and one roundels; he originates the roundel form which is a distinctive modification of the rondeau.

Robert Bridges (1844-1930) publishes two rondeaux as early as 1873;³ they are traditional in form. Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) translates a rondeau from François Villon⁴ titled "To Death, Of His Lady."⁵ This is a ten line rondeau with a one word refrain. Some of the other English poets who use the form are John Payne (1842-1916); Cosmo Monkhouse (1840-1901); Ernest Dowson (1867-1901); and Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894). These poets contribute to the revival of the rondeau in the latter half of the nineteenth century with their use of the rondeau form in their poetry

¹Swinburne, Poems and Ballads, pp. 218, 259.

²A comprehensive study of the roundel which includes its relationship to the rondeau has recently been completed in the following unpublished thesis that was written as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts of the University of Ottawa: F. Lorraine McMullen, "The Importance Of Algernon Charles Swinburne To The Origin Of The Roundel And His Use Of This Form," Ottawa, Ontario, University of Ottawa, 1967.

³Bridges, Poetical Works.

⁴François Villon has been discussed above in Chapter One, Section Four, pp. 102-103.

⁵D. G. Rossetti, Poems.

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and also by their individual and collective enthusiasm for the revival of the rondeau in particular and of the other French fixed forms in general.

Finally, this English revival is felt by poets in the United States and Canada. Rondeaux are produced in the United States by Louis Untermeyer (1885-), Henry Cuyler Bunner (1855-1896), and Brander Matthews (1852-1929), among others. In Canada, chiefly, rondeaux are written by Charles G. D. Roberts (1860-1943) and John McCrae, "In Flanders Fields" (1872-1918).

The reintroduction of the rondeau, along with other fixed French poetic forms, into England, and the introduction into the United States and Canada in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the continuing use of the rondeau form into the early twentieth century constitutes a significant stage in the course of development of the rondeau as one of the most frequently used French fixed forms. All of these writers, including Gosse, either in their individual achievement or related activity and achievement need fuller scholarly consideration than they have received.

APPENDIX

This appendix contains correspondence with the University of Leeds, Leeds, England, which holds the following documents on Gosse in the Brotherton Collection: Gosse correspondence, manuscripts of poems "Impression," c. 1870, and "The Swan," c. 1880, notes on literary and other notabilities, Gosse's Journal and Diary, and three hundred and forty-five letters from Dobson to Gosse.

There is a possibility that these documents contain rondeaux or references to the theory and practice of the rondeau. Letter dated May 20th, 1967, item I, requests information about Gosse from the library's collection. Reply from the library dated June 1st, 1967, item II, states that many documents on Gosse are contained in the library but they are not available to borrowers. Specific information is requested of the Brotherton Collection in letter dated October 22nd, 1968, item III. Item IV, reply from the library, dated October 25th, 1968, provides some information but repeats the impossibility of lending any of the documents. The last letter from the Brotherton Collection,

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Item V, dated November 15th, 1968, states that there are no references to the rondeau form in Gosse's prose manuscripts.

8 Mohawk Crescent,

Ottawa.

20th May, 1967.

University of Leeds,
Brotherton Collection,
University Library,
Leeds,
England.

Gentlemen:

Would you be kind enough to let me know if the documents contained in the Brotherton Collection are available to borrowers? I am doing a Ph.D. thesis on Edmund Gosse and would very much appreciate reading the letters in the collection and examining the documents that may contain comments on the theory and practice of the rondeau.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours very truly,



F. M. Tierney,
Professor.

FMT/lt

BROTHERTON COLLECTION
THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

LEEDS :

DIM/CAH

1st June, 1967.

Dear Sir,

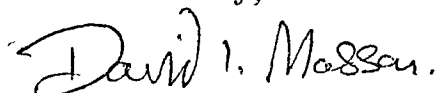
Sir Edmund Gosse

Thank you for your letter of May 24.

There is a printed catalogue, Leeds 1950, price 6s. 6d. plus postage, of the extensive Gosse correspondence, and the Brotherton Collection also has its own catalogue entries for a small number of letters acquired later. Both consist of entries under writer and recipient only, the latter being usually Gosse. There are a few other MSS, including: a poem Impression, c.1870?, a poem The swan, c. 1880?, and a collection of notes on literary and other notabilities, among which you might conceivably be interested in No. 4 "Herauld", No. 7 "Canon Dixon", No. 9 "Keats", No. 19 "Edward Fitzgerald", No. 22 "Some Balliol epigrams", No. 23, autograph poem by H. Austin Dobson "Olim", 3.7.78. Of letters from Dobson to Gosse there are 345, and it is possible that some of these refer to rondeaux, etc. If we hear from you again I will check to make sure the non-epistolary MSS mentioned are relevant, but we cannot undertake an investigation into the letters.

The Brotherton Collection cannot lend any of its material.

Yours faithfully,

David I. Masson,
Sub-LibrarianFrank M. Tierney, M.A.,
Administrative Assistant,
Department of English
University of Ottawa
Ottawa 2,
Canada.

8 Mohawk Crescent,

Ottawa.

22nd October, 1968.

Mr. David Masson,
Sub-Librarian,
University of Leeds,
Leeds 2,
England.

Dear Mr. Masson:

Thank you very much for your letter of June 2nd, 1967.
I am now completing my doctoral thesis and would very much
appreciate the following information:

1. The Catalogue of the Gosse Correspondence, Leeds 1950,
(money enclosed).
2. Catalogue of the Brotherton Collection Re: Edmund Gosse
3. May I borrow Gosse's journal and diary?
4. You mentioned in your letter of June 2nd that you would
not mind checking the epistolary manuscripts to determine
if they contain information on the rondeau form. It would
be very much appreciated if you would be kind enough to do so.
5. Would it be possible to borrow Gosse's letters?
6. Would you be kind enough to let me know if the poems
"Impression" c. 1870 and the "Swan" c. 1880 are rondeaux?

It would be appreciated if I could borrow all or any of these
documents. Any charges that are required, of course will be paid
promptly. Possibly you would prefer to send the material through
the inter-library loan system. If so our library is willing to
co-operate.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,



F. M. Tierney,
Professor.

BROTHERTON COLLECTION
THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

DIM/CR

25th October, 1968.

LEEDS :

Dear Professor Tierney,

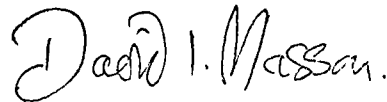
Sir Edmund Gosse

Thank you for your express letter of 22nd October. Your points:-

1. On its way by surface mail. We have your cheque covering the price of the volume plus threepence: a further 1/6 is required, for which we have enclosed an invoice with the volume.
2. There are many printed books by Gosse, etc., for which we have typed entries in our catalogue. Supplements for item 1 (correspondence) above are in the form of inscribed slips; although on 1st June, 1967 I referred to these letters as "a small number" this is only a relative term: the slips are combined with other entries, and I cannot see how we can, with our extremely limited staff, copy either the typed entries or the written slips concerned for you in any immediate future.
3. As I stated in my letter of 1st June, 1967, the Collection does not lend.
4. We will answer this in due course as it will take time.
5. See under 3. Thousands of letters are involved, many of them being bound into volumes. A great number are in frequent use by visiting and other researchers. Many of the correspondents were great literary figures of their day.
6. Impression consists of eight aabb, and The Swan of seven abab, 4-beat line stanzas. A ms note states that The Swan was published in his In russet and silver, 1894, and again in 1911 somewhere.

I am sorry that we have no power to lend at all. Naturally we would welcome a visit from you and would offer all possible facilities. Possibly a sight of the correspondence catalogue may give you an idea of what letters may particularly concern the precise theme (which I do not exactly know) of your thesis. We can then arrange something short of loan or issue. I doubt if the entries in the "Book of Gosse", which is a set of hospitality lists, will be of much relevance to Gosse's verse; nor will those in the diary, probably, as they are rather similar.

Yours sincerely,

David I. Masson,
Sub-Librarian.

Professor F.M. Tierney,
Department of English,
8 Mohawk Crescent,
Ottawa 6,
Canada.

BROTHERTON COLLECTION
THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

LEEDS :

DIM/CR

15th November, 1968.

Dear Professor Tierney,

Sir Edmund Gosse

Further to my letter of 25th October I write to say that the answer to your point no. 4 is that we have been unable to find a reference to the rondeau form in Gosse's prose manuscripts here.

Yours sincerely,

David I. Masson,
Sub-Librarian.

Professor F.M. Tierney,
Department of English,
8 Mohawk Crescent,
Ottawa 6,
Canada.

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Books

Alden, Raymond MacDonald. English Verse. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1903.

This work contains specimens which illustrate principles and history of English verse; it presents a general discussion of the artificial French lyric forms.

Banville, Théodore de. Oeuvres de Théodore de Banville: Odes Funambulesques. Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, éd., 1892.

. Petit Traité de Poésie Française. Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1909.

This work includes the important chapter, "Les Poèmes traditionnels à forme fixe," which contains examples and definitions of the forms.

. Poésies Complètes, Vol. II: Les Exilés, Odelettes, Améthystes, Rimes Dorées, Rondels, Les Princesses, Trente-six Ballades Joyeuses, éd., Eugène Fasquelle. Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1907, pp. 219-232.

This work contains some of Banville's fixed forms.

. Poésies Complètes, Vol. I: Odes Funambulesques, Occidentales, Idylles Prussiennes, éd., Eugène Fasquelle. Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1909.

This work contains some of Banville's fixed forms.

Baugh, Albert C., ed. A Literary History of England. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948.

This survey of English literature is valuable for its descriptions of the literary condition of England during the Victorian Age.

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Beckson, Karl, ed. Aesthetes and Decadents of the 1890's. New York: Random House, Inc., 1966.

Beckson's introduction to this anthology includes important data on the literary conditions in France and England that made these countries susceptible to the revival of the French fixed forms in general and the rondeau in particular.

Beresford, J., ed. Poems of Charles Cotton. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1923.

This work was used as the source of Cotton's rondeaux.

Bernbaum, Ernest, ed. Anthology of Romanticism. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1948.

This anthology was used as the source of Wordsworth's poem "The Fountain," which is described in this thesis. This work is an excellent anthology of Romanticism.

Bray, René, éd. Anthologie de la Poésie Précieuse. Paris: Librairie N12 et 3 bis, Place de la Sorbonne, V^o, 1957.

This anthology contains background information on the précieuse poets who employed the rondeau during the seventeenth century; it also contains examples of the rondeau. The précieuse poets form one important movement in the development of the rondeau in France from the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century.

. La Préciosité et les Précieux. Paris: Editions Albin Michel 22, rue Huyghens, 1948.

This work contains background information on the précieuse poets who employed the rondeau during the seventeenth century. The importance of this movement is highlighted in Bray's Anthologie de la Poésie Précieuse.

Brewer, Robert Frederick. The Art of Versification and the Technicalities of Poetry. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1912.

This is a work of poetic forms which deals with the rondeau as a "Poetic Trifle," an example of vers de société. It makes clear the raison d'être of the rondeau, and also comments on the attitudes towards the rondeau in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, it is a very limited exposition of the form.

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Bridges, Robert Seymour. Poems. London: B. Pickering, 1873.

This work contains examples of French fixed forms written during the revival, including a rondeau and two triolets.

. Poetical Works of Robert Bridges, Excluding The Eight Dramas. London: H. Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1912.

This work contains Bridges' rondeaux.

Brooks, Cleanth, and Warren, Robert Penn. Understanding Poetry. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1964.

This work is important for its chapters on practical criticism; the chapters have been helpful for the analysis of rondeaux in the present thesis.

Brown, E. K., and Bailey, J. O., eds. Victorian Poetry. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1962.

This work was used as the source for some examples of poems from the Victorian period that are referred to in this thesis.

Brugmans, Linette F., ed. The Correspondence of André Gide and Edmund Gosse. London: P. Owen, 1966.

The French influence on Gosse and his knowledge and interest in French literature is shown in this work.

Buckley, Jerome Hamilton. The Victorian Temper. New York: Random House, Inc., 1964.

Buckley's work contains essays on the literary conditions in Victorian England. His essay on the "Spasmodic Poets" is particularly important because it describes the degeneration of blank verse; this degeneration produced an interest in the revival of form in poetry during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Buxton, John, ed. Poems of Charles Cotton. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958.

This work contains Cotton's rondeaux.

Catalogue of the Gosse Correspondence in the Brotherton Collection, A. Leeds: The Brotherton Library, 1950.

This work contains a list of approximately fifteen hundred letters that are in the Brotherton Collection.

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Charteris, Evan Edward. The Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1931.

There is valuable information in this work. This work presents Gosse's French background, his interest in French literature, and his correspondence with English poets who were interested in the revival such as Dobson, Swinburne, and others. In his correspondence, Gosse expresses his opinion about the use of the refrain in the rondeau; he includes a number of his rondeaux.

Cohen, Helen Louise. Lyric Forms From France: Their History and Their Use. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.

This work is one of the few studies of the revival of the French fixed forms in England during the latter half of the nineteenth century. It gives important background information including significant details about the rondeau's growth from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century and includes a comprehensive anthology of all the fixed forms.

. The Ballade. New York: Columbia University Press, 1915.

This is a valuable work for general information on the revival. It does not contain significant details on the revival of the rondeau.

Cowl, Richard Pape. The Theory of Poetry in England. London: Macmillan and Co., 1914.

The work was scanned for significant references to the rondeau. None were found.

Dobson, Alban T. A. Austin Dobson Letterbook. Cleveland: Rowfant Club, 1936.

This is a good background work for an appreciation of Dobson's interest in the rondeau and for comments by critics on his ability as a poet.

. Austin Dobson: Some Notes. London: Oxford University Press, 1928.

These notes contain some comments by Dobson that reveal his attitude toward the rondeau. The work also contains some correspondence with other poets involved in the revival, including Edmund Gosse.

. A Bibliography of the First Editions of Published and Privately Printed Books and Pamphlets by Austin Dobson. London: Curwon Press, The First Edition Club, 1925.

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This is an important work for its bibliographic information and for the few rondeaux that it contains.

Dobson, Alban, ed. The Complete Poetical Works of Austin Dobson. London: Oxford University Press, 1923.

This work contains all but a few of Dobson's rondeaux.

Dobson, Austin. Arblay, Mme. Frances (Burney) d'. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1904.

This work was scanned in order to determine if Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

. The Ballade of Beau Brocade, and Other Poems of the XVIIIth Century. London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co., 1892.

One rondeau is contained in this work: "For Old Sake's Sake."

. De Libris, Prose & Verse. New York: Macmillan and Co., 1908.

This work was scanned to determine whether Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

. Eighteenth Century Essays. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1932.

This work was scanned in order to determine if Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

. Eighteenth Century Vignettes. London: Oxford University Press, 1923.

This work was scanned in order to determine if Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

. Fielding. London: Macmillan and Co., 1907.

This work was scanned in order to determine if Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use

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of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

Dobson, Austin. Horace Walpole: A Memoir With An Appendix Of Books Printed By The Strawberry Hill Press. London: Harper and Brothers, 1910.

This work was scanned in order to determine if Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

. "A Note on Some Foreign Forms of Verse," Latter Day Lyrics, ed., W. Davenport Adams. London: Chatto and Windus, 1904.

This work is significant because it is the first anthology of French fixed forms in nineteenth century England and because it contains six rondeaux written by contemporary English poets; it is even more important, however, for the essay by Dobson that attempts to justify the reintroduction of these forms into England. Dobson defines the rondeau and promotes its use.

. Old-World Idylls, and Other Verses. London K. Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., Ltd., 1893.

The rondeau "To You I Sing" is used as a frontispiece to this book. There are no other references to the revival in this work.

. The Poems and Plays of Oliver Goldsmith. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1923.

This work was scanned in order to determine if Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

. Proverbs in Porcelain and Other Verses. London: H. S. King & Co., 1877.

This work contains many of Dobson's triolets, rondeaux, and ballads and is one of the early volumes of these forms written and published in England. This volume helped to spread interest in the revival.

. Samuel Richardson. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1902.

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This work was scanned in order to determine if Dobson made references to the rondeau or Gosse's use of it and to see if it contained any rondeaux. The work is of no value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

Dobson, Austin. Vignettes in Rhyme and Vers de Société. London: Henry S. King & Co., 1873.

This work contains many of Dobson's French fixed forms that were published during the revival. These poems helped to promote the use of these forms in England during the 1870's and 1880's.

Drinkwater, John. A Book for Bookmen. New York: George H. Doran Company, 1927.

This is of no value to the study of the revival.

_____. The Eighteen Sixties. London: Cambridge University Press, 1932.

The essays in this book do not contain information on the revival of the rondeau.

Evans, Ivor. English Poetry in the Later Nineteenth Century. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1933.

Evans' work discussed the use of the French fixed forms in general during the period of the revival. It makes particular references to Swinburne, Gosse, and Dobson, among others, but no significant material about the revival of the rondeau.

Foxwell, A. K., ed. The Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt. New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1964.

The work contains the rondeaux written by Wyatt.

Furnival, Frederick J., ed. Hoccleve's Works, I. The Minor Poems. "Early English Text Society." London: Kegan, Paul Trench, Trübner and Co., Ltd., 1892.

This is the source for the poems of Hoccleve that are discussed in this thesis.

Gautier, Théophile. Emaux et camées. Paris: Librairie Droz, 1945.

This volume of poetry contains Gautier's poem "L'Art," which is a plea for hard clear lines in poetry and therefore a plea for the use of fixed forms.

Gayley, Charles Mills, and Kurtz, B. P. Methods and Materials of Literary Criticism. Boston: Ginn and

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Co., 1920.

This work contains a discussion about vers de société but it makes no significant references to the rondeau.

_____, and Young, C. C. English Poetry, its Principles and Progress. New York: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1920.

This work, which contains representative masterpieces from 1390 to 1917, contains no specific references to the rondeau.

Gosse, Sir Edmund William. "Andrew Lang," Portraits and Sketches. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1912, pp. 197-212.

This essay is valuable for Gosse's appraisal of Andrew Lang's use of the French forms. Gosse is lavish in his praise of Lang.

_____. Aspects and Impressions. New York: Charles Scribner and Son, 1922.

This work is of no value to the revival of the rondeau.

_____. Books on the Table. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1921.

This work contains a discussion about the importance of vers de société. The book has no direct value to the study of the revival.

_____, ed. The Collected Poems of Edmund Gosse. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1911.

This book is the chief source of Gosse's rondeaux.

_____. The Continuity of English Literature. "The English Association," Pamphlet #34. London: Presidential Address No. 5, 1922.

This work is not specifically about either the French forms or the rondeau.

_____. Critical KIT-KATS. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, Inc., 1903.

This work consists of short essays on various literary figures in the 1860's, but none are directly involved in the revival of the rondeau.

_____. Father and Son: A Study of Two Temperaments. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, Co., 1965.

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This work makes no reference to Gosse's interest in the rondeau. It does, however, demonstrate Gosse's growth and development as a literary figure, as well as his relationship to his father.

Gosse, Sir Edmund William. French Profiles. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1905.

This work contains a significant lecture given by Gosse on February 9, 1904, to the Société des Conférences, in Paris. The lecture reveals the strong association that Gosse had with France and his belief that French literature had a significant influence on English literature in general and on the rondeau in particular.

. From Shakespeare to Pope: An Inquiry into the Causes of the Rise of Classical Poetry in England. Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1885.

This work was scanned for Gosse's comments in the preface. Frequently Gosse's remarks in prefaces extend beyond the immediate topic. In this work, Gosse makes no mention of the rondeau or the revival.

. The Future of English Poetry. London: The English Association, Pamphlet No. 25, June, 1913.

This pamphlet contains Gosse's belief that poets must avoid artificiality in their poetry.

. Gossip in a Library. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1913.

This work makes no significant references to the revival.

. Leaves and Fruit. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1927.

This work does not discuss the revival of fixed forms.

. The Letters of Thomas Lovell Beddoes. London: E. Matthews and J. Love, 1894.

This work does not contain information on the revival of the rondeau.

. The Life of A. C. Swinburne. Bonchurch Edition, Vol. XIX. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1927.

This biography includes evidence of Swinburne's interest in French forms, especially the rondeau.

. Northern Studies. London: W. Scott, 1890.

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This work was scanned in order to determine if Gosse made references to the rondeau or the revival. No references were found.

Gosse, Sir Edmund William. Selected Essays. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1928.

This work is valuable as a means of understanding Lord Cromer's interest in vers de société. However, of the twelve essays in the book, "Lord Cromer as a Man of Letters" is the only one of interest and it is only of value in a general way because it deals with vers de société.

. Silhouettes. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1925.

This work is important because it reveals Gosse's interest in French literature in general.

. Some Diversions of a Man of Letters. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1919.

This work is not of direct value to the revival.

Grammont, Maurice. Petit Traité de Versification Française. Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1966.

This work is an excellent source for a definition of the traditional rondeau.

Green, Roger Lancelyn, ed. A Century of Humorous Verse 1850-1950. London: Dent, 1959.

This work has been scanned for references to the revival of the rondeau; it contains no significant references to the revival.

Harvey, Paul, ed. The Oxford Companion to English Literature. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958.

This work is valuable for general reference purposes, especially in the section "The Rolliad," which contains rondeaux written by eighteenth century English poets.

Henley, William Ernest. The Works of William Ernest Henley. London: Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1920.

This book contains Henley's published rondeaux.

Holmes, Urban Tigner, Jr. A History of Old French Literature From the Origins to 1300. New York: F. S. Crofts and Co., 1937.

This work is helpful as a source of information

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about the French poets of the Middle Ages who used the rondeau form.

Jackson, Holbrook. The Eighteen Nineties. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1939.

This work does not contain any significant comments on the revival of the rondeau in the 1870's.

Kastner, L. E. A History of French Versification. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903.

This is an important work. It traces the origin and growth of the rondeau, and the fixed forms in general, from the Middle Ages through nineteenth century France.

Lafourcade, Georges. Swinburne: A Literary Biography. New York: Morrow, 1932.

This work presents Swinburne's interest in the revival of the French fixed forms.

Lang, Andrew. Ballades in Blue China. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1881.

This work contains Lang's early ballades.

_____, ed. Ballads and Lyrics of Old France. London: Longmans and Co., 1872.

This work contains some of the earliest examples of French fixed forms that were produced in England during the revival.

Lang, Mrs. Andrew, ed. The Poetical Works of Andrew Lang. 4 vols. London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1923.

This work contains most of Lang's rondeaux.

Lang, Cecil Y., ed. New Writings by Swinburne. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1964.

This is of no value to the revival of the rondeau.

_____. The Swinburne Letters. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962.

A few references to the revival are contained in these letters. Unfortunately they do not contain replies to Gosse's letters which frequently were inquiries from Swinburne about the use of the rondeau.

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Larousse, Pierre. Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX^e siècle. Paris: Pierre Larousse, 1875.

Lowes, John Livingston. Geoffrey Chaucer. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958.

This was scanned for significant references to the rondeau; none were found.

MacCracken, Henry Noble, ed. The Minor Poems of John Lydgate. Early English Text Society. London: Oxford University Press, 1934.

This work contains Lydgate's rondeaux.

Matthusen, Paul F., and Millgate, Michael. Trans-Atlantic Dialogue; Selected American Correspondence of Edmund Gosse. Austin: University of Texas, 1965.

This work was scanned for significant references about the revival of the rondeau; none were found.

McMullen, Lorraine F. "The Importance of Algernon Charles Swinburne to the Origin of the Roundel and His Use of This Form." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Ottawa, Ont.: University of Ottawa, 1967.

This work traces the origin of the roundel from the Middle Ages through nineteenth century England. This form used by Swinburne is a manifestation of the revival of the French fixed forms in England from the late 1860's through the end of the century.

Musser, Frederic O. Strange Clamor. Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 1965.

This work is of no specific value to the revival of the rondeau.

Omond, T. S. English Metrists of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. London: Oxford University Press, 1907.

This work was scanned for significant references to the revival of the rondeau; none were found.

_____. Some Thoughts About Verse. London: The English Association, Pamphlet No. 55, January, 1923.

There is no information in this pamphlet that is pertinent to the revival.

O'Shaughnessy, Arthur William Edgar. Songs of a Worker. London: Chatto & Windus, 1872, 1881.

The work is indicative of O'Shaughnessy's devotion to Gautier's ideal of pure, aesthetic form.

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- Payne, John. Intaglios. London: B. M. Pickering, 1871.
This work contains Payne's original French fixed forms. His interest in the revival of the fixed forms is indicated by the fact that he dedicated this volume to Théodore de Banville.
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- . Songs of Life and Death. London: H. S. King & Co., 1872.
This work includes a translation from Banville, "Ballad of Common Folk," and several of Payne's exercises in French fixed forms. The effect of this work is that it indicates the growing interest in the revival of the French fixed forms in England.
- Peters, Robert L. The Crowns of Apollo. Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 1965.
This is of no direct value to the study of the revival of the rondeau.
- Power, A. The Refrain in Nineteenth Century English Poetry. An Abstract of a dissertation. Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University Press, 1960.
This work excludes discussion of the French fixed forms.
- Raynaud, Gaston. Rondeaux et autres poésies du XV^e siècle. Paris: Société des Anciens Textes Français, 1889.
This work discusses the use of the rondeau in France during the fifteenth century. It is important for the development of the rondeau from the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century.
- Robertson, A., and Stevens, D. W. eds. A History of Song. Toronto: Nelson, Foster, & Scott, Ltd., 1960.
This work was scanned in order to find reference to the origin of the rondeau. There is no significant information on this form that is contained in this book.
- Robinson, Frank N., ed. The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer. Cambridge, Mass.: The Riverside Press, 1961.
This work is the source for Chaucer's poems that are discussed in this thesis. Robinson's book includes an excellent study of Chaucer's works.
- Rossetti, Dante Gabriel. Poems. London: F. S. Ellis, 1870.
This work contains Rossetti's translations from Villon's Le Grand Testament. These translations are

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indicative of the growing interest in French fixed forms in England in the 1860's and 1870's.

Saintsbury, George. A History of English Prosody from the Twelfth Century to the Present Day. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1923.

This work includes important comments on the rondeau as a fixed form from the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century.

. Historical Manual of English Prosody. Vol. I. London: Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1910.

This work contains examples of the rondeau and a definition of the form.

Sendall, Sir Walter J. The Complete Works of C. S. Calverley. London: George Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1901.

There are no rondeaux contained in his Complete Works.

Skeat, Walter William. The Chaucer Canon. New York: Haskell House, 1965.

This was scanned for references to Chaucer's use of the rondeau; for purposes of this thesis, there is no important material in this work that relates to Chaucer's use of the rondeau.

Stevenson, Robert Louis. Letters and Miscellanies of Robert Louis Stevenson. ed. Sidney Colvin. 4 vols. London: Methuen & Co., 1900.

This work contains two rondels written by Stevenson that were sent to his friend, Mrs. Sitwell.

Swinburne, Algernon Charles. A Century of Roundels. London: Chatto & Windus, 1883.

This work contains Swinburne's creation--the roundel--which is a modification of the rondeau. The work indicates the interest in French fixed forms in England during the years following 1860.

. Complete Works, Bonchurch Edition. 20 Vols. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1925-1927.

This is the most complete collection of Swinburne's works including poems published posthumously, a bibliography, and Gosse's biography of Swinburne.

. Poems and Ballads. London: J. C. Hotten, 1866.

These works contain many of Swinburne's French fixed forms.

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Thrall, William Flint, and Addison Hibbard. A Handbook to Literature. Revised and enlarged by C. Hugh Holman. New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960.

Ubicini, M. A., ed. Oeuvres de Voiture, Lettres et Poésies. Tome Second. Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1967.

Voiture, Victor. Oeuvres de Voiture: Lettres et Poésies, nouvelle édition, revue en partie sur le manuscrit de Conrart. Tome second. Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1967.

This edition of Voiture's work is used in the present thesis.

Wallis, C., ed. Rondels. London: Caravel Press, Ltd., 1935.

This is a source for some rondeaux which can be examined to reveal the form used in the latter half of nineteenth century England.

Watson, Sir W. Excursions in Criticism 1893. London: Elkin Mathews and John Lane, MDCLXCIII.

This book has no relevance to the study of the revival of the rondeau.

Articles

Drinkwater, John. "The Poetry of Edmund Gosse." Bookman. LXIII, No. 5 (July, 1926), 536-543.

This essay is of no significant value to the study of the revival.

Ellis, S. M. "Austin Dobson." Fortnightly Review. (October, 1921), 640-650.

This article is valuable for an appreciation of the type of rondeau used by Dobson; the article contains an appraisal of Dobson's poetry in general.

Francon, Marcel. "Note on Chaucer's Roundels and His French Models." Annali Institute Universitarie Orientale, Napoli, Sezione Germanica. 9 (1966), 195-197.

This work is valuable for its discussion of Chaucer's French sources for his roundels.

Gosse, Sir Edmund William. "A Plea for Certain Exotic Forms of Verse." Cornhill Magazine. London: XXXVI (July, 1877), 53-71.

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This is Gosse's Manifesto for the English group that experimented with the French fixed forms. Gosse tells how he planned to introduce the ballade and the rondeau into English verse but had found that others had anticipated him. This is one of the most important documents in the revival.

Gosse, Sir Edmund William. "Austin Dobson." Quarterly Review. (January, 1922), 225-242.

This article comments on the French fixed forms in general which reveal Gosse's and Dobson's interest in the revival.

Lowes, John Livingstone. "The Art of Geoffrey Chaucer." Proceedings of the British Academy. London: Oxford University Press, XVI (1930), 299-326.

Lowes' article is important for an appreciation of Chaucer's use of the roundel and his dependence upon French sources.

. "The Chaucerian Merciles Beauté and Three Poems of Deschamps." Modern Language Review. London: Cambridge University Press, V (1910), 33-39.

This article is an important study of the source of Chaucer's "Merciles Beauté," which is a triple roundel. Lowes shows that Chaucer depended upon two poems from Deschamps.

Marcotte, Paul J. "An Introduction to the Triolet." Inscape. V, No. 11 (Autumn, 1966), 18-34.

Marcotte's essay traces the causes of the revival of the triolet in England during the latter half of the nineteenth century. It points out that many English writers were preoccupied with social criticism and many literary critics were attempting to define literature in general and poetry in particular as a criticism of life. He notes that the English aesthetes reacted against morality in literature and the triolet was one of the forms used by the aesthetes who were preoccupied with form in poetry.

. "More Late-Victorian Triolet Makers." Inscape. VI, No. 11 (Spring, 1968), 1-2.

Marcotte's essay contains a discussion of some of the poems of some of the poets that produced triolets during the revival. The essay is not of direct value to the revival of the rondeau.

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Robinson, James K. "A Neglected Phase of the Aesthetic Movement: English Parnassianism." PMLA. LXVIII (September, 1953), 733-754.

Robinson's article is one of the few works that examine the English Parnassian Movement in the nineteenth century. Robinson traces the beginning of the revival of the rondeau to the art for art's sake movement in France.

. "Austin Dobson and the Rondeliers." MLQ. XIV (1953), 31-42.

This work contains a discussion of Austin Dobson's contribution to the English Parnassian Movement. The article comments on the use of the French fixed forms in England during the years following 1860.

ABSTRACT OF

The Revival of the Rondeau in England
in the Years Following 1860, and the Leadership
of Sir Edmund Gosse in This Revival

The purpose of this thesis is to show that there is a significant revival of the rondeau in England during the 1860's and 1870's; to reveal the nature and principal causes of this revival; to determine the significance of the contribution of Sir Edmund Gosse to this revival; and to examine the essential characteristics of the rondeau as a poetic form.

The literary rondeau evolves out of the folk or tribal animistic ritual dance of preliterate primitive cultures and the rondeau is first used as a literary form in thirteenth century France. The dominant form in this century is thirteen lines; this form is known as the triolet from the fifteenth century until today. In the fourteenth century the rondeau has three major forms: the rondel sangle or simple rondeau, a thirteen line poem, and the rondel double or double rondeau. Only the simple and double rondeau forms are used in the fifteenth century. The refrain assumes its present abbreviated form in the fifteenth century and out of this shortening evolves a twelve line poem known as the

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rondeau simple and a fifteen line poem called rondeau double. The latter is now called rondeau and is the dominant form from the sixteenth century to the present time. The rondeau is not widely used from the sixteenth century until the revival in the years following 1860.

In England, a three stanza thirteen line rondeau is used by Chaucer (1343-1400) and Thomas Hoccleve (1368-1450); John Lydgate (1370-1450) adds a fourteenth line. Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542) uses a two stanza poem with curtailed refrain. Charles Cotton (1630-1687) uses the three stanza rondeau that is typical of the form used during the revival. In the eighteenth century, the rondeau is used for political satire in the Rolliad. The form drops from use until the revival in the nineteenth century.

The revival is caused by three significant conditions: a reaction by the English writers to heavy moral overtones in contemporary English literature, and a distaste for inferior imitations of Tennyson's and Browning's blank verse; the influence from France of Théophile Gautier's (1811-1872) "Art for Art's Sake" movement; and the theory and practice of the rondeau by Théodore de Banville (1823-1891). Banville, Sir Edmund Gosse (1849-1928), and Austin Dobson (1840-1921) agree on the definition of the traditional rondeau form. Dobson's traditional rondeau, "You Bid Me Try," is analysed.

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Gosse's leadership in the revival of the rondeau is manifested by his knowledge of French literature and close association with French writers, by publishing a Manifesto for the revival of all the French fixed forms and by other means that he uses to promote the revival. His leadership is also confirmed by his theory and practice of the rondeau. He writes a rondeau-sonnet sequence which contains eight rondeaux and he writes three separate rondeaux that are generally in the tradition of the form. Gosse makes a significant contribution to the revival.

Thus, the rondeau originates in Medieval France, is used by English poets from Chaucer to poets of the late eighteenth century, drops from use in the first half of the nineteenth century, and has a significant revival in the years following 1860. Gosse is active and influential in this revival.

This thesis, submitted in 1969 to the Department of English Literature in the Faculty of Arts, the University of Ottawa, Canada, in view of obtaining the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, comprises three hundred and twenty-nine pages.