

## THE GULLICK ACQUISITION OF 1953

In the *Turnbull Library Record* of November 1953,<sup>1</sup> the Librarian described briefly the collection of Edmund Gosse material acquired from James Tyrell, the Sydney bookseller, and the present article should be regarded as a supplement for which Mr Taylor has supplied additional information. The collection had been made by Norman Davidge Gullick, formerly advertising manager of the *Times Literary Supplement*, translator of four novels from the German in the 1930s, and for many years an admirer and collector of Gosse's work. The collection itself had been on offer to the Australian National Library at a very reasonable figure, and Mr Taylor stepped in on behalf of the Turnbull Library when the offer lapsed.

Gosse's reputation as writer and critic fluctuated violently during his lifetime, and slumped in the years immediately following his death, as, for instance, in Malcolm Elwin's *Old Gods Falling*, as late as 1939. Of recent years, however, the inevitable swing of the pendulum has occurred, and Gosse can be seen as a representative of a certain kind of criticism, a powerful entrepreneur in the field of letters, and an influential figure in the study of comparative literature. Attempts have been made to link him with the nefarious activities of T. J. Wise, but the worst that can be said is that he became a dupe rather than an accomplice.

The material acquired by the Library was principally, but not entirely, confined to Gosse; it has, in fact, a relatively wide range of personal and bibliographic interest. Gullick's very friendly relationship with Gosse in his later years, and his invariable helpfulness – at one stage Gosse refers to him as 'my master henchman'<sup>2</sup> – is reflected in scores of brief letters and postcards, and the occasional draft of a letter from Gullick to Gosse; and he was, of course, in an especially favourable position to acquire some of Gosse's minor manuscripts, of which there are ten, as well as privately circulated items behind some of which there lurked the ominous figure of T. J. Wise. Among the miscellaneous correspondence there are very cordial letters to Gullick from Mrs Gosse and Philip, the son, occasional letters from Norman Douglas (dealing with advertising), Mrs Hardy, Douglas Jerrold, George Moore, Arthur Waugh, and T. J. Wise, as well as isolated letters to Gosse himself from Thomas Hardy and George Saintsbury, presumably picked up as collector's items. Gullick's own bibliographical work on Gosse is represented by drafts and the typescript of the Bibliography he prepared for Evan Charteris's *Life and Letters of Sir Edmund Gosse*, 1931; by collations of Gosse's publications as prepared for a separate, definitive Bibliography, for which Gullick's own Introduction survives as well as a