

altered, and a temporarily mollified but profoundly distrustful De Tabley insists on examining the designs of the other plates before the engraving is done. [Lane himself had similar problems with Beardsley's designs.] Misunderstandings with Ricketts continue; De Tabley has to write a new poem, a very competent sonnet, to match Ricketts's illustration of 'The Two Old Kings', although he completely approves of the two other illustrations he has seen. Another blow was in store for him, however. Ricketts had decided to illustrate an earlier poem on the Prodigal Son, which Le Gallienne had also cut out, and De Tabley has to supply yet another sonnet in its place; and with a burst of spleen, he threatens to use his whole legal rights to prevent the publication of the book plate with the male figure unaltered. From 6 December De Tabley becomes almost frenetic. The book-plate has been resubmitted, and thereafter he prefers to have nothing to do with Ricketts directly; he has taken a month to put one patch of colour over a certain part of the figure, which remains 'unhealthy, morbid and generally . . . unpleasant'. It must be left out altogether. His friend Franks suggests 'an Apollo if Ricketts still clings to the wholly inappropriate idea of a male figure, [but it is] perfectly useless making any such suggestion, however, to a man so self-opinated'. He then finds that Ricketts has illustrated too many poems in the latter part of the book, with a manifest lack of balance; it is evident that the book cannot be out for Christmas, and to take up Lane's suggestion of Walter Crane as illustrator would defer publication indefinitely, though he would prefer a Crane frontispiece. As late as 10 December he did not know that Ricketts had as yet done no frontispiece. Not surprisingly Lane himself had retired to bed, the burden falling on Matthews, who agrees to the exclusion of the obnoxious book-plate. With a flicker of optimism, De Tabley now grasps at the possibility of publication by Christmas, only to fall victim to the printer's failure to send him the last sixteen pages of proofs, so that he cannot leave Bournemouth; 'ever since the middle of August this unfortunate book has occasioned me endless trouble and vexation'. The last six Turnbull letters dealing with the crisis are tempered by De Tabley's humane concern for Lane's health, and that of William Watson, for whom he would willingly promote a subscription. Yet Watson's illness is ominous, for his absence as critic for the *Spectator*, means that Hutton, the editor, 'is sure to be on the lookout with a view to smashing me'.

In fact, as one learns from the Bodleian and Berg collections, Lane sustained his client through a series of variations on the previous themes until *Poems Dramatic and Lyrical* appeared on 28 March, on which De Tabley comments, 'It will be a failure, assuredly. All the surroundings and antecedents guarantee that.' To his surprise and