



# Journal of European Periodical Studies

*an online journal by ESPRit, European Society for Periodical Research*

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*Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 1.2 (Winter 2016)

ISSN 2506-6587

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21825/jeps.v1i2.2650>

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The *Journal of European Periodical Studies* is hosted by Ghent University

Website: [ojs.ugent.be/jeps](http://ojs.ugent.be/jeps)

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To cite this article: Evangelhia Stead, 'The Economics of Illustration: The *Revue illustrée* in the 1890s', *Journal of European Periodical Studies*, 1.2 (Winter 2016), 65–85

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# The Economics of Illustration: The *Revue illustrée* in the 1890s

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## ABSTRACT

The Parisian *Revue illustrée* (1885–1912), a middle-class periodical of broad circulation and sophisticated iconography, lets us examine the expansion of fin-de-siècle culture beyond the so-called ‘petites revues’, particularly in the years 1894–1903. Through this fashionable all-publics fortnightly, typically fin-de-siècle tales and songs on transient motives, replete with Art Nouveau images and ornamentation, reach bourgeois households. The article shows the niche category the magazine occupied through its copious and exciting iconography. Using unpublished correspondence and print material culture, it throws light on the ways its editors turned the more refined parts of the magazine into deluxe photo-mechanically produced books. The study focuses on two men, René Baschet, the *Revue’s* editor from 1889 to 1904, and Jérôme Doucet, his assistant editor from July 1897 to 1902, and two fin-de-siècle writers, Catulle Mendès and Jean Lorrain, as well as up-and-coming artists André Cahard, Henry Bellery-Desfontaines, Manuel Orazi, and Carloz Schwabe. The case shows that sophisticated illustration was a financial spur that came cheap while it supported the so-called ‘decadent’ writings. Further, with refined taste, numerous connexions to artists, and work for a Dutch publisher, Jérôme Doucet emerges as a key figure behind the scenes.

## KEYWORDS

*Revue illustrée*, fin de siècle, circulation, iconography, photo-mechanical reproduction, colour reproduction, Art Nouveau, René Baschet, Jérôme Doucet, Catulle Mendès, Jean Lorrain, André Cahard, Henry Bellery-Desfontaines, Manuel Orazi, Carloz Schwabe, Albertus Willem Sijthoff

In the first two articles of this special issue, Elisa Grilli and Philipp Leu have addressed, in different yet complementary ways, a central point regarding the production of ‘little magazines’ at the end of the nineteenth century. These have regularly been considered as static, self-referential and short-lived artistic ventures with limited impact. This may well confirm a conception of the fin de siècle as a naughty back-alley of the literary world, and sanctify it as a fleeting moment in literary history with little substance beyond passing or trivial achievements. The assumption, though, does not correspond to what such magazines *really are*. Unpublished documents (correspondence and archive material), publishing strategies, and comparison with other policies enable us to perceive them in fact as ingenious and dynamic producers of culture in a changing world. And also as aesthetic platforms of great plasticity and flexibility, spurred by the desire both to succeed commercially and to express novel ideas or trends. Creating stimulus and mirroring cultural hallmarks of the period (symbolism, modernism, and Art Nouveau), they signal a turning-point in communication, favouring a stereoscopic view of the fin de siècle itself: a period of erosion and loss but also, more importantly, an era of hope in new beginnings.<sup>1</sup>

In this article, I purposely move away from so-called ‘little magazines’ to examine a Parisian middle-class periodical of broad circulation, the *Revue illustrée* (1885–1912). I will particularly consider how typically Art Nouveau illustrations, ornamentation for fin-de-siècle fairy tales, or songs on things of transient value appear in this all-round fashionable fortnightly targeting bourgeois households in the years 1894–1903, involving two men, René Baschet, its editor at the time, and Jérôme Doucet, his assistant editor from July 1897 to 1902, and two fin-de-siècle writers among others, Catulle Mendès and Jean Lorrain. Fin-de-siècle texts, reflecting ambient pessimism and concerned with disintegration and promoting art for art’s sake, are not the monopoly of short-lived publications. They thrive elsewhere and are popular in the mass(ive) Parisian market for printed matter. While past research strove to distinguish elite refined literature from common established media, overlapping stances and ambiguities in the daily press have been highlighted since at least 2003.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, fin-de-siècle literary texts undoubtedly correspond to a particular public sensibility conspicuous in the French capital and to the prevalent feeling of ‘decadence’ spreading through society from the 1850s onwards, as several studies have shown.<sup>3</sup> In this exploration of unpublished correspondence and first-hand research on the periodical itself, the aim is to link the economics of the image to its use and significance. I argue that images are a) financial spurs essential to commercial ventures of the period and b) strong visual incentives for readers, pleasing and tempting, an obvious hotbed for so-called ‘decadent’ writings.

### Presenting the *Revue illustrée*

In 1885 a new type of magazine shouldered its way in amongst Parisian publications. It was simply named the *Revue illustrée*, the ‘Illustrated Magazine’, and its scope was

1 For a multifaceted view on decadence, see Talia Schaffer and Susan J. Wolfson, eds, *Literature and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2006), pp. 1–4.

2 See the special issue on fin-de-siècle literary criticism and the daily press, ‘La littérature fin de siècle au crible de la presse quotidienne’, ed. by Alain Vaillant, *Romantisme*, no. 121 (2003), particularly p. 7.

3 See Alfred Edward Carter, *The Idea of Decadence in French Literature, 1830–1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958), pp. 128–29; Jacques Lethève, ‘Le thème de la décadence dans les lettres françaises à la fin du xixème siècle’, *Revue d’histoire littéraire de la France*, no. 1 (January–March 1963), 46–61; Erwin Koppen, ‘Décadence und Symbolismus in der französischen und italienischen Literatur’, in *Jahrhundertende–Jahrhundertwende*, ed. by Helmut Kreuzer (Wiesbaden: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1976), pp. 69–102 (pp. 76–77); and recently Jean de Palacio, *La Décadence: Le Mot et la chose* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2011).

to provide the French market with an altogether novel type of periodical, intended for Monsieur, Madame, and their household. Inspired by analogous British and German equivalents that were well established outside France, this all-round magazine for a bourgeois public was firmly based on illustration, using remarkable images and ornamentation, and rapidly introduced colour. It offered a large variety of topics: picturesque travel, art, theatre, social and literary events, exhibitions and books, illustrated biographies of contemporary worthies, fashion, jewellery and artfully arranged interiors, printed music, and matters of everyday life. Typically issues published original short stories, serialized novels, poetry, or entertainment literature, richly illustrated by specially employed artists. Its watchword was *talent* in text and image, a wide-ranging posture summoning the ‘cultivated spirits who feel neither traditional nor excessively modernist’, while inviting authors and artists to do it ‘the honour of stopping there for a moment’.<sup>4</sup> This policy welcomed fin-de-siècle creations by talented writers and artists, but the *Revue illustrée* also reflected politics and contemporary history. Its front cover frequently offered full-length portraits of persons active in parliament, in government or the army (Fig. 1), followed by articles on their achievements and endeavours, a strategy that generated many introductions to powerful circles for its publishers and editors.



Fig. 1 *Revue illustrée*, no. 233 (15 August 1895), front cover. Mgr. Perraud, member of the Académie Française, Bishop of Autun. Private collection.

4 ‘La sincérité du talent et le ton des honnêtes gens seront la seule marque commune des écrivains et des artistes qui [...] nous feront l’honneur de s’arrêter un instant ici. [...] Cet éclectisme [...] répond et répondra toujours à la nature du plus grand nombre des esprits cultivés qui ne se sentent ni traditionnels ni modernistes à outrance.’ ‘À nos lecteurs’, *Revue illustrée*, no. 1 (15 December 1885), p. iii.

By French standards, this was indeed a new niche. Studies on the illustrated nineteenth-century press in France have charted the field as split mainly between popular magazines on one hand, and a few refined publications on the other.<sup>5</sup> On the popular side, *Le Magasin pittoresque* (1833–1938 with a few interruptions), published by Édouard Charton on the basis of a six-franc annual subscription, offered documentary articles and literary texts along with generous black and white illustrations (mostly lithographs and wood engravings) on a weekly, and later monthly and fortnightly, basis. The *Musée des familles* (1833–June 1900), launched by Émile de Girardin, used an analogous formula. A periodical with news from around the world and copious iconography such as *L'Illustration* (1833–1944), itself inspired by the example of the *Illustrated London News* (May 1842–2003), adopted the folio format for seventy-five centimes per weekly issue and was a definite success. For an annual six-franc subscription, a full issue of the *Revue pittoresque* (1843–51), bearing a selection of novels illustrated with woodcuts, would amount, according to the prospectus, to ‘twenty in-octavo novels and more than two hundred marvellous original woodcuts’.<sup>6</sup> These were followed by the weeklies, initiated by the daily press from the Second French Empire (1852–70), either as connected publications or as supplements. Their sensational iconography and cheap price (five to ten centimes apiece) boosted their success: *Le Journal illustré* (1864–99) sold for ten centimes and printed 80,000 copies in 1876, outdone by the illustrated supplement of *Le Petit journal*, launched on 15 June 1884 for half the price. At the other extreme, a luxurious fine art and literature periodical, such as *L'Artiste* (1831–1904), mixed lithographic plates with wood-engravings set in the text, offering tasteful creations to a choice public. It would also undergo a number of transformations and changes in formula. Scholarship to date suggests that the field of the illustrated press in France was dominated by popular publications, whether these were information sheets, popular rags, illustrated serials, or theatre organs.

The *Revue illustrée* would adopt a combination of contents aimed at satisfying the needs and habits of a large reading public while explicitly stressing its own lavishness, its concern with art, and a desire to endure. Indeed, its first 15 December 1885 issue gave prominence to the visual aspect through quality engravings, etchings, lithographs, and colour reproductions of valuable and lasting compositions, relegating mere facts to the scope of newspapers. Ten years later, in the leading prospectus of the double 1 December 1895 issue, the *Revue* prided itself on being ‘the most widespread and the most luxurious of the Art Reviews extant in France’, while also being ‘a family Review suitable for all publics’.<sup>7</sup> It was published on a fortnightly basis from the outset and cost one franc fifty centimes per issue, a price that clearly set it on the expensive side. Subscriptions throughout its life would amount to 9 francs 50 for three months, 18 francs 20 for half a year, and 36 francs 40 for a full year. Adverts were a regular feature, starting from the inside front cover and frequently covering up to eight pages. Page ranges, numbered or not, varied from sixteen pages for a regular issue (1 January 1899) to forty-six pages for a double one (1 December 1895), the length being evidently dependent on the material available.

5 See Simon Jeune, ‘Les littéraires’, in *Histoire de l'édition française*, ed. by Roger Chartier and Henri-Jean Martin, 4 vols (Paris: Promodis, 1983–1986), III (1985), pp. 408–15; Jean Watelet, ‘La presse illustrée’, Chartier and Martin, eds, pp. 329–41; Jean-Pierre Bacot, *La Presse illustrée au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle: Une histoire oubliée* (Limoges: PULIM, 2005); Jean Watelet, ‘La Presse illustrée en France, 1814–1914’ (doctoral thesis, Université Paris II, 1998), repr. 2 vols (Villeneuve d’Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2002).

6 Quoted by Jeune, p. 415.

7 ‘la plus répandue et la plus luxueuse des Revues d’Art existant en France’; ‘une Revue de famille qui doit pouvoir être laissée dans toutes les mains’. See ‘En 1896’, *Revue illustrée*, no. 240 (1 December 1895), no page.

Above all, the periodical styled itself as the showcase of a fashionable contemporary lifestyle in which literature and other arts undeniably participated. Its particular strength lay in a wide array of images: inserted plates (reproductions of works by old, modern or contemporary masters), prints, wood engravings, etchings, and a flurry of illustrations, drawings, sketches, ornaments, tailpieces, headpieces as well as decorative borders expressly conceived for the texts published alongside them. Proof enough was its double table of contents: one page dedicated to the written word and twice that, sometimes even three pages, to drawings, engravings, and inserts, meticulously crediting painters as well as numerous engravers employed to translate the original works into printable and reproducible items. This successful model gained particular impetus in the case of the *Revue* thanks to original creations and colour reproductions. These benefited from the introduction of colour photo-engraving from 1883, when the *Histoire des quatre fils Aymon*, a landmark publication with compositions by Eugène Grasset, was beautifully reproduced thanks to the technique of *gillotage*. The formula would productively bring the *Revue illustrée* through twenty-seven years of vivid and varied publishing, its last issue being dated 25 September 1912 (no. 18).

The *Revue illustrée* venture sprang from a newly-founded trade association of publishers, manufacturers, and artists, initiated on 1 August 1885. Within a year this had become a limited company with a capital of 350,000 francs, and issuing 200 subscription shares at 500 francs each. The periodical boasted immediate success without the help of advertising, starting with 8,000 faithful purchasers, and relying on its already ‘progressive and regular path’.<sup>8</sup> Its principle was simple and effective: sharing the financial risk and obtaining the required pictures at the right moment.

### The Origins of a Successful Formula

Its publisher, Ludovic Baschet, was undeniably a man of images, a former artist who had worked for some fifteen years as a painter, but had been ruined by the Franco-Prussian war, as stated in an unpublished letter he addressed to Monseigneur Dupanloup.<sup>9</sup> Printing on a makeshift machine, Ludovic Baschet started publishing in 1876 the *Galerie contemporaine*, a portrait series of personalities from literature, art, government, and the army. With the help of family, namely his six young sons, of whom the elder, René, was to be the editor of the *Revue illustrée* for fourteen years, Baschet attached the photographic portrait of the celebrated man-of-the-day to his pre-prepared and ready-to-sell printed biography. His printing process for portraits was known as ‘Woodburytype’ (*glyptotype*) and allowed for copies to be made from an engraved plate by creating a raised surface. It had been invented by Walter Woodbury and exclusive French rights had been bought from him by Adolphe Goupil, with whom Baschet traded. This enterprise has been hailed as a landmark in French printing and nineteenth-century photo-reproductive processes, although it escapes classification, as specialized discussion has shown.<sup>10</sup> Baschet’s portraits gradually gave birth to an eleven-volume gallery originally issued in instalments, as was frequently the case, since illustrated publications entailed high

8 Unpaginated announcement, no date [c. August 1886], mounted at the very beginning of the first volume and the first issue, *Revue illustrée*, no. 1 (15 December 1885): ‘Dès ses premiers numéros, elle réunissait, sans aucune publicité, une clientèle de huit mille acheteurs qui lui sont restés fidèles, et son développement a suivi jusqu’à ce jour une marche progressive et régulière.’

9 Lettres à Mgr Dupanloup, f° 337, dated 28 September 1877, Bibliothèque nationale de France, NAF 24674 III.

10 See Robert A. Sobieszek, ‘The Facsimile Photographs in “Galerie Contemporaine”: A Problem in Cataloguing’, *Image, Journal of Photography and Motion Pictures of the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House*, 15.2 (July 1972), 21–24.

costs.<sup>11</sup> The *Galerie* printed 6,000 copies apiece and Baschet paid authors at least fifty francs for a biography.<sup>12</sup> Should collaborators or funding be scarce, Ludovic Baschet would sometimes draft the biography himself. This was the case for Théophile Gautier's profile, whether due to prior knowledge or to deliberate choice.<sup>13</sup>

Baschet followed the *Galerie contemporaine* with two profusely illustrated journals, *Musée pour tous* from 1877,<sup>14</sup> and *Paris illustré* from 1883.<sup>15</sup> He published the latter in association with Alexis Lahure, son of Charles Lahure, a 'printer-editor' who specialized in fine printing, and Charles Gillot, the inventor of the *gillotage* photo-engraving process. Printed with inks supplied by Lorilleux and Co. (Paris) on special paper from Grosvenor Chater and Co. (London and Paris), the periodical was edited by François-Guillaume Dumas, the first editor-to-be of the *Revue illustrée* itself. This association of names and trades, specified on the generous colourful folio cover of *Paris illustré*, served to guarantee quality. Thereafter the *Revue illustrée* would be sure to thrive on an analogous, well-tested basis.

Publications such as these allowed Ludovic Baschet to establish himself as an art editor on the boulevards.<sup>16</sup> He produced a lengthy string of museum or exhibition catalogues and illustrated sets, all sporting profuse iconography. An extensive list of these publications heads a letter from Ludovic Baschet to Félix Nadar dated 4 July 1879, under the motto 'nox mox nunc lux', i.e. 'then night, now light', purporting that light, providing 'illumination', especially as a form of photo-mechanical illustration, is synonymous with life, prosperity, and clear outlook. From the outset, and as of December 1885, the *Revue illustrée* exemplified this splendidly. The publisher of the *Revue illustrée* from the very beginning, Ludovic Baschet, then became both editor and publisher from around June 1887, gradually bringing in his eldest son, René, who would officially edit the *Revue* from 15 December 1889 until June 1903.<sup>17</sup> Their many connections to artists, collectors, photographers, and men of letters would supply the journal with material of first choice and a rich, varied iconography.

## The Periodical as a Potential Book

Already in March 1889, an exchange between René Baschet and Georges de Porto-Riche, an upcoming poet and author of light comedies, shows the extent to which images were vital to the *Revue's* policies.<sup>18</sup> To start with, to publish texts with no images in

11 See *Galerie contemporaine, littéraire, artistique, Publication hebdomadaire formant album de luxe* (1876–84).

12 According to the letter to Mgr Dupanloup referred to above, and a letter by Ludovic Baschet to Anatole France, dated 20 January 1877, Papiers Anatole France, f° 215, Bibliothèque nationale de France, NAF 15430.

13 *Galerie contemporaine, littéraire, artistique*, 2.9, no date.

14 *Musée pour tous: Album hebdomadaire de l'art contemporain*, Photographies by Goupil & Cie, Text by Adrien Dézamy (February 1877–August 1879).

15 *Paris illustré: Journal hebdomadaire*, published by Lahure and Baschet with Goupil (1883–1920), partly re-used by *Le Figaro illustré* between 1890 and 1894.

16 The address of Ludovic Baschet's Librairie d'art was initially 126, boulevard Magenta. He subsequently moved to 125, boulevard Saint-Germain. From vol. ix (December 1889–June 1890), the *Revue illustrée's* address was 12, rue de l'Abbaye.

17 The first of these two dates does not correspond to the date given by the Bibliothèque nationale de France. It is however based on the periodical itself. See *Revue illustrée*, no. 97 (15 December 1889), front cover.

18 Manuscript telegram by René Baschet to Georges de Porto-Riche, dated 'mardi 1h ½' [26 March 1889], Papiers et correspondance de la famille de Porto-Riche, f° 360, Bibliothèque nationale de France, NAF 24952. See also my analysis of this in comparison with the various publication stages in 'A Flurry of Images and its Unfurling through the *Revue illustrée*', *Studi di Memofonte*, no. 13, special issue 'Spreading Visual Culture: Contemporary Art in Periodicals, Archives and Illustrations', published 24 December 2014, memofonte.it [accessed 12 December 2016].

the *Revue illustrée* was unthinkable for René Baschet, especially short-line poems that could hardly ‘fill up the page’. Moreover, Baschet was personally engaged in tracking down possible images, visiting artists in order to secure the necessary artwork and thus guarantee a successful issue. Proof of this remarkable commitment to editing the periodical, involving page layout, adjustment of text to image, and vice versa, is still evident even when René Baschet became (from 1904) editor-in-chief of *L’Illustration*, a title he would gradually turn into the leading illustrated publication for Europe.<sup>19</sup>

Not that texts themselves were neglected. Pleasant or daring writing was desirable, and eagerly courted. It always corresponded to typesetting and design quality. Moreover, as the exchange between René Baschet and Georges de Porto-Riche reveals, both the author and the periodical could re-use the type set and composition delivered by the printer to produce refined or *de luxe* book editions. Indeed, Jean-Claude Motteroz, Baschet’s typesetter and printer, laid out his pages in a style he intended to be as recognizable as that of writers or poets composing prose or verse.<sup>20</sup> A jubilant putto prancing on a book flaunted his motto, ‘T u penses, j’œuvre’ [‘You think, I compose’], in a garland reproduced at the end of the volumes he put into print, reflecting his ambition to rival literary creation with his compositions.

Still, it was not only fine print-setting, images and ornament that made the literature published in the *Revue illustrée* worthy of being turned into slim or portly bibliophile editions. Priding itself on original fiction, theatre, chronicles, and poetry, the periodical appealed to many spirited writers of the day. Forthcoming publications were frequently announced in advance to entice readers, along with promising illustrations. Furthermore, the review encoded a subtle language within its typographic scheme and print settings. Small print in three columns was reserved for ‘society’ pages on thin paper. As ephemera they publicized events and sundry information such as obituaries, the social agenda of prominent families, records of recently published books, musical news, fashion, sometimes cycling news, and regular railway prices, itineraries, or timetables. By contrast, finer large type on fine paper distinguished contributions destined to last, all the more so as the *Revue illustrée* coveted promotion to book form from its very outset.

Indeed, its first issue on 15 December 1885 underlined competition between periodicals and books in an opening text by Émile Bergerat, under the unceremonious title ‘Small Talk’,<sup>21</sup> directly following the periodical’s policy stated in a text addressed ‘To Our Readers’.<sup>22</sup> In truth, Bergerat’s text acts as a second preface and an extension of the review’s strategy. Its casual character is a rhetorical device to secure the reader’s complicity and support, all the more so as this auxiliary declaration of intent strongly recommends the review as ‘the ideal book’ [‘l’idéal du livre’], at a time when ‘the expanding book trade has prompted the birth, life and death of many booksellers’.<sup>23</sup> In Bergerat’s resourceful imagery, the modern reader suffers either from dyspepsia or from bulimia, due to the countless supply of books to be read. The newly-founded periodical intends to save him from this double disorder: it condenses many books in one, hence the ‘ideal book’, and poses as the digest of a ‘une bibliothèque quasi-encyclopédique’ [‘virtually encyclopaedic library’]. Bergerat cleverly plays on the phonetically related verbs to read (*lire*), to read again (*relire*) and to bind (*relier*), inviting readers to collect

19 See René Baschet’s letter to Ferdinand Bac, dated 24 May 1922, on *L’Illustration* headed paper, Papiers Ferdinand Bac, f° 112, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, ms 14145 III, and my analysis in ‘A Flurry of Images’.

20 See Francis Thibaudeau, ‘Motteroz le typographe’, *Annuaire graphique: Revue des arts et des industries graphiques publiée sous la direction de Maurice Reymond* (1910–11), 1–33. See also pleinchant.fr [accessed 19 October 2014].

21 Émile Bergerat, ‘Causerie’, *Revue illustrée*, no. 1 (15 December 1885), 1–4.

22 ‘À nos lecteurs’, iii–iv.

23 Bergerat, p. 2: ‘exploitation commerciale du *bouquin* qui, depuis une quinzaine d’années, fait naître, vivre et mourir tant de libraires’.

the magazine in the appropriate bindings the review offered to subscribers, specially made to hold half a year of fortnightly issues. In addition the strategy was also to appeal to bibliophiles, as the *Revue illustrée* published a special print run of fifty copies on Japanese paper.

Although the binding policy promoted by Bergerat and the *Revue illustrée* was commonly shared by mainstream reviews at the time, the weight the *Revue illustrée* gave to its print set and the copious iconography it developed as a specific feature, brought about its gradual integration into the luxury book trade. Previously unpublished texts and their original decoration were conscientiously printed on fine paper often supplied by Draeger. Additionally, two technical details were handled with particular care: the gatherings and the signatures.<sup>24</sup> In the *Revue illustrée*, original and richly decorated texts frequently correspond to self-sufficient gatherings that bear no page numbers or signatures. Free of these telling signs, which would have betrayed their belonging to a serial publication, the gatherings could become the basis for a readily made volume, detached from the several issues of the periodical, and put together with slight or virtually no rearrangements. Figure 2 shows the difference in paper, print set, and layout between an article on fashion in small type (left-hand side) and one of the sumptuous gatherings of a text elaborately illustrated (right-hand side) by Swiss artist Carloz (subsequently Carlos) Schwabe, later destined to meet its fellows in book form (Fig. 3). Original editions were thus created effortlessly, albeit ingeniously, then marketed and commercialized by the *Revue* itself, by other publishers, or as joint ventures. Needless to say, images were a major advantage in this process, a selling point the publishers were anxious amply to exploit.

In the 1890s, under René Baschet's editorship, thanks to his keen eye, but given also his financial acumen, the *Revue illustrée* sired two avant-garde publications, first within its pages, then in book form, both in colour. The first was a major Art Nouveau work that verged on expressionism: the first ever published by the innovative Schwabe, who richly illustrated and decorated an apocryphal gospel of Jesus' childhood (Figs 2, 3 and 4). This is entitled *L'Évangile de l'Enfance de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ selon saint-Pierre* [*The Childhood Gospel of Jesus Christ Our Lord according to Saint Peter*]. According to the *Revue illustrée* editors in the later book preface, it featured as a Syriac legend originally penned in Arabic, translated into Latin, then turned into French by Catulle Mendès. In the course of an exploratory field trip in the Austrian Salzkammergut, Mendès had come across the manuscript at the library of the Saint-Wolfgang abbey which stored among its treasures many apocryphal gospels, most already published, save for this one. In both Latin and French translations the *Revue illustrée* offered its readers (particularly female ones, as the book preface underlined) an unsophisticated and touching legend. Its mystic tone was well in keeping with fin-de-siècle literature, and Mendès, its translator and discoverer, was representative of this tendency at the time.

Mendès's work is scarce in the short-lived reviews of the 1890s, but abounds in the broad circulation magazines and dailies (such as *Le Gaulois*, *Gil Blas*, *Le Journal*, *L'Écho de Paris*, or Georges Charpentier's *La Vie moderne*), despite his beginnings as the very founder of *La Revue fantaisiste* when just twenty. The latter art-for-art's-sake periodical was short-lived (Paris, 1861, eighteen issues).<sup>25</sup> Finely printed by Alcan-Lévy, and decked with rare prints by Rodolphe Bresdin, it published seven prose poems by Charles Baudelaire that were later included in *Le Spleen de Paris*. Still keen on literary

24 Gatherings are the printed sheets folded to the format's requirements that compose the magazine. Signatures are the small identifying marks one finds at the bottom of each gathering's front sheet on the right-hand side.

25 Nineteen issues according to the facsimile reprint edition (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1971).

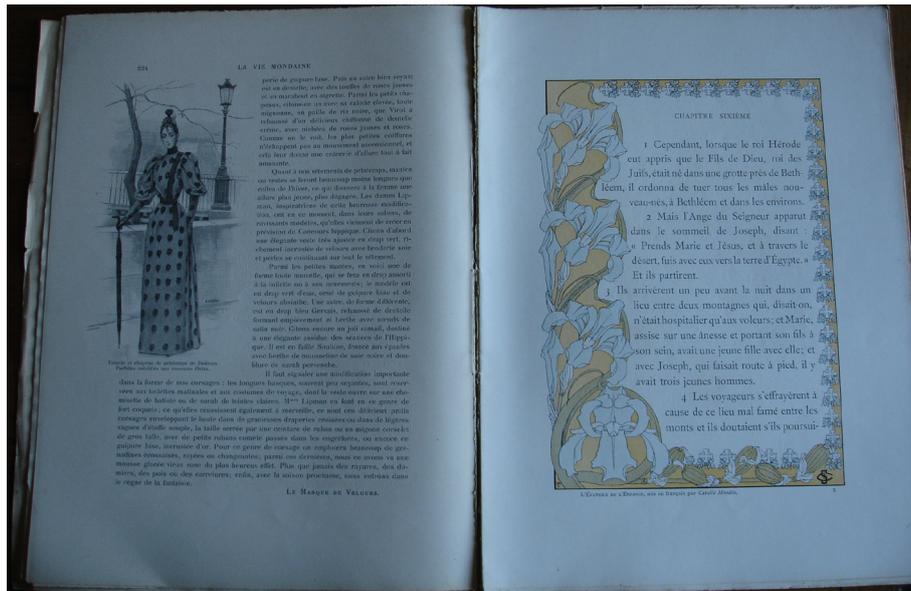


Fig. 2 *Revue illustrée*, no. 151 (15 March 1895), *L'Évangile de l'Enfance de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ selon saint Pierre*, illustrated by Carloz Schwabe, gathering no. 4 on fine paper published next to other material, ready to be detached and re-used. Private collection.

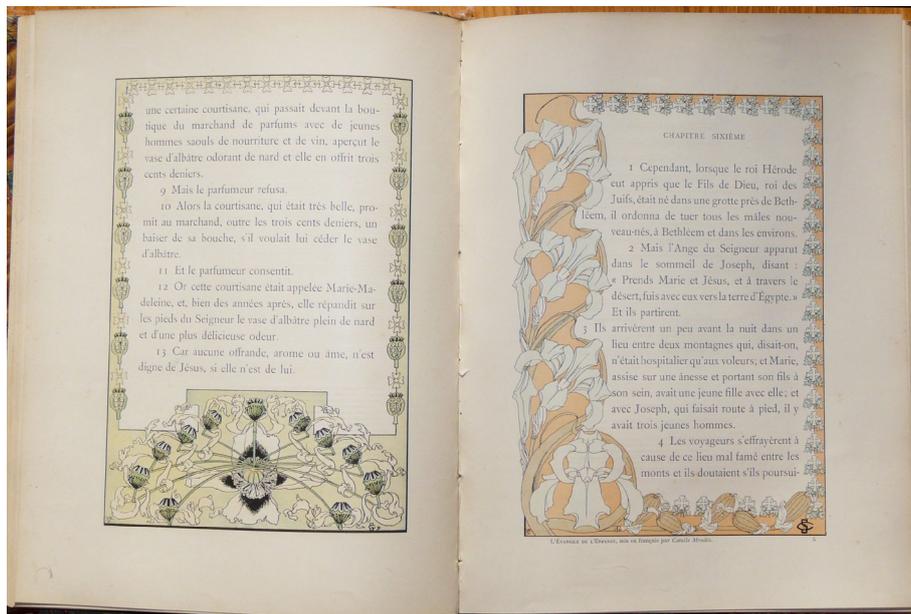


Fig. 3 The same gathering in *L'Évangile de l'enfance de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ selon saint-Pierre*, mis en français par Catulle Mendès d'après le manuscrit de l'abbaye de Saint-Wolfgang, compositions and encadrements de Carloz Schwabe (Paris: Armand Colin, [1896]). Private collection.

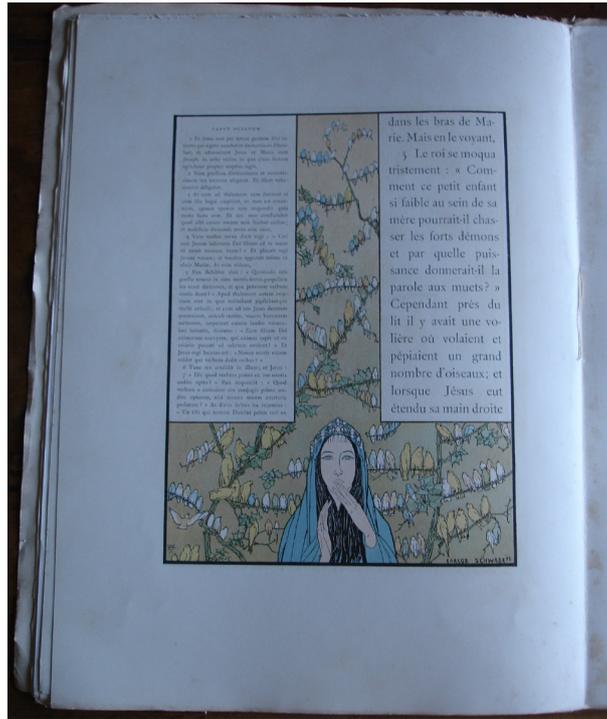


Fig. 4 *Revue illustrée*, no. 161 (15 August 1895), *L'Évangile de l'Enfance de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ selon saint Pierre*, illustrated by Carloz Schwabe, page in gathering no. 6 with both Latin original and translation into French. Private collection.

adventures as ever in the past, Mendès had since become a celebrated author, courted by the press. Similarly, choice imprints of *La Revue fantaisiste* had let brilliant photo-mechanically reproduced Art Nouveau illustration accompany the translation through the *Revue illustrée's* fourteen instalments between September 1891 and November 1894. The unusual length of this undertaking had to do with Schwabe's poor health, which also prevented him from completing his plates for Émile Zola's *Le Rêve* [*The Dream*], begun in 1892–93 and the most widely known of his illustrated works.

The gatherings of the fourteen instalments of *The Childhood Gospel of Jesus Christ Our Lord* were subsequently commercialized in book form by Armand Colin in 1896, and a luxury edition handled by the Lyon booksellers Bernoux et Cumin.<sup>26</sup> However, the book testified from the very outset to the *Revue illustrée's* initiative, thanks to a beautifully conceived medallion (unsigned, but doubtless by Schwabe) bearing the inscription 'Édition de la Revue Illustrée' opposite the ornate title page. Exceptionally in this case, the beginning of each gathering in the *Revue* itself showed the work's title in small type, as well as signatures, not according to the sequence of the periodical's issues, but of the book-to-be. This indicates that publication in book form had been predetermined.

Jean Lorrain, another key fin-de-siècle writer, represents an analogous case. He started publishing in small circulation avant-garde reviews in the 1880s before moving on to the daily press, without altering either his themes or lavish style. In the 1890s he gave the *Revue illustrée* a series of fin-de-siècle fairy tales that had already

26 The instalments are of eight pages, i.e. two in-4<sup>o</sup> gatherings. The first one dates from 15 September 1891 (*Revue illustrée*, no. 139, independent eight-page gathering), the last appears three years later, 1 November 1894 (*Revue illustrée*, no. 214). Two full-page images were also published in the *Revue illustrée*, no. 120 (1 December 1890), one of which would be used for the book cover. The luxury edition comprised 150 luxury copies, the text being followed by a threefold sequence of the artworks devoid of the letterpress.

been printed in Parisian papers. Although the originality clause typically required by the *Revue* was not respected in his case (Lorrain's celebrity probably offsetting the need for it), these texts, gawkily compressed and haphazardly printed in two major Parisian newspapers, *L'Écho de Paris* and *Le Journal*, gained an illustrated lease of second life as they literally unfurled and unfolded in the generous pages of the *Revue*. Moreover, another of Lorrain's tales, 'La Princesse sous verre' ['The Princess under Glass'], first came to life in the *Revue illustrée* without prior press publication, this time richly decorated by the debutant illustrator André Cahard in December 1895.

In the *Revue illustrée*, 'La Princesse sous verre' takes the shape of a substantial gathering of sixteen pages at the very opening of the issue, attractively printed on four folded sheets devoid of signatures. Its layout, decoration and images are strongly influenced by the key motif of the tale, a princess mysteriously somnolent, lain in a transparent glass coffin, as if dead.<sup>27</sup> The pages are cleverly arranged around a symbolic centre, the central spread and its single double-page illustration, based on the diagonal motif of the glass coffin in procession, while two text excerpts are introduced within squares balancing the composition (Fig. 5). Rectangular forms also dominate the third part of the tale down to the last page, harmoniously shared by two corresponding rectangles of text and image. Just that off-print of the *Revue* was turned into a single book in 1896, the first page having been recast as a title page (also simultaneously a colophon and a justification of the print run), and commercialized by Charles Tallandier as a gift item, with autograph inserts by the author in the forty copies of the *de luxe* edition printed on Japanese paper.<sup>28</sup> At first glance, the latter seems untouched, as recycled from the *Revue*, now set in a green folder under a mica sheet. In truth, it is a sophisticated *book object*, an avant-garde invention well ahead of its time and the very idea of book object,<sup>29</sup> subtly tuning its form and shape to the story and theme, i.e. the princess *under glass*, as I have shown elsewhere.<sup>30</sup>

Both *The Princess under Glass* and *The Childhood Gospel of Jesus Christ Our Lord according to Saint Peter* are unacknowledged milestones in the periodical's florid Art Nouveau phase and suggest complex interactions between transient and more lasting printed matter, that is, 'periodical' in relation to 'book', a topic meriting further investigation.<sup>31</sup>

## Behind the Scenes

Examining plates and prints, which introduced colour in the last decade of the nineteenth century in France, Phillip Dennis Cate and Sinclair Hamilton Hitchings have aptly

27 'La Princesse sous Verre' [compositions by André Cahard], *Revue illustrée*, no. 240 (1895), no page.

28 Jean Lorrain, *La Princesse sous Verre*: 'Ce conte a été tiré pour M. Tallandier, éditeur, | 197, boulevard Saint-Germain, à Paris, à | cinquante exemplaires numérotés sur japon | et à cent soixante-dix exemplaires numérotés sur papier "Idéal",' [1896].

29 Indeed, one of the first canonical book objects is believed to be the simultaneous poem *La Prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France* by writer Blaise Cendrars and painter Sonia Delaunay posterior to *The Princess under Glass* by nearly twenty years (1913).

30 See 'Espaces de création entre le livre et la revue: Jean Lorrain et Jérôme Doucet à la *Revue illustrée*', in *Les Espaces du livre: Supports et acteurs de la création texte/image (20<sup>e</sup>/21<sup>e</sup> siècles) / Spaces of the Book: Materials and Agents of the Text/Image Creation (20th/21st Centuries)*, ed. by Isabelle Chol and Jean Khalfa (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2015), pp. 133–49.

31 For further discussion of the relations between periodicals and books at the time, see Evangelia Stead, 'De la revue au livre: Notes sur un paysage éditorial diversifié à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, no. 4 (2007), 803–23.



Fig. 5 Jean Lorrain, *La Princesse sous Verre* (Paris: Tallandier, [1896]), copy no. 5 on Japanese paper, printed by Draeger & Lesieur. Page layout after 'La Princesse sous Verre' [illustrations by André Cahard], *Revue illustrée*, no. 240 (1 December 1895), middle double spread. Private collection.

used the expression 'color revolution'.<sup>32</sup> Colour reproduction proved crucial for French bibliophiles and was also an irresistible spur for modernist undertakings. In this context, the *Revue illustrée* acted as a platform for rich experiments, tested fortnightly, pursued, renewed or discarded, expanded or contracted, occasionally promoted in more perennial book form. Despite his devotion to illustration, René Baschet, the editor of the *Revue*, was not the only key figure in this complex venture, involving a variety of processes and constant dialogue between art and literature. The *Revue illustrée's* assistant editor, Jérôme Doucet, a talented bibliophile behind the scenes to whom little attention has been paid up to now, deserves due consideration.<sup>33</sup>

Doucet entered the *Revue illustrée* in July 1894 as author of an illustrated song, 'La Chanson du marteau sur l'enclume' ['The Song of the Hammer on the Anvil'],<sup>34</sup> the first in a series of fifty odd items on transient every day themes, later collected in book form. In March and April 1895, he published in the *Revue* 'La Légende de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne' ['The Legend of Saint Mary the Egyptian'], a tale superbly illustrated by artist painter Georges Rochegrosse and set in rich ornamental frames with hand-illuminated initials in gold.<sup>35</sup> Not only did this create a public sensation and repeatedly serve as a guarantee of quality in the periodical's statements to its readers, it

32 See Phillip Dennis Cate and Sinclair Hamilton Hitchings, *The Color Revolution: Color Lithography in France, 1890–1900*, with a translation by Margaret Needham of André Mellerio's 1890 essay 'La Lithographie originale en couleurs' (Santa Barbara, CA: Peregrine Smith and Rutgers University, 1978).

33 Christian Lamard, a keen contemporary bibliophile, is a rare and welcome exception. He has dedicated to various aspects of Doucet's life, and a few of the books he created, several blog posts and notes available at [publicationscalamar.wordpress.com](http://publicationscalamar.wordpress.com) [accessed 24 November 2016].

34 'La Chanson du Marteau sur l'Enclume' [drawings by Andréas engraved by Boileau], *Revue illustrée*, no. 207 (15 July 1894), no page.

35 Jérôme Doucet, 'La Légende de sainte Marie l'Égyptienne' [illustrations by G. Rochegrosse, frames and ornate initials illuminated by hand and embellished with gold], 1st part, *Revue illustrée*, no. 223 (15 March 1895), 2nd part, no. 225 (15 April 1895), both no pages.

was also followed by a second tale decorated in silver,<sup>36</sup> and a third in copper, published much later.<sup>37</sup> As swift completion of the ornate trilogy proved complicated for the *Revue*, possibly because of the costs involved,<sup>38</sup> Doucet published all three in book form in 1901, again using Rochegrosse's refined ornaments, but in a wholly different type and technique.<sup>39</sup> Although these may seem elitist procedures, it should be understood that they were published in a truly bourgeois periodical that welcomed fin-de-siècle culture.

Gilt and silver inserts with complex decorative frames continued to be printed in the *Revue illustrée* in March and July 1896, in two medieval Jean Lorrain tales, beautifully illustrated by the promising Art Nouveau painter and architect Henry Bellery-Desfontaines (Fig. 6).<sup>40</sup> These were based on medieval tales, of Melusine for one and Oriane for the other. The second, published in lavish pages decorated with silver hand-painted details and beginning an issue, contrived to sustain Lorrain's disreputable glory and attract further readers: a full-length portrait of the writer was used for the cover and a long article on his work was decorated with bespoke 'toad' decorations (his fetish pet and talisman). This was followed by a piece on actress and demi-mondaine Liane de Pougy, Lorrain's favourite darling at the time. The extreme care put into the titillating collection of texts and the intriguing details is exceptional, even by *Revue illustrée* standards. Managing such complex tours de force must have been no easy task.

In the meantime, Jérôme Doucet, until then operating from Rouen, had moved to Paris. A pair of official documents, namely the death certificate of his beloved maternal grandmother on 6 March 1896 and his own marriage certificate in 1897, testify to a change of status, from 'journalist' ['publiciste'<sup>41</sup>] in 1896 to 'man of letters' ['homme de lettres'] in 1897. In an early unpublished letter sent from Rouen to François Coppée, he had described himself as 'a very young tyro in the arduous career of literature'.<sup>42</sup> Indeed he had started off by locally publishing poetry, verse for music and light comedies, had been involved in managing the Théâtre des Arts in Rouen, and had been active in regional journalism for some five years, striving all the while to earn approval from leading poets and gain access to the Parisian press. In 1897, thanks to the *Revue illustrée*, his situation changed significantly. On 24 July 1897, he married Marie Meunier, well connected to art circles through her brother, the painter Eugène Murer. As the marriage certificate shows, the *Revue illustrée*'s editor, René Baschet, acted as one of his witnesses. In the same month, July 1897, Doucet officially acted as assistant editor (*secrétaire de rédaction*) to the *Revue*. Granted a strategic position, he was in fact entrusted by René Baschet with the

36 Jérôme Doucet, 'La Mort au beau visage, conte mystique' [illustrations by G. Rochegrosse, frames and ornate initials illuminated by hand and embellished with silver], 1st part, *Revue illustrée*, no. 1 (15 December 1897), 2nd part, no. 7 (15 March 1898), 3rd part, no. 9 (15 April 1898), all no pages.

37 Jérôme Doucet, 'L'Âme du samovar, légende de cuivre' [illustrations by Georges Rochegrosse], *Revue illustrée*, no. 2 (1 January 1905), no. 5 (15 February 1905), no. 7 (15 March 1905), no. 10 (1 May 1905), no. 12 (1 June 1905), no. 14 (1 July 1905), no pages.

38 Every part of the third tale amounts to only four ornate pages. Conversely, the first two had appeared in far fewer issues abounding in over-elaborate pages.

39 Jérôme Doucet, *Trois légendes d'or, d'argent et de cuivre, Sainte Marie l'Égyptienne, Le Beau Visage de la mort, L'Âme du samovar*, illustrées de trente-trois compositions par Georges Rochegrosse gravées en taille-douce (Paris: Librairie des Amateurs, A. Ferroud, 1901). The book was based on a new typography, the frames and ornaments were now line engravings.

40 'Légende de la fée Mélusine et du chevalier Raymondin' [colour illustrations by Bellery-Desfontaines], *Revue illustrée*, no. 247 (15 March 1896), and 'Légende d'Amadis et de la fée Oriane' [illustrations by Bellery-Desfontaines], *Revue illustrée*, no. 254 (1 July 1896), both no pages.

41 'Publiciste' was commonly used in nineteenth-century France to refer to journalism both regarding the French and the British press. Although this meaning is outmoded today, an example given in the *Trésor de la langue française* still attests to its use in 1939 with reference to Daniel Defoe, Joseph Addison, and Jonathan Swift.

42 'Tout jeune débutant dans la rude carrière des lettres'. Undated letter, probably written in 1890 or 1891: Paris, Archives de l'Académie, Fonds Coppée, Correspondance, 17 A P1.

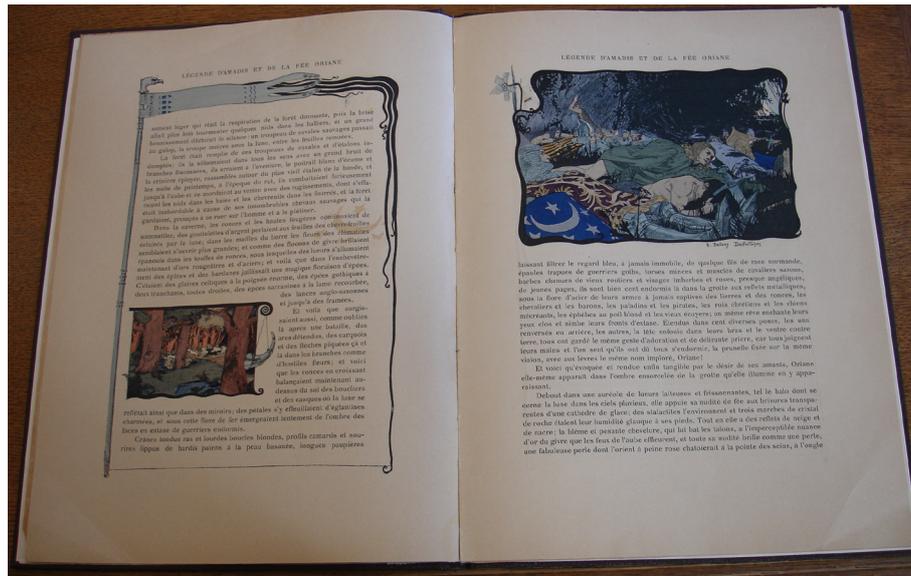


Fig. 6 Jean Lorrain, 'Légende d'Amadis et de la fée Oriane' [illustrations by Bellery-Desfontaines], *Revue illustrée*, no. 254 (1 July 1896), double page, unpaginated. Private collection.

effective editorship of the periodical, as a contemporary portrait confirms.<sup>43</sup> He would greatly improve the *Revue's* fortunes, gradually turning it into a periodical brimming with refined text and image displays, thanks to his taste and keen eye, commitment, and many connections in art circles. He would also be actively linked with Jean Lorrain's publication of fairy tales in the periodical as thirty-six yet unpublished letters sent by Lorrain to Doucet between 1898 and 1906 amply show.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, comparison of the body of the review, including ephemeral parts, with this correspondence offers a striking backstage view of the economics underpinning illustration.<sup>45</sup>

We can thus establish that the *Revue* paid artists in cash while authors had to wait for a money voucher, as Lorrain states in a letter to Doucet dating from the end of 1899 or the beginning of 1900. This underlines the periodical's image policy, clearly backed by editorial commitment, and buoyed by as broad a choice of artists as the Parisian market could have offered. In both the landmark books illustrated by Schwabe and Cahard mentioned above, the artists are talented newcomers in the field of illustration, whose fledgling gifts benefited the *Revue illustrée*, since their ground-breaking imagery came cheap, particularly in the case of Schwabe. In return, publication in this bourgeois magazine clearly contributed to their own fame and fortune in a competitive context. The same occurred with Jean Lorrain's tales illustrated by Manuel Orazi, an Italian artist who had moved to Paris in the 1880s. In 1898 Jean Lorrain promoted and piloted 'petit protégé' ['his young ward'], Manuel Orazi, through the periodical, as his correspondence with Doucet shows. Orazi thus became the illustrator of seven Lorrain tales in the *Revue*, all visionary and varied, through Lorrain's favour and use of yet another convincing financial argument to insist on him being hired. The writer was willing to accept a third

43 See Joseph Uzanne, 'Jérôme Doucet', in *Figures contemporaines tirées de l'Album Mariani* (Paris: Librairie Henri Floury, [1903]), no page.

44 Private collection.

45 It is to be stressed that more ephemeral pages are frequently discarded in the digitized version, available on Gallica, which is also incomplete, not in colour, and difficult to handle, adopting a variety of digitized formats. See gallica.bnf.fr [accessed 12 December 2016].

of his normal price (seventy-five francs) for an article on Gustave Moreau (previously published in the daily press), while Orazi required a hundred francs for a full-page in colour, including headpiece and tailpiece. Tellingly however, this was half the standard price for an illustration at the time.<sup>46</sup> It is obvious that the pursuit of images and the periodical's policy of satisfying the public's craving for pictures was driven by intense market competition, stylistic boldness, and the imaginative panache of the time.

In parallel, between 1897 and 1902, Doucet turned the *Revue illustrée* into a showcase of refined imagery, impressive layouts, and technical prowess. The hitherto obscure technical side of this achievement is revealed in ten previously unknown letters addressed by Doucet to the well-known Dutch publisher Albertus Willem Sijthoff of Leiden between 20 October 1898 and 20 February 1900. In these, Doucet describes how he re-sizes, combines and carefully lays out the drawings of the romantic Dutch artist Alexander Ver Huell for a new collective edition in quarto book format to be published by Sijthoff in instalments between 1899 and 1900, these images being taken from previous landscape format albums lithographically published in the Netherlands.<sup>47</sup> The edition-to-be was based on cost-cutting measures that included scaling down the originally published lithographs and recombining Ver Huell's pictures on pages of smaller size, to be reproduced subsequently from halftone plates. Sijthoff was familiar with these procedures. He used to buy illustrations and order halftone plates abroad, since they proved considerably cheaper, in order to publish more profitable volumes with broad public appeal.<sup>48</sup>

In detailed a description of his work for Sijthoff, which comprised lettering design for the title page, Doucet offered to include supervision of the plates at the engraver's premises (originally Ducourtieux and Huillard in Paris) and even to control the final printing, although this probably did not happen in the end.<sup>49</sup> While discussing his fees, Doucet refers to his own work for the *Revue illustrée*. He asks Sijthoff for twenty-five francs per eight-page instalment, precisely on the basis of what he earns at the *Revue*: fifty francs for sixteen pages. This presumably corresponded to ordering and arranging text and image in the classier parts of the magazine, a task for which he was remarkably gifted, as his own books prove by their novel arrangements, inventive techniques, and fine sense of space and proportion, independent of his earnings as an author (he also published in the *Revue illustrée* using both his own name and the pseudonym Montfrileux). Requesting analogous fees from the Dutch publisher implies comparable occupation in the Parisian review, to which correspondence and contacts with authors and artists should be added. Doucet also requested a 'small satisfaction' from Sijthoff that his name be mentioned in the rearranged volumes: 'I would like if it does not bother you to indicate that it was under my direction, my arrangement that this was done[;] since I put the utmost care it can always be nice to see one's name on

46 By comparison, Albert Besnard in a letter of 5 November 1884 to Mr Racon, printer, talks about his meeting with a Mr Fouré about the illustration of the third volume of a *History of France*, at 200 francs per drawing (Bookinet-Venole, autographs catalogue, no. 136, August 2013, item 33).

47 See *De Werken van Alexander Ver Huell*, 9 vols (Leiden: A. W. Sijthoff, 1899–1900) and *Zijn er zoo?: Schetsen uit de portefeuille van Alexander V. H.* (Amsterdam: J. H. Gebhard en Comp<sup>ie</sup>). The latter consists of twelve albums in lithography published between 1851 and 1853. However, in his re-dimensioning of the compositions and combining them differently, Doucet used a new lithographed edition of the Ver Huell albums published by P. Gouda Quint in Arnhem between 1874 and 1887 (available in ordinary and in pricy editions, the latter in imposing bindings).

48 See Altyt Waek Saem, 'De drukker-uitgever A. W. Sijthoff (1829–1913)', *Nieuw Letterkundig Magazijn*, no. 14 (1996), 35–41. Also online at [www.dbnl.org](http://www.dbnl.org) [accessed 25 April 2016].

49 The Sijthoff Ver Huell volumes bear no colophon or any other indication on the printer.

something appealing.<sup>50</sup> But the unsympathetic publisher did not grant his wish, and none of the nine rearranged volumes bears any acknowledgment of his efforts.

Similarly it is to external data that we must turn to confirm the innovative part Doucet played in the *Revue illustrée's* fortunes. From 15 July 1894 to 15 April 1899, he printed in the *Revue* a series of profusely illustrated song poems on passing and evanescent themes, dedicated to many artists. This was an earlier undertaking, dating back to around 1893, as another unpublished letter to François Coppée evidences, escorting the manuscript (or an early stage of it) and asking for the poet's assessment.<sup>51</sup> Apart from three pieces published in 1893 in the short-lived review *Le Bambou*, its first fully expanded and illustrated realisation came again to be in the *Revue illustrée* in regular publications between 15 July 1894 and 15 January 1899, ultimately setting the tone for a genre.<sup>52</sup> Later in 1899 Doucet assembled them in a *de luxe* volume, *La Chanson des choses: Illustrations des principaux artistes de ce temps* [*The Song of Things: Illustrations by the Major Artists of Our Time*].<sup>53</sup> Reorganising the random periodical releases, he expanded some of them from one-page compositions to finely arranged spreads, attributing to all songs their own half title, a device that granted each piece autonomy and character. Its fifty-five songs form a fine volume, based on the fleeting nature of time and short-lived impressions.

Thanks to a fine ear, Doucet demonstrates subtle poetic responsiveness to indescribable motifs: the emission of scent, smoke wreaths, the stillness of tears, wind among dead leaves (Fig. 7), the milky opal of the moon, the frothy bubbles of champagne, a ghostly voice dwindling to the chords of a harp snapping, bells jingling, a wing beating in the wind, the flow of water cascading and rushing, the smoke of a censer-bearer, the panting of fire dispelling dreams against a night sky, a cloud's vapour, puppets' nasal twang, a mandolin's humming, the mocking whine of a spinning-top, wind setting weathercocks a-spin, the scratch of ice dimmed and dulled under the skates of whirling girls, silk that fades, the counterweights of an old clock, and the lustrous pollen of face powder compose a theatre of fin-de-siècle vanity, diminutively portraying life, love and death. However, the collection is not only attuned in responsiveness to the period's flagrant mood. Its varied page arrangements are also an emanation of the spirit of the *Revue illustrée*. Furthermore its sensitivity to fleetingness and evanescence meets with the very essence of the ephemeral press.

The book inaugurated a new era in fin-de-siècle book collecting. On the one hand, Doucet had employed means of reproduction in harmony with the nature of the work to be replicated: woodcuts for wash drawings, colour reproductions for watercolours, line blocks for outline drawings, photo-engravings for paintings, stencil colouring (*coloris au patron*) for illuminations, etc. On the other, its selling price (fifteen francs) definitely beat the costly bibliophile companies of the time. Interestingly, Doucet's choice of craftsmen, artists, and decorators in this volume – each specialist was selected for their familiarity with themes, atmospheres, or genres – set the man of letters at the centre of

50 'je voudrais si ça ne vous gêne pas indiquer que c'est sous ma direction, mon arrangement que c'est fait comme j'y mets le soin le plus grand ça peut toujours être agréable de voir son nom à une jolie chose'. Letter dated 4 November 1898 on *Revue illustrée* headed paper: Leiden University Library, SYT A 1898, n° 117.

51 Undated but certainly written in 1893 as proves reference to Doucet's booklet *La Damnation de Pierrot* (Paris: Léon Vanier, 1893), Paris, Archives de l'Académie, Fonds Coppée, Correspondance, 17 A P1.

52 See Jérôme Doucet, 'La Chanson des Choses: La Chanson de la Cloche' and 'La Chanson du Cierge', *Le Bambou: Périodique illustré paraissant tous les mois*, no. 7 (1893), 131–40, illustrated respectively by L. Marold and A. Andréas, and 'La Roue du Moulin', *Le Bambou*, no. 8 (1893), 137–40, illustrated by H. Vignet.

53 (Paris: Société Française d'Éditions d'Art, L.-Henry May, [1899]).

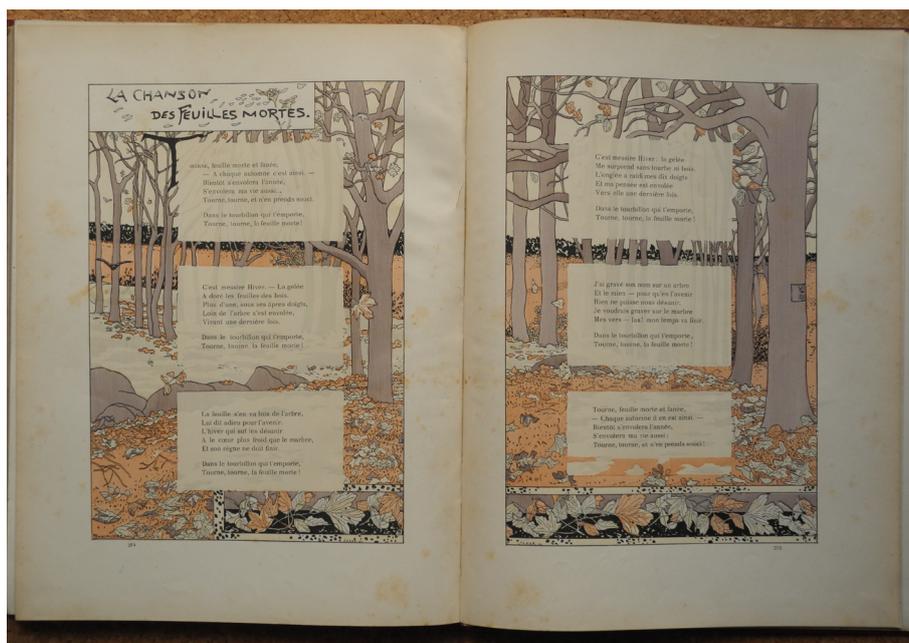


Fig. 7 Jérôme Doucet, 'La Chanson des feuilles mortes' [colour reproductions after watercolours by Pascalidès], in *La Chanson des choses: Illustrations des principaux artistes de ce temps* (Paris: Société Française d'Éditions d'Art, L.-Henry May, [1899]), p. 214–15. After the *Revue illustrée*, no. 264 (1 December 1896), unpaginated. Private collection.

a web of artists and art trades.<sup>54</sup> The *Revue illustrée* profited as much from the technical knowledge and fine taste of its gifted assistant editor as from his interpersonal skills.

## Conclusion

Looking critically at this material shows that publishing fin-de-siècle stories and songs was not the exclusive concern of the aesthetic and ephemeral periodicals set up by younger writers. In all cases examined in the *Revue illustrée*, both the chosen literature and its iconography propagate typically fin-de-siècle texts and images in a mainstream, fashionable magazine, rather than in exclusive, indigent or transitory reviews. More generally, on the one hand, texts circulated widely, from the daily press to fashionable periodicals, while they also may have found a welcome home in short-lived reviews. Literature by Jean Lorrain or Catulle Mendès amply testifies to this, and other authors shared their fortune. In the case of the *Revue illustrée*, such texts easily became the basis for new, audacious iconography, but also spoke for themselves, enhancing their authors' reputation. On the other hand, the specific weight the *Revue illustrée* gave to images both helped spread Art Nouveau aesthetics to a wider public, along with fin-de-siècle fairy tales and verse. Indeed small-run aesthetic magazines were part of a larger movement, promoting rare or reserved forms of art and literature for the benefit of a large audience, whether highly sophisticated or broadly bourgeois.

Furthermore, the *Revue illustrée* acted as an appealing showcase for the acquisition of images in the international illustration market. Evidence collected amongst an

54 On this, see Evangelhia Stead, 'La chanson illustrée fin-de-siècle: Versicules, chansons bas, images', in *La Poésie délivrée*, ed. by Stéphane Hirschi, Serge Linares, Alexandra Saemmer, and Alain Vaillant (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris-Ouest, forthcoming in 2017).

array of magazines such as the *Westminster Budget* (London, 1893–1904), a British illustrated weekly family magazine, or the Catalan modernist *Hispania* (Barcelona, January 1899–December 1902), and even the rather conservative Canadian *Revue des deux Frances* (Paris, 1897–99), shows a sizeable circulation of material linked to fin-de-siècle aesthetics.<sup>55</sup> Much remains to be done in this field across Europe and overseas, in order to better assess the way visual culture was built. Image making proves a rich and innovative world based on exchange, circulation and technical innovation. As such, it resolutely challenges our conception of centre versus peripheries and small versus big. As we strive to map these exchanges out in a more detailed way,<sup>56</sup> personalities such as Jérôme Doucet have emerged as key figures in periodical editing, acting behind the scenes with insight, talent, and technical knowledge, their personal connections with artists, writers, and craftsmen and their many business relations to printers, engravers, and publishers lending them a significance despite their disappearance into the oblivion of literary history.

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55 For a complementary analysis on this, Stead, ‘A Flurry of Images and its Unfurling through the *Revue illustrée*’.

56 See the collective volume *L’Europe des revues II (1860–1930): Réseaux et circulations des modèles*, ed. by Evangelhia Stead and Hélène Védrine (Paris: PUPS, forthcoming in 2017).

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