

F. J. Furnivall's Last Fling: The Wyclif Society and Anglo-German scholarly relations, 1882-1922¹

ABSTRACT

The Wyclif Society (1882) was the last of F. J. Furnivall's text societies, prompted by the approaching quincentenary of Wyclif's death (1384), and by celebrations commemorating Luther's birth (1483); moreover, the Bohemian reformer, Jan Hus, was thought to have been heavily influenced by Wyclif's writings. Luther's works were published in authoritative editions to coincide with the anniversary. Protestant religious sentiment was indissolubly mixed with patriotism, and, in central Europe, with nationalist aspirations in the German states before and after unification in 1871, and among Czech patriots seeking independence.

The Society concentrated on Wyclif's Latin works, of which many of the best manuscripts were in libraries in the historic Bohemian lands, and also Vienna. Though English-run, the Society necessarily relied heavily on German-speaking editors who could gain access to the manuscripts. They brought to the task the familiarity with critical text editing and philological methods for which German scholarship was famed. Its publications were ground-breaking in applying methods of text editing devised for classical texts to medieval Latin, while also offering practical demonstrations of how to prepare critical editions for the benefit of English scholars more familiar with parallel texts and diplomatic transcription.

The Society testifies to remarkable cultural exchanges and friendship between English and German-speaking scholars at a time of rising Anglo-German political tension, as well as pressures within the German-speaking and Slav communities in central Europe, Catholic and Protestant. The Society was even briefly revived in 1918 to complete work in progress before war broke out.

i. *Furnivall and German scholarship*

Frederick James Furnivall (1825-1910) is best known, at least to medievalists, as the founder of the Early English Text Society (EETS). But he is a fascinating figure, with much broader literary and social interests; almost an archetypal 'Victorian'. His long life was shaped by the Gothic revival, the passion for King Arthur, Christian Socialism, and educational reform. He was at the heart of London literary life, a scholar, eccentric, long-time associate of the Working Men's College and the London Philological Society. He was a man of boundless enthusiasm, with an extraordinary gift for friendship; also an inveterate and scurrilous prosecutor of literary quarrels. He founded no fewer than seven literary and publishing societies (including the Chaucer and New Shakspeare Societies), which, even in an age of

¹ This study of the Wyclif Society arose in the course of a longer study, in preparation, of the EETS. I am most grateful to Professor Anne Hudson for reading and generously commenting on a draft of this article; I have benefited greatly from her immense knowledge of this area. Responsibility for the opinions expressed, and any errors, is mine. In ensuing bibliographical references, publishers, as well as the customary place of publication, have been recorded when citing nineteenth- and early twentieth-century publications; their identity is a part of the story.

founding societies, was impressive.² The Wyclif Society was the last of these enterprises, and the one which demanded his most sustained courtship of the Protestant Establishment, especially the more evangelical wing of the Church of England. Furnivall's interest in Wyclif was long standing, and sparked by what were thought to be his English writings, especially the translations of the Bible. The Society's foundation was prompted by an outside event: the impending celebrations for the quincentenary in 1884 of the death of John Wyclif. It stands apart from the other Furnivall societies, not least because of its commitment to publishing Wyclif's Latin writings – the others were all devoted to English – and because it was an English society which relied heavily for its editors on the newly unified Germany and the Austro-Hungarian empire. Broadly speaking, the manuscripts of Wyclif's Latin writings, with exceptions, are divided almost equally between English libraries, and those in Prague (with some in outlying Czech lands), and Vienna. All of these Continental copies are of Bohemian origin, presenting logistical challenges for an English-run society.

The Wyclif Society was a remarkable instance of English and German-speaking scholars collaborating in a cause in which they believed despite the worsening Anglo-German relations in the period up to, and after, the First World War. The private friendships formed in the 1880s were tested and not found wanting as tensions between the two nations increased. Furnivall, though 'without a trace of insular prejudice' was nevertheless a patriot and wrote indignantly to Alois Brandl, professor of English philology at the University of Berlin, following the Kaiser's despatch of his telegram to Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal Republic, on 3 January, 1896, expressing support for the Boer cause, 'breathing threats and slaughter, as if I had myself been the author of the message.' Brandl detected a cooling off in Furnivall's German sympathies for some while afterwards.³ Friendships within Furnivall's circle nevertheless showed that Anglo-German rivalry could coexist with mutual admiration, albeit tempered by some jealousy and resentment on the English side, and a sense of superiority on the German, yet softened by memories of Furnivall's kindness to foreign scholars, and admiration of the prodigious amount of work he did, as testified in Brandl's memoir, and Ewald Flügel's, in the volume of reminiscences put together in the year after Furnivall's death.⁴ The Wyclif Society modestly flourished in these years, though never fast enough to satisfy Furnivall's impatience. Its Continental editors, with one

² See John Munro, 'Biography,' in *Frederick James Furnivall: A Volume of Personal Record* (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), pp. vii-lxxxiii. On Furnivall, in addition to the memoirs in this volume, see further, William Benzie, *Dr. F. J. Furnivall: A Victorian Scholar Adventurer* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1983); William S. Peterson, 'Furnivall, Frederick James (1825-1910), *ODNB*; Derek Pearsall, 'Frederick James Furnivall (1825-1910),' in Helen Damico, ed., *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline*, 3 vols. (New York and London, 1995-2000), ii. 125-38.

³ *Frederick James Furnivall*, pp. 10-15 (pp. 10, 14). In addition, the German friend with whom Furnivall had particular sympathies, Julius Zupitza, had died in 1895.

⁴ *Frederick James Furnivall*, pp. 205-9. Flügel also gave an account of 'The History of English Philology', in the *Flügel Memorial Volume: Containing an Unpublished Paper by Professor Ewald Flügel, and Contributions in his Memory by his Colleagues and Students*, Leland Stanford Junior University Publications, University Series (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 1916), pp. 9-35.

exception, were German-speaking, rather than 'German.' Their Teutonism is complex. One, Michael Henry Dziewicki, was Polish; all had reason to be wary of Bismarck's Prussia. The exception, Rudolf Buddensieg, lived in Saxony (recently Austria's ally against Prussia); he is the one whose cultural affinities with German 'new philology' are most apparent. Thanks to Vienna's holdings of Wyclif manuscripts, many of the Society's editors and copyists were 'Austrian'. Johann Loserth had been born in Moravia, to which his family had fled as refugees from Silesia in the seventeenth century. It is easy, from an English perspective, to miss the political, religious, and cultural sensitivities involved.

German scholarship had established its reputation for pre-eminence in the related fields of philology and textual criticism in the first half of the nineteenth century. This story has been told before, and need not be rehearsed here.⁵ Successive Presidents of the Philological Society noted the fact that, as Richard Morris observed in 1875, 'For the last sixty years, a period that embraces the beginning as well as the growth and development of linguistic science, we have been content to look to Germany for nearly all our scientific knowledge in this department, but have done little ourselves.'⁶ Two years later Henry Sweet summed up the essential differences between English and German ideas of editing. English effort had been largely devoted to 'publishing our rich stores of MSS., and making them generally accessible in a reliable form,' and the strength of this empirical tradition lay in 'minute accuracy and fullness of material'. English editors, then, had tended to produce parallel texts or diplomatic transcriptions, with variants from other copies which were not usually allowed to invade the text. In theory they allowed readers to be their own editors. Even the Germans, instructed in the art and theory of critical editing, were coming to 'see the advantage of a plan which makes the reader independent of possible editorial vagaries, besides supplying inexhaustible material for special investigations of every kind.' However, this praise was severely qualified by Julius Zupitza's strictures on English editors from which Sweet quoted liberally: 'The editors are, with very few exceptions, dilettantes. Many of them have very vague ideas of philological method, of the treatment of the text, especially when it is preserved in several MSS., of what is essential and what not in reproducing a MS.' The consequence, as Sweet said, was that 'while the principles of text-criticism have been firmly established for the last thirty years in the other Teutonic countries, we at the present day have hardly advanced beyond the mere mechanical reproduction of MS. texts.'⁷ The

⁵ See further, Richard Utz, *Chaucer and the Discourse of German Philology: A History of Reception and an Annotated Bibliography of Studies 1793-1948*, *Making the Middle Ages* 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002); Hans Aarsleff, *The Study of Language in England 1780-1860* (Minneapolis, 1983), and references there given. Also R. W. Chambers, *Man's Unconquerable Mind: Studies of English Writers, from Bede to A. E. Housman and W. P. Ker* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1939), pp. 342-58; also 'Philologists at University College' An Address delivered by Dr. R. W. Chambers, on Monday May 2, 1927 (London: University of London Press, Ltd., 1927).

⁶ 'Fourth Annual Address of the President ... 21st of May, 1875', *Transactions of the Philological Society* 16 (1875-6), p. 1.

⁷ 'Sixth Annual Address of the President ... 18th of May, 1877', *Transactions of the Philological Society* 17 (1877-9), pp. 10-11. Zupitza was reviewing the work of the EETS, 'Die neuesten publicationen der Early English text society', in *Anzeiger für deutsches Alterthum*

Wyclif Society accommodated different ideas and cultural traditions. Furnivall's own ideas of editing firmly favoured reproduction of the manuscript text as it stood rather than what he called 'cooked' or 'doctored' texts. But he was a practical man, who considered his many friends and acquaintances, including Germans, to be an endless labour force to supply the insatiable demands of his text societies

The Philological Society had from its earliest days welcomed association with Continental scholarship, even while it took some natural pride in its own traditions. The German philological stars, Franz Bopp and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were lifelong honorary members, and, after the revolutions of 1848 in the German states forced him into exile from Berlin, the Sanskrit scholar, Theodor Goldstücker, became a professor at University College, London, and, in due course, the Philological Society's President. Furnivall naturally knew Goldstücker well. He had more opportunity than most to appreciate German leadership in the formal study of English language and literature. Through his New Shakspeare Society (founded 1873) he caused to be translated, and wrote the introduction to Georg Gottfried Gervinus's *Commentaries*, 'an honour to a German to have written, a pleasure to an Englishman to read,' though he acknowledged in this introduction that even Gervinus had 'shortcomings, if not faults. It is German, and occasionally cumbrous.' More informally he noted that 'the spirit of the man is deep & noble. Some bosh, & much Germanism, I admit.'⁸ Nevertheless, Gervinus's authoritative commentary fulfilled a real need for an English-speaking audience. Exactly the same pattern of translating a German author's work into English as a first step in getting a new Society off the ground would be repeated in the Wyclif Society. Furnivall had a sufficient workforce of British scholars to supply the EETS's needs in the 1860s and 1870s, but in the 1880s and 1890s Germans also contributed. He tolerated some 'bosh' in the greater interest of getting the work done.⁹ This was also the Wyclif Society's heyday, though the 'German' editors who worked for the Wyclif Society were not the same as those who worked for the EETS. Yet Furnivall's closer acquaintance with German scholarship through the Wyclif editors, as well as his own friendship with Zupitza, Brandl, Flügel and others, and also the German-educated Dutch scholar, Bernhard ten Brink, consolidated his real respect for their achievements.

und deutsche Litteratur, in *Zeitschrift für deutsches Alterthum und deutsche Litteratur*, 19 (1876), 116-26, dated 29 June, 1875, Vienna.

⁸ Fredk. J. Furnivall, 'The Succession of Shakspeare's Works and the Use of Metrical Tests in Settling It, Being the Introduction to Professor Gervinus's "Commentaries on Shakspeare," translated by Miss Bunnett (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1874). Marvin Spevack, 'James Orchard Halliwell and Friends X. Frederick James Furnivall. XI. William Aldis Wright and William George Clark, *The Library* 20 (2) (1998), 126-44 (p.133).

After Gervinus's death in 1871, Furnivall, chairing the Society's second meeting on 27 March, 1874, reported that 'Madame Gervinus of Heidelberg ... had consented to become one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society,' *Transactions*, Part I, series I (1874), p. xii.

Quotations from Furnivall include his idiosyncratic simplified spellings.

⁹ See further, Antony Singleton, 'The Early English Text Society in the Nineteenth Century: An Organizational History, *RES* N.S. 56 (2005), 90-118; also 'The EETS in the Nineteenth Century: A Chapter in the History of the Editing of Middle English Texts,' D.Phil. thesis (Oxford, 2001) for detailed case studies of EETS editorial practice, including that of Einkenel and Zupitza compared with Richard Morris and others.

ii. *The Origins of the Wyclif Society: The First 'Wycliffe Society'.*

The enthusiasm of the sixteenth-century polemicists, Bale and Foxe, for Wyclif and his followers as proto-Reformers, fostered by the antiquary, Thomas Tanner and others, encouraged work by a number of eighteenth-century writers interested in the English Bible translation thought to be by Wyclif himself, as well as other Wyclif texts.¹⁰ In 1828, the Congregationalist minister, and second Professor of History at University College, London, Robert Vaughan, published the *Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*. Despite its limitations – Vaughan confined his searches to English libraries – his volume included information about the whereabouts of Wyclif's unpublished writings embedded in a summary of their contents.¹¹ This was followed by the formation of the short lived first Wycliffe Society in 1844.¹² Vaughan was considered by the Committee as 'more fully qualified to engage in the work of preparing' their first publication, a selection of Wyclif's tracts and treatises in translation, 'than probably any other writer in the kingdom.'¹³ His superior qualifications rested on his Nonconformity as much as his willingness to delve into medieval manuscripts.¹⁴ This first Wycliffe Society was sponsored by the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and Vaughan's was the first of only two publications before it was wound up with a balance of just £5 18s. 2d., and liabilities of about £112. It had failed to attract anything like the 1500 subscribers its officers had calculated they needed for its financial plans to be viable.¹⁵ Moreover, the Society's title was a flag of convenience: the

¹⁰ See further, Anne Hudson, 'The Survival of Wyclif's Works in England and Bohemia', in *Studies in the Transmission of Wyclif's Writings*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Aldershot, ca. 2008), XVI, 1-43.

¹¹ *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe: Illustrated principally from his unpublished manuscripts; with a preliminary view of the papal system, and of the state of the Protestant doctrine in Europe, to the commencement of the fourteenth century* (London: B. J. Holdsworth, Hatchard and Sons, 1828); a second edition 'much improved' appeared in 1831, published by Holdsworth and Bull. I am grateful to Anne Hudson for drawing my attention to Vaughan, on whom see James Crompton, 'John Wyclif: A Study in Mythology,' *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* 42 (1969), 6-34, (p. 16).

¹² The detailed reasons for the society's failure are set out in a pamphlet, *The Wycliffe Society for Reprinting a Series of the more scarce and valuable Tracts and Treatises of the Earlier Reformers, Puritans and Nonconformists of Great Britain: Substance of the Report of the Committee Presented to the Assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, May 15, 1846* (London: Blackburn and Pardon, dated 1 July, 1846).

¹³ *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe, D.D. with Selections and Translations from his Manuscripts and Latin Works*, edited for the Wycliffe Society, with an introductory memoir by the Rev. Robert Vaughan, D.D. (London; printed for the Society by Blackburn and Pardon, 1845); *Report*, p. 2.

¹⁴ See further, Alexander Gordon, rev. R. Tudur Jones, 'Robert Vaughan (1795-1868), *ODNB*. Vaughan was at this time President and professor of theology at the Lancashire Independent College in Manchester.

¹⁵ The Treasurer was William Alers Hankey, and the Secretaries were the Rev. Robert Ashton and the Rev. John Blackburn, at 'The Wycliffe Office, Congregational Library, 4 Blomfield St. Finsbury.' The initiative to found the Society had come from one of the Secretaries

intention was never to restrict publications to Wyclif's writings, but to reprint treatises written by Puritan divines and Reformers, who fought for 'religious liberty in this country,' (*Report*, p. 3). The name honoured merely the 'first English Reformer'. The elaborate device on the frontispiece of the Society's first volume includes an engraving of Wyclif flanked by the Waldensian seal, and the arms of the canton of Geneva. The captions, 'Vaudois, Wycliffe, Geneva' refer to the supposed origins of reformed religion among the Waldensians before Wyclif, and Calvin. The Society was modelled on the scholarly publication societies springing up in the first half of the nineteenth century such as the Roxburghe (1812), Bannatyne (1823), Camden (1838), or Surtees (1838), some of which were also rather specialised, but, unlike them, not able, as the founders had hoped, to attract wealthy patrons among their community (*Report*, p. 3) – this was not a mistake that Furnivall made. Reminding Nonconformists of what they owed to their heroic confessors attracted only a 'languid' response (*Report*, p. 1) - Furnivall likewise perennially berated lukewarm subscribers. The Committee wished to offer scholarly titles rather than to satisfy 'the prevailing taste of the age' (*Report*, p. 3). It failed to attract enough subscribers, despite vigorous advertising, but decided to go ahead with its publication plans, hoping, from the experience of similar societies, that the issue of Vaughan's Wyclifiana 'would immediately produce a great augmentation of subscribers.' Return of subscriptions would be embarrassing. In hindsight the book's fourteenth-century content probably offered little to the intended audience seeking inspiration from more immediate forebears.¹⁶

The credit for the idea of systematically publishing Wyclif's writings goes to the Rev. William Waddington Shirley, Regius Professor in Ecclesiastical History and canon of Christ Church Oxford. Canon Shirley undertook a preparatory catalogue of Wyclif's works, but died in 1866 a year later.¹⁷ Shirley's catalogue included both the Latin and English works attributed to Wyclif; it furnished the programme of publications to which the later Wyclif Society pledged itself. As one of the principal German scholars involved, Rudolf Buddensieg, said, 'To him we owe the foundation of a firm basis whence to prosecute a scientific enquiry

(unspecified), who presented a memorial to the autumn meeting of the assembly of the Congregational Union, held at Liverpool, in October, 1842.

¹⁶ The Society's second publication was *The Select Works of David Clarkson*, seventeenth-century clergyman and ejected minister, who was chosen for his scholarship, especially his use of patristic source material and ecclesiastical history (*Report*, p. 2).

¹⁷ *A Catalogue of the Original Works of John Wyclif* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1865). Shirley (1828-1866) took a first class degree in mathematics from Wadham College, Oxford, before turning his attention to Church history. His interest in Wyclif was signalled a few years earlier by his publication of the anti-Wycliffite collection of tracts, the *Fasciculi zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif cum tritico*, Rolls Series (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1858). Shirley's *Catalogue* was revised by J. Loserth, as regards the Latin manuscripts: *The Catalogue of the Extant Latin Works of John Wyclif* (London: the Wyclif Society, [1924]). This was superseded by Williel R. Thomson, *The Latin Writings of John Wyclif: An Annotated Catalog* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Subsidia Mediaevalia 14, 1983), and Thomson's list was augmented by Anne Hudson, *Studies in the Transmission of Wyclif's Writings*, Appendix II: Supplement to Manuscript Listings, pp. 1-16.

concerning Wyclif as a theologian and Church politician.¹⁸ When Furnivall took up the idea of a Wyclif Society in 1882, the task was to be divided between his two complementary Societies: the Wyclif would take on the Latin, while the EETS undertook the English.

Meanwhile, the massive four volume text of the Wycliffite Bible translations was published in 1850, edited by Sir Frederic Madden, Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Museum Library, with Josiah Forshall, Secretary of the British Museum, formerly under-keeper of the department of manuscripts. A start had also been made on publishing the Latin texts, first by Gotthard Victor Lechler, of Leipzig, who had published *De officio pastoralis* in Germany, and then persuaded the Clarendon Press to publish the *Dialogus* (in which the entire volume, including editorial matter, was left in the decent obscurity of Latin). This was followed by his monograph on Wyclif as a founding figure of the Reformation.¹⁹ The Press also published at this time three volumes of *Select English Works of John Wyclif*, edited by Tom Arnold (1823-1900), son of the headmaster of Rugby, brother to the poet, Matthew, and father of the novelist, Mrs Humphry Ward.²⁰ This, however, with the *Dialogus*, represented the limits to which the Delegates of the Press, even 'with every means at their command', were willing to dabble in publishing Wyclif, despite Buddensieg's representations in 1880/1 that this was their duty, with the quincentenary of Wyclif's death on 31 December, 1384, fast approaching. Buddensieg's own study of Wyclif and his times appeared - in Gothic type - in 1885.²¹ The anniversary inevitably stimulated an interest in publishing books about Wyclif and other celebrations of his life, as happened again at the sexcentenary in 1984.²² The time was more auspicious for a Wyclif Society than it had been in 1842.

iii. *The Wyclif Quincentenary and other anniversaries: 1868/9, 1883, and 1884*

Buddensieg (1844-1908) suspected darkly that unprofitability lay behind the Delegates' decision not to publish the remainder of the English writings attributed to Wyclif which it had been intended to include - this had been left to 'a private undertaking,' to wit the EETS edition undertaken by Frederic David Matthew (1838-1918), who would become a

¹⁸ *John Wyclif's Polemical Works in Latin. For the first time edited from the Manuscripts, with Critical and Historical Notes*, English edition, 2 vols., Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1883), i. iv.

¹⁹ *Johannis de Wyclif, Tractatus de officio pastoralis* (Leipsig: A. Edelmann, 1863); *Joannis Wyclif, Dialogus cum Supplemento Dialogi*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1869); *Johann von Wyclif und die Vorgeschichte der Reformation* (Leipzig: F. Fleischer, 1873), trans. Peter Lorimer, *John Wyclif and his English Precursors*, 2 vols. (London: C. K. Paul, 1878).

²⁰ *Select English Works of John Wyclif*, ed. T. Arnold, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1869-71).

²¹ *Johann Wyclif und seine Zeit, zum fünfhundertjährigen Wyclifjubiläum (31 Dezember 1884)*, Verein für Reformationgeschichte (Halle, 1885).

²² See Christina von Nolcken, 'Wyclif in our Times: The Wyclif Sexcentenary 1984,' *The Yearbook of Langland Studies* 2 (1988), 143-54.

stalwart of the new Wyclif Society.²³ Buddensieg saw the Delegates' abandonment of the project as Oxford's revenge for Arnold's conversion to Catholicism: 'We cannot, even after his death' – Arnold was still very much alive – 'expect to receive much at the hands of his Alma Mater, who during his life time expelled him when at the height of his fame.'²⁴ A letter to *The Academy* (a journal which Furnivall read and contributed to), had better results.²⁵ Furnivall responded in his usual way, by founding a society. Anglo-German collaboration was integral to the project from the start. As Buddensieg put it, invoking the trope, as the first Wycliffe Society had also done, of a literary, not a literal, monument, the anniversary should find 'English and Germans engaged in the joint work of raising a memorial to this vigorous Teutonic mind', one 'more beautiful and durable than marble or bronze, not formed of lifeless stone, but moulded in his own living words of evangelical faith, of manly frankness, and patriotic high-mindedness.'²⁶ This was the stuff to rouse the troops; certainly Furnivall, who must not only have concurred heartily, but maybe influenced the sentiments' expression, since the wording sounds like him, and Buddensieg never pretended that his own English was perfect. The Wyclif Society's finances were too fragile to risk distracting the subscribers by appeals for monuments. Yet others' wishes for a tangible memorial were not satisfied by books; though generosity did not rise to marble or bronze, a granite obelisk was erected in 1897, to coincide with the Jubilee, in Lutterworth, Leics., where Wyclif had spent his last years, paid for by public subscription.²⁷ Throughout the nineteenth century 'Wyclif' enterprises proliferated, as chronicled by James Crompton, who has observed that Wyclif would have had 'little sympathy' with, 'and less understanding' of the majority.²⁸ The quincentenary brought a flurry of Wyclif biographies to feed the interest. The Wyclif Society may be said to have hitchhiked a lift on the crest of this wave: Furnivall reported, rather disingenuously, given that most of those celebrating in 1884 had probably never heard of his Society, that 'among the tens of thousands of folk whose knowledge of the great Reformer was increast and freshened by the efforts of his honourers last year, there can have been none who was not glad that a Wyclif Society existed.'²⁹

²³ *Polemical Works*, i. v, 'This publication did not pay its own way, and the commissioners not seeing their way to pecuniary success, stopped short.' *The English Works of Wyclif, hitherto unprinted*, ed. F. D. Matthew, EETS O.S. 74 (London: Trübner & Co., 1880).

²⁴ *Polemical Works*, i. iii, n. 1. Arnold had recently forfeited his chance of the Rawlinsonian Professorship of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford (to which John Earle was elected in 1876) by his reconversion to Catholicism. On Arnold, see further Meriol Trevor, *The Arnolds: Thomas Arnold and his Family* (London, 1973).

²⁵ *Polemical Works*, i. Preface, p vi. Letter to *The Academy*, 17 September, 1881.

²⁶ *Polemical Works*, i. xi.

²⁷ Later dismantled and moved in the spring of 1999 to make way for road improvements. A memorial, showing Wyclif preaching to villagers, with two disapproving monastic observers, by R. Westmacott, 1837, placed in the south aisle of the church, is still there. An earlier plan in the 1820s (roughly coinciding with the quincentenary of Wyclif's supposed birth date) to erect a bronze statue in the churchyard had come to nothing: Crompton, 'John Wyclif', p. 15.

²⁸ 'John Wyclif,' p. 6.

²⁹ Second Report 1884-5 (June 1885), pp. 1-2. The Society's constitution forbade its participation, though individual members took an active part.

The Society was founded in March, 1882, 'to remove from England the disgrace of having left buried in manuscript the most important works of her great early Reformer.' This treasure was 'in foreign libraries':³⁰ not only in Vienna and Prague, where they might be expected because of Bohemian interest in Wyclif in the late Middle Ages, following Richard II's marriage to Anne of Bohemia (1382). Others were more widely scattered, including copies in Florence and Venice. Buddensieg noted one in the Royal Library of Stockholm, carried off from Moravia after the intervention of Gustavus Adolphus during the Thirty Years War.³¹ Buddensieg commended Shirley's remarkable commitment in identifying Wyclif manuscripts, 'during a sojourn in Vienna,' when he 'gave himself up to the study of the Wiclifiana with extraordinary diligence and self-denying devotion to the subject.'³² But Shirley did not find them all: Buddensieg, no slouch himself, reported finding hitherto unknown ones 'on a tour of investigation through Upper-Lusatia, Bohemia, Moravia and Lower-Austria.'³³ He naturally headed for Bohemia's historical crown lands, largely absorbed into the Habsburg empire and Saxony, where many German-speakers had settled among the historically Slav population.

Two other Reformers are concerned in the Wyclif Society: Luther, and the Bohemian, Jan Hus, martyred in 1415 at Constance, and thought to have been greatly influenced by Wyclif's writings. In the circumstances, talk of 'our' Reformer could be provocative. The rivalry between the claims of the Englishman, Wyclif, and the German, Luther, were openly acknowledged within the Wyclif Society (the quatercentenary of Luther's birth fell in 1883); Hus attracted less comment. And yet one of the most assiduous workers for the Society, Johann Loserth (1846-1936), had become involved in its work because of his study, *Hus und Wiclif*, published (in Prague and Leipzig, and printed in Prague) in that momentous year, 1884.³⁴ Tensions between Germans and Slavs, and Czech nationalist aspirations swirled around ideas of Protestant national identity focussed on Hus and Luther. The Austro-Hungarian *Ausgleich* of 1867 had re-established Hungary's sovereignty, and the Czech leaders sought similar autonomy - the quincentenary of Hus's birth in 1869 was a telling near-synchronicity.³⁵ Several hundred participants in the 'first Czech pilgrimage' set out for

³⁰ First Report, pp.1, 4. The rationale for founding the Society echoed Buddensieg's words: printing Wyclif's books was the most fitting monument to 'our great Reformer', and till this were done, 'no question of monument or other memorial to him need be raised.'

³¹ *Polemical Works*, i. Preface, p. vii. Five of John Hus's copies of Wyclif's writings were carried off to Sweden, and are now in the Royal Library (Kungliga Biblioteket). See further, Crompton, 'John Wyclif', p. 12.

³² *Polemical Works*, i. xxiii.

³³ *Polemical Works*, i. Preface, p. vii.

³⁴ *Hus und Wiclif: zur Genesis der Husitischen Lehre* (Prague (F. Tempsky) and Leipzig (G. Freytag), 1884). According to Furnivall: Third Report (1885), p. 2; Loserth 'discovered the full extent of Hus's great debt to Wyclif'. According, however, to Vilém Herold, Loserth's view was 'certainly not free of nationalist bias', 'How Wyclifite was the Bohemian Reformation?', *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* 2 (1996), 25-37 (p. 25).

³⁵ See further, Petr Pabian, 'Czech Protestants and National Identity: Commemorating Jan Hus in 1869,' in *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious Practice* 7 (Prague, 2009), pp. 221-8, and the same author's 'Inventing the Hussite Nation: Liberals, Catholics, and Protestants in Conflict over Czech National Identity,' in *The Bohemian Reformation and Religious*

Constance in 1868; and, in early September 1869, the leading radicals in the Czech national party, the 'Young Czechs', organised major celebrations in Prague and Hus's birthplace, Husinec. Also in 1868 a statue of Luther was dedicated in Worms. In this context, Buddensieg's comments about the propriety of *not* raising a memorial to Wyclif acquire added force. There had been perhaps enough excitement created by statues commemorating vigorous 'Teutonic' - or Slav - minds. Moreover, the choice of *mind* was itself careful - what is the point of a statue to a mind? (Thanks to the overlay of the later history of the Czech Republic, study of Hus has subsequently become still more contested.)

Furnivall declared at the outset that, 'No party feeling whatsoever enters into the Society's plan,' unlike the earlier Wycliffe Society, founded by the Congregational Union.³⁶ This was to be a *text* society. He was personally without denominational prejudices: he had been rather devout at Cambridge, but had become an agnostic.³⁷ Yet, in practice, he played up Wyclif's reputation as much as the Congregationalists had done to get subscribers. The rich brown protestant varnish (Macfarlane's phrase) with which Wyclif's posthumous image was lavishly coated, appealed to Evangelical Anglican sympathies.³⁸ Furnivall, who had told the bibliophile, Sir Thomas Phillipps, that he did not care who subscribed to the Philological Society and EETS, even Cardinal Wiseman himself, and who was to entrust the EETS after his death to the Jewish scholar, Israel Gollancz, was obliged to approach what was, for him, strange company (bishops), though justified by his conviction that money for his societies was good, whoever paid the guineas.³⁹ The founders of the first Wycliffe Society, although seeking to assimilate Wyclif to their own community had also aspired to form a *text* society. Yet no Wyclif Society could function in the nineteenth century in a bubble where there were no deep tensions between Protestants and Catholics. As James Gairdner said, 'We lose in relation to this particular object the co-operation of a large body of men who in other cases are among the most ready to assist in the diffusion of a taste for early literature. You might as well ask a Jew to a dinner on pork as invite a Roman Catholic to join with you in helping to propagate writings distinctly labelled as poisonous by the authorities of his own Church.' Yet, Gairdner continued even-handedly, 'Protestants as well as Roman Catholics have their own delusions about WYCLIF; indeed I strongly suspect they have some delusions in common; and neither side, possibly, is very anxious to have those delusions removed.'⁴⁰ Buddensieg certainly thought that religious prejudice had coloured Tom Arnold's 'Selections' from Wyclif, and presumably stopped him from completing the work. Arnold's life seems, indeed, to have been haunted by Wyclif: the ship on which he sailed to New Zealand in 1847 was the *John Wickliffe*, carrying a group of Free Churchmen to found a

Practice, 6, (Prague, 2007), pp. 275-82. Hugh Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (Stanford, 2004); Bascom Barry Hayes, *Bismarck and Mitteleuropa* (Rutherford, ca. 1994).

³⁶ First Report, p. 4.

³⁷ See Benzie, *Dr. F. J. Furnivall*, pp. 12-13.

³⁸ K. B. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity* (London, 1952), p. xii.

³⁹ Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson, d. 201, f. 86^{r-v}. On Wiseman's philological interests, see further, Aarsleff, *Study of Language in England*, pp. 208-9.

⁴⁰ Essay, quoted in the Report for 1892, pp. 6-7, reprinted from *The Athenaeum*, 15 July, 1882.

community. His house in the Banbury Road, Oxford, 'Laleham', was later converted into the theological college, Wycliffe Hall, founded in 1877.⁴¹

These rifts were still more potent in central Europe. No wonder if Catholic scholars did fight shy of a Wyclif Society. Yet, just a few years after Gairdner's remarks, the Society recruited a Polish Catholic: Michael Henry Dziewicki, who, at the end of his long service, and careful reticence on the matter of his own beliefs, felt he had earned the right to explain himself:

People have asked me many a time how I, nominally a Catholic, could aid in publishing the works of one so contrary to Catholicism as Wyclif is universally considered to be; and they readily supposed that I was indeed a Catholic only in name. They mistook; and though I have sincerely – and I hope successfully – tried to edit Wyclif with perfect impartiality from first to last, I have no sympathy with those of his doctrines that contradict the teaching of my Church... When I was offered the position of editor of Wyclif's Latin works, I consulted a clergyman of my faith in London. He told me that a translation into the vernacular would be forbidden, but that a mere edition of the Latin text was quite another thing. I have since had reason to doubt whether his ruling was technically right; but there is no doubt whatever that it was right practically, and that I at any rate, as a layman asking counsel, was right in accepting it. 'Qui s'excuse, s'accuse,' but this is rather a justification than an excuse.⁴²

Dziewicki edited seven volumes for the Society, but tended to concentrate on Wyclif's philosophical, rather than controversial, writings.

iv. *Wyclif: Appealing to English mythology*

Wyclif presented a curiously dual posthumous image, which impeded Furnivall's usual attempts to bring together enthusiasm for manly and frank Englishness with dry scholarship in a feel-good blend of educational improvement and sentiment. His writings offered ample opportunity to be rigorously 'scientific' in pursuit of the scholarship, and wallow indulgently in the sentiment. But, in this case, mind and heart have rarely been more at odds. Wyclif wrote in difficult, academic Latin - Furnivall admitted that 'few more difficult

⁴¹ *Polemical Works*, i. iii. E. O. Dodgson, 'Notes on Nos. 56, 58, 60, 62 and 64 Banbury Road,' *Oxoniensia* 32 (1967), 53-9 (p. 56). Arnold joined the Catholic Church in 1856, lapsed, and reconverted in 1876. It was during this non-Catholic interval, in 1869, that he was able to visit the notoriously anti-Catholic, Sir Thomas Phillipps' library, to consult Wyclif manuscripts, as reported by Furnivall, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Phillipps-Robinson b. 176, f. 271^{r-v}.

⁴² *Johannis Wyclif, De ente librorum duorum*, ed. M. H. Dziewicki, Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1909), p. vi. Dziewicki's first contribution was *Johannis Wyclif Tractatus de apostasia*, Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1889). The Eleventh Report (1907), p. 1, noted Dziewicki's 'rare competence' in scholastic philosophy.

tasks than editing a Wyclif treatise can face an Editor.⁴³ There was plenty to make the head ache, as some of the editors acknowledged. Wyclif's appeal to the heart was twofold: on the one hand he appealed to Protestant emotions, and on the other (if one disregarded his extensive Latin writings) he appeared 'in his purely English aspect as the first translator of our Bible and THE FATHER OF ENGLISH PROSE.'⁴⁴ The attempt to foist prose paternity onto Wyclif (in pleasing symmetry with Chaucer's fatherhood of English poetry, alleged by Matthew Arnold) would be frustrated by twentieth-century research, not least that of a later Director of the EETS, Anne Hudson, which reassigned nearly all the English texts to Wycliffites.⁴⁵ Even in 1842 the Irish scholar, James Henthorn Todd, had declared his conviction 'that we are to this day unable to decide with any certainty what are Wickliffe's genuine works and what are not.' Todd's Anglo-Irish identity perhaps gave him a certain detachment from the excesses of English fancies about Wyclif.⁴⁶

Furnivall had courted the British Establishment before, and did so again, resorting to the blunderbuss rhetoric that he also used in the EETS to bully readers into supporting the Society in its work of doing 'England's long-neglected duty to the memory of a great English Worthy'. Study of Wyclif's Latin writings was essential if one were to 'follow the growth and development of [Wyclif's] mind' – Furnivall shared the nineteenth-century obsession with the chronological development of a writer's genius. He was as prepared as the next man to wheedle and hector in a good cause. Probably nothing would give the Wyclif Society broad appeal, but an effort was made to reach a wider audience by the provision of 'a full English abstract or digest of each of the Society's volumes ... so as to make reference easy to the student, and to enable the English reader to get a knowledge of the contents.'⁴⁷ Side-notes, the 'editorial marginal notes,' which Buddensieg noted disapprovingly were 'so popular in English,'⁴⁸ were provided, usually by F. D. Matthew. Furnivall used many of the same ploys he had devised for financing and running the Society that he had found to work with the EETS and his other enterprises. He used the same publisher, Trübner, and his familiar

⁴³ Second Report, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Report for 1892, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Arnold's 'Study of Poetry,' in which he urged Chaucer's claim, had appeared at about this time, 1880. The quest, although 'somewhat idle and disputable' (Saintsbury's critical introduction to *English Prose*, vol. 1, Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century, ed. Henry Craik (1916)) for a father of English prose was on: Wyclif's claims (as putative translator of the Bible) were contested by advocates of Mandeville, John Trevisa, still sometimes associated with the Wycliffite Bible translations, and the later William Tyndale. Also proposed was Richard Rolle, with avowedly partisan intent by George Beverley, 'The Hermit who was Father of English Prose,' *Catholic Herald*, 30 September, 1949.

⁴⁶ *An Apology for Lollard Doctrines, attributed to Wicliffe, now first printed from a manuscript in the library of Trinity College Dublin, with an Introduction and Notes*, by James Henthorn Todd, Fellow of Trinity College, and Treasurer of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, Camden Society 20 (London: John Bowyer, Nichols and Sons, 1842), pp. xvii, xxii.

⁴⁷ Report, May 1892, pp. 1-3. Also, 'to understand his immense influence as the teacher of Huss and the originator of the Reformation in Europe.'

⁴⁸ *Polemical Works*, i. lviii. He added that German scholars were following the English lead, though for his part he preferred a summary of the contents as a more accurate précis than side-notes.

printers, Stephen Austin of Hertford, and the Clarendon Press. When the Continental editors were working in Vienna, it was convenient to use an Austrian printer, Karl Georg Fromm, who, like Charles Childs, who printed for the New Shakspeare Society, was 'always ready to undertake fresh work ... though its publications issued in advance have not been fully paid, for he takes a scholar's interest in the Society's work.'⁴⁹ One thing that was never uniform was the spelling of the Morning Star of the Reformation's name, which appears variously as Wyclif, Wiclif, or Wycliffe on the title pages.

To lend his Society lustre, Furnivall, as he had with the New Shakspeare Society, stuffed it with the most exalted members of the establishment he could find, enrolling a preposterous number of grand Vice-Presidents. The President was the Bishop of York, and the Vice-Presidents included the bishops of Carlisle, Durham, Exeter, Lincoln, Sodor and Man, and the Earl of Shaftesbury. Later the Archbishop of Canterbury would take on the Presidency, and the Archbishop of Dublin, and the bishops of Liverpool, London, Peterborough, St David's, Lahore and Sydney were added to the roll call of Vice-Presidents.⁵⁰ By 1892, the list of members included 'Her Majesty, the Queen,' and 'Her Serene Highness, the Grand Duchess of Saxe Weimar'.⁵¹ Oxford colleges were well represented among the institutional members; individuals included the Regius Professor of Divinity, the Chichele Professor of History (Montagu Burrows), other clergy and scholars, and Shirley's widow, residing at Wynston House, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford – much as Gervinus's widow was recruited to the New Shakspeare Society. A rare example of a cross-over between the Wyclif Society's list and that of the EETS was the Rev. John Eyton Bickersteth Mayor (1825-1910), classical scholar and librarian of Cambridge University Library (1864-67), who edited the English works of John Fisher for the EETS, and who was noted (besides his vegetarianism) for his willingness to embrace German ideas of classical scholarship.⁵²

v. *The Quest for Wyclif 'workers'*

Furnivall's emphasis on Wyclif as *ours* acknowledged the competition with Germany's Luther. A new critical edition of Luther's works, 'of which the first volume was issued on the day of Luther's Centenary, 10 November 1883,' demanded the same for

⁴⁹ Eleventh Report, May 1900, p. 4. The two volumes of the *Polemical Works*, ed. Buddensieg, the first in the series, and originally prepared for German publication, were printed by Metzger & Wittig in Leipzig. In the Tenth Report (1896) Furnivall reported that £350 was owing to Fromm for the Society's volumes for 1896-8.

⁵⁰ First Report, 1882-3; a list of members is bound in with *Iohannis Wyclif, Tractatus de logica*, ed. M. H. Dziewicki, Wyclif Society 21 (London: Trübner & Co., 1893).

⁵¹ Report, 1892, p. 9.

⁵² *The English Works of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester (born 1459; died June 22, 1535)*, ed. J. E. B. Mayor, EETS, E. S. 27 (London: Trübner & Co., 1876). On Mayor, best known for his edition of Juvenal, a familiar Cambridge 'worthy', and source of many anecdotes, see further John Henderson, *Juvenal's Mayor: The Professor Who Lived on 2d. a Day*, Cambridge Philological Society, Supplementary vol. 20 (Cambridge Philological Society: Cambridge, 1998).

Wyclif.⁵³ Furnivall banged the patriotic drum, to rouse sleeping English scholars to action in Wyclif's cause, in the manner of St Paul admonishing the Romans, 'We cannot desire that German scholars and princes should complete the work which falls by right to Englishmen; and even if we had reached that pitch of supine contentment it is unlikely that our wishes would be fulfilled. It is time for us to wake up from our lethargy, and set our hands manfully to the duty before us.'⁵⁴ 'Manfully,' was, for once, apropos, since, although womenfolk were involved in an ancillary role, *ancillae* – handmaidens – they remained. They were scholars' daughters. Alice Shirley (daughter of W. W. Shirley) translated Johann Loserth's introduction to *De ecclesia* from the German.⁵⁵ Dorothy G. Matthew (daughter of F. D. Matthew) served, from 1907, as the Society's Honorary Secretary replacing the faithful J. W. Standerwick, of the General Post Office – an institution which was thus entitled, as a member, to receive free copies of the Wyclif Society's publications – one hopes that edification ensued..⁵⁶

Englishmen, never mind women, able to edit medieval Latin to a high standard were also few. Their classical education predisposed them to regard later Latin as misspelled and eccentric: a reader 'needs to think deeply over the sentences and construction in order to become master of the strange idiom ... what still more renders his perusal difficult is the writer's habit of following the construction of his mother language in the rules of syntax and in his general mode of expressing his thoughts.'⁵⁷ Buddensieg, the first editor in the Wyclif Society's series, was strongly of the view that 'all considerations of language, construction, nomenclature and verbal accuracy directly forbid an author of the latter part of the 14th century to appear in the garb of the Augustan age.' British editors and publishers tended to favour classicising, 'The English Rolls Series', in which Shirley had published the *Fasciculi zizaniorum*, had resorted to classicising, as had Buddensieg's *bêtes noires*, the Oxford Delegates, who obliged Lechler in his edition of the *Dialogus* 'to deprive Wiclif's thoughts of their mediaeval clothing,' whereas Lechler, good German scholar that he was, in his edition of *De officio pastoralis*, published in Leipzig, 'rightly retains the mediaeval form.'⁵⁸ Yet, when Wyclif Society texts were printed by the Clarendon Press, Horace Hart, Printer to the University, did not apparently object to their medieval dress.

Furnivall scouted about, as he did for the EETS, looking locally for novice editorial talent which could be trained on the job. His outburst about not leaving everything to the Germans obliged him to try. Enquiries led to Alfred William Pollard, at this time a young assistant in the Department of Printed Books at the British Museum. 'I first came to know the Doctor about 1885,' Pollard later recalled, 'when he took me, on the recommendation

⁵³ First Report, p. 4. *D. Martin Luthers Werke: kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. J.K.F. Knaake, et al. 1 Band (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus, 1883).

⁵⁴ Report of the Wyclif Society, May 1892, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Third Report, March 1885, p. 2; As Mrs Linton she continued to contribute to the Society's work (Fourth Report, for 1886 (August, 1887), p. 5). *Iohannis Wyclif, Tractatus de ecclesia*, ed. J. Loserth, Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1886).

⁵⁶ As announced in the Eleventh Report, June 1907 (as distinct from the Eleventh Report dated May 1900), p. 2. Standerwick's death on 25 December, 1910, was announced in the Twelfth Report (1911), p. 2.

⁵⁷ *Polemical Works*, i. lxxxvi.

⁵⁸ *Polemical Works*, i. xcvi-xcviii.

of one of the evening superintendants of the Reading-room at the British Museum, to edit a volume for the Wyclif Society.' This, Pollard considered 'a good instance of his lightheartedness, as at that time I had never read a page of Mediaeval Latin, nor looked at a manuscript except through a glass case.' He was, however, an Oxford man, and found his first attempt to edit a Wyclif text, the *Dialogus*,⁵⁹ went passably enough to be asked to do a second (though it is now perhaps the best candidate among the Wyclif Society's publications to be redone).⁶⁰ *De officio regis* proved a tougher nut, though since there are only three manuscripts (admittedly all Bohemian) it ought to have been easier. Pollard needed to call upon a co-editor, Charles Sayle, who graduated in the year of publication from New College, Oxford with classical honours, and claimed a 'working knowledge of Latin'.⁶¹ The pair, 'from lack of training in medieval Latin and inadequate acquaintance with Wyclif's politics and philosophy ... were both of us quite incompetent for the task,' from which they had to be rescued by F. D. Matthew, 'the mainstay of the Society'.⁶² Thanks to his lifelong interest in Shakespeare, Pollard had a lively memory of the costermongers' language in which Furnivall and Swinburne had conducted their literary quarrels some years before, and feared to 'be abused like a pickpocket,' but Pollard meant well: Furnivall treated the errors as 'a misfortune which might have happened to anybody.'⁶³

F. D. Matthew had planned to edit the *Tractatus de mandatis divinis* after completing Arnold's work on the English texts for the EETS, but was often side-tracked by other duties for the Society: auditing the accounts, writing side-notes, and endlessly putting the vast knowledge of Wyclif which he accrued at others' disposal. He was 'truly indefatigable'.⁶⁴ He probably deserves much of the credit for the Society's survival after Furnivall's death. He was reckoned to be 'the one man in England who owned the most extensive and profound knowledge of Wyclif's writings and of the literature of Wyclif.' But he never completed his edition, even after decades. By his generosity to others, he 'missed his opportunity to reap that would have been his own crop.'⁶⁵ Edward Harris, formerly of Lincoln College, Oxford, and, between 1877 and 1881, Head Master of Exeter School, edited

⁵⁹ *Iohannis Wycliffe, Dialogus, sive speculum ecclesie militantis*, ed. Alfred W. Pollard, Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1886).

⁶⁰ Anne Hudson notes that Pollard knew only about half of the surviving copies (which are more numerous than for any other of Wyclif's writings), and he produced a conflated text, which is hard to disentangle; thus none of the copies he knew had all of the chapters which he prints, and he has jumbled their order.

⁶¹ *Iohannis Wyclif, Tractatus de officio regis*, ed. Alfred W. Pollard and Charles Sayle, Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1887). A. W. Pollard, 'Charles Sayle', *The Library* (1924), 267-70 (p. 267).

⁶² Pollard, 'Charles Sayle,' p. 269. Sayle, who was also a poet, was sufficiently inspired by the subject to compose *Wiclif: An Historical Drama* (Oxford: James Thornton, 1887), in verse, based largely on Lechler's monograph, translated by Lorimer.

⁶³ Contribution to *Furnivall: A Volume of Personal Record*, pp. 147-51 (pp. 147-8).

⁶⁴ *Iohannis Wyclif De eucharistia, tractatus major*, Wyclif Society 19 (London: Trübner & Co., 1892), p. lxvi. Fourth Report, 1886 (August 1887), p. 2 (at which time he was said to be writing side-notes to Loserth's and Beer's editions).

⁶⁵ *De mandatis divinis*, Preface.

De benedicta incarnacione from the seclusion of Torquay.⁶⁶ Reginald Lane Poole (1857-1939), the Oxford historian, and editor of *De dominio divino*, and the first volume of *De civili dominio*⁶⁷ (dedicated to Benjamin Jowett, the Master of Poole's first college, Balliol), with a Ph.D. from Leipzig (1882), and fluent, not only in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, but also five modern European languages, was the heavyweight among the English editors, and commanded greatest respect.⁶⁸ Loserth acknowledged his help 'with many an emendation of the text' of *De civili dominio* – we do not hear that the other British scholars, much as their contribution was appreciated in other ways, were trusted with emendations.⁶⁹ The collaboration that perforce went on, and the difficulties of procuring editions based on manuscripts in Continental libraries, especially Vienna, is well illustrated by the edition of *De officio regis*, with a complicated textual history, and surviving in a number of English and Bohemian copies – the Society could not just print any manuscript which would do. Buddensieg's assistant had copied the manuscript which was most accessible to him, with the intention that it should be used as the copy text – there is always an understandable temptation to editors to choose a manuscript in a nearby library. Full collation with 'the better MS. in Vienna, was, after a time, found to be indispensable for the understanding of the Treatise, and the production of a decent text.' Buddensieg, with duties in Dresden which obliged him 'to set aside his Wyclif work for at least two or three years', needed help. Herzberg-Fränkell finished the collation; Pollard and Sayle edited it.⁷⁰

The Continental editors were a small, but dedicated team. Dr. Rudolf Buddensieg, possibly the only one who could be described as 'German' by nationality, rather than culture, was a schoolmaster at the Vitzthum Gymnasium in Dresden, who rose to be Headmaster. Dr. Johann Loserth was Professor of History, first at the Karl-Franzens-Universität, Graz, and later the Franz-Josephs-Universität, Czernowitz in Bukowina. He was born in Fulnek in Moravia to a poor family, enabled by a relative and private teaching to

⁶⁶ *Johannis Wyclif Tractatus de benedicta incarnacione*, ed. Edward Harris, Wyclif Society 10 (London: Trübner & Co., 1886). Harris, M.A, D.D., pursued his career in school-teaching: as Assistant Master at Clifton College, before going to Exeter School. Later he would emigrate to Australia, as Headmaster of the King's School, NSW. I am grateful to Exeter School for supplying information about Harris. His edition of *De benedicta incarnatione*, is, like Pollard's *Dialogus*, a conflated text, and he did not know two important manuscripts of English origin.

⁶⁷ *Johannis Wycliffe Tractatus de civili dominio*, ed. R. L. Poole (vol. 1) and J. Loserth (vols. 2-4), 4 vols., Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1885-1904); *Johannis Wycliffe, De dominio divino libri tres: to which are added the first four books of the treatise De pauperie salvatoris*, ed. R. L. Poole, Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co. 1890). There is only a single manuscript surviving of all three parts of *De civili dominio*, now in Vienna, apart from extracts, and an abbreviated Paris copy apparently made by a student in 1381 (not known to Poole or Loserth).

⁶⁸ James Russell, 'Reginald Lane Poole (1857-1939),' *ODNB*. He was awarded honorary doctorates, not only from Oxford and Cambridge, but also Leipzig and Louvain. His Ph.D. from Leipzig (1882) followed the award of a Hibbert travelling scholarship; he also studied in Zurich.

⁶⁹ *De civili dominio*, iv, p. xxi.

⁷⁰ Fifth Report, for 1887 (March 1888), p. 2.

study at the University of Vienna; he achieved his doctorate at Tübingen (1871), and also Vienna (1874). Dr. Rudolf Beer described himself as 'Amanuensis of the Imperial and Royal Court Library of Vienna;' he had Spanish connections as corresponding member of the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid (whence his editions were signed) and also of the Real Academia de Buenas Letras at Barcelona. Dziewicki, lector of English in the University of Cracow, had to compound with the Society's Committee to abandon his retirement in Russian Poland, and go to Vienna 'there to devote his time from May to October to the Society's work, so far as the keeping-open of the Library will let him.'⁷¹

The editors were doing this work in their precious spare time: friendship with Furnivall came at a heavy price. Buddensieg had to abandon Wyclif editing for a few years, when he was first appointed headmaster, and, when he returned to the work, said that his three volumes of *De veritate sacrae scripturae* were 'chiefly the outcome of holiday-leisure and of work up to the small hours of the night. At the head of a large school I have a difficult daily task to perform, requiring the full working power of a man. This is my plea for having spent more than 22 years in preparing this edition, claiming as it did, the whole elasticity of the mind to prevent neglect of my official duties.'⁷² Poole likewise reported that 'I sit up late at night over the thing,' and described the usual frustrations of any researcher whose time is not his own.⁷³

The Wyclif Society was to remain in existence 'until all his most important genuine writings should be given to the world through the press.' Members must, as Furnivall said, with characteristic colloquialism, keep 'pegging away' (by giving money).⁷⁴ The only way to publish at a speed which would, in principle, ensure a regular supply of books to repay subscribers with more than moral uplift and patriotic satisfaction was, as with the EETS, to make extensive use of paid manuscript copiers; the editors could then work from these transcripts (though they also made their own transcripts when they could). Because of the length of the works and their location in foreign libraries, forty of the 230 original members were 'askt to pay five years' subscription in advance, in order that Manuscripts might be copied, and forty-two did so.'⁷⁵ Even in 1890, there were still complaints of 'the lack of copiers in Vienna'.⁷⁶ Libraries were generous in lending manuscripts: Buddensieg, for example, noted his debt to 'libraries in Vienna, Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin who sent their manuscripts to Dresden for my use.'⁷⁷ Editors repeatedly acknowledged the assistance of Vienna's scholar-librarians: Hofrath Dr Ernst von Birt, Dr Otto Stänge, Herr Custos Dr.

⁷¹ Seventh Report, for 1889 (May, 1890), p. 2. See also *Frederick James Furnivall*, p. 42: in a letter of 21 October, 1908, Furnivall urged another Polish scholar, Roman Dyboski, recently appointed to Cracow, to cultivate 'your friend Dziewicki ... who helps us so well with our Wyclif Society.'

⁷² *John Wyclif's De veritate sacrae scripturae*, 3 vols, Wyclif Society 29-31 (London: Trübner & Co., 1905-7), i. Preface, p. viii.

⁷³ Second Report, 1884-5 (June, 1885), p. 5.

⁷⁴ Wyclif Society, First Report, 1882-3, pp. 1, 4. Tenth Report for 1896 (April), p. 2, *et passim*.

⁷⁵ First Report, p. 1.

⁷⁶ Seventh Report for 1889 (May, 1890), p. 2.

⁷⁷ *De veritate sacrae scripturae*, Preface, p. ix.

Goldlin von Tiefenau, Herr Ferdinand Mencik. Dr. Hertzberg-Fränkell not only collated manuscripts in Vienna, but is named as co-editor with Dziewicki of *De Simonia*.⁷⁸

vi. *Editorial Method: Rudolf Buddensieg and Rudolf Beer*

There was no chance, in its first couple of years, that the Society could produce a home-grown edition to its own specifications until 1884. Accordingly Furnivall commissioned as the first issue Buddensieg's edition of what, in English, would become the *Polemical Works*. It had been prepared for German publication and in German, and its 'arrangement is, of course, after the German manner'. The Introduction was translated for English publication.⁷⁹

No other edition in the series more sharply displays the cultural differences between British and German editors. Buddensieg was not reticent about how 'scientific' was his approach, and how 'naïve' he considered English scholarship. The Oxford Delegates came in for another bashing – they had not been forgiven for turning down his approaches: Arnold's edition of the English writings 'though externally well got up, is from a critical standpoint very imperfect.' It is true that Arnold did not attempt systematic collation or to devise stemmata, and recorded variants rarely, but his transcriptions are notably accurate. Buddensieg chiefly objected to the bias towards 'history and philology,' rather than the texts' 'literary and theological leaning,' which were his own fancy.⁸⁰ By 'literary,' he meant not the 'higher criticism', but 'textual study'.

So *Vorsprung durch Technik* was the watchword. Buddensieg's principles were derived from distinguished historians among his countrymen in the preceding ten years; his models for editing were, in particular, Theodor Sickel's edition of the *diplomata* of the tenth-century Kings of Germany for the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* series, of which Part I had just appeared, and Julius Weizsäcker's edition of the *Deutsche Reichstagakten*.⁸¹ But though anxious to edify, as befits a schoolmaster, Buddensieg was not a fanatic, but a sensible man. Sickel's principles, designed for official documents and state papers, should be moderated: 'To go so far in the reproduction of the original text "that even faults should be faithfully transcribed" ... cannot surely be required of an editor.'⁸² As one who was doing something new in applying 'scientific' editorial techniques to late medieval texts, Buddensieg gave a detailed account of his method. He clearly felt that seven years' hard labour deserved explanation, and that he was breaking stony new ground by introducing these new techniques to an English-speaking audience. He struggled gamely to express

⁷⁸ *Iohannis Wyclif Tractatus de Simonia*, ed. Herzberg-Fränkell and M. H. Dziewicki, Wyclif Society (London: Trübner & Co., 1898).

⁷⁹ First Report, p. 2.

⁸⁰ *Polemical Works*, i. v.

⁸¹ *Die Urkunden Konrad I., Heinrich I. und Otto I.*, herausgegeben von Theodor Sickel, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 1 (Hanover: Hahniani, 1879-84); *Deutsche Reichstagakten*, herausgegeben von Julius Weizsäcker und Dietrich Kerler (Gotha and Munich, 1867-88). Johann Loserth, too, was in Sickel's debt, as he had admitted Loserth to the Institute for Research in Austrian history (1869)

⁸² *Polemical Works*, i. xcvi.

himself in a foreign language which had treacherous idioms, and, in his view, inadequate vocabulary: 'To edit mediaeval texts critically is work not very familiar to English scholars ... I had to ... form a terminology of my own.'⁸³ Selection of the copy text was painstaking because it would be treated conservatively: Buddensieg was not one for swashbuckling conjectures, or even intervening in the text at all, if the manuscript readings were defensible.⁸⁴ He cuts no corners, unlike the slapdash English scholars, 'when they say in their printed programs that the text 'will be copied from the best codices extant,' but do not discuss the difficult question which codex is in fact the best.' This remark is politely half hidden in a footnote, but his fundamental criticism is not, and must have provoked an 'Ouch!' from some of his readers.⁸⁵

Buddensieg set a high standard; the Wyclif Society publications are generally much more professional than those of the early years of the EETS. Yet if all the editors had insisted on taking such pains in the Society's early years before it had built up a cohort of editions in progress, Furnivall would never have been able to satisfy his subscribers. This was difficult enough as it was: the Society's Annual Reports are filled with explanations, apologies, and promises. Beer's *De compositione hominis* followed two years later, building on Buddensieg's practice.⁸⁶ 'There is no need,' he said, in a fine illustration of *occupatio*, 'to discuss at length in this place what is understood amongst recent scholars by the term "diplomatic criticism,"' before proceeding to do just that. Subsequent editors did not feel it necessary to include essays on how to edit.

vii. *Running the Society*

Like all Furnivall's societies, the Wyclif was run hand to mouth. A gift of £100 from the Bishops' Fund, and other donations amounting to £55. 13s., reported in 1888 did not go far when set against £792. 3s. 6d. spent on copying, 'etc.', and bills for £1194. 4s. 9d. for printing and binding.⁸⁷ When the Society was founded, members were warned not to expect any immediate return for their subscriptions, which would pay for the first tranche of copying and editing. That fifty-two members, twelve more than were asked, were willing to pay five years' subscriptions in advance suggests that his appeals were not falling on deaf ears, even though he did not get the 300 members he was initially looking for, but 230. Any malcontent 'should feel bound in conscience to accompany his complaint with a £50 note in order that his grievance may be remedied.' 'The Committee cannot make bricks without straw.'⁸⁸ 'If the Members of the Society will only bestir themselves and raise £1000 ... all these works, and more, can be printed and issued next year.'⁸⁹ He started a Quincentenary

⁸³ *Polemical Works*, i. Preface, p. vii.

⁸⁴ *Polemical Works*, i. xcii.

⁸⁵ *Polemical Works*, i. lxxxix.

⁸⁶ *Ioannis Wiclif, De compositione hominis*, ed. Rudolf Beer, Wyclif Society (London, Trübner and Co., 1884), p. viii. Third Report, p. 3, 'Miss Alice Shirley will english its Introduction.'

⁸⁷ Fifth Report, for 1887 (March 1888), p. 4. Expenses incurred between 1882 and 1887. The Thirteenth Report (1913), p. 1, records a gift of £50 from Magdalen College, Oxford.

⁸⁸ Fifth Report, for 1887, pp. 4-5.

⁸⁹ First Report, for 1882-3, p. 4.

Thousand-Pound fund, to which he contributed five, and Matthew ten pounds.⁹⁰ There is no evidence that it achieved its target. Furnivall's assessment was blunt: 'The Society wants more money and more Editors.'⁹¹ Needing income, Furnivall wanted to keep the retail costs of the books high, unlike those of his other societies. These titles did not appeal to his usual constituency of aspiring autodidacts.⁹²

He intended to publish two volumes a year, and by making a large initial outlay on copying to do 'much of the future years' work'.⁹³ Hope was the Wyclif Society's tutelary Virtue and her daughter was 'If only'. Furnivall reckoned, eight years after its conception, that almost all of Wyclif's writings had been assigned to editors, bar a 'few short Treatises.' 'The beginning of the end is thus apparent.' 'If only,' the Society could ... get its remaining eight years' work done in four, the gain to all concerned would be great.'⁹⁴ By what he saw as the Society's mid term in its labour, Furnivall was urging everyone concerned to make a 'push'. The effort exhausted the finances. He squeezed the members even harder by appealing for five or ten years' advance subscriptions. 'The Executive Committee are but asking Members to do what they have already done themselves.' By 1894 he trusted in 'help promist' from the United States.⁹⁵

Furnivall's optimism was indomitable. In 1896 he estimated that 'two thirds of the Society's task will be done by 1900.:' In 1900 it 'has at least 14 years' work before it,' but it should be finished in 1915. His death in 1910 was a blow; then war came. It was announced that 'subscriptions to the Society cease as from the end of 1914.' Two books were still in preparation: H. S. Cronin's edition of Roger Dymok's *Duodecim errors et hereses Lollardorum*, and Matthew's *De mandatis*.⁹⁶

viii. *Epilogue*

Much had been done towards fulfilling Furnivall's prophecy that the main work would be complete by 1915. (However not all of Wyclif's works have yet appeared in print.) But the Wyclif Society had not quite finished. The editor of Dymok, the Rev. Harry Stovell Cronin (1866-1922), formerly Fellow and dean of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, though well past the age of military service had joined the Cambridge University Volunteer Rifle Corps, where

⁹⁰ First Report, verso of last sheet: no other contributors are listed.

⁹¹ Fifth Report p. 4.

⁹² First Report, p. 4, 'To prevent any lowering of price of the Society's books, the number printed is limited to 500, of which 50 are given to the Editor of each Text.' Unlike the EETS volumes, the Wyclif Society books do not include the price on the title page.

⁹³ Eighth Report, p. 2.

⁹⁴ Sixth Report, for 1888 (March 1889), pp. 1-3. Furnivall envisaged sixteen years for the Society to complete its task.

⁹⁵ Eighth Report, for 1890 (October 1890), p. 1.

⁹⁶ Tenth Report, for April, 1896, p. 2; Eleventh Report, May 1900, pp. 4-5; the 'irreparable loss' of Furnivall was announced in the Twelfth Report (1911), p.1; Fourteenth Report, January, 1915, p. 1: "Rogeri Dymok Liber" is to be dated 1912 and 'De Mandatis' and 'De Statu Innocentiae' are to form one volume dated 1913-14.'

he had served as Lieut. Colonel. He had not finished the introduction when war broke out.⁹⁷ His was perhaps a doubtful addition to the list even at the best of times, as the Twelve Conclusions had been written in English, though translated into Latin in Dymok's refutation, and were not by Wyclif himself. Cronin, however, retained an interest in Wyclif after the war, and his edition appeared *ca.* 1922, the year of his death.⁹⁸

De mandatis, with *De statu innocentiae*, came out as a single volume in 1922, with Matthew and Loserth as joint editors. Loserth saw it through the press 'in the hard time of war and post-war, under all sorts of troubles and of both physical and mental want.'⁹⁹ Matthew, whose eyesight was failing, died in 1918 having handed over his work to Loserth in 1912. Loserth was encouraged in the edition's completion by Dorothy Matthew, and Sir Cooper Perry, physician, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London until 1919, and a classical scholar.¹⁰⁰ Like others who have undertaken such labours of piety, Loserth, who had been toiling on Wyclif for forty years, found that Matthew's work was not so near completion as the first editor had thought. In the circumstances, this last edition was a touching work of minor heroism.

The Wyclif Society played its part in introducing new ideas about editing to a British scholarly audience. Furnivall would have had every reason to be proud of his creation, which in the verdict of one who knew, 'accomplished a truly remarkable task before its dissolution in 1924, publishing thirty-five volumes of the reformer's Latin works, maintaining a high level of excellence,' largely thanks to the German-speaking scholars and Furnivall's friendship towards them (which may be traced back to the New Shakspeare Society in the seventies) after which such friendship became increasingly unfashionable.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ He is listed in the *London Gazette* of 1 September, 1916, as temporary Major, having transferred to the Cambridgeshire Volunteer Regiment. See also 14th Report, January 1915, p. 1, 'The sheets are still at Vienna in the hands of the binders.'

⁹⁸ *Rogeri Dymmok, Liber contra xii errores et hereses Lollardorum*, ed. Rev. H. S. Cronin, Wyclif Society (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., ?1922). Preface signed 11 November, 1921.

⁹⁹ Preface to *Johannis Wyclif Tractatus de mandatis divinis accredit Tractatus de statu innocencie*, ed. J. Loserth and F. D. Matthew, Wyclif Society 35 (London: C. K. Paul, 1922).

¹⁰⁰ *ODNB*, H. L. Eason, rev. Patrick Wallis, 'Sir (Edwin) Cooper Perry (1856-1938)'.

¹⁰¹ *Johannis Wyclif Summa de ente*, ed. S. Harrison Thomson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), p. vii.