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CONTENTS OF N^o LVI.

ART.	PAGE
I.	The History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth. By J. A. FROUDE, M.A. Vols. III., IV. 1858. 265
II.	Vetus et Novum Testamentum, ex antiquissimo Codice Vaticano. Edidit ANGELUS MAIUS, S.R.E. Card. Romæ. 1857. 5 vols. 4to. 315
III. 1.	Histoire des Livres Populaires, et de la Littérature du Colportage, depuis le XV. Siècle jusqu'à 1852. Par M. CHARLES MISARD. 2 tomes. 1854.
2.	A Prognostication of Right Goode Effect. By LEONARD DIGGES. 1555.
3.	The Almanacs from 1607 to 1616.
4.	Almanacs for the Year 1630.
5.	Merlinus Anglicus. By WILLIAM LILLY. 1644 to 1660. 333
IV. 1.	Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif cum Tritico: ascribed to Thomas Netter of Walden, Provincial of the Carmelite Order in England, and Confessor to King Henry V. Edited by the Rev. WALTER WADDINGTON SHIRLEY, M.A., Tutor and late Fellow of Wadham College. 8vo.
2.	The Quarterly Review, No. 207. July, 1858.
3.	Diatribæ in Johannis Wicliffi Reformationis Prodromi, Vitam, Ingenium, Scripta. Auctore S. A. J. DE REUYER GRONEMAN, Theol. Doct. Trajecti ad Rhenum apud Rob. Natan. MDCCCXXXVII.
4.	Die theologische Doctrin Johann Wycliffe's. Nach den Quellen dargestellt und Kritisch beleuchtet. Von Dr. ERNST ANTON LEWALD, Kirchenrath und Professor der Theologie zu Heidelberg. ('The Theological Doctrine of John Wycliffe, exhibited from the Original Sources, and critically illustrated.' By Dr. E. A. LEWALD.) In the Quarterly Journal of Historical Theology ('Zeitschrift für die Historische Theologie'); Parts 2 and 4 for 1846, and Part 4 for 1847.
5.	Wiclif und die Lollarden. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchengeschichte Englands in den letzten 150 Jahren vor der Reformation. Von GOTTHARD VICTOR LECHLER,

CONTENTS.

ART.

PAGE

	Dr. Phil. Diakonus in Waiblingen bei Stuttgart. Quarterly Journal of Historical Theology. Parts 3 and 4 for 1853, and Part 2 for 1854.	
6.	Johann Wycliffe und seine Bedeutung für die Reformation. Von OSCAR JÄGGER, Phil. Dr. Gekrönte Preisschrift. 1844.	
7.	Geschichte der Kirchen Reformation in Gross Britanien. Von Dr. GEORG WEBER, Professor und Schul-Direktor in Heidelberg. Neue Ausgabe.	
8.	Gerson, Wiclefus, Hussus inter se et cum Reformato-ribus comparati. Auctore J. C. A. WINKELMANN. Commentatio in Certamine Literario Civium Aca-demiæ Georgiæ Augustæ ex sententia Rev. Theol. Ord. die iv. mens. Jun. 1856. Præmio Regio ornata. 1857.	
9.	Wiclif, als Vorläufer der Reformation. Antritts Vorle-sung gehalten zu Leipzig, den 9 Juli, 1858. Von G. V. LECHLER, der Phil. u. Theol. Dr., Superint. u. Ordent. Prof. der Theologie. 1858.	
10.	Die Vorreformatoren des vierzehnten und funfzehnten Jahrhunderts. Erste Hälfte: Johannes von Wycliffe. Von FRIEDRICH BÖHRINGER.	
11.	The Character and Place of Wickliffe as a Reformer. By HERBERT COWELL, of Wadham College.	360
V.	The Catechism of Positive Religion. Translated from the French of Auguste Comte. By RICHARD CON-GREVE, M.A.	422
VI.	1. The History of Herodotus. A new English Version. Edited, with copious Notes and Appendices, by GEORGE RAWLINSON, M.A., late Fellow and Tutor of Exeter College, Oxford, assisted by Colonel SIR H. RAWLINSON, K.C.B., and Sir J. G. WILKINSON, F.R.S. Vols. I. and II. 1858.	
	2. Herodotus; with a Commentary, by JOSEPH WILLIAMS BLAKESLEY, B.D., late Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge. Two Vols. 1854.	446
VII.	1. Letter to a Noble Lord on the Nature and Prospects of Political Party. By a COMMONER. 1858.	
	2. Phases in Politics. By WILLIAM E. LENDRICK. Second Edition. 1858.	
	3. Parliamentary Government considered with reference to a Reform of Parliament. By EARL GREY. 1858.	486
—		
	EPILOGUE ON AFFAIRS	516
	EPILOGUE ON BOOKS	517

when South, Dryden, and Waller were eager to vilify him they had but just before offered incense to: let it be remembered as one of the redeeming traits in Lilly's character, that he alone, in the year 1660, dared to vindicate the fame of the great Protector.

With the Restoration, the history of the political almanac ends, and here we must conclude. Booker died soon after; Vincent Wing was forced to content himself with prophecies of murrain among the cattle, and toothache among his readers; while Captain Wharton, notwithstanding the violent outbursts of loyalty of his *Calendarium Ecclesiasticum* of 1660, lived to experience and deplore the usual gratitude of the Stuarts. Lilly, having received a pardon, took to physic, as well as astrology, still publishing his *Merlinus Anglicus*, but keeping far aloof from political matters. At length, in 1681, he died, in a good old age, and was buried in Walton church by his friend and admirer, credulous Elias Ashmole, who placed over his remains 'a fair black marble stone,' which he tells us with laudable minuteness, cost exactly 'six pounds, four shillings and sixpence.'

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- ART. IV.—(1.) *Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif cum Tritico: ascribed to Thomas Netter of Walden, Provincial of the Carmelite Order in England, and Confessor to King Henry V.* Edited by the Rev. WALTER WADDINGTON SHIRLEY, M.A., Tutor and late Fellow of Wadham College. Oxford. 8vo. Longmans.
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- (5.) *Wiclif und die Lollarden. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchengeschichte Englands in den letzten 150 Jahren vor der Reformation.* Von GOTTHARD VICTOR LECHLER, Dr. Phil. Diakonus in Waiblingen bei Stuttgart. ('Wiclif and the Lollards. A Contribution to the Church History of England during the last 150 years before the

- Reformation. By Dr. G. V. LECHLER.) *Quarterly Journal of Historical Theology*, Parts 3 and 4 for 1853, and Part 2 for 1854.
- (6.) *Johann Wycliffe und seine Bedeutung für die Reformation.* Von OSCAR JAEGER, Phil. Dr. Gekrönte Preisschrift. ('John Wycliffe and his Importance with respect to the Reformation. By Dr. O. JAEGER. A Prize Work.') Halle. 1844.
- (7.) *Geschichte der Kirchen Reformation in Gross Brittanien.* Von Dr. GEORG WEBER, Professor und Schul-Direktor in Heidelberg. Neue Ausgabe. ('History of the Reformation of the Church in Great Britain. By Dr. G. WEBER, Professor and School-Director at Heidelberg.')
- (8.) *Gerson, Wicelius, Hussus inter se et cum Reformatoribus comparati.* Auctore J. C. A. WINKELMANN. Commentatio in Certamine Literario Civium Academiæ Georgiæ Augustæ ex sententia Rev. Theol. Ord. die iv. mens. Jun. 1856. Præmio Regio ornata. ('Gerson, Wiclif, and Huss, compared with One Another and with the Reformers. University Prize Essay. By J. C. A. WINKELMANN.') Göttingen. 1857.
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- (10.) *Die Vorreformatoren des vierzehnten und funfzehnten Jahrhunderts, Erste Hälfte: Johannes von Wycliffe.* Von FRIEDRICH BÖHRINGER. ('The Forerunners of the Reformation in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries.' First Part.)
- (11.) *The Character and Place of Wickliffe as a Reformer.* By HERBERT COWELL, of Wadham College. J. and G. Parker. Oxford.

THE volume placed first in the list of works at the head of this article, is one of a series in course of publication under the sanction of the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury, at the suggestion of the Master of the Rolls. The works thus published are to consist of 'materials for the history of this country from the invasion by the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII.' Hitherto the publication of documents relating to English history under the direction of our government has gone on so slowly as to exhaust the patience of the student, and to be far from satisfactory to the public. And when such works have made their appearance, it has generally been in forms so costly as to place them beyond the reach of the great majority of the persons likely to make the best use of them, by rendering it necessary that they should be consulted, for the most part, only in large public libraries. The Master of the Rolls has avoided these errors. By the employment of a sufficient number of competent

editors, he hopes to send forth as many as twelve volumes in a year. It is a part of his plan also that these volumes shall be published at a price which may allow of their finding a place in the libraries of scholars who do not often purchase very expensive works. Mr. Shirley's volume extends to more than six hundred handsomely printed royal octavo pages, it is strongly and even elegantly bound, and may be purchased for 8s. 6d.

We scarcely need say, that in this matter the Master of the Rolls, and the Lords of the Treasury, are doing a good work. Our only fear is lest this change from the delays of the past, as regards the rate of publication, to the speed of the present, should be found greater than will consist with due care and accuracy. In Mr. Shirley's volume there are not a few signs of haste which we shall have occasion to notice, and which may suffice to show the ground of our apprehension in this particular.

The manuscript volume from which Mr. Shirley has made his selections has been long known to scholars, and has already served the purposes of history to a large extent. Though described as *Wycliffe's Tares*, it consists in only a small degree of papers by Wycliffe, and only partially of papers relating to him. But it shows largely what the opponents of Wycliffe thought of him, and of his real or supposed disciples—the Lollards. The first hundred pages in this volume are occupied by a Carmelite friar named Cunningham, with arguments directed against certain metaphysical and scholastic speculations attributed to Wycliffe. Something more than another hundred pages are assigned to two monks, named Tyssington and Winterton, who wrote in reply to Wycliffe's *Confession on the Eucharist*. In what remains, there is about a hundred pages which may be said to concern Wycliffe directly. About half this space is filled with papers from the pen of Wycliffe. But these papers have all been printed, entirely or in their substance, before, with the exception of the one in which the Reformer replies to Cunningham. The fifty pages remaining, consist of documents which are well known, and which might have been seen *in extenso*, or in their substance, by turning to the printed pages of such writers as Walsingham, Foxe, and Collier, before they made their appearance in the Appendix to Lewis's *Life of Wiclif*.

The merit of Mr. Shirley accordingly is not the merit of a discoverer. But he has done good service in editing this volume. He has given us documents together which are not so found elsewhere; and he has given one or two of them for the first time in completeness, and carefully collated, so that, as far as those papers are concerned, we need not depend any longer on extracts, abridgments, or second-hand information. It should be

added that the papers by Cunningham, Tyssington, and Winton, though well known to be existing in manuscript, have not been printed before, and the question naturally comes as to the value that should be attached to these two hundred pages of new material. It must be at once obvious that we are not at liberty to judge of the opinions of the Reformer from such polemical representations of them. He often complains of being grossly misunderstood and misrepresented by his assailants. The historical worth of such documents accordingly is limited—we may say very limited. They have their uses, but there are points on which they may require to be used with great caution. Taken alone, their authority must be small. But it is otherwise with Wycliffe's reply to Cunningham. In this defence of himself Wycliffe states his own case, as he does in his *Confession on the Eucharist*. This reply is the only contribution in this collection from the pen of Wycliffe that Mr. Shirley has been the first to print; and unfortunately the disputation throughout this paper is of a sort to be little interesting to modern readers, affording small help in respect to what we most wish to know concerning its author. Cunningham's papers are, as we have said, wholly metaphysical and scholastic, and such is the character of Wycliffe's reply. In the dispute as here presented there is nothing to prepare us for what was to follow. For anything that is here said, Wycliffe might have lived and died no more a reformer than Bradwardine or Duns Scotus. It is of course no fault of Mr. Shirley's if these documents do next to nothing towards enlarging or correcting the views of well-informed men concerning the life or the doctrine of our great Reformer. Such, at all events, is the fact. After a careful examination of this volume, we find ourselves at the same point on this subject. We may feel our footing a little more firmly, but our footing is where it was.

What we have said in favour of this volume relates exclusively to the papers which Mr. Shirley has edited. The sketch of the Life and Times of the Reformer which precedes the documents is another affair. We should have been glad if we could have spoken as favourably of this part of Mr. Shirley's labours as of what follows. But this we cannot do. Nothing can be imagined in worse taste—more unsuitable or unjust—than that works of this nature should be used to give expression, and factitious influence, to personal prejudices and party feeling. These publications are issued at the cost of the nation. They are meant to serve the interest of the nation. Future generations are expected to read them and study them, and they will so do. If used to give vent to the spleen of sects or coteries, either political or religious, the

dignity of their true position is sacrificed. The national feeling is lost—a sectional feeling comes into its place; and the assailant secures a position for his attack, which cannot be ceded to any rejoinder, however reasonable or just. To an honourable mind, the last consideration alone should be enough to preclude all controversial matter, as far as possible, from such publications. The editors of the works published of late years from our national archives, and we may mention especially the learned editors of Wycliffe's Bible, have been religiously observant of these considerations, and have not disgraced themselves or their country when so employed by sinking the Englishman in the bigot. The Master of the Rolls and the Lords of the Treasury seem to have been alike aware that the manifestation of any such feeling by the editors to be employed by them would be most unseemly, and no doubt flattered themselves that they had guarded effectually against it. The judgment of the Master of the Rolls was—

‘That each chronicle or document to be edited should be treated in the same way as if the editor were engaged on an *Editio Princeps*; and for this purpose the most correct text should be formed from an accurate collation of the best MSS.

‘To render the work more generally useful, the Master of the Rolls suggested that the editor should give an account of the MSS. employed by him, of their age and their peculiarities; that he should add to the work a brief account of the life and times of the author, and any remarks *necessary to explain the chronology*; but no other note or comment was to be allowed, except what might be necessary to establish the correctness of the text.

The Lords of the Treasury

—‘expressed their approbation of the proposal that each chronicle and historical document should be edited in such a manner as to present with all possible correctness the text of each writer, derived from a collation of the best MSS., and that *no notes should be added, except such as were illustrative of the various readings*. They suggested, however, that the preface to each work should contain, in addition to the particulars proposed by the Master of the Rolls, a biographical account of the author, as far as authentic materials existed for that purpose, and an estimate of his historical credibility and value.’

Of course, if so much care was taken to secure that the text should not be used as an occasion on which to hang things irrelevant, unnecessary, or controversial, the same principle would apply to anything in the shape of a memoir to precede it. Indeed, Mr. Shirley himself seems to have been in a measure aware of the propriety of this course, inasmuch as in one instance he avowedly passes by a topic which lay in his path, on the ground

that 'it would involve a controversy, which in these pages would be misplaced.'—('Introduction,' lx.) Had Mr. Shirley been duly mindful of this principle, he would have felt that in his sketch of the Life of Wycliffe it became him to tell his own story as he best could, and not to go out of his way to place himself, and that by the help of sneers and misrepresentations, in an attitude of antagonism to men who have travelled the same ground before him. Of course it is open to Mr. Shirley to indulge in this kind of authorship to any extent that may be agreeable to him, on his own responsibility; but it is not open to him to write in this manner in publications of the description to which his name is in this instance attached.

Mr. Shirley begins his narrative in the Niebuhr manner, by doubting what most people have believed. There is a fashion in such things, as in much beside. In the case of Mr. Shirley this sceptical tendency follows naturally from his proneness to depreciate the labours of his predecessors. Nearly everything he touches is somehow found to be a matter on which the right thing has not been done. Hallam, Sismondi, Thierry, Guizot, and others, have done their best to make themselves familiar with the mind of the Middle Age. But after all, the literary history of that age, it seems, has yet to be written. Of all the periods in English history before the accession of Henry VIII., perhaps the age of Edward III. is the most interesting to Englishmen, and the best understood by them. But even that history, we are assured, is an untold tale. Much has been done of late years to assist inquirers in the study of the scholastic philosophy. But according to Mr. Shirley, the historian of the scholastic philosophy is still to come. Nothing is easier than to write in this manner. It is to take very high ground at very little cost. For many persons are thus led to think, with one of Mr. Shirley's friendly critics, that the man, in such cases, 'who most keenly feels the want, is in all probability the best qualified to supply it.* We do not mean to say that Mr. Shirley may not be the man to give us the literary history of the Middle Age, the history of the reign of Edward III., or the account of the old schoolman philosophy, which the world still wants. We only venture to say that it is not often safe to cede reputation on the supposition of what a man *may* do. What has he *done*? We should further observe that Mr. Shirley, in several instances, expresses surprise that the biographers of Wycliffe should not have seen certain things which he points out as overlooked, though noteworthy, while in fact those things have been seen by

* *Quarterly Review*, No. 207, p. 151.

others before, quite as clearly as by Mr. Shirley now, and it is not the fault of Wycliffe's biographers if they are not well known. But more of this presently.

While such is the general tone of Mr. Shirley's writing about Wycliffe and his times, it will not be supposed that so severe a censor has allowed the professed biographers of the Reformer to go free. Mr. Lewis, the first in this series, is much favoured; but even his work, according to Mr. Shirley, does no credit to the University press, and as a literary performance it is pronounced 'very poor.' It is saved, apparently, on the ground of the documents which make up its appendix. But the labours of Dr. Vaughan in this field seem to be very unwelcome. It is clear that Mr. Shirley would extrude that gentleman from this ground altogether—were it possible. There are two notes in Mr. Shirley's 'Introduction' (pp. xvi., xxxiv.) in which references are made to Dr. Vaughan, concerning which we have a word to say. In the first of these notes—and we speak advisedly—Mr. Shirley asserts as *true*, what he could not *know* to be true, and what is *untrue*. In reply to the second note, it is sufficient to say that Dr. Vaughan is not in 'complete ignorance' of the Oxford MS., *De Veritate Scripturæ*, the note to which Mr. Shirley himself refers being proof to the contrary; and that he has *not* affected a knowledge of that MS. which he does not possess, but has taken care in that same note to guard his readers against mistake on that point.* In the language of these two notes Mr. Shirley has conveyed three ideas in reference to Dr. Vaughan, all three of which are false, all three of which are meant to be damaging—as damaging as possible. What is more, to do the amiable in this manner Mr. Shirley has gone quite out of his way. There was no more need that what is said should have been said at all, than that it should have been said with a sneer. The notes are such as we do not expect from a scholar—there is insult in them both. But such, it seems, is the taste of the 'tutor of Wadham' in things of this nature †

After this it is hardly surprising that Mr. Shirley should speak of Mr. Lewis's book, 'very poor' though it be, as being still our best Life of Wycliffe; and of Mr. Baber's catalogue of the Re-

* *John de Wycliffe, D.D. A Monograph.* Pp. 536, 537.

† Dr. Todd, the librarian of Trinity College, Dublin, expressing his regret that so little is known of the work by Wycliffe intitled *De Veritate Scripturæ*, thus describes the copy of it in that collection. 'This ignorance, I must candidly confess, it is not in my power to remove; for although the volume which is the subject of it, is now actually open before me, yet it is written in a hand so fearfully abbreviated, that it would deter a more skilful diplomatist than myself from attempting its perusal, unless he had much more time for the task than I can command. . . . I had intended quoting the whole of the summary of one or two chapters, in order to give the reader some idea of the work, but I find some words so abbre-

former's works, as being still our best guide on that subject. These assertions are the expressions of mere opinion, and are worthy of notice simply from the amount of prejudice which they betray—prejudice which would be merely ridiculous but for the graver element which underlies it.

But since comparisons *are* to be made, let them be made. For reasons which will be understood by some of our readers, Dr. Vaughan's *Monograph* has never been reviewed in these pages, and his labours generally in relation to this subject have been left, so far as the *British Quarterly Review* is concerned, to the independent estimation of the public. If we now undertake to show what the state of our literature really was in regard to

viated as to require more time than I can at present conveniently spare for deciphering them.'—*British Magazine*, June, 1835. Dr. Vaughan has spoken of the Oxford copy of this work, which in these respects is the counterpart of that in Dublin, as difficult to decipher, and almost unreadable, and this has exposed him to another sneer from Mr. Shirley. ('Introduction' xxxiv.) Dr. Todd further says of the MS. in Dublin,—'It is not a complete work in itself, as has hitherto been supposed, but a part, and as I would say, about a third part of a great system of scholastic divinity, written in all the barbarity of language, and with all the formidable array of distinctions and divisions which are now regarded as the opprobrium of the schoolmen.' Dr. James, the librarian of the Bodleian in the time of James I., published a small work intitled *An Apologie for John Wicliffe* in which he printed passages from the MS. *De Veritate Scripturae*, and he left in MS. in the same library considerable extracts from that work, extending to nearly a hundred small quarto pages, made with his own hand. Dr. Vaughan confesses (*Monograph*, p. 537) in common with Dr. Todd, to his difficulty in attempting to read this work, and states distinctly that his acquaintance with it does not extend beyond a general inspection of it, and an endeavour to transcribe and translate certain parts of it. He spoke of it, as he says, more from Dr. James's extracts than from his own examination; and if he spoke of it quite as favourably as those extracts would warrant, it was in the hope that before now some scholar, with the position and leisure requisite to such an undertaking, might have been disposed to do something towards making it better known. The man who should pretend to have read everything it is desirable to read in relation to Wycliffe, without having given no small part of a life to it, would only betray his jauniceity or his weakness. Mr. Shirley is a resident in Oxford, and has been largely aided in his labours by the learned sub-librarian of the Bodleian, the Rev. F. O. Cox, a gentleman, it seems, to whom he is indebted for 'whatever knowledge he possesses of mediæval manuscripts.' In such circumstances Mr. Shirley ought to be able to give a good account of the contents of the *De Veritate Scripturae*—and it would be something to be the first man that has so done. It is strange that Dr. Vaughan should be described as affecting to have read a work which he is accused of describing as 'unreadable!' Truth is consistent. Mr. Lewis describes the MS. in Oxford as beginning with the words '*Restat parumper discutere errores*' (p. 190;) but these words do not occur at the beginning of the Oxford MS., nor do they occur as initial words in any subsequent part of the work.

Mr. Shirley is careful to refer his readers to Dr. Todd's attacks on Dr. Vaughan; why is he silent about the reply to those attacks? He knew of both, and surely it would be as easy for the student to turn to the *Eclectic Review*, (January, 1843,) as to the defunct *British Magazine*. One of Dr. Todd's assertions was, that 'all' the Wycliffe MSS. in Dublin had their place in a printed catalogue before Dr. Vaughan called attention to them. On examination it was found that the 'all' in this case consisted of eight out of SIXTY! So recklessly can some learned gentlemen write when their object is to damage Dr. Vaughan.

Wycliffe when Dr. Vaughan took up the subject, and what his contribution to it has been, it will, we trust, be seen that this is a course to which we have been constrained. We have not chosen it.

Every student of English history will be aware that even before the decease of Wycliffe, the political feeling, and the state of political parties in this country, which had been for a time so favourable to the purposes of the Reformer, were greatly changed. One effect of this coming change we see in his retirement from Oxford to his rectory at Lutterworth; and he there employed himself in preaching, in translating the Bible into English, in multiplying his English tracts and treatises, and in encouraging the labours of the itinerant preachers—such as Purvey and Ashton—often mentioned by him under the name of ‘poor priests.’ If his voice was no longer to be heard in Oxford, he knew how to make himself felt more than ever among the people, from one end of the country to the other. From this time it was among the people, and for the most part among the humbler classes of them, that his doctrines were to vegetate. On the accession of the house of Lancaster, the hierarchy regained much of its power. The men at the head of the state were not men disposed towards innovation in religious matters. Learning, religion, morals, social liberty, all continued to deteriorate, until the turbulent interval extending from the reign of Henry IV. to that of Henry VIII. had passed away. The peasant and the yeoman, the burgher and the merchant, retained some memory of Wycliffe, and secreted and read his books. But when the Reformation came, it was a reformation springing from new circumstances and new passions, and was founded on principles widely different from those which Wycliffe had promulgated. The bleeding remnant of his followers which still survived, did much to help forward that change, but the reforming statesmen who flourished under the Tudors had no motive that could dispose them to recall the name of Wycliffe—rather the contrary. The first protest against Romanism was soon followed by the struggle between the high church Anglicans and the Puritans, which issued at length in the memorable strife between Parliamentarians and Royalists. In none of these changes, nor in those which followed on the Restoration, was there anything to make the contending parties at all curious about the opinions of Wycliffe. Enough was known to make all parties aware that he was not with any of them more than in part; and in those times of strong party demarcations, this circumstance alone was enough to lead to what happened. No party could use the name of Wycliffe as a watchword, and accordingly, as by tacit consent, all were prepared to pass him by.

Such has been the fate of Wycliffe’s memory in our history.

Nevertheless, if some of our modern German historians are to be credited, Huss and Jerome were little more than echoes of Wycliffe, and if so, then Luther and Melancthon may be claimed as his children, however insensible they may themselves have been to the fact of such a genealogy.

But the Reformation, and especially the dissolution of the monasteries, threw a large quantity of manuscripts abroad. Bishop Bale, Archbishop Parker, and Archbishop Ussher, are entitled to special commendation for the care with which they possessed themselves of such treasures, and deposited them where they might be of service in time to come. Foxe the martyrologist made use of the manuscripts relating to Wycliffe which Bale had collected, especially of the collection of papers from which the pieces in Mr. Shirley's volume are selected. But the most valuable collection of manuscript works written by Wycliffe himself, were those collected by Archbishop Parker, and deposited in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; and those collected by Archbishop Ussher, and deposited after his decease in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Down to the beginning of the last century, however, not a vestige of use had been made of the Parker manuscripts at Cambridge, and even then the use made of them by Mr. Lewis was much less thorough than might have been expected, as will be presently shown. While in regard to the Ussher manuscripts in Dublin, though among the most valuable that have been preserved to us, they were not known, for the greater part, as being in existence, until Dr. Vaughan called public attention to them.

It is this long neglect of everything relating to Wycliffe in England, though himself so great an Englishman, that has made it so difficult in these later times to gratify the curiosity of a wiser public by furnishing trustworthy information concerning him. As a nation we may well lament that the place of the great Reformer in our history should be so much a place apart and alone, and that what we now know of him, or can hope to know, falls so much below what we wish to know. But we have ourselves to thank for this state of things. We owe it to those narrow bigotries which have been so rife among us from the days of Wycliffe to our own.

But what is our present knowledge with regard to the writings of this extraordinary man? Mr. Shirley says that the introduction to Mr. Baber's reprint of what was supposed to be Wycliffe's New Testament 'contains the best catalogue yet given of Wycliffe's works' (530). A few sentences on this point will suffice to test Mr. Shirley's claims to caution and accuracy on matters of this nature.

The earliest attempt to furnish a list of the Reformer's writings was made by Bishop Bale, in his *Illustrium Majoris Britannia Scriptorum Summarium*, printed in 1548. The catalogue there given includes one hundred and two titles, with the mention of the opening words of the MSS. in thirty-four instances, but without reference as to where any MS. in the list might be found. Many of the works in this catalogue are now among the best known productions of the Reformer, and are of much value, others are still known only by their titles. Mr. Lewis's list was not published until two centuries later. It is a great improvement on that of his predecessor. It had now become comparatively easy to ascertain what MSS. of this description existed in the libraries of the English universities, in the King's Library, and in some other collections. Mr. Lewis's titles of works amount to two hundred and eighty, and under some of these titles several distinct pieces are included. But it should be added, that more than half of these titles are titles of the same works, or of works which have either perished or are unknown. Of the remaining MSS. the opening words are generally given, as well as the title, and sometimes—though very rarely—an indication as to their contents, and it is quite as rare to find any indication as to when they were written. Mr. Baber's catalogue was published in 1810. It ought to have been a great improvement on that published by Mr. Lewis. But it is not. It is much less full, and some of its omissions are very material. For instance, fully a third of the MSS. in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, mentioned by Mr. Lewis, are overlooked by Mr. Baber. To the MSS. in Trinity College, Cambridge, Mr. Baber has not made a single reference. One of the volumes in the last-named collection consists of a folio of nearly a hundred and fifty closely written pages, including thirteen discussions or treatises, on so many different topics, several of these being pieces which, so far as we know, will not be found elsewhere. Here are the contents of this volume as printed by Mr. Lewis, and as reprinted by Dr. Vaughan, who has added the paging of the volume to indicate the comparative length of the several papers:—

'1. DE ENTE COMMUNI. In primis supponitur ens esse, hoc enim non probari potest nec ignorari ab aliquo. Fol. 1—5. 2. DE ENTE PRIMO. Extenso ente secundum ejus maximam ampliacionem, possibile est venari in tanto ambitu ens primum. Folio 5—9. 3. DE PURGANDO ERRORES, ET VERITATE IN COMMUNI. Consequens et purgare errores. Fol. 9—15. 4. DE PURGANDO ERRORES ET UNIVERSALIBUS IN COMMUNI. Tractatu continentur dicta de universalibus. Folio 15—23. 5. DE UNIVERSALIBUS. Tractatus de universalibus continet 16 capitula cujus primum. Folio 23—37. 6. DE TEMPORE. In tractando de tempore sunt aliqua ex dictis superius

capienda. Folio 37—47. DE INTELLECTIONE DEI. Illorum quæ insunt Deo communiter, quædam insunt sibi soli. Folio 47—53. 8. DE SCIENTIA DEI. Ex dictis superius satis liquet quod scientiam quam Deus. Folio 53—70. 9. DE VOLITIONE DEI. Tractando de volitione Dei quam oportet ex dictis supponere. Folio 70—91. 10. DE PERSONARUM DISTINCTIONE. Superest investigare de distinctione et convenientia personarum quas credimus plena fide. Folio 91—115. 11. DE IDEIS. Tractando de ideis primo oportet quærere si sunt. Folio 115—122. 12. DE POTENTIA PRODUCTIVA DEI. Veritatum quas Deus non potest renovare. Folio 122—134. 13. DE SERMONE DOMINI, in three parts. Licet totum Evangelium.—Fol. 134—141.—*Monograph*, 541.

The reader will feel that omissions extending to MSS. of this magnitude and importance are a grave matter. The truth is, the only advantage in Mr. Baber's catalogue over that of Mr. Lewis that is worth notice, consists in the reference made by the help of Denis's printed catalogue of the Imperial Library at Vienna, to MSS. existing in that collection which are attributed to the Reformer. But information concerning the titles of supposed Wycliffe MSS., at Vienna, is a poor compensation for the want of the information that might have been given concerning MSS. nearer home. Mr. Baber's account of the MSS. in the British Museum is valuable. It is well also to know, as far as we may, what is in a library so little accessible as the Imperial Library of Vienna; but, on the whole, Mr. Baber's catalogue, in place of being the best as compared with Dr. Vaughan's (which is what is meant), is not the best as compared with that published by Mr. Lewis more than a century since. As Mr. Baber ought to have produced a fuller and more satisfactory catalogue than Mr. Lewis, so Dr. Vaughan ought to have produced a fuller and a more satisfactory one than either; and we cannot help thinking that he has done so. But of this our readers shall have the means of judging.

Dr. Vaughan had before him what Mr. Lewis had done, and what Mr. Baber had done. What addition has he made to those acquisitions? In the first place, he has done something to confirm the representations made by those writers by his fuller examination of some of the MSS. to which they refer—by presenting frequent analyses of their contents, with copious and characteristic extracts, and in many instances by determining, not only their authorship, but their dates. He has also shown that some of the pieces attributed to Wycliffe, and printed as being his, are certainly not his. He has, moreover, added to the series of Wycliffe MSS., which were known to be in existence when Mr. Baber concluded his labours, an extended list of which the best informed at that time had no knowledge. The following

are the titles of the MSS. which Dr. Vaughan has added to the previous lists:—

'1. DE HYPOCRITABUM IMPOSTURIS. 2. DE OBEDIENTIA PRELATORUM. 3. DE CONVERSATIONE ECCLESIASTICORUM. 4. SPECULUM DE ANTICHRISTO. 5. OF CLERKS POSSESSIONERS. 6. DE XXXIII. ERRORIBUS CURATORUM. 7. OF THE ORDER OF PRIESTHOOD. 8. DE PRECATIONIBUS SACRIS. 9. DE EPISCOPORUM ERRORIBUS. 10. IMPEDIMENTA EVANGELIZANTIUM. 11. DE DOMINIS ET SERVIS. 12. DE DIABOLO ET MEMBRIS. 13. FOR THREE SKILLS LORDS SHOULD CONSTRAIN CLERKS TO LIVE IN MEEKNESS. 14. DE DOMINIS DIVINO. 15. OF PERFECT LIFE. 16. THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS. 17. DE ECCLESIE DOMINIS. 18. OF THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE FIEND. 19. HOW MEN OF PRIVATE RELIGION SHOULD LOVE MORE THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S HESTS, &c. 20. TRACTATUS EVANGELII DE SERMONE DOMINI IN MONTE. 21. EXPOSITIO ORATIONIS DOMINICÆ. 22. TRACTATUS DE ANTICHRISTO. 23. EXPOSITIO IN XXIII. XXIV. XXV. CAP. ST. MATTHEW. 24. TRACTATUS DE STATU INNOCENTIÆ. 25. TRACTATUS DE TEMPORE. 25. DE CAPTIVO HISPANENSI—FILIA COMITIS DE DENE INCARCERATO INFRA SEPTA WESTMONAST. 26. THE CREED, THE PATERNOSTER, AND THE AVE MARIA. 27. OF THE SEVEN HERESIES. 28. OF THE DECALOGUE. 29. OF FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY. 30. OF THE SEVEN WORKS OF BODILY MERCY. 31. OPERA CHARITATIS. 31. SEPTEM PECCATA CAPITALIA. 32. DE ECCLESIA ET MEMBRIS EJUS. 33. DE APOSTASIA ET DOTATIONE ECCLESIE. 34. TRACTATUS DE PSEUDO FRERIS. 35. EGRESSUS JESUS DE TEMPLO. 36. OF ANTICHRIST AND HIS MEYNEE (lately printed by Dr. Todd, but not Wycliffe's), 37. OF ANTICHRIST'S SONG IN THE CHURCH. 38. OF PRAYER—A TREATISE. 39. NOTA DE CONFESIONE. 40. CHRIST FORSOOTH DID ALL THAT HE COULD TO OBEY LORDS. 41. NOTA DE SACRAMENTO ALTARIS. 42. CHRYSOSTOM SAITH THAT FISHERS AND BUYSTOUSE MEN, MAKING EACH DAY NETS. 43. NEITHER MAN NOR WOMAN MAY PERFECTLY DO THE SEVEN WORKS OF MERCY. 44. CLERKS KNOW THAT MAN HATH FIVE WITS OUTWARD. 45. HOW ARE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS PUT THAT ARE WRITTEN HEREAFTER (extends to forty leaves, has been since printed by Dr. Todd). 46. IT IS WRITTEN IN HOLY WRIT THAT THERE WERE THREE PATRIARCHS. 47. THESE BE THE NINE POINTS THAT THE LORD JESUS ANSWERED A HOLY MAN. 48. OF THE DEEDS OF MERCY GOD WILL SPEAK AT THE DREADFUL DAY.'

Here, then, is a list of some FIFTY MSS., large and small, all existing in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and all attributed to Wycliffe, not one of which has been mentioned as existing there in any publication whatever until they were all inserted in the list of the Reformer's writings published by Dr. Vaughan. In 1827, when Dr. Vaughan was engaged in these researches, there was no printed catalogue to the Dublin MSS.,

and no one could examine them except under the eye of a fellow of the college. They were, in consequence, unknown at a distance, and no one having ready access to them had been disposed to examine them. Mr. Baber remarks that much of the value of any list of the Reformer's writings must depend on the care taken to name 'the place where any manuscript work is to be found, and the language in which it is written.' (p. xxxviii.) It must also be obvious that such a catalogue will be good, not only in proportion to the number of MSS. it includes that may be accounted unique, but to its number of existing duplicate manuscripts. We feel bound to say, however, that Mr. Baber's catalogue is remarkably faulty according to his own idea of what it ought to have been. Not to notice lesser omissions, it gives no account, as we have seen, of the manuscripts in Trinity College, Cambridge—a considerable series. It omits quite a third of the Wycliffe MSS. in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge—the most valuable collection in the kingdom. It mentions six only of this class of MSS. as to be found in Trinity College, Dublin—while the number existing there is between fifty and sixty. Dr. Vaughan's catalogue contains everything to be found in Mr. Baber's; it is full in its account of the MSS. in Cambridge; and it stands alone in its account of the nearly FIFTY MSS. above enumerated which are in Dublin, and it includes the results of Dr. Todd's subsequent examination of those MSS. along with his own.* Yet Mr. Shirley can coolly tell the future students of English history that Mr. Baber's list is 'the best that has yet been given to the public!' How is this to be explained? Is it done in ignorance? Or is it done wittingly? In either case, what value can attach after this to any assertion that Mr. Shirley may make on points of this description? Not the LEAST.

We think we shall make it appear, in the next place, that the comparison made in reference to Mr. Lewis's *Life of Wiclif* is about as just as the assertion made in reference to Mr. Baber's catalogue of the Reformer's works. We have seen how the course of events in our history tended to divert the attention of Englishmen from enquiries concerning the services and character of Wycliffe down to the beginning of the eighteenth century. It was greatly to the credit of Mr. Lewis to attempt what he did on this subject at that time. Bishop Bale, John Foxe, Dr. James, Fuller, Collier, and Anthony Wood, were his chief precursors in this path since the Reformation. Such documents as had appeared in print, and some that existed only in manuscript—

* *John de Wycliffe, a Monograph.* Appendix, pp. 525—544. *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe, D.D., with Selections and Translations.* Edited by Robert Vaughan, D.D. 1844. pp. 1—79.

especially in the volume from which Mr. Shirley has made his selections—were more or less pointed out to Mr. Lewis by those writers. Mr. Lewis very naturally availed himself of their guidance, and brought together a number of papers already in print, and with them several valuable contributions from manuscripts. The following is Mr. Lewis's account of the assistance he obtained in this good work:—

'By the favour of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, I had the perusal of Wiclif's *Triologus*, and of a volume of MSS., which his Grace had transcribed for his use from the Bodleian Library. His Grace's librarian, the learned Dr. Wilkins, was so kind as himself to copy for me the process of the dispute between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dr. Wiclif about the Wardenship of Canterbury Hall. To my faithful friend, Dr. Elias Sydal, canon of Christchurch, Canterbury, I owe the having had the liberty of making use of whatever is in the library of that church for my purpose. The copy of the collection of Wiclif's English MSS., in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, of which I have made so much use, was procured for me by the Rev. Mr. Charles Sheldrake, fellow of that college. The account of the other MSS. in the libraries at Cambridge, I had by the favour and the kind assistance of the Rev. Thomas Denn, fellow of the same college. What account I have had of the MSS. in Ireland, I thankfully acknowledge to have received it from the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Kilmore, and the Rev. Dr. Howard, Fellow of Trinity College, near Dublin.'—Preface xv.

The papers transcribed for Mr. Lewis from the Registry in Canterbury, touching the matter of Canterbury Hall, were not, it seems, transcribed very accurately, and they added little to what was before known.* We have seen in part how scanty was the information supplied from Ireland. In Oxford, Mr. Lewis no doubt examined for the most part for himself, and what he knew of real value about the Cambridge MSS. he knew in the same way. It is not pleasant to say anything to the disadvantage of a man whose intentions were so good, and whose labours were in many respects so praiseworthy, and, we may add, so valuable. But it has not been ours to force comparisons in relation to him. We shall, however, only advert to one or two points, for the purpose of showing that something better than Mr. Lewis had done on this subject was desirable, and that something better has been accomplished.

Mr. Lewis's chief merit was that of a collector of materials. His German critics say that his book can hardly be called a life, that it should rather be described as consisting of materials for a

* Seeley's Edition of *Foote*, edited by the Rev. Josiah Pratt. Vol. ii. App. pp. 922—938.

life. But even in this view its defects are sometimes serious. In a work printed in Oxford in 1697, intitled, *Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliæ et Hiberniæ*—a work by the way which answers but poorly to its title—is the following entry concerning MSS. in Trinity College, Dublin. ‘No. 814. *Jno. Wickliffe’s Works to the Duke of Lancaster in 1368*. Quarto. Parch.’ It must be remembered that the year 1368 was only two years after the discussion about the King John tribute, and nine years before Wycliffe’s appearance with the Duke of Lancaster and the Earl Marshal in St. Paul’s—that is, nine years before the first open movement of authority against him on account of his opinions and teaching. Now we surely might have supposed that one of the first efforts of a man intending to write a Life of Wycliffe would be to make himself acquainted with this volume. Its supposed date made a knowledge of its contents most important; and its being dedicated to a layman and a statesman seemed to promise that it would be of great practical worth. Mr. Lewis does get one or two brief extracts from one piece in this volume—but how the volume has come to be described as *John Wickliffe’s Works to the Duke of Lancaster*, and how this tract, written evidently in 1368, from which he gets his extracts, has come to be attributed to Wycliffe, he never learns. This significant title, ‘*John Wickliffe’s Works to the Duke of Lancaster in 1368*,’ is handed down without questioning in Mr. Lewis’s narrative for the next hundred years, and it is copied in all directions during that interval. That Mr. Lewis should have been content to leave this matter in such a posture, is evidence enough, we think, that to do what needed to be done for the memory of Wycliffe demanded some attention to the subject beyond what Mr. Lewis had been able to bestow upon it.

Dr. Vaughan examined this manuscript volume for himself. He found that the title, *Jno. Wickliffe’s Works to the Duke of Lancaster in 1368*, was no part of the original manuscript; that this title is written *upon* one of the pieces by another and a much later hand; that the piece on which it happens to be written bears internal evidence of having been written not earlier than 1381; and concerning the one short tract which was evidently written in 1368, and from which Mr. Lewis gets his brief extracts, Dr. Vaughan’s ultimate opinion is that it ought not to be attributed to Wycliffe at all. On this last point Mr. Shirley is of Dr. Vaughan’s judgment; concerning the other points he can have no judgment, for he has no knowledge.

On a subject of this nature, next in importance to the industry and enterprise which brings home material, is the discernment which knows how to make the best use of it when obtained.

In this respect, Mr. Lewis's ability—to use Mr. Shirley's expression—is 'very poor.' There are men who become manifestly rich by their acquisitions, and there are men who are not so much enriched as bewildered by them. The power to arrange, construct, and build up is not their power. In a life, there should be what belongs to all life—progress. Development, and how that development has been brought about, belong to the essence of such a theme. But Mr. Lewis had no such conception of his work. What Wycliffe did, what happened to him, in this year or that—these ideas as relating to mere matters of fact, Mr. Lewis could in some sort apprehend, but his intelligence rarely goes beyond that limit. To look at these facts in their relation to growth, and especially in their relation to the growth of such a mind as Wycliffe's, was not at all in his way. He did not attempt it—it becomes ridiculous to think of him as attempting it.

The original material in relation to Wycliffe that was most familiar to Mr. Lewis, was the collection of the Reformer's English works preserved in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. But the plan on which he has used those documents is most unsatisfactory and misleading. He has contented himself with culling a few extracts from them which are meant to illustrate a few of the Reformer's opinions. It might have been supposed that Mr. Lewis would at once have seen that the value of all such extracts for the purposes of biography would depend very much on what might be known as to *when* those opinions were avowed, or *when* those feelings were expressed, so as to allow of their being estimated in relation to their antecedents and circumstances. But scarcely a thought of this kind would seem to have entered the mind of Mr. Lewis. With a little effort for the purpose he might have ascertained the date of nearly all those English treatises—certainly of the more important among them. Fortunately, the sermons of Wycliffe, and most of his English works, are pregnant with allusions to passing events. Mr. Lewis might have carefully marked all such allusions, and by thus fixing the dates of the several works he might have presented them as indications of the growth of the man in its season. But Mr. Lewis does nothing of the kind. Without care about dates, without attempting to set forth the general contents of such works, it is enough for him to show from them that Dr. Wycliffe taught or believed thus and thus, but whether the Wycliffe who so taught and believed was the Wycliffe of thirty years of age, of fifty, or of sixty, is a point which does not seem to have presented itself to his mind as of any great importance. We shall give an illustration.

Wycliffe's return from the negotiation with the Papal Commis-

sioners at Bruges belongs to the year 1374. Mr. Lewis, speaking of the Reformer's disappointment at the result of that embassy, says, that, 'on his return he did all he could to expose the pride, covetousness, ambition, and tyranny of the Pope.' (P. 37.) In proof of this statement, passages of a very impassioned description are adduced from four of the Reformer's English treatises, as though they were certainly the productions of that period, while in fact, if he had looked with only ordinary care and intelligence into those writings, he must have seen that they could no one of them have come into existence until some seven or ten years later. They all belong to that closing period of the Reformer's career, when, having withdrawn from Oxford, he gave himself with so much intensity to the translation of the Scriptures, to the labours of the pulpit, and to the multiplication of treatises and tracts in the language of the people.

One of the treatises thus inaptly appealed to by Mr. Lewis is intitled *The Great Sentence of the Curse Expounded*. It is distributed into seventy-nine chapters, and extends to nearly a hundred quarto pages. Its reference to the Papal schism determines that it could not have been written earlier than 1379:—its reference to the war going on in Flanders 'for the love of two false priests who are open Antichrists,' determines that it could not have been written before 1383—while Lewis appeals to it as written on his return to England in 1374, or immediately afterwards. Another of the treatises cited by Mr. Lewis is that intitled *On Prelates*, and here again there is a reference to the war in Flanders under Bishop Spencer, which is said to show that the use of the clerks of Antichrist is 'not to make peace but dissensions and wars.' (C. 13.) A third work so cited is that known under the title of *Servants and Lords*; and the fourth is the well-known treatise named *Of Clerks Possessioners*—both these pieces, from their references to the Reformer's 'poor priests,' and to the persecutions directed against them, could not have been written earlier than 1382. These works accordingly give us the ultimate convictions and feelings of the Reformer, and are no certain guide as to his impressions and opinions so far back as 1374. The proceedings against him at St. Paul's, at Lambeth, and in Oxford were all then to come, and their effect upon him to be realized. Most important, too, is it to bear in mind, that, if Wycliffe had written the works in 1374, which Mr. Lewis has virtually attributed to him at that time, then the articles of impeachment against him in 1377 would hardly have stopped where they did, and, what is more, Wycliffe's defence of himself on that occasion could not be reconciled with honesty. The language of that defence, and the language of these treatises,

could not have come consistently from the same man at the same time. By this inattention to the chronological order of the Reformer's writings, Mr. Lewis has not only failed to do justice to the character of Wycliffe, he has—however unintentionally or unwittingly—done serious injury to his memory. A cast of inconsistency and contradiction has thus been made to rest on his history, of which his enemies have not been slow to take advantage. Dr. Vaughan has been especially careful to guard against negligence in this respect, and unless a host of competent judges have been mistaken, he has thus done for the character and the career of Wycliffe much of the service which it was important some one should have done. He has had the results of Mr. Lewis's inquiries to begin with. He has bestowed not a little time and toil of his own on researches bearing upon this subject. His only competitor has been a man whom even his friends describe as a person of the smallest literary ability. It would, therefore, have been marvellous if, as Mr. Shirley generously intimates, the end of all this had been to leave the subject just as it was. It would be easy to describe in the right words the course which Mr. Shirley has taken on this subject—but it is not worth while.

Mr. Shirley, indeed, intimates that the chronology of Wycliffe's English works can hardly be determined until his earlier Latin works shall have been more carefully examined (p. xlii.). It is easy to see what this means. But such talk is idle. Wycliffe's English works, with rare exceptions, determine their own date, and nothing can disturb the historical conclusions in relation to him which have thus become settled. Enough is known of his earlier Latin works, such as the *De Veritate Scripturae* and the earlier portions of the *Triologus*, to show that the germs of the reforming thought which are so largely developed in his English works, will be found more or less sown in those somewhat earlier productions—but it will be thought in the germ, as compared with the later growth. We shall not extend these criticisms further. We have said more than we wished to have said about Mr. Baber's catalogue of the Reformer's works, and about Mr. Lewis's volume on his life. Both were highly estimable men, and imperfect as their performances have been, both have a real claim on the gratitude of thoughtful Englishmen.

But it certainly becomes the Master of the Rolls, and the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury, to consider whether it is fitting that the series of valuable works which they hope to make accessible to the English student at the public cost should be entrusted to men as editors capable of desecrating them, after Mr. Shirley's manner, to the meanest personal and party

purposes. What has prompted the reverend gentleman to write thus it is not for us to divine. We have said enough to indicate how he has acquitted himself in relation to others, and we now proceed to examine what he has himself done to throw light on the life and times of Wycliffe.

Mr. Shirley has found a very kind reviewer in the *Quarterly*. We do not know that the reviewer and the author are personal friends, but it seems very probable. And we must say that we are a little surprised that the authorities who are responsible for these publications, and for the mode in which they come before the public, should deem it proper to occupy the pages of a prospectus with commendatory extracts on the different works from reviews. National publications of this description we should have thought might have been left to the tenor of their way, without seeming to court approval from organs of criticism which have no pretension to the dignity of the national. We should not have adverted to this circumstance were it not obvious that as the editors of these works will all be living literary men, more or less connected with the periodical press, there is some danger lest a tendency towards dealing in that 'splendid traffic' of praise for praise should become prevalent among them. The critic in the review above named sees so completely with the eyes of Mr. Shirley, and when speaking of what that gentleman has done puts the critic so completely in abeyance, that the great purport of the article, in place of being extended to nearly fifty pages, might have been expressed in five lines. Indeed, one line—read Mr. Shirley, and believe everything he says—would have done it all. The reviewer does not sin in the matter of temper as Mr. Shirley does, and is hardly aware perhaps of the amount of unfairness with which he is chargeable. But we are some of us old enough to remember when a writer in that journal was wont to be a person having a mind of his own, and was expected to do something more than endorse the statements of his author. We shall have to show that Mr. Shirley has set forth some very shallow and unwarrantable criticisms about Wycliffe, and that he has used these worthless criticisms as the basis of weighty historical conclusions—but to all these criticisms his reviewer yields what we must regard as a singularly uninquiring and unintelligent assent. In short, the critic in this case would seem to be a quiet, easy gentleman, disposed to do things gently, and well aware that to attempt to go much beneath the surface on a subject of this nature would involve what to most people is a very unwelcome thing—labour. Hence he allows Mr. Shirley to say about Wycliffe's biographers, what a little more thought concerning books he professes to have read must have shown to be untrue. He does venture to tell some

other critics, Dr. Todd among them, that they have not settled accounts with Dr. Vaughan by their meddling with him. He thinks, indeed, that Dr. Vaughan's *Monograph* ought to have been written more in the style of an Oxford sermon, and says that his attempt to give his readers the image and spirit of the times in which Wycliffe had to take his part, is not to his mind. But these are matters of opinion and taste in which there is room for a difference. The reviewer is careful to state—and to state it as though the thought were not only weighty but new—that it would be folly to attempt to write the Life of Wycliffe without doing something considerable to show the state of society generally in his time. Dr. Vaughan has evidently written under this impression, and, we must suppose, to the best of his ability. But while we make no complaint about diversities of taste, it is right to complain when the fruit of honest labour is ignored—as it is in the following passage in this review:—

'The Reformer retired to his living at Lutterworth, where he passed the remaining two years of his life in an obscurity to which he owes his immunity from further persecution. Yet even thus it is strange that he was suffered to linger out the remains of his days in peace. Tradition says that soon after his retreat he was attacked by paralysis, which ultimately ended his life; but if so, it appears that disease did not at all impair his powers of mind. *The number of his works which must be attributed to this period is prodigious.* To these years of retirement, *besides a multitude of others*, probably belong his tract on the 'Leaven of the Pharisees,' directed against the mendicants; and the 'De Obedientia Prelaturæ' (*sic*); and also a tract, 'De Conversatione Ecclesiasticorum,' which disposes of indulgences, pardons, masses, and all the practical machinery of working the Roman Church.'—p. 145.

The italics in this extract are ours; and we have to ask the reviewer—how do you know that the number of the Reformer's works during those last two years of his life were so prodigious? The answer will probably be—Oh, Mr. Shirley says as much. Yes—but how did Mr. Shirley know that? He could learn nothing of the sort from Mr. Baber, nor from Mr. Lewis, and he does not pretend that his own knowledge of Wycliffe's writings could have given him such information. The truth is, that Mr. Shirley is indebted for his knowledge of this very material fact, as his reviewer upon reflection must see, to the author of a certain *Monograph* of whom both these gentlemen might have spoken differently without much harm to their reputation. The fact is, the writer of the article in question sees discoveries wherever his author sees them, and finds errors wherever he finds them, while in the great majority of instances the discoveries are

not discoveries at all, and the supposed errors are not errors at all. As a further instance of the easy-going style of Mr. Shirley's critic, we may notice that he has printed two or three passages as specimens of Wycliffe's English, but which are taken from a tract with which we feel assured Wycliffe never had anything to do. The following criticism has been published in relation to it:—

'It expresses opinions as to the errors and vices of the entire hierarchy, with the pontiff at its head, which Wycliffe certainly did not publish until within a few years of his decease, and the feeble judgment, and the puerile taste which characterize the whole manner of the performance, forbid my thinking that Wycliffe *could* so have written at that time. By the 'meynee' of antichrist is meant the whole gradation of churchmen, and the religious of all orders and of both sexes; and a rhetorical contrast is instituted in the form of an antithesis between the course pursued by these alleged followers of antichrist, and that pursued by the true disciples of Christ; and this antithesis is extended without interruption through more than five-and twenty pages, until elaboration and ingenuity, such as they are, can be stretched no further, and the straining and the repetitions become utterly wearisome—Wycliffe was incapable, at any time, of perpetrating such a piece of literary folly.

'The piece abounds, moreover, in words that do not occur in the known writings of Wycliffe—as any one may ascertain by comparing it with the works of the Reformer which have been printed, or with the glossary appended to the Oxford edition of his Bible.

'The omissions, too, in this treatise are significant. In Wycliffe's pieces written after 1381, whatever may be the main topic of them, there are generally such references to the disputes about the Eucharist, or about enabling the people to read the Scriptures in English, as to render it all but certain that in such a striving after the multiplication of the points of difference between the orthodox and their opponents, there would have been large references to these particulars if Wycliffe had been the author.'—*John de Wycliffe, D.D.; a Monograph.* Pp. 539, 540.

Had this criticism come from Mr. Shirley, the reviewer would no doubt have made his selection from some other source. The tract contains references to the favour shown by the prelates towards men able 'to speak fair Latin,' over men distinguished by holiness of life; and also to their persecutions, in which they 'kill men in their prison, pained with hard bonds to make them revoke the truth' (p. cxl.). These allusions are to the persecutions commenced by Courtney in 1382, and which were felt by the Lollards long afterwards. The piece is no doubt the production of a Lollard of the Piers Plowman class, who wrote probably after the Reformer's death, and who did not feel in relation to

the Eucharist controversy, or some other matters, all that Wycliffe felt. This is one of the three *Wycliffe Treatises* published by Dr. Todd; and if the criticism of that gentleman failed to detect its real character, it is perhaps hardly surprising that the writer in the *Quarterly* should have been deceived by it.

Mr. Shirley's criticism on the supposed birthplace of the Reformer may be taken as a fair sample of the manner in which he is disposed to assume to himself more than his due. Leland speaks of the Reformer as born in the parish of Wycliffe on Tees (*Collectanea*, tom. i., part ii., 329), and elsewhere speaks of him as born at Spreswell, 'a good mile from Richmond' (*Itinerary*, v. 99).

'Of the Reformer's origin and birthplace,' says Mr. Shirley, 'Leland, our earliest authority, gives two different accounts, which are perhaps not so irreconcilable as they have been sometimes considered. He says in one passage that he was born at Spreswell, a good mile from Richmond in Yorkshire; in a second, that he drew his origin—'originem duxit'—from the village of Wycliffe, some ten miles distant. He was born, that is, at Spreswell, and was a member of the family of Wyclif of Wyclif.'—p. x.

The impression conveyed by this language, and by that of Mr. Shirley's reviewer, is, that this method of harmonizing the discrepancy in Leland is something new. But this distinction between the place where the Reformer may have been born, and the family home, was suggested by Dr. Vaughan more than a quarter of a century ago.* The substitution of 'Spreswell' for 'Hipswell,' which Mr. Shirley adopts, is of a much older date; but it is a mere conjecture which adds nothing to our knowledge. This instance of apparent obliviousness as to what other men have done would be a small matter were it not a sample of a series.

The following facts, when taken together, bear more satisfactorily on this point:—There was a William Wycliffe holding a Fellowship in Balliol College in 1361, while John Wycliffe was Master. There was also a John Hugate who was Master in 1366. William Wycliffe, we find, was presented to the living of Wycliffe on Tees in 1363, and John Hugate was presented to that living in 1369, both by John Wycliffe. This interchange of names between Balliol College and Wycliffe on Tees is significant—especially when it is remembered that Balliol College was founded by the ancient Balliol family residing at Bernard Castle,

* 'It is probable that Leland's information in the two instances was obtained from different sources, the one statement referring perhaps to the family origin of the Reformer, the other to the precise spot of his nativity.'—*Life and Opinions of Wycliffe*, i. 233. Ed. 1831.

not six miles from the parish of Wycliffe. The natural conclusion seems to be, that the Wycliffes of Balliol, both William and John, were Wycliffes of Wycliffe on Tees. The facts which lead to this conclusion come in part from Whitaker's *Richmondshire* (Art. Wycliffe), and in part from the Rev. Josiah Pratt's valuable notes to Seeley's edition of Foxe (vol. ii. 939, 940; iii. 812).

The earliest documentary evidence of Wycliffe's residence in Oxford is in the Bursar's Comptus of Merton College, which shows John Wycliffe to have been seneschal, or steward for his week, in June 1356. The earliest Comptus of Queen's College, it appears, do not go back further than 1347, and they are for a while imperfect. The first appearance of the name of Wycliffe in such of those entries as are preserved at Queen's is not, it appears, earlier than 1363. From that time, however, the name recurs at intervals until 1380—that is down to the eve of the juncture at which Wycliffe finally withdrew from Oxford to Lutterworth. From this evidence it would seem that if Wycliffe removed at an early period, as is commonly supposed, from Queen's to Merton, he returned after a time to his former residence. It is certain that several of his personal friends were in Queen's during the latter part of his Oxford career. It seems clear, also, that when he withdrew from the University he was of Queen's College; and we have little doubt that there has been evidence for the common opinion of his having commenced his course there, though we had ourselves become aware, before Mr. Pratt made the discovery, that there is no evidence in the records of the college of Wycliffe's connexion with it at so early a period as 1340.

It has been said that, about the year 1360, Wycliffe took up the cause of the University and of the secular clergy against the mendicants, and so became the successor of Fitz-Ralph, the celebrated Bishop of Armagh, in that controversy. We know not Wood's evidence on this point, but we have little doubt that he had apparent warrant for what he has said. Mr. Shirley says that this is 'implicitly contradicted by contemporary authority.' If it be so, there is, of course, an end to that section of the Reformer's life, as commonly understood. The authority referred to is Wodeford, a great opponent of the Reformer. But the testimony of this writer is singularly conflicting. He gives us three incidents as marking the point of time from which Wycliffe began to publish his 'depraved opinions'—when he took the degree of Doctor, when he was expelled from Canterbury Hall, and when he became provoked against the mendicants for publicly condemning his 'heresies concerning the sacrament of the altar.' Mr. Shirley has attempted to show when Wycliffe

took his degree, and would have us believe that it was so early as in the year 1363. If so, then the writers who date the origin of the movements of Wycliffe as a Reformer to about the year 1360, have not been so far wrong. With regard to the Canterbury Hall date, Mr. Shirley does not believe that Wycliffe ever had anything to do with that hall, and cannot, therefore, attach much importance to the statement which attributes his course as a Reformer to the mortification produced by that expulsion. There only remains the statement that he had said nothing against the mendicants until they had publicly condemned his heresies on the Eucharist. When was that? The Reformer's doctrine on that subject was not pronounced to be heresy, and publicly condemned as such, before 1381; and are we to believe that all Wycliffe's zeal on the side of the University and of the secular clergy, against the religious orders and the papacy, was the growth of the last three or four years of his life? The idea is absurd. This view of the matter proves greatly too much; and, to use Mr. Shirley's language, 'it is implicitly contradicted by contemporary authority.' If history has given us one idea about Wycliffe more prominently than another, it is the idea which depicts him as the special antagonist of the mendicants. But Mr. Shirley will perhaps say that he has shown from Wodeford that Wycliffe had some peculiar ideas about the Eucharist which he held publicly in the schools while only a Bachelor, apparently before he had taken his Master's degree. Be it so; and if we suppose the mendicants to have been his opponents thus early, as we may be sure they were, then they may very naturally have felt the force of his indignation against them even thus early; and so the received opinion in regard to that stage of the Reformer's history may, after all, be the true one. Received opinions in relation to great facts, whether in the life of a man or of a nation, are rarely without some basis. The effect of attempting to do away with such impressions is often only to make it more certain that whether the direct evidence in relation to them be forthcoming or not, such evidence there has been. The new hypothesis in such cases, when fairly sifted, is often felt to be less tenable than the old.

Moreover, in regard to this controversy between Wycliffe and the mendicants, we are in danger of greatly underrating the liberty of speech and of writing on such topics which our strong-nerved ancestors of the time of Edward III. really enjoyed. The rhetoric with which Fitz-Ralph laid bare the artifices of the mendicants, and pointed to the mischiefs produced by them, was of the boldest description. He had himself been Chancellor of Oxford, and he denounced the friars as having by their fraudulent

practices reduced the number of students in that university, within his memory, from 30,000 to not more than a fifth of that number. Such a trade, too, did these false religionists carry on in pardonings, that multitudes of the most lawless characters in the Archbishop's diocese, whom his clergy would not have thought of absolving, were confessed and absolved without scruple by the mendicants. The man who spoke thus was never charged with heresy, nor troubled in any way by the authorities of the time on account of his opinions. Let any man look at the pictures which Chaucer has drawn of monks and friars, and other ecclesiastical persons, and he will see how far Wycliffe might have gone in that direction in 1360, or thereabouts, without being classed with heretics, and without hazard of inconvenience from men in office, either civil or ecclesiastical. But even his dispute with the mendicants would, no doubt, become another and a new affair in the eyes of Wodeford, when it became coupled with many opinions deemed nothing less than heretical. It is probable, too, that Wycliffe's antagonism to the religious orders was really deepened by the conspicuous part taken by them in condemning his doctrine on the Eucharist.

Wodeford, and Netter of Walden, the supposed collector of the papers in the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, and the author of the narrative which connects them, make the time when Wycliffe took his degree to be his starting-point as a Reformer. That time has been hitherto supposed to be 1372. The document in Rymer, which assigns Wycliffe his place in the embassy to Bruges, shows that he was certainly Doctor, and in consequence Professor, in 1374. Mr. Shirley would make it appear that Wycliffe had been Doctor and Professor nine years before that time, instead of two years only—that is, in 1363, instead of 1372. This is another new reading in the life of the Reformer. But this also will be found to consist of a superstructure without a foundation. In two of the papers by Cunningham against Wycliffe, printed in this volume, Wycliffe is described simply as Master; in the third, which seems to have followed soon after, he is described both as Master and Doctor. The question is—can the date of this paper, in which Cunningham begins to describe Wycliffe as Doctor, be ascertained? This question Mr. Shirley answers in the affirmative. This third paper, he writes—

‘Is an answer to one written by Wyclif, and now printed in our Appendix. This tract, therefore, of Wyclif was written before, and not long before, the date we are attempting to fix.

‘Now, in this tract the Reformer declares his intention of not entering for the present on a subject which afterwards gave a title to two of his best known works, the *Theory of Dominion*, or, as we should now

call it, of Church and State. But the fragment on that subject, printed by Lewis (p. 349), bears internal evidence that it was written probably in 1366, certainly not later than the following year, and the long work, *De Dominio Divino*, from which, possibly, Lewis's fragment is an extract, was published at the latest in 1368.

'The evidence, therefore, confines us absolutely to 1361 on the one side, and to 1366 on the other.'—Introduction, xvi. xvii.

Mr. Shirley, for reasons which he assigns, fixes on 1363 as the year in which he supposes Wycliffe to have become Doctor and Professor. But everything here depends on the question—does Wycliffe say in this now printed document that, up to that time, he had abstained from writing on the subject of Dominion—or what we now call the question of Church and State? Nothing of the sort. His language, in place of saying that he had not written on that subject, rather implies that he had, and merely intimates that he is not to be diverted into that topic at present, lest he should lose sight of the topic properly in hand. Here are his words:—

'Nemo enim donat secundum ampliorem titulum quam ipsemet habet, licet posset esse occasio. Unde Deus donat amplius dominium quam etiam habet iste dans. *Ista est pulchra via ad introducendum materiam de dominio, sed oportet ab illa supersedere ad tempus, ne materia accepta præ manibus omittatur.*'—p. 456.

According to Mr. Shirley's interpretation of this passage, when a man says, 'I shall not go into that subject at present, for it does not belong to my present argument,' you are always to infer that the man has never gone into that subject in his life! It really amounts to this. Nevertheless, Mr. Shirley's echo in the *Quarterly* accounts this 'a very ingenious argument,' and looks on the matter as settled! From the ground as thus settled, Mr. Shirley goes off into high philosophical speculation on the synchronism of this memorable year 1363—the juncture when the chivalry of England reached its climax, and Wycliffe entered on his course as a Reformer!

Wycliffe may have taken his degree of Doctor earlier than 1372, and Mr. Shirley may live to show that he did, but he has done nothing towards that object at present.

Next we have the question which is likely to become rather a vexed question—viz., whether the Warden of Canterbury Hall was Wycliffe the Reformer, or a Wycliffe—or 'Whyteclyve'—of Mayfield. This question was mooted for the first time in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1844. It has since been examined by several competent writers, and has left their former belief on this subject undisturbed. The learned editors of Wycliffe's

Bible, Dr. Madden and Dr. Forshall, had all the material points of the case before them, but they did not find either the Warden of Canterbury Hall, or the seneschal of Merton, in the John Whyteclyve of Mayfield. Mr. Pratt has since that bestowed great care on the question, and he finds the Reformer in the expelled warden, and in the Wycliffe of Queen's and of Merton. Citing a document describing the society of Balliol College while Wycliffe was Master, Mr. Pratt remarks:—

'The distinction between *Magister* and *Dominus*, in the above extract, refers to the M.A. and B.A. degrees, and suggests a pretty decisive proof, hitherto unnoticed, that the Warden of Canterbury Hall was a different individual from the Vicar of Mayfield. For the Warden, in his appointment by Islep, in his removal by Langham, and in the Papal process, is always styled *Magister*, save that his opponents in the suit cunningly drop the prefix, knowing that Friar Wodehull's want of the M.A. degree disqualified him for the wardenship, according to the University statutes. Whereas Johannes de Whyteclyve, vicar of Mayfield, in all the four archiepiscopal registers in which he is mentioned, is invariably styled *Dominus* to his dying day, and even in the probate of his will, which proves that he never attained the M.A. degree, if ever he took any academic degree at all. He was an ordinary man, who owed his promotion to some accident.'—Pratt's *Foxe*, vol. iii., App. p. 812.

The man who had never taken his Master's degree could not have been fellow of Merton, and was less likely to have been chosen by Islep to be Master of Canterbury Hall.

But Mr. Shirley's great reason for concluding that Wycliffe was not the Warden of Canterbury Hall is, that Wodeford, the Reformer's great opponent, stands alone among his contemporaries in asserting it. But Wodeford stands alone in asserting that Wycliffe held peculiar views about the sacrament of the altar while only in his Bachelor's degree; and in asserting that the Reformer did not attack the mendicants until they had condemned his doctrine on that subject. On these two points Mr. Shirley accepts the unsupported testimony of Wodeford as sufficient—why not on the other point? It may be said, because there are probabilities against that point. But so there are against the other two. Wodeford's assertion as to the date of Wycliffe's controversy with the mendicants, according to Mr. Shirley's understanding of it, is utterly incredible; and if Wodeford was really so ill-informed, as to make Wycliffe the Warden of Canterbury Hall, when he was not, and when, as the Master of Balliol, he must have become a man of mark, was he likely to be well-informed about the shades of the Reformer's thinking on the subject of the Eucharist when he was a young man in his

Bachelor's degree? But thus unsteady—thus apparently capricious, are Mr. Shirley's criticisms generally.

We must notice, however, that Mr. Shirley has printed a passage from one of the Vienna MSS. in which Wycliffe refers to this suit, and an interesting passage it is, on this account. But Mr. Shirley's use of it furnishes another instance of the facility with which he seems to discover in a document whatever it is agreeable to find there. We give the passage as it is:—

'Homo potest facere nedum bonum de genere, sed bene moraliter, et tamen cum hoc et in hoc peccare venialiter, ut ista pars habet dicere in familiari exemplo. Nam dominus Symon Hyslep, archiepiscopus Cantuariensis, fundavit unum collegium in Oxonia plus pia intentione, ut evidentius creditur, quam de fundatione cujuscunque abbatie in Anglia, et ordinavit quod in ea sub forma laudabili studeant ad utilitatem ecclesie puri clerici seculares; quod et factum est. Et tum, ipso mortuo, simoniace commentis mendacii eversum est tam pii patroni propositum, et illis expulsis pauci alii, non egentes, sed divitiis affluentes, contra decretum captum ex dictis B. Hieronymi xii. qu. 2. 'Gloria episcopi est pauperum opibus providere; ignominia sacerdotis est propriis studere divitiis.' Et cum pretextum (pretextu?) illius facti sophistici 'Episcopus et suum capitulum sunt una persona, a qua non licet alienare bona illius ecclesie,' ista persona vindicat bona illius collegii proprietarie possidere. Unde consulendum videtur domino Wintoniensi (William of Wykeham) ut caveat hanc cautelam. Credo autem quod dictus Symon peccavit fundando dictum collegium, sed non tantum quantum anti-Symon, qui ipsum dissolverat.'—p. 526.

The following is as literal a rendering of this passage as we can give:—

'No man can do anything essentially (or absolutely) good. But he may do right morally (or in moral intention), and yet, with this and in it, he may commit some venial sin—as one may illustrate by a familiar example. For master Symon Islep, Archbishop of Canterbury, founded a college in Oxford, with a more pious purpose, as is believed on ample evidence, than (was shown) in the foundation of any abbey in England; and he appointed, according to a very creditable scheme, that in it there should study for the service of the church purely secular clerks—which was carried out. And then, after his death, simoniacally, and on false pretences, the plan of this very good patron was overthrown, and they (the seculars) having been expelled, a few others, by no means needy, but abounding in wealth (were brought in), contrary to the decree taken from the sayings of St. Jerome (ii. qu. 2). 'It is the glory of a bishop to provide for the needy—it is the disgrace of a priest to delight in his own wealth;' and on the sophistical ground that a bishop and his income are one person, from which it becomes unlawful to alienate church property—

that person claims the property of that college as his own; from which proceeding my Lord of Winchester deems it wise to protect himself against exception in this form. I hold, then, that the said Simon sinned in founding the said college, but not so greatly as did anti-Simon in dissolving it.'

On this extract Mr. Shirley thus writes :—

'In this last sentence Archbishop Islep is spoken of as having infringed that principle of the unlawfulness of perpetual eleemosynary endowments which formed a part of Wycliffe's theory of dominion. That theory was promulgated by the Reformer in Oxford only a few months after the disputed nomination to the wardenship, and it was hinted at probably two or three years before, in his public discussion with Cunningham. Who can suppose that the promulgator was himself the warden?'—pp. 526-7.

The 'theory of dominion,' here said to have been published by Wycliffe in 1366, is contained in his defence of the crown in refusing payment of the King John tribute money. From the language of Mr. Shirley, who would not conclude that in this argument the Reformer must have clearly and unequivocally committed himself against all perpetual endowments for the purposes of charity or learning—to say nothing of religion. But in truth the Reformer has done nothing of the kind. For anything contained in that paper Wycliffe was no more bound to such a principle from that time than Mr. Shirley himself is bound to it now. The argument of that paper is, that in temporal matters the crown should always take precedence of the mitre; that King John, in his transaction with Pope Innocent inverted this order of authority; and that the King of England, accordingly, was perfectly justified in repudiating that proceeding altogether. One of the lords, in the course of his argument, is described as hinting to his Holiness that even a pope is liable to sin, and that, according to divines, a pope in mortal sin cannot hold dominion at all. It is enough, therefore, says this lord, that the kingdom should be subject to one lord, and that we all keep ourselves from mortal sin, and communicate of our goods charitably to the poor. These are the sentences which Mr. Shirley interprets as opposed to all 'perpetual eleemosynary endowments.' That a priest in mortal sin should repent of his sin, or cease from his vocation, is, we presume, a doctrine we all hold. There is room to doubt whether Wycliffe *ever* avowed the extreme principle which Mr. Shirley seems, for polemical purposes, to attribute to him. It certainly is not in the paper appealed to as containing it, nor is it in the above extract now produced for the first time by Mr. Shirley.

It is to be regretted that we do not see more of the connexion of this extract. In the sentence with which it commences, the Reformer says that man can do nothing absolutely good—that something of the imperfect will mix with it, and the case of Canterbury Hall is given as an illustration. The tone throughout is commendatory of what Islep had done in founding that hall. It became him, as a pious churchman, so to care for the poor scholars. But he committed an error, by which men of less principle succeeded in frustrating his intentions, and William of Wykeham, in doing a work of the same kind, had taken care to guard against the same mistake. When Wycliffe says, therefore, in conclusion, that Islep sinned in founding the hall, he can hardly mean that he sinned in founding it at all, but that—in conformity with the principle under discussion—he vitiated an act good in itself by something amiss in the mode of performing it. What was this something amiss? Let it be remembered that Islep's foundation was originally for the benefit of a society to consist, in part, of men belonging to the religious orders, not of secular clerks alone; and if this fact be borne in mind, the following passage from Lowth's *Life of Wykeham* seems to show where the 'venial' sin lay in Islep's otherwise very worthy service.

'He (Wykeham) had long resolved to dispose of the wealth, which the Divine Providence had so abundantly bestowed upon him, to some charitable use, and for the public good; but was greatly embarrassed when he came to fix his choice on some design that was likely to prove most beneficial, and least liable to abuse. He tells us himself (Statut. Coll. Oxon. and Wint.) that upon this occasion he diligently examined and considered the various rules of the religious orders, and compared with them the lives of their professors; but was obliged with grief to declare, that he could not anywhere find that the ordinances of their founders, according to their true design and intention, were at present observed by any of them. This reflection affected him greatly, and inclined him to take the resolution of distributing his riches to the poor with his own hands, rather than employ them in establishing an institution, which might become a snare and an occasion of guilt to those for whose benefit it should be designed. After much deliberation and devout invocation of the Divine assistance, considering how greatly the number of the clergy had been of late reduced by continual wars and frequent pestilences, he determined at last to endeavour to remedy, so far as he was able, this desolation of the church, by relieving poor scholars in their clerical education, and to establish two colleges of students, for the honour of God and the increase of his worship, for the support and exaltation of the Christian faith, and for the improvement of the liberal arts and sciences.'—pp. 92—95.

It thus seems clear, that the point in which Wykeham profited

by the experience of Canterbury Hall, was in resolving to have nothing to do with the religious orders. For it was the error in respect of Islep's first scheme, which embraced the religious orders, along with seculars, that brought on his infant foundation all its troubles, and ended in an expulsion of the seculars to make room for the monks—the proceeding denounced by Wycliffe as a robbing of the poor to confer needless wealth upon the rich. The assumption that Islep was not at liberty so to appropriate his income, is not accepted by Wycliffe. Is repudiated as a sophism.

It should be observed, that from the reference in this extract to the Bishop of Winchester, who did not found New College before 1379, it is evident that when the passage was written some ten years must have passed since the Canterbury Hall case had been judged and settled. Wycliffe's intimate acquaintance with the history of the case after that lapse of time, and the terms in which he condemns the papal verdict upon it, are just such as might have been expected on the supposition of his having been himself the warden. We scarcely need say, that could Wycliffe be shown to have held the doctrine which Mr. Shirley attributes to him in 1380, that would be no evidence of his having so thought in 1365, when he accepted his appointment as warden.

So another of Mr. Shirley's criticisms, commended with such edifying docility by his reviewer, falls to the ground.

Mr. Shirley says the object of the prelates in citing Wycliffe before them in 1377 was purely political, and meant as a blow, through the Reformer, at John of Gaunt.

'Whatever opinions Wyclif may really have held, a question we reserve for the present, it is certain that the principles which he had avowed, and on which he had defended the ecclesiastical policy of his patron, may have easily appeared to many to be subversive of the framework of society. Convocation arraigned these political doctrines as heresies, and appointed William of Wykeham one of the judges. How utterly the meaning of this prosecution was political may be gathered from the total omission in the articles of accusation of all matters not bearing on the question of the hour. Wyclif had been long ago accused of heresy on the subject of the Incarnation, but this was not mentioned; his doctrine of the imperishability of matter had been actually condemned by Archbishop Langham, it was not alluded to; he had been accused of reviving the necessitarian tenets of Bradwardine, but neither were these touched upon. The object of the prosecution was to proclaim to the world that society was endangered by the political principles which John of Gaunt was putting in practice against the church.'—xxvi., xxvii.

No doubt, the clergy meant that—meant to alarm the timid,

and to injure John of Gaunt, their great opponent at that moment, by proclaiming Wycliffe's political doctrines as dangerous to society. But it is strange that Mr. Shirley should have described the articles of accusation against the Reformer as drawn up on the plan of excluding everything not belonging to the politics of the hour, while in fact one half of those articles have nothing to do with politics, and relate exclusively to spirituals—that is, to the spiritual pretensions of the Roman priesthood. Here are some of them :—

' We know that it is not possible that the Vicar of Christ merely by his Bulls, or by them together with his own will and consent, and that of the College of Cardinals, should qualify or disable any man.

' It is not possible that a man should be excommunicated to his damage, unless he be excommunicated first and principally by himself.

' No one ought, except in the cause of God, to excommunicate, suspend, or interdict any one, or to proceed according to any ecclesiastical censure by way of revenge.

' Cursing or excommunication does not bind finally, only so far as it is used against an adversary of the law of Christ.

' The disciples of Christ have no power to exact temporalities by censures or civil compulsion.

' We ought to believe that then only does a Christian priest bind or loose, when he simply obeys the law of God.'

The reader will judge whether the questions thus raised belong exclusively to the domain of politics. They are, in fact, questions that go to the root of the Roman church as a spiritual system, and aim at nothing less than taking the souls of men out of her hands. It would be in vain to say that these heresies, as they were called, were rather ecclesiastical than theological. Such was their vast spiritual import, and we doubt much if there was anything that *could* be adduced against Wycliffe as theological heresy, in the more direct sense, with any colourable pretext, at that time. It would be easy to show that an attempt to get up a case of heresy against him on any one of the three grounds mentioned by Mr. Shirley would have been absurd. We know not when Cunningham charged the Reformer with heresy on the Incarnation, nor is it material to know. *None* of the public proceedings against him make mention of heresy on that subject. Wycliffe's enemies must have known, moreover, that to attempt to make him a heretic on the ground of his speculations about the imperishability of matter, could only serve to show how much they had been straitened for material against him; and to have proceeded against a man for believing on the subject of the freedom of the will with Bradwardine and St. Augustine, would, if possible, have been still more impolitic. If the Convocation of 1377 *could* have

charged Wycliffe with theological heresy, we may be assured they would have placed that charge in the foreground then, as they did in 1381. The moment a tangible ground for accusation in that shape became available, it was seized, and one of the immediate effects was the memorable disownment of Wycliffe by John of Gaunt. Concerning the obscure dogmas ascribed to Wycliffe in those articles touching the basis of human authority and human possessions, it is sufficient to observe that Wycliffe's writings are full of passages showing the ideal and harmless sense in which he interpreted those tenets. In his view the Divine Being was chief lord in relation to all earthly authorities and possessions. All were received from him on conditions, and those conditions failing, the gifts were really forfeited—but forfeited in respect to God, not in respect to man. There was a difference, indeed, between secular lords and spiritual. The former might deprive the latter of their possessions if habitually delinquent. But Wycliffe had no such summary mode of dealing with the question as it affected the lords temporal. When temporal lords became thus delinquent, what their position might be in relation to God was one thing, what it was in relation to man was another. We may be assured that the most material points of alleged heresy or error that could be collected from the Reformer's earlier Latin writings up to 1377, *were then adduced against him*. THOSE POINTS GIVE US A LANDMARK IN HIS HISTORY.

As another instance of the manner in which Mr. Shirley can assume the merit of discovery where he has made none, we may notice his reference to the relation between Wycliffe and his 'poor priests.' It is mentioned as a circumstance 'little known,' that those itinerant preachers bore some resemblance to the early Methodist preachers under the direction of John Wesley; and it is suggested that if Wycliffe could only have kept free from heresy, he might have wrought them up into a new order, and so might have been considered as their founder. All we know of Wycliffe's relation to these preachers is, that he applauded their labours, and that he denounced the conduct of their persecutors; and if these facts be 'little known,' and if the character of the preachers themselves be 'little known,' the blame does not rest, we think, with those who have preceded Mr. Shirley in writing about Wycliffe. One of these writers, describing the preamble of a statute, prepared by the bishops in 1382 against this new order of public instructors, says:—

'There is even in this dry law-paper something of the pictorial. These 'poor priests'—these sturdy, free-spoken and popular *Methodists* of the fourteenth century, are here travelling before us, from county

to county, from town to town, and village to village, barefooted, staff in hand, the visible personation of the toilsome, the generous, the noblehearted. In churches or churchyards, in markets or fairs, before gentle or simple, pious or profligate,—wherever men or women are gathered together, or may be gathered, there the itinerant instructor of this school finds his preaching-place, and discourses boldly on the difference between the religion of the Bible, with its appeals to every man's reason and conscience, and the superstitions of the priests, which have nothing to sustain them save that hollow mockery called the authority of the Church. Prelates and abbots, mendicants and monks, rectors and curates, become wrathful—but the people are not wrathful. Almost to a man they attest that the stranger is in the right, and that harm shall not be done to him. Knighton mentions a number of persons of some figure who openly favoured the new preachers—such as Sir Thomas Latimer, Sir John Trussell, Sir Lodovick Clifford, Sir John Peeche, Sir Richard Story, and Sir John Hilton. It was the manner of these distinguished persons, as our historian informs us, when a preacher of the Wycliffe order came into their neighbourhood, to give notice to all around of time and place, and to draw a vast audience together. Even beyond this did they proceed, for you might see them standing round the pulpit of the preacher, armed, and prepared to defend him from assault with their good swords, if there should be need. Knighton, who complains of this mode of proceeding as being rather Mohammedan than Christian in its spirit, is nevertheless obliged to give these Lollard or Puritan knights the credit of being governed by a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.'—*De Eventibus*, 2660, 2661.

'The local official, not daring to go farther, serves his writ upon the disorderly stranger, requiring him to appear before his ordinary; but the stranger is speedily elsewhere, and at his wonted labour. Proud churchmen thunder their anathema against him—to him it is an empty sound. The soul under that coarse garb, and which plays from beneath that weatherworn countenance, is an emancipated soul—not so much the image of the age in which we find it, as the *prophecy of an age to come*—to come only after a long, a dark, and a troubled interval shall have passed away.'—*John de Wycliffe: a Monograph*, —pp. 276—279.

Mr. Shirley is no stranger to the volume from which this extract is taken. Nevertheless, in the face of what is there written, he can intimate to his readers that the labours of these preachers, and Wycliffe's patronage of them, are facts which have been so neglected by the Reformer's worthless biographers as to be 'little known,' leaving it to his own better information and intelligence to bring the subject into daylight, and to present it in its true significance. Mr. Shirley's reviewer is especially struck with finding for the first time that modern Methodism has its type so far back in our history as the fourteenth century!

Mr. Shirley thinks—and we suppose we must not say, thanks to his German critics for it, though they have certainly been before-hand with him on this point—that a close study of Wycliffe's 'Realism' as a thinker is an 'essential element' towards a just estimate of his character:—

'Whatever be the cause, almost all the religious life, and even all that was continuous even in the intellectual life of the middle ages, belonged to one or other of the various shades of realism. In the latter half of the fourteenth century, whatever there was among the clergy, either of such religious feeling or of intellectual activity, was to be found, speaking broadly, in the secular priests. As a body, therefore, they were naturally realists.'—liii.

These sentences invert the relations of cause and effect. In the first, men become intellectual and spiritual, because they are realists; and then they become realists because they are intellectual and spiritual. We do not say that Mr. Shirley is not an intelligent man, but this is only an instance of the sad want of certainty in the working of his intelligence. Admitting, however, as we certainly do, that there is a natural tendency towards liberalism in realism, yet seeing that half the thinkers of Europe were realists in the fourteenth century, and only one of them became a Wycliffe, is it not clear that the 'essential element'—the distinctive force, of this man's character, must be sought in some source above realism, and more potent than it? Great effects never come from small causes, and complex effects never come from simple causes. These maxims are so obvious as to be almost truisms. But what labour might have been spared had they been always remembered! It seems to be a besetting infirmity of much of the thinking of our time, to look in this manner to some one cause for greatly more than can possibly have proceeded from it. It is so pleasant, so sagacious, so scientific, to be able to lay hold on a single clue which shall unravel everything. But it is not sound philosophy, not common sense, that puts men on such a track. Realism had something to do with giving Wycliffe to history; but a higher power had much more to do with that event—the power, we mean, which lodges religious conviction in the souls of the men according to a law of sovereignty little understood by us. Realism might have taught the Reformer his respect for human intelligence, but it was an influence above that which taught him his reverence for the word of God. His stern rationality helped to make him what he was, but much more came from that biblical influence which served to consecrate his rationality to its true uses. The root of Wycliffe's greatness lay in his fear of God, and in his sense of responsibility. He toiled

much, and braved much, but with the nature which God had given him he could not do otherwise. The spirit of self-consecration shut out the selfish. Something of this spirit in ourselves is of the *first* importance to a right understanding of the character of Wycliffe.*

We repeat, Mr. Shirley is entitled to our gratitude for the care with which he has edited the papers in this volume. There is also some matter even in this sketch of the Reformer's life to which those who wish to study his times will do well to give attention. No modern writer has been infallible in writing about Wycliffe. So lost, through neglect and distance, is the material relating to him, that the question of mistake on the part of his biographers can only be a question of degree. Every man who has touched

* The reviewer in the *Quarterly* regrets, in common with us all, that nothing is known concerning the history of the portrait of the Reformer at Wycliffe. The painting is on panel, in size about 18 inches by 14. It has a dark Rembrandt appearance, the head being the only object looking forth from a deep vandyke brown circumference, the dark ground having apparently become darker by age. It is described as an 'Original Picture,' by Sir Antonio More. As a work of art it is worthy of the pencil of that artist, but it has not the clearness and freshness so observable in the portraits by Sir Antonio in the recent Manchester Exhibition. It seems much older.

There is another portrait of the Reformer which has attracted some attention of late. It is in the possession of Henry Payne, Esq., of Leicester. This picture was presented for inspection at a meeting of the Archaeological Society in London, in November, 1851. In the next December the following account of it appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:—

'A remarkable 'palimpsest' painting was shown by Mr. Payne, of Leicester, having been originally a portrait of Wycliffe, but painted over, and converted into that of 'Robertus Langton, Doctor,' whose name appears *concealing* that of Wycliffe.

'This latter work appears to be of the times shortly before the Reformation, and is very remarkable for the assemblage of pilgrim's signs which it displays. The original painting appears to be of the fifteenth century, and bears much resemblance to the fine portrait at Knoles.'

These 'pilgrim's signs' which now disfigure the painting, and the name 'Robertus Langton,' owe their origin, we doubt not, to the same cause, and helped to disguise the portrait at some time when it was felt that it might be dangerous to be known to possess it. The name 'Robertus Langton' has been in gilt German-text letters: the name 'Johannes Wickliffe' is in a dark character, and seems to be of a much older date. Mr. Payne is disposed to think that Wycliffe may have sat for this portrait when at Bruges in 1374. But this can be only conjecture. If it be true, as stated by the reviewer in the *Quarterly*, that Italy itself has no portrait, even on panel, so old as the fourteenth century, then Mr. Payne's, which is on canvas, should be thus old is out of the question. It is an admirable painting. The artist achieves much with little appearance of elaboration. There is more in it to remind us of Sir Antonio More than in the painting at Wycliffe. Both heads are clearly representations of the same man. But Mr. Payne's portrait is not that of so old a man. The lips are more conspicuous, and the features are altogether somewhat bolder and firmer. It is remarkable that the portrait at Wycliffe is the only ancient painting in which the Reformer is represented without his staff. In all other respects, all the portraits we have seen have so much in common, as to bespeak a common origin. The staff, the book, and the same cap and gown, come up in them all, with the same cast of features. Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, speaks of a Robertus Langton, who was a doctor, and died in 1524. But this affords no clue.

this subject has been in some things defective, in other things mistaken, and so it will be in the future. There is enough to do in this field to require the help of many hands. Gladly should we have hailed Mr. Shirley as a labourer had he brought another spirit to his work. But his attempt to be original, and to eclipse every one that has gone before him in this path, has betrayed him into theorizing, and taught him to see evidence where no mortal, we should think—always excepting his friend in the *Quarterly*—would ever have thought of seeing it. From his learning we might have expected something considerable; but so very peculiar is his manner of interpreting historical documents, that we feel that no statement made by him can be entitled to the least confidence, unless you have the means of examining for yourself the ground on which it is said to rest. Wycliffe's early Latin works are mostly philosophical and scholastic, of which some judgment may be formed from the first and second books of his *Trialogus*. The labour of reading and collating such works would be immense, and the return would probably be very inadequate; but we think Mr. Shirley might do some service in this way, and if shut up, as in the documentary part of this volume, to questions of philology, we should be glad to see him committed to the task—but only on that condition. His reputation has not been served, and will not be served, by writing on this subject as in the memoir before us. He has had many predecessors in this field—he depreciates them all, and, at the same time, has so managed as to be himself more at fault than the most faulty among them. We have not said all we might in exposure of these faults, but we have said a great deal more than it has been pleasant to say, and there is little probability of our returning to the subject. The other volumes in this important series of publications appear to be edited as such works should be edited. We deeply regret that the same cannot be said of the volume that has been entrusted to Mr. Shirley.

We gladly pass now to see what the scholars of the Continent have been doing on this subject. It is to be regretted that the great Neander has not shown a more adequate appreciation of Wycliffe's character and influence. But both Luther and Melancthon had learned to speak slightly of Wycliffe. Melancthon did not reckon him clear on Justification, and speaks of him as raving on matters of civil government; and Luther could pass him by as the 'hair-splitting' Wycliffe (*der spitzig*).^{*} The effect of this has been to turn the thoughts

^{*} Yet Neander calls attention to a remarkable passage in the *Trialogus*, in which Wycliffe seems to foretell the mission of Luther. 'I suppose,' says Wycliffe, 'that some brethren, whom God may vouchsafe to teach, will be devoutly con-

of the Germans away from our first Reformer for centuries, much as our own thoughts had been turned from him by other circumstances. Even so recently as when the erudite and diligent Winer published the last edition of his elaborate *Handbook of Theological Literature*, with its supplement extending to the close of 1841, the subject of Wycliffe still remained almost a blank in German bibliography, as his meagre account shows. But more attention has been paid to matters relating to Wycliffe, and more veneration has been shown to his memory during the last dozen years in Germany than during the previous three centuries. 'It is quite gratuitous,' says Jaeger, 'for certain church historians, in their judgment concerning Wycliffe, to appeal to Luther's view, for that rests, no less than their own, on a superficial knowledge of the man. Is what Luther said at his table three hundred years ago to be the rule of our opinion for ever?' No—the present generation of German thinkers have put an end to that.

In general, indeed, what this more enlightened class have done has been rather dogmatic and theological than biographical. Concerning the *life* of the Reformer they furnish nothing that is not to be found in the English works which they cite as their authorities. But on the *opinions* of Wycliffe they have done more than we have done. They have given these with a minuteness, fulness, and system, quite in the German manner. The sources of their information are, the biographies of Wycliffe best known among ourselves, which come up in nearly every page they write, and the printed works of writers opposed to the Reformer, such as Walsingham, Knighton, Wodeford, and Walden,—and, above all, the *TRIALOGUS*.

Most of our readers will be aware that this last mentioned work is a Latin treatise, extending to more than three hundred quarto pages, in moderate type. It was compiled by the Reformer within two years of his death. In the first and second books it presents Wycliffe as the metaphysician and the schoolman; in the third and fourth books, as the theologian and the reformer. Two editions of this memorable treatise have been printed on the Continent, one in 1625, and another in 1754. In this country it has

verted to the primitive religion of Christ, and abandoning their false interpretations of genuine Christianity, after having demanded or acquired for themselves permission from anticrist, will freely return to the religion of Christ as it was at first, and then they will build up the Church like Paul.' p. 271). Thus he expresses the expectation that a return to the true way of following Christ would proceed from the bosom of monachism itself; that its friends would obtain liberty from the pope to live in their own way, or would find means of conquering that liberty, and this would be the commencement of a renovated church.—*Hist. Reformation Movements in England.*

never been printed, but nearly the whole of it has been made accessible to the English reader in a literal translation.*

It is refreshing to note the catholic spirit in which the mental processes, and the active life of Wycliffe, are estimated by most of his continental critics, and the thankfulness with which they avail themselves of help towards the study of his career as a Reformer, come from what quarter it may. They have left it to the countrymen of our Reformer to disgrace both him and themselves by looking at him in relation to the narrow limits of some particular church or sect. It is enough for the representatives of thought in Germany to see in Wycliffe the great patriarch of our common Protestantism. That his system is not in all points their own they know. But their marvel is, that a man so intently occupied to his last hour in demolishing the enormous impositions of his age, should have found it possible to make any approach towards a system of any kind. They know, therefore, how to judge him charitably, and how to be grateful to any man who has done something to uphold and vindicate his memory.

The first in the order of time in this series of authors is Dr. Groneman, whose work appears third in the list at the head of this article. That volume was published in 1837. We shall be excused, we trust, for allowing the author to mention his authorities.

'As to my authorities, I have availed myself as well of the works of those who were the enemies of Wycliffe, as of those authors who held him in the highest estimation. Accordingly, I have made especial use of the histories of Henry Knighton and Thomas Walsingham, the former of whom flourished in the time of Wycliffe, the latter in the following century. I have consulted beyond these many records of councils, the public enactments, and the works of Bale, Fox, Harpfield, Wood, Wharton, and others who have written about Wycliffe. Though I saw that his character and doctrine were to be best elucidated from his own writings, I had no opportunity of examining his MSS., which are preserved in great numbers to this day, when those English writers who have immortalized their countryman assisted me, and held out an admirable light for my guidance. For what had been commenced by Thomas James, in his *Apology for John Wickliffe*, published in the year 1608, and by John Lewis, in his book entitled *The History of the Life and Sufferings of John Wickliff, D.D.*, London, 1720, has been carried out with much more accuracy, fulness, and labour, in our own time by Mr. Robert Vaughan, in his work intitled *The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe*, London, second edition, 1831, who has illustrated the life, character, and doctrines of

* *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe, D.D., with Selections and Translations from his Latin Works.* By the Rev. Robert Vaughan, D.D. 8vo. Wycliffe Society, 1845.

the Reformer with extraordinary success, from the Wycliffe MSS.'—Preface.

Dr. Groneman's volume presents a judicious summary of what may be learnt from the above sources in regard to the life and doctrine of our Reformer—presents it to the scholars of Europe in the language common to them. More than one work appeared subsequently in Germany on this subject, founded avowedly on Dr. Vaughan's publication; but the next production of importance consisted of a series of articles on the doctrine of Wycliffe, in the *Zeitschrift für die Historische Theologie*, in 1846 and 1847, from the pen of Dr. Lewald, Professor of Theology at Heidelberg. The aim of Professor Lewald is to present Wycliffe, not in the more popular aspects of his history, so much as in the light of the academical divine. It is Wycliffe's doctrine as a whole, and in the most systematic shape in which it can be presented, with which he is concerned—but indeed we cannot do better than allow him to describe his task in his own words:—

'In various biographies of Wycliffe, as well as in the more copious amongst the works on church history, are to be found sketches of his doctrinal system with illustrative passages appended. In these summaries the doctrines and principles more immediately connected with his Reforming bias, the points of difference between him and the dominant church of his age, are mainly regarded. The well-planned biography by Vaughan, rich in extracts and verbatim citations from Wycliffe's still unprinted writings, gives us more than this. The attempt to furnish, as I propose to do here, such an exhibition of Wycliffe's doctrinal belief (*glaubenslehre*) as shall be somewhat more thoroughly elaborated in point of systematic arrangement than former productions of the kind, one entering more into the peculiarities of the scholastic processes of thought, and developing with greater precision certain philosophico-dogmatical fundamental ideas of the Reformer, will not, I hope, be unwelcome to the reader.

'The *Libri IV. Dialogorum*, or, as it is otherwise intitled, the *Trialogus*, composed by Wycliffe at an advanced age, will form the main source of information in reference to this object of historical research—a work whose remarkable contents in many points of view would prove a still more powerful attraction to the earnest student, if it did not so easily frighten readers away from it by its ugly look in point of style and composition. It is its defectiveness in this respect, and especially its unmethodical, desultory treatment of the subjects handled in the disputations—which are not always brought to any definite conclusion—which explains why, even for a purpose such as mine, it has not as yet been rendered so available in all its parts as it ought. Since we are anxious to supply what is wanting in this respect, so far as what is of most weight is concerned, we shall do our best so to follow the train of thought in the particular dialogues,

that the main threads of the discussion may always be in our grasp. Many too refined scholastic distinctions and subtle scruples, which the author mentions only to throw aside, we take no notice of.

‘Besides the *Triologus* we have as additional sources the *Inedita*, or fragments of such, to be found in Lewis and Vaughan, and particular pieces of Wycliffe, which have already appeared in print, as, for example, the *Ostium* or ‘Wicket’ relating to the Lord’s Supper (Norimberg, 1546, 8vo). For our knowledge of the dialectical basis of his realism, the publication of his work, *De Universalibus*, as yet extant in manuscript only, would be of importance.’—*Zeitschrift f. d. Hist. Theol.*, 1846, H. 2, S. 171—173.

As an honest and skilful guide through the thorny mazes of the *Triologus*, Dr. Lewald has fairly earned by these patient and self-denying labours the highest praise. He has been the first to do what some Englishman should long since have done. The amount of loving toil involved in what has been thus accomplished must have been very great. Professor Lewald has resuscitated the Reforming Schoolman—has loosed Wycliffe from the scholastic ceremonies of the fourteenth century, and enabled him to speak to us in the scientific language of our own time. But the Reformer is still the Professor discoursing to his academic auditory. Indeed, the main fault we have to find with Dr. Lewald is, that he has made Wycliffe too much like a modern Heidelberg professor. The metaphysical Wycliffe of the early part of the *Triologus* is starched and cold, and gives us scarcely the germ of Wycliffe the Reformer. We should rather have had Wycliffe in something of undress. We have to thank Dr. Lewald for disentangling the ideas of the Reformer from the meshes of scholasticism, and for reducing them to order, but this need not have been done after the manner of a Dutch garden, or of a railway-ticket office. We have here nothing but cold bony analysis. There is not even an attempt at synthesis, but the *catalogue raisonnée* of Wycliffe’s opinions unwinds its slow length along with an unbroken uniformity to the end. Of course we cannot quote with any advantage from such a composition. It must suffice to indicate briefly the arrangement Dr. Lewald has adopted in reducing the opinions of the Reformer to a system. The principal parts, or vertebræ—for we cannot help being reminded of the fossil remains of some old saurian—are seven in number. First we have Wycliffe’s sentiments on the Sources whence our knowledge of the Christian religion is to be drawn, and on Faith as a particular mode of conviction. The subdivisions are:—

1. Scripture, the rule of right belief.
2. How Scripture is to be expounded.
3. The right of all Christians to read the Scriptures.
4. The relations between Faith and Knowledge—

Of Faith in its practical aspect—Light of Faith and Light of Reason. The Second Part relates to Wycliffe's doctrine of God, his existence, essence, and attributes. Part the Third gives us his doctrine on the Trinity. Part the Fourth develops his peculiar doctrine of Ideas, and of the Necessity of all that actually exists, together with the Negativity of everything not grounded in God. The Fifth Part details his views of Creation and the Creatures, of Man as consisting of body and soul, his Angelology and Demonology. Then follows his doctrine concerning the Fall and Redemption; the Incarnation and the Atonement. Lastly, we have his teaching as to the Sacraments, with an appendix relative to his views on the nature and functions of the Church. The passages brought together from Wycliffe's writings as bearing on these various topics are of great value as thus arranged, and will be of vast service in the hands of those who may know how to make a more popular use of them than Professor Lewald has attempted.

Professor Leo, of Halle, thinks Wycliffe should be regarded rather as a heretic than as a reformer: an insinuation which, coming as it does from so reckless a partisan of the High Lutheran reactionaries, will hardly create surprise. It is more sad to find a man like Guericke (*Kirchengeschichte*, Bd. i. s. 779, Erst. Ausg.) denying his possession of the Holy Ghost. On this Jaeger quietly remarks: 'This usurped *χαρισμα διακριτικως* stood greatly in need of a tonic regimen, such as might have been found in a study of the works of Lewis and Vaughan,' and accordingly undertakes to prove in opposition to such ignorant and uncharitable judgments that, 'in Wycliffe all the maxims and principles of the Reformation found for the first time a definite and all-sided expression, and that to him belongs, amongst all the forerunners of the Reformation, the title of the Forerunner in an eminent sense.' The occasion both of the composition and of the publication of Jaeger's production affords illustration of the growing interest taken in the subject throughout Germany. For it was written with a view to a competition proposed in 1851 by the Protestant Theological Faculty of the University of Tübingen, on 'the theological characteristics of John Wycliffe, his opposition to the dogmas of the Catholic Church, and his importance as a Reformer compared with John Huss and John Wessel on the one hand, and with Luther on the other.' Having been awarded the prize, it was laid by for a while until the Ultramontane attempts of the Archbishop of Friburg against the Baden Government seemed to the author to present a fitting opportunity for calling the attention of his countrymen to the great man who first struck the key-note of patriotic resistance to

Rome in England. His Essay is a most genial one, and furnishes a very delightful and instructive comparative study of the four sturdy pillars which in England, Holland, Bohemia, and Germany upheld the rising temple of a renovated Christianity. Our author's method in the treatment of his subject is sketched by his own hand in the following extract, which must serve instead of a more detailed analysis:—

'We first delineate Wycliffe apart. The starting-point and centre of gravity, so to speak, of his work falls on the side of *faith and doctrine*. If we treat this question first of all according to its subjective aspect, this will give us the *theological characteristics* of Wycliffe in the narrower sense, and this portion of our work will have to do with the fundamental Christian dogmas, with Wycliffe's Christian view of things purely as such. When we have thus become acquainted with the deep substructure of his power, our Second Part will show how these theological convictions took up arms against the externalism of the ecclesiastical dogma, and will treat of *his opposition to the Catholic creed*. After summing up the general results of the inquiries entered on in the First Part, it will exhibit Wycliffe's antagonistic views under the two heads of the doctrine of the Sacraments and that of the Church. The latter will of itself lead us by a natural transition to the Third Part—viz., the delineation of Wycliffe's character as a Reformer, and of the *means* at his command and the *plans* which he formed for the renovation of the Church; in which place we shall have to speak of his relations to the ecclesiastical authorities, to the people, and to the State. This done, we shall gather up the results, and on the basis thus secured shall proceed to the examination of what forms the second main division of our subject—viz., Wycliffe's importance with reference to the Reformation, side by side with the men who paved the way for it on the one hand, and with the man who at length accomplished it on the other.'—Jaeger, pp. 18, 19.

In the comparison between Wycliffe and Huss, our author is more just to our illustrious countryman than Neander, who, he rightly complains, shows too much disposition to underrate the English Reformer's share in the Bohemian movement. The space assigned to Wycliffe in Neander's posthumous volume affords a fresh illustration of the growing German interest in the Lutterworth evangelist, and is welcome to our national feeling. But we fear it cannot be said that the prince of church historians has in this portion of his immortal work risen to the height of his great argument. Such is also Jaeger's deliverance upon the point. He says:—

'As regards the delineation of Wycliffe in the sixth and most recent volume of Neander's *Church History*, we find it sadly wanting in arrangement, completeness, and profound apprehension of the man, and in the course of our task we shall be compelled here and there to

impugn one and another of his perverse judgments. At the very outset we must lift up our voice against his placing the entire history of Wycliffe under the rubric, 'History of Theology and Doctrine.' 'In the ideas scattered by Matthias of Janow,' says Neander, 'we have all that was wanted to produce the Bohemian revolt, and that out of these ideas, without the superadded influence of Wycliffe, a struggle, pushed continually farther and farther through the opposition of the great anti-reforming party, might have developed itself.'

On which Jaeger pertinently remarks, that it is idle to ask what *might* have happened apart from Wycliffe's influence. That influence was there, and had wrought far more powerfully than that of Matthias of Janow on Huss himself at any rate, and still more on Jerome of Prague, who is doubtless of more importance than Huss so far as regards the beginning of the Bohemian commotions. He then proceeds:—

'The true state of the case was in general as follows:—Already, before the time of Huss, the practical opposition to the prevailing abuses, just as it showed itself sporadically everywhere, so also was it carried on with particular vigour here in Bohemia by Janow and his compeers, and this path was followed up by Huss with equal zeal. Wycliffe's writings were already known there, at least in part, but without as yet having attracted special attention. But in the year 1398, Jerome of Prague brought home with him from Oxford other writings of Wycliffe, dispersed them with the greatest enthusiasm, and became inspired with zeal on behalf of the English doctrines. It was this newly-kindled interest in the doctrines of the English heretic which led to the condemnation of his forty-five articles in 1403, with which event the controversy begins to gain in real significance. For now, for the first time, *Wycliffe's general attack upon the entire foundations of the ancient Church*, which, moreover, had been particularly warm against *the ecclesiastical doctrine*, coalesced with the opposition against *abuses in practice and life*, and imparted to this latter its own radical character. In this way Huss was forced into a position which he by no means occupied in the beginning, and which he was even constantly at pains to decline. Huss was anxious about nothing so much as to purge himself from the charge of heresy. The accusation of being puffed up with a sense of his own importance was painful to his susceptible and humble mind, and whilst Wycliffe in his daring self-reliance hurled against the Church herself the charge of heresy—even in reference to articles of faith, such as transubstantiation, Huss even from his prison writes with touching earnestness to the Knight of Chlum, to be sure and not forget to impress on the queen, that she need not be under any apprehension of scandal on his part as though he were a heretic. Moreover, he repudiated every sort of intimate connexion and partnership with Wycliffe. Already at Prague, in 1403, he would not allow it to be asserted to his prejudice that he had said that all Wycliffe's forty-five articles were true, although by ascribing what was false in them, with the exception of the article,

De corpore Christi, to the falsification of a certain Dr. Hübner, he, nevertheless, evinces his inward leaning towards Wycliffe. The same is expressed in his well-known touching and beautiful wish: 'Would I might reach the place where the soul of Wycliffe is!'—Jaeger, pp. 92, 93.

In Jaeger's opinion Huss deceived himself as to the extent to which he had been influenced by Wycliffe. It was not mainly the philosophical writings of Wycliffe, as he said before the Council, which had first and especially attracted him. He had not merely imbibed and defended this or that particular doctrine of the English Reformer, but he held the *fundamental principle* in common with Wycliffe, and that, as our author thinks, in a still more profound, immediate, and living way than Wycliffe himself. His reasoning is as follows:—

'In support of this conclusion we cannot do better than appeal to his adversaries, to the Catholic Church, which in such questions has ever judged with all the keenness of a natural instinct. The Church had recognised in Wycliffe her most dangerous enemy, the man who had laid the axe to the root of her proud but corrupt tree. The Synod at Rome had ordered the writings of Wycliffe to be burnt, and had fulminated against him the curse of the Church. The Council of Constance, in its eighth session, in May, 1415, solemnly pronounced him a heretic, condemned his doctrine, and in its fanatical zeal ordained that his accursed bones should be dug up out of consecrated ground, and his earthly remains scattered upon the river.

'Again, that the Council were for classing Huss altogether with Wycliffe, is particularly shown by its eagerness to fasten on Huss the heresies of Wycliffe, to which point his accusers always came back. The same thing appears in many of the speeches of the most eminent men in the Council, but especially in the *sentence*, in which the doctrines and the person of Wycliffe fill the foreground, and Huss is treated simply as an adherent and disciple of Wycliffe, and condemned to be burnt accordingly.

'Paletz, then, was quite right when he said to Huss, 'Since the birth of Christ no heretic has written more dangerously against the Church than thou and Wycliffe.' For it is just this phenomenon, that what had found in Wycliffe clear *dogmatic* expression, had at once assumed in Huss a direct *practical* shape—one-sidedly practical, it may be, but probably for that very reason all the more truly popular—it is just this fact, I say, which proves that in the Bohemian Reformer the new principle had already become *life and reality*, and had gained in depth and earnestness. This has been already pointed out in detail. The evangelical conception of the Church at once attains with Huss its practical application in what he says of the universal priesthood, and, if Gerson is to be believed in the articles of accusation which he drew up, the Reformer himself went so far as to maintain that every pious man has a right and is bound to teach and to preach (*quod omnis bene vivens secundam vitam Christi potest et debet docere palam*

et prædicare). The refusal to bow to the papal authority, which he is unable theoretically to carry through, he maintains simply by implication, in that he revolts against being hindered by the papal excommunication from the fulfilment of his duty as a preacher imposed on him immediately by God. So, too, if when he asserts the authority of Scripture he glances wistfully at tradition, and the holy *doctores*, nevertheless the study of his practical writings in particular, and of his whole personality, shows that with him the authority of Scripture had become a living power. They breathe throughout, and that far more than Wycliffe's, a spirit inwardly akin to the Gospel, and based on it alone. In Huss we meet with a really living and personal relationship to Christ, after which we see Wycliffe earnestly striving only. In this respect the reforming principle in Huss rises to a higher level than in Wycliffe, to whom he is decidedly inferior in importance, power, and clearness of intellect, and approaches in a marked degree the full pitch which it attains in Luther.

'A deeper study of history will not reproach us with a leaning to the magical and superstitious if we here mention also the marvellous insight and the prophetic element in Huss. It proves how full his mind was of the weal and woe of the Church; how this one thought swayed his soul. As an example of this trait, which is everywhere discernible, especially in his last peril, we adduce only that dream, of which he writes so touchingly from his prison:—'I saw how in Bethlehem* men endeavoured to deface all the pictures of Christ, and they succeeded in doing so. Then on the next day I arose and saw a number of painters, who had painted many more and much finer ones. In like manner, I too hope,' he proceeds to say, 'that the life of Christ which by my ministry in Bethlehem has been painted by means of His word in the hearts of men, will be better painted and by more and better preachers than I; and with this prospect will I comfort myself.'—*Jaeger*, pp. 93—95.

Space will not be left us to enter into the particulars of the scarcely less interesting parallel between Wycliffe and the reforming Hollander, Wessel, the scholar of Thomas à Kempis and the teacher of Reuchlin. Until the Messrs. Clark, of Edinburgh, gave us, in our own language, Ullmann's masterly work, *The Reformers before the Reformation*, Wessel was to English readers a great unknown. We wish we could here afford to do more than merely allow Jaeger to indicate the point of view whence he compares Wessel with Wycliffe.

'It now came to the turn of the second of the two tendencies which we have found united in Wycliffe to develop itself; I refer to the opposition against the hierarchical science, against scholasticism. This was the problem of that period of seeming repose and lassitude which succeeded to the exciting times of the great Councils of Basle and Constance. The representative of this second tendency is John

* The chapel of that name at Prague in which he was wont to preach.

Wessel, and it is remarkable enough that he exhibits in his person this side of Wycliffe with the same one-sidedness as Huss the other. When great ideas make shipwreck for the moment, and the opposing forces triumph, it is in accordance with a natural law that an impulse develops itself, to gain by means of a reform from within outwards, and step by step, that which has not been yielded in the lump to stormy and revolutionary assaults. In such cases the new element has to be brought to full maturity, and to be carefully elaborated in the noiseless workshop of calm scientific retirement. In the time of which we speak this process was precipitated by the revival of the humanistic studies which were going on at that very epoch. This quietly creative spirit, which blended a tranquil, practical life with contemplative science—the Inner Mission, as it may be styled, of the fifteenth century—had its head-quarters in the Netherlands. In this country, in the societies of the Brethren of the Common Lot, we find a more peaceful renovation of the Lollards. Like Wycliffe's disciples, they lived according to the Gospel by the labour of their hands; they had introduced amongst themselves the community of goods in use amongst the first Christians, and studied in retirement the Gospel of love and science. Whilst Wycliffe's fiery nature infinitely preferred energetic action to slothful contemplation, and had zealously opposed everything like conventual life within stone walls, it was precisely this habit of retreating into the quiet of their cells, to which these brethren were indebted for the powerful spirit which animated their modest works of charity. No better illustration can be given of the contrast between Wycliffe's heroic struggles, and this love of retirement produced by intoxication of feeling, than the words of Florentius Radertus, one of the successors of the founder of the brotherhood, Gerhard Groot. 'Accustom thyself,' says he, 'to abide in thy chamber, and to read in a book until it is disagreeable and irksome to thee to quit it, but delightful to enter it.' And again: 'It is dangerous to converse with worldly dignitaries and spiritual lords; rather avoid the people of the world and great men.'

'Out of this brotherhood proceeded John Wessel, born 1410 at Gröningen, and to this cloistered retreat, furnished by his native land, did he return after having lived at Cologne, Paris, Rome, and Heidelberg, in contact with the most eminent scientific minds and ecclesiastical notabilities, everywhere doing good in the way of communicating instruction, and by means of friendly controversy, whenever it was possible without a deeper breach with the established order of things. Here in his own home he wrote most of his works, which, keeping the middle path between simple edification and science, bear throughout the same uniform character of mild and moderate opposition, free from all excitement, and of humble self-mistrust and genuine piety. It must be added that they bear also the stamp of an age wanting in the highest kind of productive power.'—*Jaeger*, pp. 102—104.

The general scope of the parallel with Luther may be gathered from the following brief retrospective survey of the whole subject:—

‘ We have seen the reforming principle complete a sort of cycle. Wycliffe shook from without the prison-house in which men’s spirits lay bound, and toiled in rolling the first stones towards the new building. But though this blow made the whole edifice totter, yet it was not repeated, and it was not effectual on a grand scale. There was wanting to the new principle that inward power of life, which it was destined to discover in itself in a course of slow development, and as it became more deeply rooted, and that by means of a separate unfolding of each particular germ. This process took place in Huss and Wessel and their compeers. Luther united anew, as in a focus, the different diverging tendencies and reforming energies, and led them up to a higher stage; and in him the reforming principle has not simply reached its culmination in its doctrinal form, as he himself thought, but rather out of the teeming fulness of a great man, and of a wholly new view of life, it has shed the seeds of new impulses and new progressive instincts. Again, not as though the whole truth were now found out, in whose shadow we might comfortably repose, and perhaps in German fashion spin disputes about trifles, as did that great abortive century which followed the sixteenth with its mighty movements. Luther and the German Reformation have left a great portion of the problem unsolved, and, such being the case, we ought not in the feeling of our weakness to be above learning from the beginners of the Reformation things for which the great consummator of the work found neither himself nor his age ripe, and things of whose importance the present time seems to admonish us with loud voice. We mean the carrying out of the reforming principle on the arena of national life and of the State; a carrying out of the work, not, as our adversaries say with their wonted blindness in historical matters, identical with the French Revolution and French anarchy, but one which, both in Church and State, like to nothing save itself, means only legal, temperate, manly freedom and reformation from within outwards.’

Dr. Lechler, an able contributor to this department of literature in Germany, was first brought into notice by his prize work on *The Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Age*, and by his *History of English Deism*. Of late he seems to have cherished a growing predilection for Wycliffe as his special subject. Hence his selection by Herzog (whose editorial tact in these matters is beyond all praise) to write the Lollard articles in the great *Protestant Theological and Ecclesiastical Encyclopædia*, now in course of publication at Stuttgart. Hence, too, his own choice of Wycliffe as his theme in his inaugural discourse delivered on the occasion of his taking possession of the Theological Chair at Leipzig a few weeks ago. The foundation of all these minor labours, however, is to be found in his series of papers in Niedner’s *Zeitschrift für die Historische Theologie*, the years 1853 and 1854. These interesting papers are now before us, and afford ample testimony to the spirit of patient and conscientious research with which

inquiries of this sort are conducted by German scholars when once their attention is thoroughly called to them. What prompted Dr. Lechler to study the subject more closely, was the discreditable confusion of opinion on the Continent relative to Wycliffe and the Lollards, which he thus describes:—

‘Wycliffe’s importance as a forerunner of the Reformation is not uniformly recognised and finally set at rest to this day, even within the Protestant churches themselves. Neither his character and style of thought as an individual, nor the nature, measure, duration, and issue of the work begun by him, are known as they ought to be. Opinions differ widely, for instance, even as to whether Wycliffe has at all a right to be reckoned amongst the forerunners of the Reformation, properly so called, and his place amongst the ‘witnesses of the truth’ is warmly disputed. Again, as relates to the disciples whom he gathered round him, and the results which he brought about, men have just as little made up their minds, even at the present day. At the very outset we find the question undecided, whether in general the rise of a reforming party in England is to be set down so pre-eminently and even exclusively, as is commonly done, to the account of Wycliffe; or whether the influence of older sects, the Waldenses for example, was not an important factor in the business, so that at bottom Wycliffe could merely have furnished the decisive impulse to the open manifestation of views already current independent of him. Further, a great diversity of opinion prevails as to the measure in which the influence of Wycliffe permeated the English nation, and in particular whether his influence was felt mainly amongst the higher and cultivated classes, or actually laid hold of the heart of the people. There are questions, too, as to the nature of his influence, namely, whether he laboured in a one-sided manner merely to increase the stock of Christian knowledge, or brought about an outward ecclesiastico-political ferment, or was the author of a moral renovation and genuine religious awakening. Lastly, as regards the fortunes of the party after Wycliffe’s death, and the degree of success attending the measures adopted against it, we find in many historical works hazy and inadequate, or formally incorrect statements. Mostly the writers content themselves with remarking that till 1399 the Lollards were on the increase, and that then, for the first time, stringent measures were adopted in dealing with them, the severity of which became intensified from 1413. It is often imagined that the result of this bloody persecution was the total suppression of the party; whilst others have seen so much at least of the truth as to maintain that its free opinions were never quite rooted up again, and that many germs of Wycliffe’s sowing were preserved down to the Reformation.’—*Zeitschr. f. Hist. Theol.* 1858, Heft 3, s. 416, 417.

In the luminous papers before us, Dr. Lechler does his best to disabuse his countrymen of the manifold misconceptions current amongst them respecting Wycliffe and his followers. He treats

of their history in five periods, the first of which extends to Wycliffe's death (1384); the second ends with the elevation of the House of Lancaster to the throne (1399); the third with the martyrdom of Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham (1417); the fourth period is brought down to 1431, when the bloody persecution against the Lollards may be said to have culminated; and the fifth and last stretches down to the Reformation. Of these periods, the first alone more immediately concerns us here. Our author first gives a slight sketch of the Reformer's life, next a summary of his doctrines, and lastly, an estimate of his success. The review of his theology confines itself, for the most part, to the *Reforming* elements embodied in it. A very similar distribution is followed in the 'Inaugural Lecture,' which, indeed, may in general be regarded as our author's own *resumé* of his earlier production. We shall, therefore, borrow from its more compressed pages his account of Wycliffe's religious opinions:—

'As a theologian, Wycliffe is eminent, not only as a master of the scholastic method, but also by virtue of his healthy relish for the truth itself, his biblical bias, and his critical spirit. Jerome of Prague, who returned home to Bohemia from Oxford fourteen years after Wycliffe's death, says, in his enthusiasm for the man, 'Hitherto, men possessed nothing but the shell of science, Wycliffe was the first to discover the kernel.' But I am persuaded that had Wycliffe discovered the kernel without being, at the same time, master of the scientific form, which in his age was looked on as the main thing, he would, in the end, have met with nothing but depreciation, and especially from the very fact of his making the Bible the foundation. Those who, instead of reading over the great masters of scholasticism, read over the Bible itself, and drew immediately from the Bible, were nicknamed 'Biblicists,' and greeted with nothing but shrugging of the shoulders. And yet with what decision and loyalty did Wycliffe hold aloft the Bible! With ever-growing clearness and power his conviction breaks forth, that holy Scripture is alone entitled to supreme authority as the fountain and rule of Christian faith and life. He says, for instance, 'As Christ is infinitely exalted above every other man, so is Holy Scripture possessed of infinitely greater authority than any other book. Every truth which the pilgrim upon earth does not perceive by means of his senses, must, if it be entitled to belief, be drawn from the Holy Scriptures.' Indeed, in another passage, he makes the bold assertion, 'Were there a hundred popes, and were all the begging friars turned into cardinals, yet in matters of faith men would not be bound by their *dicta*, except so far as they were founded on the Bible.' This biblical bias was well known to his hearers as the Reformer's distinguishing characteristic; and hence, whilst other great schoolmen received names of honour, such as *Doctor Angelicus*, *Doctor Subtilis*, *Doctor Irrefragabilis*, &c., to Wycliffe was given the striking title, *Doctor Evangelicus*.

'This upholding of the authority of Scripture as the only decisive rule in matters of faith, this, so to say, formal principle, rests, as we at once see, on a material principle, and this latter runs thus—*To God alone be honour!* Christ and his merits *alone* are the ground of salvation, and God's free election in Christ is the unconditioned cause of the blessedness of all believers. Wycliffe earnestly insists on the point that honour is to be given to God alone, and overflows with zeal against all idolatry, which, for instance, he sees in this, that the commandments of men are ranked above the commandment of God, or that men swear by the saints, or that a monkish order usurps the honour which belongs to none but God, &c. That Jesus Christ, by virtue of his exalted person, as God and man, and of his merit, is the *only Mediator* between God and man, is with him a fundamental truth, to which he always appeals again and again against the invocation of the saints. The faith which saves must, for this reason, trust exclusively and wholly to Christ, and not to anything besides, whether the merits of the saints or one's own works. This faith must be 'a full belief of Christ.' Connected herewith is his doctrine touching *God's unconditional election*. This Augustinian doctrine Wycliffe makes his own in all earnestness, save that he does not, like Augustine, make the fall and human sinfulness and inability for good his starting-point, but God's omnipotence and government of the universe, unconditioned itself, but prescribing absolutely the conditions under which all things exist. In other words, he lays down, not an anthropological but a theological and speculative basis for the doctrine. In opposition to the superficial view of human sin, and the exaggerated estimate of human virtue, which lie at the basis of the Pelagian doctrine, in his eyes the infinitely gracious will in Christ, which works everything that is truly good, stood high above all. And accordingly, in his view, faith itself is a free gift of God's grace, and not a meritorious work. This belief, shaped in a corresponding way his conception of *the Church*; the holy church is nothing but the congregation of the elect; this is 'the true body of Christ' as opposed to the 'mixed or seeming body of Christ,' which includes within itself both elect and hypocrites. In other words, whilst the Romish mediæval view understood by the church the prelates and priests—the hierarchy, and did not, properly speaking, reckon the laity to the church, Wycliffe sets forth a conception of the church which, on the one hand, excludes all the impious and hypocrites, even if invested with church-office, whether high or low; and on the other hand, includes all true believers. And instead of making the salvation of individuals dependent throughout on church-office and the priesthood, he holds the immediate access to grace, *i.e.*, the universal priesthood of all believers. 'Faith,' says Wycliffe, 'is not built upon the Pope and his Cardinals, but upon the Holy Trinity and the God-man Jesus Christ, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' Moreover, at the bottom of his lively opposition against the Romish doctrine of the *Lord's Supper*, lies the same seal for the honour of God. In the mediæval church, the Eucharist, both doctrinally and

in its administration, had assumed a shape in which we Protestants must recognise a corruption. In three main points the institution of Christ and biblical truth had become perverted and falsified, viz., in the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, in the withholding of the cup from the laity, and in the dogma of transubstantiation. Wycliffe's attention had only been fastened upon the last, viz., the Roman Catholic doctrine that the bread and wine upon the altar, by virtue of consecration by the priest, are *changed* into the body and blood of Christ, in such a manner that nothing, save the *species*, or semblance and taste of bread and wine now remain, but that in reality it is only the body and blood of Christ which are there, for which reason the consecrated host must be worshipped as the real body of Christ. This doctrine Wycliffe declares to be contrary alike to reason and Scripture, pronounces it the most impious heresy which ever arose, and 'the abomination of desolation in the holy place,' spoken of in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. There were two things which gave him such great offence—in the first place the formal worship paid to the host, which he says, is a making of God out of the creature, idolatry; and secondly, the fancy that the priest, by virtue of his consecration, could *make (conficere)* the body of Christ, a pretence which raises the honour of the priesthood to the skies: in this Wycliffe could see nothing else than a blasphemous making of God out of a man, and an anti-Christian self-exaltation of the clergy. As respects his own view, it is on the one side, clear and consistent, viz., that the bread and wine in the sacrament of the altar are, and remain, real bread and natural wine, as much after consecration as before it. But on the other side, as to the sense in which Christ's body and blood are to be discerned in the Lord's Supper, his view is vague and wavering. Sometimes he seems to allow the visible to be nothing more than a sign of the invisible, in which he approximates to the doctrine of Zwingli; at other times he acknowledges the true body of Christ in the Sacrament, so that he approaches the Lutheran confession. We may remark in general, that candour demands that we should not forget the difficulties which in reference precisely to this article, would stand in the way of a now and satisfactory doctrinal development, especially on a first attempt at a critical treatment of the Romish dogma.'

Dr. Lechler has expressed his critical judgment on the principal biographies of Wycliffe. There are considerations which would preclude us from citing his language on this point, but there are other circumstances which seem to say that it should be given:—

'The best works on Wycliffe are the biographies of Lewis and Vaughan. The former was the first earnest attempt at a history of Wycliffe from its sources; and in fact, in addition to 105 pages of original citation, mostly Latin, in the Appendix, numerous proof passages are given in the work itself. What we miss in the book, however, is not only due elaboration, order, and clearness, but also a comprehensive acquaintance with Wycliffe's works. But although

this book remained to 1829 the only one drawn from the authorities, it was very little used. What Schneider remarks in the preface to the sixth volume of Neander's *Church History*—viz., that few of our church historians can ever have had the book in their hands—is certainly correct. . . . The new work—*The Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe, D.D.*, by Robert Vaughan, is distinguished by an extensive study of the originals; and he has incorporated in his work a precious and well-arranged *florilegium* of citations from them. For example, he gives from the manuscript sermons of Wycliffe a number of valuable and highly illustrative passages, whereas, until the appearance of his work, no correct and satisfactory information as to those homilies was anywhere to be found. Besides all this, Vaughan may claim the distinguished merit of having been the first to arrange chronologically the writings of Wycliffe by the help of internal notes of time, whereby it became possible, for the first time, to point out the Reformer's inner course of development, and to defend him against traditional prejudices, especially against the charge of inconsistency or disingenuousness.'

Professor Lechler regrets that Dr. Vaughan has not paid more attention to Wycliffe's philosophical speculations as a realist, and would have preferred that the extracts from Wycliffe's English works had been given with the strict *ipsissima verba* of the author; but he speaks of the work, on the whole, as dealing with its subject 'critically, cautiously, and with thoroughness,' and as being 'the only satisfactory elaboration of Wycliffe's life from the original sources.'

Winkelmann's Latin essay is the fruit of another university competition. The Theological Faculty of Göttingen, which had proposed the theme, were scarcely satisfied with the first draught, although they adjudged to it the prize; and they accordingly sent it back to the writer for correction before honouring it with their *imprimatur*. It is still, however, a somewhat crude performance; and their first judgment, pronounced through their Dean, the learned and genial Dr. Dörner, has been by no means wholly deprived of its sting by the subsequent revision. The Faculty says of it:—

'As a whole, with the exception of the part relative to the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the treatise is elaborated from the original sources, and, at the same time, does not omit to notice, not without a judicious estimate of their merits, the more recent literary productions. We find it, indeed, open to exceptions. It is a great deal too abruptly, and, here and there, too hurriedly written. It enters too little into such a general description of the historical situation with which it has to do as might help the reader in discovering his whereabouts, and allows the tendency to schematize—too evident in many places—to get the better of an unprejudiced appreciation of the real state of the case. It thereby often assumes too

abstract a tone, and becomes almost chargeable with injustice. This is especially to be remarked in reference to its treatment of Wycliffe. In particular it does not discuss in sufficient detail the relation of the previous reforming movements to the Reformation itself. With all these drawbacks, however, the essay displays a lively and agile intellect, acuteness and solidity of judgment, and a not altogether unsuccessful endeavour to learn the nature of the phenomena from the inner heart of the spiritual powers concerned in their production. The delineation of Gerson and his theology is entitled to marked commendation.'

That Dr. Dorner and his colleagues should have classed Gerson, the bitter persecutor of Huss, as a Reformer along with his victim, will surprise no one who remembers the part played at Constance by the great Chancellor of Paris, and his bearing there towards the papacy. His prescription for the sick church was, in reference to doctrine, a blending of the scholastic and mystic theologies; and as regards polity, the substitution of an aristocratic ecclesiastical regimen by means of decennial general councils in the place of the papal autoeracy.

In the following passage Winkelmann places Gerson quite upon a par with Wycliffe—altogether erroneously, as might easily be shown, and only by depreciating the latter most unfairly.

'Since Wycliffe, with his disciples, showed that God is revealed in holy Scripture, and insisted that all truths are to be drawn thence, he might seem to deserve the name of a Reformer far more than Gerson. In the main, however, they are entitled to the same credit; for Wycliffe did not learn more from his new source than Gerson discovered by his own genius (!!)—which yet is not to be taken in the sense that their sentiments were in general the same; on the contrary, they taught opposite truths. It must be granted, however, that no man has seen everything. Gerson believed that God is love, but forgot that He is just. Wycliffe, on the other hand, was above all things concerned to inculcate the truth that He is just. The former decides that the world is governed by grace; the latter, that it is ruled by justice and penalties. The former esteemed the contemplative life the highest grade of perfection; the latter never ceased to proclaim that God's righteous law must be done and fulfilled. Both, accordingly, found God, but the one scarcely recognises the God of the other; and this difference in their opinions concerning God is the cause of their disagreement as to what men are to do, and as to the way to the blessed life.

'Wycliffe seems to have deduced the justice of God, not from his contemplation of the universe, but from his study of human nature, under the guidance of his own intellect. For since he affirms that God is 'everything, whose existence is better than its non-existence' (*Trial*. 12), it is difficult to say why he should have chosen to say that God is just (*Trial*. 13), rather than that God is love, unless because he found the truth that God is just, and that wickedness will be punished,

ingrained in his very nature. For he declares that God and the law are one and the same, and is wont to style the whole of holy Scripture the law or rule of Christ or of God. In one passage, indeed, he says that 'the Scripture denotes Jesus Christ the Book of Life' (*Trial*. 175), but he adds, 'in which all truth is written;' and since he regarded the law as truth rather, he did not come to conceive of it as life, as Jaeger rightly remarks (p. 139).^{*} What Vaughan has observed (i. 331) is indeed true, that in Wycliffe's writings the law of Christ means all God's communications to men; but then to him these same things which have been revealed by God seem to be little else than God's commandments. Even in that passage which I have just cited he says nothing concerning the *life* with which Scripture is instinct, but speaks of the law only, and of what is the more glorious import of Scripture in the popular estimation; and elsewhere he styles the Decalogue the crown of God's law, that is, of Scripture (*Vaugh.* ii. 322). Moreover, in those of his books which were written for the unlettered, and in his sermons, he is ever saying that the will of God is revealed in holy Scripture, and that we may learn therefrom how to live aright (*Vaugh.* ii. 19—26). Lastly, if he makes mention of the Gospel—which, indeed, he very seldom does—the Gospel is introduced not as an annunciation of the Gospel, so to speak, but as an issuing of commands' (*Vaughan*, ii. 23).—*Winkelmann*, pp. 30, 31.

No doubt our essayist's judges had something of this sort in view when they hinted at his having in his haste, and love of *achematism*, wronged the English Reformer's memory. Wycliffe, although, of course, he had not so clear a perception of the evangelical aspect of revelation as Luther, was anything but the legalist—we had almost said Pelagian—here portrayed. To one who was no less decided a predestinarian than Augustine and his own master Bradwardine before him, or than Calvin after him, this was simply impossible; and it is scarcely necessary, in such a case, to appeal from so crude a judgment to the infinitely better informed and maturer estimate of Lewald, as indicated in the following brief extract:—

'Wycliffe's theory of grace and predestination forms the centre of his theological doctrine; and we soon see that his efforts as a Reformer ripen on a soil on which, at least, the tares of pride in one's own merits and conceited self-righteousness cannot take root and thrive; whilst, on the other hand, the germ of the various doctrinal corruptions and practical abuses, of which he was the antagonist, sprung up and grew in the soil of that semi-pelagianism, which is so much more kindly for the production of such tares. 'He is a believer,' says Wycliffe (*Dial.* l. iii. c. 2, fol. 47,) 'who possesses faith as something shed into his heart immediately from God,

^{*} Jaeger is misrepresented here. He merely says, 'This sentence never became a full reality with Wycliffe. He stopped at the word 'Book,' and never got so far as the word 'Life.'

mingled with no contrary affection of fear or despondency.' We may combine with this the passage in a sermon in which he thus expresses himself on the same subject:—'We ought to know that faith is a gift of God, and that it cannot be given to men otherwise than of grace. Therefore, every good which men possess is from God. Accordingly, when God rewards any good work of a man, He crowns His own gift. Even this is in like manner of grace, just as all things which men possess according to the will of God are of grace. God's goodness is the primary reason why he bestows on man any good thing; and thus God can do good to man no otherwise than freely and of grace; and it is only in a sense agreeable with this rule that it is correct to say that man deserves anything of God' (*Vaughan*, vol. ii. p. 33 sq.)—*Zeitsch. f. d. Hist. Theol.* 1846. Heft, 2 ss. 184, 185.*

Professor Weber of Heidelberg, in what claims to be the first original German history of the English Reformation, has, of course, to speak of Wycliffe's share in bringing it about. We are sorry to find, however, that the Reformer does not fill the space in this history which the promise held out in the supercription to the first volume naturally leads us to expect. 'The Lollards' occupy, out of nearly seven hundred pages, not more than eighty, of which under fifty are assigned to Wycliffe. The author, too, has fallen into the same error with which Jaeger justly charges Neander (whom, indeed, he seems to have too servilely copied in this matter), by treating of 'Wycliffe and the Lollards' under the strange heading: 'The Theological Science of the Middle Ages in Relation to the Dominant Church System.' He has, however, happily avoided the error of Winkelmann, as pointed

* Neander has some just observations on this point, and on the tendency of Wycliffe's view respecting it. Wycliffe was entangled in the old scholastic view of the doctrine of Justification. He gave special prominence to the subjective side of this doctrine; and hence he agreed with Augustine and the schoolmen on this point, that no one could have certainty whether he belonged to the elect or not. It is evident that in this case as in that of Augustine and the Thomists, this might be held in perfect consistency with his referring everything to grace alone, and placing free-will utterly in the background. And hence, too, Wycliffe might sometimes give prominence to the trust of a Christian in the consciousness of his own pious life, though he regarded everything in that life as being but a work of Divine grace. Accordingly, he says, when God rewards a good work he crowns his own gift. Hence, too, we may with Vaughan (vol. ii. 359) compare Wycliffe with Luther in his views of the doctrine of Justification. But trust in the redemption by Christ is, in truth, made the central point also by the scholastic theologians of the thirteenth century. Yet in making this *subjective* conception of Justification his point of departure, and deriving everything from the divine fellowship of life with Christ, he came to a more profound and spiritual conception of the Church, as an inward unity to be traced to the same common *inward* fact, in contradistinction from the *outward* unity contended for on the position held by the Church. 'Holy Church,' he says, 'is the congregation of just men, for whom Christ shed his blood, and not mere stones and timber, and earthly dross, which the priests of antichrist magnify more than the righteousness of God, and the souls of men' (*Vaughan*, ii. 279)—all who shall be saved in the bliss of heaven are members of holy Church, and no more.—*Hist. Reformation Movements in England.*

out by his judges—he has not neglected to take account of the political situation and the general physiognomy of the times, and his remarks in particular on the influence of the dynastic change at the accession of Henry IV. on the fortunes of the Lollard cause are valuable. He first gives a brief biographical sketch of Wycliffe (i. pp. 54—91); next comes a still more compendious analysis of his opinions on the priesthood and the church, religion and worship (pp. 92—101); and lastly, an account of Lollardism down to the Reformation (pp. 102—135). The descriptive portions are graphic, though not at the expense of historical truth; and the vivid impression left on the reader's mind of the wide spread of Wycliffeism in this country during the few years before and after the Reformer's death deserves special mention. The doctrinal summary is a rather perfunctory performance—tolerably correct and not intolerably dull.

The *Life of Wycliffe* by Friedrich Böhringer, published in 1856, is the first work, in a series, on the biographical history of the early Reformation to which the author has pledged himself. It extends to more than six hundred octavo pages, and its view of the life and doctrine of Wycliffe is, as a whole, the best that has appeared in Germany. The *Life of the Reformer* extends through the first hundred and fifty pages, and is of course derived from English sources. On the doctrines of Wycliffe the author prosecutes his own independent analysis, but avails himself freely of the labours of Professor Lewald. He complains that Lewis does nothing with the doctrines of Wycliffe, and that Dr. Vaughan has not gone into that subject more thoroughly and systematically. As may be expected, he is himself very full and very methodical on that topic—much more so we suspect than would accord with the patience of ordinary English readers, and even with that of most English students. It is a work, however, which will do its part towards placing Wycliffe in his true position before the mind of the Germans. So the right comes round at last. This world can be long forgetful of some of its greatest men. The following is the form in which the doctrine of Wycliffe is presented by Böhringer:—

' *Wycliffe as a Theologian*.—The Existence of God—the Trinity—the Divine Attributes—the Divine Ideas—the Divine Omnipotence and Causality—Necessity and Freedom—Moral Evil—Predestination—the World—Angels—Man—the Fall—Original Sin.

' On Redemption.—Necessity of the Incarnation—Person of Christ—Work of Christ—Salvation.

' Eschatology.—Immortality of the Soul—Purgatory—Resurrection—the Judgment—State of the Saved—of the Lost.

' Ethics.—The Virtues (Ethical, Theological)—Sin (Venial Sin and Mortal)—the Seven Virtues and Sins.

'*Wycliffe as a Reformer.*—The Bible—Translation of the Bible—Reason and Revelation—Scholastic Philosophy—the Fathers—the 'New' Teachers.

'Sacraments.—Baptism—Lord's Supper—Confirmation—Ordination—Marriage—Penance—Extreme Unction.

'On Worship.—Evangelical Worship—Worship of Saints.

'The Church.—Idea of the Church—the Empirical Church—the Decline—the Priesthood—the Pope—the Clergy.

'Reform of the Church.—In General—Preaching—Clergy—Lords—the Crown—the People—the 'Poor Priests'—the Free Congregations—Prospects.

'Wycliffe and the Friars.—Monachism—Civil Affairs—Characteristics of Wycliffe—his Relation to the Reformers of the Sixteenth Century.'

We may select, as illustrating the sobriety with which this author investigates the Reformer's opinions, his observations on the doctrine of Wycliffe concerning dominion as founded in grace. The propounding of this doctrine in some of the earlier writings of Wycliffe brought upon him much trouble, and during his later years much of what he writes is intended to correct misconception on this subject—misconception, in fact, on which he ought to have calculated. His belief was, as we have elsewhere said, that all men hold their gifts from God, as being, in the feudal sense, chief over all; that they hold these gifts on conditions; that these conditions being violated, the gifts are forfeited, and that mortal sin involves such forfeiture. In other words, the gifts of God are for those who know how to use them: the man living in mortal sin is sure to abuse them, and thus will give evidence that in his case they are in the wrong hands. But by mortal sin, Wycliffe meant not an act, but a state, a condition of habitual and hardened impiety—in short, the sin against the Holy Ghost. Even yet, however, Böhlinger goes on to say—

'It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that Wycliffe speaks only of an ideal order of things, not as existing in the world, but viewed in itself, as it is, and should be, before God. He says himself, referring to Hos. viii., that he means such and such things as 'before God.' before the 'face of God.' It is also true that he does not look upon these views as purely ideal in regard to the Church, but that there he comes within the province of reality. We are not, however, therefore to conclude, as his enemies have done, that he would and must of necessity thus act in civil affairs.'

Böhlinger joins in the now common lament over the neglect of Wycliffe on the part of his countrymen:—

'The German Reformers of the sixteenth century never accorded to

Wycliffe that frank, impartial acknowledgment which was due to him, owing probably to the lack of accurate historical information. Between him and the Reformers of the Swiss school there is however a specific resemblance. This is true with regard even to personal character: pure intellect without, mythic, contemplative, romantic elements, overruling imagination and feeling, combined with a stern temperament like that of Calvia. There is also the same gradual progress from the old errors toward a new knowledge, without 'painful outburst in one great deed,' as we find with Luther, and the same rational tendency, giving to reason its due place in divine things. The protestation against ecclesiastical abuses was also more energetic in these reformed churches than in that of Germany; they looked directly to the original apostolic Christianity and its outward form, rather than to an historical chain of usage; their whole moral and religious acceptation of Christianity was in fact identical.'—p. 606.

The following is Böhringer's idea of the mental history of the English Reformer:—

'It does not seem probable that he passed through any very severe struggles, from the peculiarities of his disposition. We should rather suppose him to have become gradually freed from the thralldom of the age, to have progressed step by step toward his riper views of evangelical doctrine. It was the external form of the Church and its secular corruptions, which first forced itself irresistibly upon him. He then began to consider the Church as a whole, rather than in its visible and hierarchical relations. At length he reached the doctrinal points, not the old Christian dogmas, but those new Middle-age ones which the Church then held to be of most importance—the ecclesiastical purpose of the Sacraments, especially of the Communion.'—p. 596.

In his general estimate of the character of Wycliffe, Böhringer marks especially his strong Biblical and rational tendency.

'Moreover, a religious and strong personality was necessary, in which these truths should become as it were living flesh and blood. A character which in its conscious repose on the truth and fidelity of divine grace has courage, from this immovable rock, to testify before the world, without fear of human authority, which could neither add to nor take from it. Above all, a *heart* for the 'people of Christ;' and this truly our Wycliffe never lacked. It is to him as much a necessity as a duty to 'save souls' whom he sees 'entangled' and 'lost' under ecclesiastical rule. . . . This loving zeal for the safety of souls dictated those pamphlets which have reference to the enlightenment of the people, and which compose the larger and later portion of his works. It impelled him, finally, to the translation of the Bible into the common tongue. Whatever be the subject occupying heart, mind, and hand,—the law of God, or its perversion by the inventions of man, the right of the nation to its undisturbed possession, or the struggle against the monks and against a secularized church—be the important question what it may, he makes it a matter of conscience to

explain it to the people, and to assist them in recovering the 'early freedom in Christ.'—p. 593.

'There is yet another feature necessary to complete our picture of this Reformer: one possessed by other reforming spirits who have taken hold upon the inner life of their fellow-countrymen—his strong nationality, his patriotism and political zeal. Not that his influence in the latter respect was *immediate*, he would thus only have fallen into the same fault which he reproved in his opponents, the men of the ruling Church, but indirectly by the light often thrown upon State affairs by his Christian ideas. In this direction he worked in different ways. Taking, in ecclesiastical and political affairs, the position, we might almost say, of a consul to the Parliament and other nobles, a relation which has been not inaptly compared to that existing between Okkam and the Emperor Louis. With person, word, and pen he stands at the service of every national ecclesiastical movement. He was equally anxious to free both State and people from a hierarchy, for whose foundation he had vainly searched the Scriptures. In thus emancipating the State, and the spirit of the nation, he believed the Church to be best served, since it was occupied more with such matters than with its first duty—the preaching of the Gospel and the spiritual care of souls.'—p. 595.

The following notice of what we may call the temper and thoroughness of Wycliffe's ultimate course as a Reformer is just and noteworthy.

'With regard to the defects and weaknesses of Wycliffe, that which appears to us most apparent is a want of *moderation*. In his thoughts and labours as a Reformer, we especially note this immediate contrasting of the divine and the human, the external and the internal. In the ecclesiastical condition of his time he acknowledges nothing but human inventions, existing in obvious contradiction to its earlier simpler state. To have the one or the other of such innovations removed would not satisfy him, the very foundation must be cleared. Of all the Middle-age Reformers he is by far the most radical.'

The great fault of Böhringer's work is the cautiously neutral, and purely scientific tone which, for the most part, pervades it. The aim of the writer in general is, to acquit himself with all the calmness of a judge, and the case is often judged as though no great interest, nothing beyond the fate of certain small ingenuities which have grown up among polemics, were at stake. This indifference never made such men as Wycliffe, and it will never give us the biography of such men as it should be written. We do not of course want the one-sidedness of the partisan—but we do want a firm belief in the reality of truth, and in the fact that the tendencies of truth are on the side of humanity.

Mr. Cowell's paper on *Wycliffe* is the essay to which the Stanhope prize was awarded in Oxford in 1857. The author is of Wadham College—one of Mr. Shirley's pupils we presume.

But Mr. Cowell does not concern himself about authorities, touches nothing controversial, and discourses through his thirty handsomely printed pages in a very general and harmless manner. What thought there is in these pages is intelligent, but it is sadly beaten out, and overlaid with words. The style, indeed, is quite after the academic model—elongated, elaborately balanced, and so smoothed down and polished that you are in danger at every step of taking sound for sense. It is a style which young men at college are often at great pains to learn, and afterwards, if they ever come to anything, take quite as much pains to unlearn. Had Wycliffe written thus, he might have sent forth books at the rate of a cartload a month, and have done nothing.*

Much that is now written about Wycliffe would, we suspect, be a sorry business in his estimation were he to revisit us.

* We feel disposed, before we conclude, to offer a word or two more about Wycliffe's wardenship of Canterbury Hall.

1. In reply to Mr. Pratt's note in a preceding page (387), Mr. Shirley thinks it enough to say (p. 519), that 'Dominus was the ordinary style of a priest whenever there was no question of his degree.' Now it is true, that in documents of some length, and where the same name occurs frequently, the word Dominus, or Magister, might be given to a Master of Arts interchangeably—just as the name of Master or Doctor is given interchangeably to Wycliffe by Cunningham, in the paper which Mr. Shirley has printed, and where that writer describes the Reformer as Doctor for the first time. But this is something very different from the brief, formal, and official entry of a name in a register, or in a legal document. That this 'Whyteclyvo's' name should appear in four archiepiscopal registers, and in the probate of his will, and in all these instances with the word Dominus, and never with the word Magister attached to it, is proof, if anything well can be, that he had no right to the title of Master, and was in fact a person 'who, though favoured with high patronage, finished his course apparently as the commonplace men of all time have done, leaving no trace of power behind him' (*John de Wycliffe, a Monograph*, 61); or who was, in the later words of Mr. Pratt, 'an ordinary man, who owed his promotion to some accident.'

2. But the following extract contains what Mr. Shirley describes as a ' cogent argument.' 'The Reformer was a Doctor of Divinity at the very latest in 1366, and before that was a Bachelor of Divinity for some time. In December, 1365, the warden of Canterbury Hall, in his deed of appointment, is styled Master of Arts; and in the statement of his cause before the Papal court, which must be dated 1368 or 1369, he is spoken of as a Bachelor of Divinity, that is to say, at a time when the Reformer was a Doctor, of at least two, and probably of five or six years' standing' (p. 527). It is natural to ask here—why the Wycliffe of Canterbury Hall must be *always* described by his proper degree, and the Whyteclyve of Mayfield *never*? For so, according to Mr. Shirley, the case stands! But this ' cogent argument' is worthless on other grounds. The notion that Wycliffe took his Doctor's degree at the latest in 1366 is a mere notion. We have shown that it is not proved.

3. The fact that Wodeford's explicit statement on this point does not appear to have been repeated for some time to come, will hardly appear strange, if we bear in mind that Canterbury Hall was a very small and a very poor foundation, affording scanty assistance to not more than a dozen persons; that Wycliffe showed himself, by his conduct, to be not much concerned about the issue of the suit; and that he soon rose to such a position as to render it absurd to attribute a career so potent to a cause so trivial.

Men can now bestow their authorship upon him, whose narrowness and selfishness make it certain that they would have been found in the first rank of his traducers and persecutors had they lived in his time. Your fathers killed the prophets, and you build their sepulchres. He who cared so much about the duty of the hour, so little about the fame of the future, would look with small favour on the little disputations concerning the affairs of his life with which men having little real sympathy with his character have become disposed to employ themselves. His own life was a life of honest and self-forgetful labour, and the lives of other men rose in his estimation only as they were lives of that order. But it will, we trust, be seen from what precedes, that enough has been done in the time of the present generation, to ensure that the great English Reformer will have something like his due place in the history of Christian thought in the time to come.

ART. V.—*The Catechism of Positive Religion.* Translated from the French of Auguste Comte. By RICHARD CONGREVE, M.A. London: John Chapman.

'PROFESSING themselves wise, they became fools.' Certainly these words, however applicable to many of the ancient philosophers, are equally so to many modern, and perhaps to the author of the *Catechism of Positive Religion* more than all. So puerile, so silly, so drivelling (if we knew of any stronger word we should use it), is this entire volume, both in conception and execution, that no other alternative is left for many of M. Comte's admirers than the unpleasant one of supposing that just when, in his own estimation, he had put the coope-stone on the system of 'Positivism,' and annihilated all the 'theologies,' he unluckily went mad, and that this volume of inanities is the sign and consequence thereof. For our own parts, we believe that when he composed this volume he was just as much in his senses as he ever had been,—at least for many a year. Plenty of the absurdities which make this volume so exquisitely foolish had long been held by M. Comte, and proclaimed in his previous writings; they are simply exhibited here with more startling flagrancy, and in combination with others of newer, but perfectly congenial character. His overweening vanity had long led him to the notion that his 'Positivism' was destined to revolutionize the whole world of thought, to annihilate theology in all its forms, and to banish God out of the world; or rather