HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

I

If there is any truth in the old Greek maxim that a large book is a great evil, English dictionaries have been steadily growing worse ever since their inception more than three centuries ago. To set Cawdrey's slim small volume of 1604 beside the completed Oxford Dictionary of 1933 is like placing the original acorn beside the oak that has grown out of it.

The immensity of this growth is explained by the successive introduction of three new principles in lexicography. The earlier dictionary-makers followed in the line of the old glossaries, and directed their attention to such words as were likely to be unfamiliar to the ordinary man. The widening of this narrow range during the seventeenth century is made obvious by the steady increase in size through Bullokar, Cockeram, Blount, and Phillips, until in the eighteenth the principle of general inclusion was practically accepted by Kersey and Bailey. The next stage is marked by Johnson's systematic use of quotations to illustrate and justify the definitions, the many omissions still existing in the vocabulary being partly filled by later supplementary works on the same lines. When to all this was superadded the principle of historical illustration, introduced by Richardson, it became inevitable that any adequate dictionary of English must be one of the larger books of the world.

It is remarkable that Richardson's dictionary, perhaps through certain defects in his method, did not at once attract the attention it deserved. From the appearance of the first instalment in the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana* in 1819 to the full acceptance of the historical principle by the Philological Society almost forty years had passed, and the separate publication of his dictionary in 1836-7 did not affect to any appreciable extent the work of those lexicographers who followed in the wake of Johnson or Webster. Even his wealth of quotations remained unutilized, although they formed a natural storehouse for any who cared to search in it and bring forth 'treasures new and old' to add to those already available in the works of Johnson and his successors.

That a forward step was made towards the end of these forty years was due to the action taken by the Philological Society in the summer of 1857, apparently as the result of a suggestion made by F. J. Furnivall to Dean Trench in May. At the meeting held on June 18 'the appointment of Messrs. Herbert Coleridge and Furnivall and Dean Trench by the Council, as a committee to collect unregistered words in English, was announced, and that they would report to the next Meeting of the Society in November'. At this stage the idea was to prepare and publish a volume supplementary to the later editions of Johnson, or to Richardson, and containing all words omitted in either of these dictionaries.

The committee did not report in November, but on the fifth of that month one of its members, Dean Trench, read the first part of a paper 'On some Deficiencies in our English Dictionaries', while the report was postponed till December 3. This interval allowed the second part of the paper to be read on November 19, when the Society showed its appreciation by resolving 'That The Dean of Westminster be requested to publish his interesting and valuable Paper. To this request he kindly assented.' Publication followed almost immediately, the first edition bearing the date 1857 and the title 'On some Deficiencies in our English Dictionaries, being the substance of two papers read before the Philological Society, Nov. 5 and Nov. 19, 1857. By Richard Chenevix Trench, D.D., Dean of Westminster.'

Even at this day, after the lapse of three quarters of a century and the advance in English studies which has taken place during that time, Dean Trench's paper retains its value as a statement of what an English dictionary ought to be. No one who reads it can fail to see how clearly he anticipated the lines on which the Society's dictionary was ultimately compiled—all of them, indeed, a necessary result from the historical principle which he laid down as the only sound basis for the work.

At the meeting of 3 December 1857, a report from the 'Unregistered Words Committee' was read by the Secretary to that Committee, Mr. H. Coleridge'. This was followed by the resolution 'That for the present this Report be received and laid on the table. This resolution was passed in consequence of a statement that a larger scheme, for a completely new English Dictionary, might shortly be submitted to the Society.' The Dean's paper had clearly convinced the Society of the inadequacy of its proposals,
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and had shown that nothing short of a 'completely new' work would suffice. In this natural way arose the epithet New which appeared on the title-page of the Dictionary when the time for publication arrived.

The Society lost no time in following up the new idea, little suspecting the magnitude of the task which lay before it, and the many years that would elapse before it would be completed, or even properly begun. On 7 January 1858, the following resolutions were passed relating to the undertaking of a New English Dictionary.

I. That instead of the Supplement to the Standard English Dictionaries now in course of preparation by the order of the Society, a New Dictionary of the English Language be prepared under the Authority of the Philological Society.

II. That the work be placed in the hands of two Committees, the one, Literary and Historical, consisting of The very Rev. The Dean of Westminster, F. J. Furnivall, Esq., and Herbert Coleridge, Esq. (Secretary), the other, Etymological, consisting of Hensleigh Wedgwood, Esq., and Prof. Malden, and that in questions of doubt as to the form which any article shall assume, the decision of the Literary and Historical Committee shall be final.

III. That the Society desires to express its thanks to the contributors who have kindly given their assistance to its Unregistered Words Committee, and to invite their assistance, and that of fresh volunteers, in the new undertaking.

IV. That Messrs. Furnivall and Coleridge be empowered to enter into such conditional agreement with Messrs. Nutt of London and Asher of Berlin, or such other Publishers as they think fit, to publish the Dictionary on such terms as they think fit.

V. That the Subscriptions of all Members who have joined or shall join the Society through the Unregistered Words Committee or the New Dictionary Committee, shall be placed, so far as required, at the disposal of the Committees now appointed, to defray their printing and other expenses.

VI. That the Philological Society will afford every assistance in its power to enable its Committees to make a Dictionary worthy of the English Language.'

As is indicated in the third of these resolutions, the Unregistered Words Committee had been remarkably successful, during its brief existence, in arousing interest in the Society's undertaking, and in enlisting willing helpers to aid in carrying it out. Towards the close of his paper as printed, Dean Trench had been able to make an encouraging statement on this head. 'Let me mention here that seventy-six volunteers have already come forward, claiming their shares in the task. A hundred and twenty-one works of English authors, in most cases the whole works of each author, have been taken in hand by them; and I may add that thirty-one contributions have already been sent in.' In this way began the system of voluntary readers, without whose help the material for the Society's dictionary could never have been collected at all, except at a prohibitive cost of time and money.

At the meeting on 21 January 1858, 'Mr. Furnivall read a circular which the New Dictionary Committee proposed to issue, stating the plan of the Dictionary and asking for help in carrying it out'. It does not appear whether the circular was actually issued, and further notices in the Transactions for that year are brief and unimportant. A glimpse of the progress that was being made is afforded by a passage in Coleridge's letter to Dean Trench (30 May 1860), which was printed in the second edition of the Dean's paper. 'More than a year passed away in combating various difficulties, and it was not till August 1858, that we felt ourselves in a position to announce the plan of a New Dictionary as a certainty, and to invite contributors to furnish us with assistance.' Negotiations with publishers had been carried on during the year, first with John Murray, and then with David Nutt; finally on November 4, Furnivall 'stated that Messrs. Trübner & Co. had agreed to publish the Society's New English Dictionary'.

The young co-workers, for both Furnivall and Coleridge were still in early manhood, had not only all the optimism of youth, but were embarking on an uncharted sea, quite unwitting of the long course which had to be sailed before the farther shore could even come into sight.

By 1859 the Committee was able to publish full details of the undertaking in the form of a 'Proposal for the Publication of a New English Dictionary by the Philological Society'. This document is a proof of the thoroughness and sound judgement with which the whole question had been considered. Opening with a review of the steps by which the idea of a 'new' dictionary had been reached, the authors of the Proposal went on to lay down certain principles as a basis for the work, of which the two most important are the first and fourth, viz.

I. The first requirement of every lexicon is that it should contain every word occurring in the literature of the language it professes to illustrate.

IV. In the treatment of individual words the historical principle will be uniformly adopted.
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Other contents of the Proposal are 'Rules and Directions for Collectors' as agreed upon by the Literary, Historical, and Etymological Committees, and 'Mechanical and Practical Regulations'. Then follow three lists of books, each representing much labour on the part of their compilers. These are 1. 'A list of the printed literature of England belonging to the period 1250-1526', with the added note, 'Those works marked with an asterisk are already undertaken'. 2. 'A list of works of the Second Period (1526-1674) already undertaken'. 3. A similar list of 'works of the Third Period (1674-1858) already undertaken'. This division of the literature into three periods, which originated with Coleridge and was maintained for some time as a basis of collecting, has a real foundation in fact. Although the dates 1526 and 1674 were chosen because the former was that of the first printed English New Testament, and the latter the year of Milton's death, they correspond very closely with significant epochs in the development of the English vocabulary. If arrived at by accident, they at the same time show a sound instinct for detecting the periods of essential change.

The volunteers were also beginning to play their part, and to provide the Committee with material to work upon. 'In April 1859 a paper containing queries respecting etymologies and several difficult passages from Early English books was circulated among members of the Society and contributors to the Dictionary, and conjectures in answer were invited... So much of the results of this appeal as the Dictionary Committee consider sufficiently valuable, and sufficiently certain to be worth printing' was reported to the Society by Coleridge in a paper entitled 'Hints towards the explanation of some hard words and passages in English writers'. On November 10 of the same year, Coleridge, now formally appointed as editor, presented a 'report on the Society's proposed Dictionary'.

The following month saw another forward step, when on 8 December the Society resolved:—

I. That a Committee be appointed to draw up a set of Rules for the guidance of the Editor of the Society's new English Dictionary.

II. That the Committee consist of:—

The Very Rev. The Dean of Westminster: Thomas Watts, Esq.
Professor Key: F. Pulszky, Esq.
F. J. Furnivall, Esq.: H. Wedgwood, Esq.
Professor Goldstücker.

III. That the Committee be authorized to print the Rules drawn up by them, to circulate the printed Copies among all the Members of the Society, and to appoint one of the Society's nights of Meeting for a special discussion of the Rules by Members.

The Committee, or Coleridge himself on its behalf, set to work at once and prepared a draft of the rules, which was discussed, enlarged, and modified, at meetings held in December 1859 and January 1860, further considered and revised in April and May, and finally printed with the title of 'Canones Lexicographici, or rules to be observed in editing the New English Dictionary of the Philological Society'. Continued interest in the work is also shown by a paper read on May 10, 'Observations on the plan of the Society's proposed new English Dictionary, by the Rev. Derwent Coleridge', and by the appearance of a second edition of Dean Trench's two papers 'revised and enlarged. To which is added a letter to the author from Herbert Coleridge, Esq., on the progress and prospects of the Society's New English Dictionary'.

This letter is interesting as a survey of what had so far been accomplished, and closes on a confident note. 'I believe that the scheme is now firmly established, and I confidently expect... that in about two years we shall be able to give our first number to the world. Indeed, were it not for the dilatoriness of many contributors... I should not hesitate to name an earlier period.' Here also comes the first mention of co-operation from the English-speaking nation on the other side of the Atlantic. 'The Hon. G. P. Marsh of Burlington, Vermont, having kindly offered to act as secretary in America, I at once suggested that the Americans should make themselves responsible for the whole of the eighteenth-century literature, which probably would have a less chance of finding as many readers in England. This was agreed to... and contributors are, as I understand, coming in, but no results of their labours have reached us yet.' The suggestion was not a fortunate one, and was never seriously taken up.

By this time, on the basis of the material already sent in by contributors and of the existing dictionaries, Coleridge was hard at work preparing word lists to serve as a guide in further collecting. The 'Third Period' was selected for this purpose, and by 14 February 1861, he was able to lay before the Society the first part of this 'Basis of Comparison', covering the letters A to D. The preliminary notice to this in its printed form is signed by Coleridge, and its publication was unfortunately the last of his valuable contributions to the progress of the work. On Thursday, 25 April, 'Mr. Furnivall announced the death on
the preceding Tuesday of Herbert Coleridge, Esq., the Editor of the Society’s New English Dictionary’. When the second part of the ‘Basis of Comparison’ (E to L) appeared later in the year, the prefatory note, dated 25 September, and signed by Furnivall, opened with these words. ‘Since the publication of the First Part of this Basis, our proposed Dictionary has received a severe blow by the death of its first Editor, the able and accomplished Herbert Coleridge. In its service he caught the cold which resulted in his death. All through his illness he worked for it whenever leisure and strength allowed; and his last attempt at work—two days before he died—was to arrange some of its papers.’

The death of Coleridge at the age of 31 deprived the Dictionary, almost at the outset, of an editor of great promise. In addition to the activities already mentioned, he had compiled and published a Glossarial Index to the printed literature of the thirteenth century, rightly estimating the value of this as a basis for the early history of the language. He had also faced the problem of editing, and had prepared a few of the A words for printing, so far as the material sent in to him allowed; this had been carried as far as the printing of a specimen page containing Affect-Affection. If this was premature, as it proved to be, it was because the magnitude of the work had not yet become apparent. Clear evidence of this is furnished by the set of specially made pigeon-holes (still in existence) which he considered would be large enough to contain the materials required at the outset. These provide about 260 inches of linear space, which would take no more than about 85,000 ‘slips’. As many as this were ultimately required for even one of the minor letters of the alphabet. Specimens of the articles prepared by Coleridge were printed in 1862, at the end of Part III of the ‘Basis of Comparison’, and extracts from others were read at a meeting of the Society on 24 April of the same year.

With Coleridge’s death, the editorship passed to Furnivall, then in his thirty-sixth year. He immediately took up the duties, and on 23 May ‘made a statement as to the present condition of the collections for the Society’s Dictionary, and the course he proposed to pursue with regard to the scheme’. The lines of that course are clearly indicated in the ‘Preliminary Notice’ mentioned above. He was convinced that the time for editing was still a distance. ‘I have determined to put aside all idea of printing the first part of the Dictionary for four or five years unless some great unexpected help is forthcoming; and I propose, if all go well, to finish this Third-Period Basis early next year; then to compile Two Concise Dictionaries of Early and Middle English, which shall include severally all the materials sent in for the First and Second Periods.’

The magnitude of the task was thus becoming clearer, but in some points its extent was still underrated. ‘Meantime,’ Furnivall wrote, ‘the etymological material will, I trust, be ready.’ This was to be done by Dr. Carl Lottner on the basis of Worcester’s Dictionary, with the precaution that ‘his work will be submitted to the Etymological Committee, perhaps before it is printed’. It had not yet become obvious that in many instances only the accumulation of material for the particular word could enable the editor to suggest or establish its real origin.

Another of Furnivall’s first tasks was the compilation of a ‘List of Books already read, or now (12 July 1861) being read for the Philological Society’s New English Dictionary’, covering 24 pages and published as an appendix to the Transactions for 1860–1. The numbers given here are: First Period, 143 Works and Authors; Second Period, 456; Third Period, 81. Among the principal readers are Furnivall and Coleridge, Rev. J. Eastwood, H. H. Gibbs, E. S. Jackson, Rev. Dr. Stocker, W. C. Hazlitt, Mr. Sprange, etc. The last page contains an intimation that the reading of any books not named in the foregoing List will be of service to the Dictionary. A list of those specially recommended to the notice of contributors is in preparation.

Meanwhile, the Third Part of the ‘Basis of Comparison’, containing the letters M to Z, was on the way, and was issued in the third week of March 1862. Shortly before its appearance, on 7 February, Furnivall proposed the following resolutions, which were accepted by the Society.

1. That a concise Dictionary be prepared as a preliminary to the Society’s proposed new English Dictionary and as a new basis of comparison for all the other periods.

2. That the concise Dictionary shall be as far as possible an abstract of what the larger Dictionary should be; and shall contain—the Pronunciation, Critical marks, Etymologies, Roots, Prefixes, Suffixes, Definitions, and Homonyms of the words registered in it, with short quotations (a few words long) and the date and name of the Author for all words for which passages have been sent in to the Editor, and that all words, senses of words, idioms &c. known to exist, but for which authority has not yet been sent to the Editor, be supplied from any other available source and be marked with a * or other sign to denote the want of an authority.

3. That the Editor be authorised to entrust the quotations in his possession, and the sub-editing of any parts of the concise Dictionary to such of the contributors to the Dictionary or other Volunteers as he shall think fit.
It was also resolved:

That Mr. Furnivall be authorised to announce his plan to the contributors in the next part of the Third Period to sort the contributions and entrust them to the care of such sub-editors as he thinks fit, and that he be requested to print off at the expense of the Society a specimen of the concise dictionary which he proposes, and to lay it before the Society for their final decision before proceeding further with the printing of such dictionary.

In accordance with this the Third Part of the 'Basis' announced that 'the next step to be taken is to get out the Concise Dictionary hinted at in Part II.' Even this, it was clear, would take time, and 'nothing but the continuous labour of many years can make our Book anything like complete.—Let us then persevere.'

The idea of compiling a concise dictionary as a preliminary to the greater task was adopted by Furnivall on practical grounds; the agreement made with Trübner in 1858 had lapsed in course of time, and he saw no chance of finding another publisher for the larger work. In the expectation that the smaller task could be accomplished in a few years, he even entered into a personal contract with John Murray to have the manuscript ready for the press by the end of 1865. This view of the situation was natural while the material was still comparatively limited in amount. It became more and more unpractical as this continued to accumulate, for it involved the handling and arranging of all the slips for each word before the 'concise article could be written, and consequently would have taken almost as much time as the preparation of the work on a more ample scale. This must, in time, have become obvious to the few volunteers who actually prepared portions of the Concise Dictionary, and it is not surprising that in the end the idea had to be given up, at considerable pecuniary loss to its originator. Apart from this, the employment of sub-editors was an idea which proved of great value for the later progress of the Dictionary, and to Dr. Furnivall belongs the credit of originating the scheme and of issuing instructions for the guidance of these helpers in printed form, on 15 September 1862. Within the next year or two several of them prepared lists of the words coming under the letters which they had undertaken to sub-edit, and these were printed separately when ready, beginning in 1863 with that for B, 'compiled by W. Gee, Esq., sub-editor of the B words for the Concise Dictionary'. This contained no less than 93 pages in triple columns, giving the date of the earliest example of each word in the material, and the latest date for obsolete words, while each word is provided with numbers to indicate the periods (1, 2, and 3) for which there were quotations. Similar lists for N and U-V were issued in 1865. The latter contains a prefatory notice by Furnivall on the progress made in sub-editing, and lists of 'books now in hand for cutting up'. These words indicate a method of collecting material extensively employed from this time onward, by which the reader for the Dictionary was saved much time and labour by being freed from copying the quotations, while the Editor had the advantages of the original print and a fuller context. The defects of the method were that two copies of each book were required to give the full text, and that many early printed works were dealt with in this way which would have been of greater value in the hands of the editors.

From 1862 to 1872 the progress of the Dictionary in Furnivall's hands can be clearly traced in the annual circulars which he sent out to the members of the Philological Society. Portions of these are quoted in the 'Appeal to the English-Speaking Public on behalf of a New English Dictionary', issued by the Rev. G. Wheelwright in 1875. A study of them shows considerable activity on the part of readers and sub-editors for the first three or four years, followed by a gradual slackening off, partly due to Furnivall's own increasing absorption in other interests. That for 1872 admitted that 'the progress in the Dictionary work has been so slight that no fresh report in detail is needed'.

These circulars were not included in the printed Transactions of the Philological Society, and in the pages of these there is remarkably little mention of the Dictionary during this period. On 6 November 1868, 'the Hon. Secretary [i.e. Furnivall] made a statement as to the progress of the Society's proposed new English Dictionary, together with a calculation by the Rev. G. Wheelwright, showing that about one-third of the work had been sub-edited'. A still briefer mention occurs under the date of 21 May 1869, and after this the subject does not recur until, in the annual presidential address by Alexander J. Ellis on 15 May 1874, it is included in a survey of the Society's work.

One of our works, for which great collections have been already made, remains, and may for some time remain, merely one of the things we have tried to do,—of course I allude to our projected dictionary. Several things, indeed, make me inclined to think that a Society is less fitted to compile a dictionary than to get the materials collected.

In the words that follow on this, Ellis clearly indicates that in his opinion the scholar best qualified to edit the Dictionary was Henry Sweet. The Rev. Mr. Wheelwright's 'Appeal' of the following year
is in a more hopeful tone, and indicated the richness of the Dictionary material by giving a specimen of the letter F, which he had sub-edited; this extends to eight pages in triple columns and contains the words from Fa to Face.

During these years, Furnivall had of course not been idle. Not only had he continued to direct the collecting and sub-editing, but he had immensely increased the possibilities of the Dictionary by the foundation of the Early English Text Society in 1864, and the Chaucer Society in 1868. Without the former of these, the collecting of sufficient Middle English material would have presented almost insuperable difficulties, and in consequence the historical basis for many words would have been defective or altogether lacking. Although he took no part in the actual editing of the Dictionary in its ultimate form, he never ceased to contribute liberally to its stores, both from the publications of these societies and from other sources, including his daily morning and evening paper. If the Dictionary at one period quotes the Daily News and at another the Daily Chronicle, it is because Furnivall had changed his paper in the meanwhile. Through his early organization of the collecting and sub-editing, and his lifelong contributions, the work of Furnivall pervades every page of the Dictionary, and has helped in a great degree to make it what it is. He was fortunate in living long enough to see assured the completion of the work to which he had given so much of his busy life. Almost down to the time of his death in 1910, he still gave evidence of the unremitting activity, and interest in English studies, which had enabled him to achieve so much, while his genial disposition and constant readiness for new friendships explained his success in enlisting the help of others.

II

Before the Dictionary again becomes prominent in the Transactions of the Philological Society, a new and important element had entered into its history. James A. H. Murray, who had been a master at Mill Hill School from 1870, and had already made his mark in philological studies, had been approached in April 1876 by the firm of Macmillan with regard to a new dictionary. The idea of this, a dictionary to rival those of Webster and Worcester, had originated with Harper and Brothers of New York, who wished Macmillan to take part in the enterprise. Acting on the advice of Dr. Richard Morris, who had consulted Furnivall in the matter, Macmillan proposed to Murray that he should undertake the editorship. Murray was not prepared to agree to this, unless the new dictionary was to be a great advance on the existing ones in respect of scholarship. Macmillan had heard of the intentions of the Philological Society, and asked whether the material already collected for it might not be available. Having, as the result of this suggestion, obtained some portions of the material, Murray prepared specimens of the kind of dictionary which he considered would be worth doing, and these were put into type. His ideas went far beyond those of the publishers, and a considerable time was spent in trying various modifications, till these reached the lowest point which in his opinion would have any real value. The divergent views of the publishers on this head were capable of adjustment, but difficulties arose in connexion with the terms for the use of the Society's materials, and the negotiations came to an end.

The exhibition of the specimens produced from the material already collected, however, had the effect of again interesting the Philological Society in its old project. By May 1877 matters had begun to move; a letter from Furnivall written in that month tells where the various letters of the alphabet were to be found in the hands of the sub-editors. It was fortunate that the scattered material was, with the exception of one small portion, actually recoverable; one sub-editor, sending part of what he had, promised to search for the rest, which had been disposed by his wife in a lumber-room. Encouraged by those signs of new life, the Society again began to look round for a publisher, but at first without result, for with its small membership and limited funds the Society itself had nothing to offer but the material for the Dictionary, and no publisher was prepared to face the expenditure that would be required. Early in 1877, however, there were already foreshadowings of the ultimate connexion with the Oxford University Press. Details of the scheme were submitted on behalf of the Society, and at the request of the Delegates a specimen of the proposed work was prepared by Murray. This was ultimately approved to such an extent that in the spring of 1878, the then President of the Society, Mr. H. Sweet, was authorized to open negotiations with the Delegates for the publication of the Dictionary. As the prime mover in this new development, Murray also had a meeting with the Delegates at Oxford on 25 April, and 'thought there was good hope that the issue would be favourable'. This impression was confirmed by a letter (communicated to the Society on May 17) 'from the Secretary of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Prof. Bartholomew Price, saying that the Delegates had authorized
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him to enter into negotiations with the Society for the publication of the Dictionary on the basis of the terms submitted by the President to the Delegacy. The Council had accordingly directed the Dictionary Committee to meet Prof. Price, and try to come to terms with him. Two such meetings were held before 21 June, and a basis of agreement was arrived at in the following October.

'The substance of the proposals' made by the Society as a basis for negotiation was, that the Delegates should advance the capital required for completing and publishing the work, that the gross profits should in the first place be applied exclusively to repaying their advances with interest, the net profits being then divided equally between the Delegates and the Society, that Dr. J. A. H. Murray should be the Editor, and that he should be allowed ten years to complete the work in. Various alterations were made in these proposals before the terms were finally embodied in two contracts, one between the Delegates and the Society, and the other between them and Dr. Murray. In order to enter into this contract the Society had to be incorporated on a legal basis, and was registered in proper form on 21 January 1879. The contract, which is dated 1 March 1879, is printed in an Appendix to the Society's Transactions for 1877-9, where it occupies ten pages, with the addition of a specimen page of the proposed Dictionary, containing the words Castle and Persuade, and some subordinate entries based on these. At that stage the Dictionary contemplated was one estimated to occupy not less than 6,000 nor more than 7,000 pages, ... and the said Dictionary shall be edited and prepared on the same principles and on the same lines of historical and linguistic evidence as to the forms and meanings of its words, as are shown in the Specimen page, and shall contain on its title page 'Founded mainly on the materials collected by the Philological Society.' This work is referred to in the contract as the 'principal dictionary,' but provision was made for either party at a later date proceeding to compile and publish a larger dictionary containing not fewer than ten volumes, each containing not less than 1,500 pages of the size of the said Specimen page. This was, in fact, a pretty close estimate of the size to which the Dictionary ultimately grew, and as early as November 1881 there was some anticipation of this growth, when the Delegates agreed to an increase in the number of pages from 6,400 to 8,400.

There are many other details in the contract which are interesting in themselves, or in the light of the later fortunes of the Dictionary, but on which it is not necessary to enlarge. The great facts which it embodied were that the Society had at last found its publisher, the Delegates had undertaken a task more magnificent than they knew of, and the Dictionary had found an editor capable of converting its latent possibilities into a great reality.

During the earlier part of these negotiations, however, Dr. Murray had not definitely contemplated undertaking the editorship of the Dictionary, although he had taken a leading part in furthering the idea that it was something to be done. It was only when the necessity for a decision was forced upon him, by his being assured that the fate of the Dictionary depended on his acceptance, that he reluctantly agreed to assume the responsibility for a task which was even then formidable enough, though its full weight was not yet apparent. Several serious questions had to be faced in making this decision. It would be necessary to do the editing in addition to his work at Mill Hill School, even if he might be relieved of part of this. The housing of so great a mass of material could be satisfactorily accomplished only by providing special accommodation for it, and this and other necessary aids to the work involved at the outset the expenditure of private means in addition to the provision made by the Delegates. In spite of all these deterrents, he boldly faced the task, and set about providing the Dictionary with a home, and making it possible for himself to work at it. By the middle of February (he told the Society in May 1879) 'I had commenced the erection of an iron building, detached from my dwelling-house, to serve as a Scriptorium, and to accommodate safely and conveniently the materials. This has been fitted with blocks of pigeon-holes, 1,029 in number, for the reception of the alphabetically arranged slips, and with writing desks, reference desks, and other conveniences for the extensive apparatus required. On Lady Day ... I received from Mr. Furnivall some ton and three-quarters of materials which had accumulated under his roof as sub-editor after sub-editor fell off in his labours. With a considerable body of assistants I have been engaged since that date, as to all appearance I must be for many months to come, in turning out, examining, sorting, and bestowing these materials.'

By the tenth of May, with a few exceptions, all the material in the hands of the sub-editors had either been sent in, or satisfactorily accounted for. It had, indeed, been widely scattered, and not only in Britain; the letter H came back all the way from Florence. Although so much of it was still in an undigested state, it was soon obvious that even all this mass was inadequate for the production of a satisfactory Dictionary on the lines that had been laid down. The material for many words, especially
the commoner words, was obviously defective, and required to be augmented as rapidly as possible. A fresh appeal was made for voluntary readers, and even in April 1879 a number had come forward to help. At the end of that month, the Clarendon Press printed a thousand copies of ‘An Appeal to the English-speaking and English-reading public to read books and make extracts for the Philological Society’s New English Dictionary’. This appeal covers four pages, of which the first two summarize the history of the Dictionary from 1857 to 1879, the third explains the reading still required, and the fourth contains the statement ‘A thousand readers are wanted, and confidently asked for, to complete the work as far as possible within the next three years’. To this are added four pages of book lists, and a set of directions to readers. This appeal, of which another five hundred copies were issued later, met with a gratifying response, and enabled the compilation of the Dictionary to be undertaken with confidence in the result.

The arranging of the old material in the Scriptorium, the organizing of the fresh collecting, and extensive correspondence with readers and sub-editors, were tasks which at first left but little time for the actual preparation of the Dictionary, or even for consideration of the many points which had to be settled before a real beginning could be made. For many of these there was no model which could be followed; they involved totally new principles in English lexicography, and required both scholarship and practical judgement to solve them satisfactorily. Coleridge and Furnivall had shown a sound understanding of what was necessary as a foundation for the Dictionary; to Murray belongs the credit of giving it, at the outset, a form which proved to be adequate to the end, standing the test of fifty years without requiring any essential modification to adapt it to the steady advance of English scholarship or the accession of new material.

III

At this point it will be well, both for the sake of greater clearness and of giving credit where credit is due, to give some account of the method of collecting the material for the Dictionary and of the work done by the voluntary readers and sub-editors. Each member of these two classes stood to the final editors in a relation similar to that which Socrates in the Ion compares to the magnet and the suspended rings, each depending on and operating through the other, although in the case of the Dictionary the order of their sequence was reversed.

The example of Johnson and Richardson had shown clearly that the citation of authority for a word was one of the essentials for establishing its meaning and tracing its history. It was therefore obvious that the first step towards the building up of a new dictionary must be the assembling of such authority, in the form of quotations from English writings throughout the various periods of the language. Johnson and Richardson had been selective in the material they assembled, and obviously some kind of selection would be imposed by practical limits, however wide the actual range might be. This was a point on which control was difficult; the one safeguard was that the care and judgement of some readers would make up for the possible deficiencies of others.

By the directions which were issued to intending readers in 1858, and again in 1879, uniformity in the method of presenting the quotations was attained. Each was written on a separate slip of paper, at first of the size of a half-sheet of note-paper, latterly of a quarter of a sheet of foolscap, except when readers who supplied their own paper (such as Dr. Furnivall, Dr. Fitzedward Hall, and the Rev. W. B. R. Wilson) wrote on pieces of any size or quality that came to hand. This difference in size makes it easy to distinguish the slips belonging to the two periods of collecting. When completed, the normal slip presented three things, (1) the word for which it was selected, written in the upper left-hand corner, (2) the date, author, title, page, etc., of the work cited, and (3) the quotation itself, either in full, or in an adequate form. A typical slip therefore presents something like the following appearance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Britisher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1883 Freeman Impressions U.S. iv. 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always told my American friends that I had rather be called a Britisher than an Englishman, if by calling me an Englishman they meant to imply that they were not Englishmen themselves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

To obviate the tedium of repeating item (2) over and over again on hundreds of slips, it was in a large number of instances printed on each, in accordance with an estimate of the number that would be required for the particular book, or was supplied by stamping after the quotations themselves had been written. In this way, too, it was easier to make the references to page, chapter, line, etc., conform to general rules.

Thus the readers were to be guided in their selection of words was thus explained in the directions issued in 1879:

Make a quotation for every word that strikes you as rare, obsolete, old-fashioned, new, peculiar, or used in a peculiar way.

Take special note of passages which show or imply that a word is either new and tentative, or needing explanation as obsolete or archaic, and which thus help to fix the date of its introduction or disuse.

Make as many quotations as you can for ordinary words, especially when they are used significantly, and tend by the context to explain or suggest their own meaning.

It is obvious that these rules would apply in very varying degrees to different books, and that the task of some readers would be much more difficult and extensive than that of others in books of the same size. The amount undertaken or done by the different readers also varied enormously. In both periods of collecting there were a number who were marvels of industry and whose mark is plain on almost every page of the Dictionary to those who can recognize it. With these on the one hand, and the large army of lesser, but often important, contributors on the other, it is not surprising that the piles of quotations grew into the interminable series that filled to overflowing the pigeon-holes of the Scriptorium. How rapidly the material increased in the periods of greatest activity will best be realized by a few of the passages relating to this phase of the work.

In May 1879, in response to the appeal issued at the end of April, 165 readers have offered themselves, 128 of these have chosen their books, been supplied with slips, and are now at work for us. The number of books actually undertaken and entered against readers is 294; arrangements are in progress for perhaps as many more. A year later the number of readers had risen to 754. Altogether 1,568 books have been undertaken, of which 924 have been finished, and the total number of printed slips supplied to readers now amounts to 625,035, while the quotations returned are 361,670. Of these readers some have sent in a large number of slips varying from 4,500 to 11,000. By another year (1881) the number of readers has now risen to upwards of 800, of whom 510 are still at work. The slips issued now number 817,625, and the quotations returned 656,900. The total number of authors then represented in the Reference Index was 2,700, and the titles numbered some 4,500.

Many of the particulars of this remarkable activity were given in the preface to the first volume of the Dictionary, and a full list of the readers and the books read by them between 1879 and 1884, with the approximate number of quotations supplied by each, forms an appendix of 32 pages to the Presidential Address for 1884 (pp. 101-42).

On looking over this list, the observant reader will notice that the interest in the Dictionary which at its first beginning had been manifested in the United States had been maintained, though not on the lines suggested by Coleridge. The interest, and the results it produced, are especially referred to by Dr. Murray in his Presidential Address for 1880 in these words:

In connexion with the Reading, I cannot sufficiently express my appreciation of the kindness of our friends in the United States, where the interest taken in our scheme, springing from a genuine love of our common language, its history, and a warm desire to make the Dictionary worthy of that language, has impressed me very deeply. I do not hesitate to say that I find in Americans an ideal love for the English language as a glorious heritage, and a pride in being intimate with its grand memories, such as one does find sometimes in a classical scholar in regard to Greek, but which is rare indeed in Englishmen towards their own tongue; and from this I draw the most certain inferences as to the lead which Americans must at no distant date take in English scholarship.

Dr. Murray then specially refers to the services rendered by Prof. Francis A. March of Lafayette College in directing the reading done in the United States at that time, and adds:

There is another feature of American help to which I must allude, because it contrasts with that which we have obtained in England—I refer to that offered to the Dictionary by men of Academic standing in the States. The number of Professors in American Universities and Colleges included among our readers is very large; and in several instances a professor has put himself down for a dozen works, which he has undertaken to read personally, and with the help of his students. We have had no such help from any college or university in Great Britain; only one or two Professors of English in this country have thought the matter of sufficient importance to talk to their students about it, and advise them to help us.
By far the greater part of the material supplied by these American readers, it may be noted, was of the same type as that furnished by the British contributors, that is, it was mainly drawn from literary or scientific works written in standard English, or without noticeable American features in vocabulary or idiom. It was thus very serviceable in supplementing the English evidence, but failed to a very large extent to bring out the special developments of the language in the American colonies and the United States. Much of the material for these was specially supplied during the progress of the Dictionary by one or two workers, notably by Mr. Albert Matthews of Boston.

In addition to the quotations supplied by all this new reading, a few collections of Dictionary material, which had already been made by various persons, were by them generously handed over for use in the new work. If the Dictionary as it stands is a monument of scholarship, it is also one of unselfish giving on the part of a great number of men and women whose nameless contributions form the foundation of almost every article it contains.

Only second in value to the work done by the voluntary readers was that of the volunteer sub-editors. Without these, the mere handling and reducing to alphabetic order of three and a half millions of slips would have formed a task sufficiently heavy to delay for some years the actual preparation of the Dictionary. Even those who did no more than this rendered good service, but most of them went much farther, and so arranged and sub-divided the words they dealt with, and defined their various senses, that their work was of real value in the final editing. It is with good reason, therefore, that the portions done by each were carefully recorded in the various reports on the Dictionary presented to the Philological Society and in the Preface to each letter in the Dictionary itself.

IV

Amid all the turmoil of assembling the old material, collecting the new, and reducing both to some kind of orderly arrangement, Dr. Murray was working out the lines on which the editing of the Dictionary was to proceed. The problem of the best means of indicating the pronunciation, for example, was under consideration for a long time, and was decided only after the views of various authorities had been duly taken into account. Correspondence on this subject with Isaac Pitman, James Lecky, and W.R. Evans, was still in progress in the summer and autumn of 1881 and the spring of 1882, and the notation finally adopted was submitted to, and accepted by, the Council of the Society on 17 March of that year.

Meanwhile the preparation of the letter A was making progress with the material then available. As early as 16 May 1879 this had advanced as far as Aby, covering 557 words, and providing enough copy to make 96 pages of the Dictionary. A year later this had increased to 160 pages, going as far as Al. By May 1881 the question of typography was being discussed, and there is mention of a specimen page in June. About the same time, the desire to settle down definitely to the real work of editing becomes obvious in the statement that 'the general amassing of quotations must cease with the present year'.

It had been estimated that three years would be required for all this preparatory work, and the estimate proved to be correct. On 19 April 1882, the first batch of copy went to the printer, and in his report to the Philological Society on 19 May, Dr. Murray had the satisfaction of being able to announce 'the great fact . . . that the Dictionary is now at last really launched, and that some forty pages are in type, of which 48 columns have reached me in proof'. To fill the first part, however, extending from A to Amid, more than a thousand columns were necessary, and the task of providing these occupied the remainder of that year, and the greater part of the next. Finally, on 18 January 1884, advance copies of Part I were exhibited at a meeting of the Society, publication took place on 1 February, and the 'New English Dictionary' at once took its place as an incomparable record of the English tongue, far surpassing all that had as yet been accomplished or even dreamed of in the field of lexicography.

The beginning had been made; how to continue the work rapidly was the next question that called for solution. Simple arithmetic indicated that there was need for an increased rate of production, though it was not clear how this was to be attained. In May 1884 Dr. Murray thought that with six good assistants 'it might be possible to produce two parts in the year, and thus finish the work in 11 years from next March'. This suggestion was no doubt justified by the facts as they were at that time. That it failed to work out was certainly due in great part to the fact that A was not a good letter on which to base the calculation, and to a steady increase in the material which could not at that time be foreseen.

All the work necessary to produce the first part had been done in the original Scriptorium at Mill Hill. It was clear that greater progress could be made if the editor could devote all his time to the
work and be in closer touch with the printing at the Clarendon Press. As early as 1882 the idea of removal to Oxford had been suggested, but it was only towards the end of 1884 that the proposals began to take definite shape. The practical aspects of the question having been settled, the removal took place in 1885; a new Scriptorium was erected in the garden of the house at 78 Banbury Road, and here Dr. Murray and his staff carried on their work for the next thirty years. The Scriptorium was not in itself lacking in space, but when into it were packed all the accumulated material, the necessary works of reference, and the tables, desks, and chairs required by the editor and six or seven assistants, it presented a crowded scene to the eye of the visitor. If John Baret had been able to look into it, he would have hailed it as another Alvearic, with a swarm of workers as busy as those who helped him to compile his own volume.

In the new quarters the Dictionary continued to make progress, and Part II, containing the words from Ant to Balten, appeared in 1885. By that time it had become plain that some editorial co-operation was necessary to increase the rate at which successive parts could be produced. Here again the Dictionary was fortunate, as it had already been in rising, in Dr. Murray’s hands, out of the apparent impasse into which it had fallen ten years before. When Part I was published, the editor of the Academy handed it for review to Henry Bradley, who had but lately arrived in London, and was yet comparatively unknown in the world of scholarship. His review, which appeared in two parts, on 16 Feb. and 1 March, at once marked him out as one of the few who were competent either to appreciate the Dictionary at its proper value, or to offer useful criticism. So clear an indication of possible help was not overlooked, and by July Bradley was assisting in the preparation of the latter part of B. From January 1888 he was independently editing the letter E, and continued with this and F while still engaged in other work in London. In 1896 he also moved to Oxford, and with his staff found quarters in the Clarendon Press itself.

From 1888 there were thus two distinct sections of the Dictionary simultaneously in progress, Dr. Murray doing the whole volume occupied by C, and the half volume containing D, while Bradley completed that volume with E, and began the next (Vol. IV) with F. Down to 1900 the letters published, with the respective dates of the preparation of each, stand as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1882-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1882-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1888-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1893-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1888-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1893-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>1897-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>1897-1900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all this work the part played by the assistants who formed the staff of each editor was of the greatest importance. While considerable training and experience are required by every one, however well qualified, it is also true that the real dictionary worker is born and not made, and that no application or diligence will ever make up for the lack of natural aptitude for the work. The two earlier editors, and those who came later, were fortunate in having the services of a number of such assistants, some of whom (and those among the best) became connected with the Dictionary in its earlier stages and remained faithful to it for periods of twenty, thirty, and even forty years. Without their unflagging and efficient aid, no editor could have coped with the task without so much expenditure of his own time that the end of it would have been beyond all calculation. If those who read the original prefaces to the various letters will note the names that occur time after time at the end of these, they will do right to recognize that the bearers of these names have throughout many years borne the greater share of the labour by which the Dictionary was made possible.

Among these assistants a natural sub-division of labour readily established itself according to the special interests of each. Some became experts in preparing copy for the printer, drafting articles which required only a few editorial changes, or actually writing them in a form which admitted little or no improvement. To these fell the task of taking up the work already done by the sub-editors, of incorporating new material, of making fresh additions that were obviously required, of distinguishing senses and sub-senses, of writing the definitions, and of reconciling the historical order of the senses with their logical development from the original meaning of the word. This became a highly complicated task in the case of common words with a long history, such as the most frequently used verbs, adverbs, or prepositions. The difficulty of these had become apparent even in the early period of the work, and formed the subject of comment by Dr. Murray in 1881:

In returning to me his last batch, Mr. Jacob mentioned to me that the division of the meanings of the verb Set, and the attempt to put them in satisfactory order, had occupied him over 40 hours. In examining his results,
with 51 senses of the simple verb, and 83 of phrases like set-out, set-off, set-down,—134 divisions in all—I do not wonder at the time. I suspect that the Editor will have to give 40 more to it, for the language seems not to contain a more perplexing word than Set, which occupies more than two columns of Webster, and will probably fill three of our large quarto pages.

When Set finally came to be done, more than thirty years later, it took nearly 40 days and 40 hours to digest the mass of examples which had accumulated by that time; the word occupies a column more than 18 pages of the Dictionary, and extends to 154 main divisions, the last of which (set up) has so many subdivisions that it exhausts the alphabet and repeats the letters down to rv. Other words like get, give, go, put, take, may not rival this, but each of them required a vast amount of preliminary labour on the part of some assistant, which was of the greatest value in saving the time of the editor and giving him a clear basis on which to work.

Other assistants developed special ability in checking and verifying references readily and correctly, in finding earlier or desirable examples of words or uses, or in reading proofs and making additions to the material at that stage. When a staff had all these elements properly represented and distributed in it, and certain preliminaries to the work on each letter (such as the copying of glossaries, concordances, and indexes) had been fully carried out, steady progress could be made, and was made to an extent which seemed marvellous to foreign scholars acquainted with the difficulties of lexicography, but unfamiliar with the practical methods of overcoming them.

For the obtaining of full or accurate information on special points, it was frequently necessary to apply to outside authorities of the most varied kind. The services rendered by these were partly acknowledged on the title-page of the earlier parts and volumes in the words ‘With the assistance of many scholars and men of science’. How many these were may be seen at large in the original prefaces to the various letters, but it should also be noted that there were many in those lists who would not have claimed to belong to either of these learned classes, but who could and did supply the information wanted with a clearness and fullness which made the editor’s task easy, and gave him confidence in the correctness of his statements. If various errors to be found in standard works are not repeated in the Dictionary, it is frequently because some one with a practical knowledge of the subject had been specially consulted on the point, and had freely given the information required.

When the Dictionary had reached the stage of the first proof (regularly supplied in sets of eight columns), it was found to be of much value to send these to various readers deeply interested in the work, to receive the benefit of their criticisms, suggestions, and additions. In this way many improvements were made, errors and misprints eliminated, and the history of words and senses more fully illustrated. In the latter respect the contributions of Dr. Fitzedward Hall were of special value by reason of his own collection of material. His regular reading of the proofs extended over some twenty years, and after his death his collections for the later letters were placed at the service of the editors. Among nearly a score of others who reviewed the proofs for shorter or longer periods special mention should be made of Mr. Henry Hicks Gibbs (Lord Aldenham), who also in other ways gave valuable help and encouragement in the early stages of the work; of Miss Edith Thompson of Bath, Canon Fowler of Durham, and Mr. A. Caland of Wageningen in Holland, who not only supplied many fresh quotations, but as a foreign student of English frequently noticed points which did not so readily strike the native eye.

Although two editors and their staffs had been working separately from 1888, it was still considered by the Delegates of the Clarendon Press that the rate of progress ought to be increased, and it was clear that this could only be done by the appointment of a third editor. With this in view, William Alexander Craigie, then a lecturer at the University of St. Andrews, was invited to Oxford in the summer of 1897, and after assisting Dr. Bradley with the letter G, and Dr. Murray with I and K, began separate editing with Q in 1901. From that date two sections of the Dictionary had their home in the Old Ashmolean Building in Broad Street, which had been left vacant by the removal of the Museum some years before. To these a third was added in 1914, when Charles Talbut Onions, who had at Dr. Murray’s invitation joined the staff in 1895, and had between 1906 and 1913 prepared special portions of M, N, R, and S, began with a separate staff to edit the later portion of that letter (Su-Sz).

With four editors and their staffs concurrently at work prospects for an early conclusion to the whole seemed brighter than they had ever been since the full magnitude of the undertaking became apparent.
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Unfortunately it was not long before various events began to mar these prospects, and bring unwelcome delays. The outbreak of the Great War soon began to reduce the staffs by withdrawing from them their younger members, and in time even some of those more mature in years. The loss of these trained workers for three or four years was naturally a serious handicap for those that remained. The next severe blow was the death of Sir James Murray (he had been knighted in 1903) on 26 July 1915, after more than thirty-eight years of connexion with the Dictionary and thirty-three during which he had supplied copy to the printer without intermission. The transference of his staff to the Old Ashmolean, or to quarters near it, helped greatly to strengthen the three remaining sections, but there was no possibility of compensating for the loss that the work had sustained. If his wish had been fulfilled to the extent of seeing his eightieth birthday in 1917, it would not have coincided with the end of the Dictionary, as he had hoped, but those two years would have brought the completion of the work appreciably nearer in spite of the difficulties of the time.

With the end of the war, some of the assistants returned to their posts, and for some four years the work went on steadily (although the two younger editors were not continuously engaged on it nor able to give their whole time to it), until the death of Dr. Bradley on 23 May 1923 removed another of its mainstays. By that time it was clearly too late to think of finding another editor: the best that could be done was to make full use of the more experienced assistants in the preparation of special sections of the letters that still remained. By this means it was possible for Dr. Craigie, in spite of his removal to the University of Chicago in 1925, to take part with Dr. Onions in the editing of W, and so enable the work to be finished in the beginning of 1928, almost exactly seventy years from the date on which the Philological Society had decided to make 'a completely new English Dictionary'.

With work on three or four letters going on simultaneously, and publication of each taking place as soon as the sections were ready, the sequence of the various parts of the Dictionary became more irregular after 1900, as will be seen from the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Murray</th>
<th>Bradley</th>
<th>Craigie</th>
<th>Onions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I K 1899-1901</td>
<td>L 1901-03</td>
<td>Q 1902</td>
<td>O 1902-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O 1902-04</td>
<td>M 1904-06</td>
<td>N 1906-07</td>
<td>P 1904-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-Sh 1908-14</td>
<td>Re-Ry 1907-10</td>
<td>Re-Ry 1907-10</td>
<td>R-Re 1903-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St 1914-19</td>
<td>Si-Sq 1919-15</td>
<td>V 1916-20</td>
<td>T 1909-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-We 1920-23</td>
<td>U 1921-26</td>
<td>X Y Z 1920-21</td>
<td>W-Wo 1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wo-Wy 1927</td>
<td>Wh-Wo 1922-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of pages in the Dictionary is 15,487; of these no less than 7,207, or nearly half of the entire work were edited by Sir James Murray.

The early volumes of the Dictionary were as a rule published in parts of 352 pages at a price of 12/6 each, with three smaller sections introduced to make the divisions coincide with the end of the letters B, C, and E. The size of these parts necessarily involved a considerable time in the preparation of each, and a corresponding interval between the dates of publication. Towards the end of 1894 it was decided that a shortening of these intervals was desirable, and the new arrangement explained in the following announcement was adopted.

The Letters A, B, C, and E of this great undertaking having been already published, the Delegates of the Clarendon Press have been urged from many quarters to consider the more frequent publication of the subsequent portions of the work, in smaller instalments, as each is completed by the Editors, so as to supply students of the English Language and Literature more promptly with the results of the latest researches.

In response to this demand, the Delegates have arranged for the punctual issue of the letters D and F in Quarterly Sections. The new issue will begin with the simultaneous publication of the opening part of each letter on November 15, and further instalments of the Editors' work will be regularly published thereafter on the first day of each Quarter, in such alternation as may seem desirable. The Delegates have no reason to fear any interruption in the continuous publication of the Dictionary on this plan.

This expectation was realized, and quarterly sections of 64 pages, or double sections of 128 (occasionally even a triple section of 192) were steadily issued for the next twenty years, until the reduction of
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

staffs caused by the war, and other losses, made it impossible to continue with the same regularity. For the convenience of those who preferred them, however, the larger twelve-and-sixpenny parts were still issued whenever a sufficient number of consecutive single or double sections were available to make one.

At the time this change was made, a new name for the Dictionary was also introduced, though no change was made on the title-page. On the cover of the section containing Doceit to Dojct, published on 1 Jan. 1806, above the title, appeared for the first time the designation 'The Oxford English Dictionary', which was repeated on every section and part issued after 1 July of that year. The new name being more distinctive than the old has steadily come more and more into use, and the abbreviation O.E.D. tends to supplant N.E.D., although the latter is still frequently employed. A third abbreviation, H.E.D. (with H. for Historical), though employed for a number of years in Notes and Queries, never attained general currency. Popularly the work is often referred to as Murray's, and the Philological Society by a natural tradition has continued to call it 'the Society's Dictionary'.

As the publication of the Dictionary extended over a period of forty-four years, it was inevitable that many later additions to the language, both of new words and of new senses, should be lacking in the earlier volumes, and that even the later should to some extent present similar deficiencies. To remedy this as far as possible, the years since 1928 have been devoted to the preparation of a supplementary volume, the scope of which is fully explained in a special preface, in which acknowledgement is also made of the assistance which has been received in collecting and editing the new material.

VI

During all these years of work, in addition to the growing appreciation which it steadily received, the progress of the Dictionary was diversified by a few extraneous events. On 12 October 1897, a large number of the readers, sub-editors, assistants, and other helpers were enabled to meet each other at Oxford by the generosity of the Provost and Fellows of The Queen's College, who on that date gave a complimentary dinner to 'Dr. Murray, Mr. Bradley, and some others who have helped in the production of the Historical English Dictionary'. The time was a fortunate one, for in that year it was still possible for some of the early workers to shake hands with those who were just beginning to take up the task which they had already carried on so long. Only a small number of the company which met that evening lived long enough to see the completion of the work.

In the same year the Dictionary was by permission dedicated to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, as intimated on a special page inserted in the part for January 1898.

Up to 1905 the whole expense of preparing and printing the Dictionary was borne by the Oxford University Press. In that year, however, a contribution was made towards the cost of the sixth volume, which was also recorded on a separate page in these words:

This sixth volume is a memorial of the munificence of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, who have generously contributed five thousand pounds towards its production.

When the completed dictionary was published in April 1928, the first copies were presented to His Majesty King George, and to Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States, as the highest representatives of the two great English-speaking nations.

On 6 June of the same year the Goldsmiths' Company celebrated the completion of the work by a dinner in the Company's hall in London, at which contributors and workers again had an opportunity of meeting, and of hearing the Prime Minister, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, commend the results of their labours in eloquent and graceful terms.

During the progress of the work academic honours were from time to time conferred upon the editors by various universities, and at its completion the University of Oxford marked the occasion by conferring the honorary degree of D.Litt. on the two surviving editors, the Secretary to the Delegates of the Press, the Publisher to the University, and the Printer to the University.

Sir James Murray, as already mentioned, had in recognition of his services to scholarship received the honour of knighthood in 1908, the announcement being made in the Birthday list of 26 June, and the same distinction was bestowed on the third editor in the Birthday list of 3 June, 1928.
VII

The part played by the contributors, sub-editors, assistants, and others in the production of the Dictionary has been emphasized above, but is too important to be stated merely in general terms. The number of those who, in one or other of these capacities, had a share in the task, and the amount of work done by them, can be properly presented only by a more detailed account of the special services of each. For this purpose the following lists have been compiled, bringing together information scattered through the various prefaces to the original volumes, or preserved in the records of the Dictionary.

1. Contributors

A. This list contains the names of the principal readers before 1834; many of these began reading as early as 1833. The material which they contributed formed a great part of the main foundation on which the Dictionary was based. Under some of the names the number of quotations sent in is given, as an indication of the time and labour expended by many of these readers.

J. Amphlett, M.A.
W. J. Anderson (of Fife)
G. L. Apperson (of Wimbledon, S.W.; 11,000)
Col. R. D. Ardagh
Thomas Austin (165,000)
Miss E. E. Barry (of London)
Rev. E. M. Barry
Mrs. Bathoe (of London)
A. Beaazley, C.E. (of Thornton Heath)
Rev. W. I. Beckett
Rev. W. C. Boultier
Rev. G. B. R. Bousfield, B.A.
The Misses B. M. and L. Bousfield
Rev. S. J. Bowles
William Boyd (of U.S.A.)
E. L. Brandreth
Prof. and Mrs. Brandt (of U.S.A.)
James Britten, F.L.S.
The Misses E. and J. E. A. Brown (of Cirencester)
Mrs. Walter Browne (of Worcester)
Dr. T. N. Brushfield (50,000)
R. K. Buchrele (of U.S.A.)
Miss E. F. Burton (of Carlisle; 11,400)
A. Caland (of Holland)
Mrs. G. M. E. Campbell (of Peckham)
Dr. R. S. Charleston
The Ven. Archdeacon Cheetham
(Dean) R. W. Church
Herbert Coleridge
Prof. A. S. Cook (of U.S.A.)
J. M. Copper (of Canterbury)
Rev. T. Lewis O. Davies, M.A.
Rev. Cecil Deedes, M.A.
H. Dixon (of London)
C. E. Doble, M.A.
William Douglas (of London; 136,000)
Edward Dowden
Rev. J. Eastwood
Miss Eisell (of Colchester)
Professor Robinson Ellis
Mr. and Mrs. F. T. Elworthy
The Misses Elworthy
A. Erlebach, B.A.
H. A. Erlebach, B.A.
Rev. J. T. Fowler, D.C.L.

W. Warde Fowler, M.A.
Miss A. Foxall (of Birmingham; 11,250)
Dr. F. J. Furnivall (30,000)
W. Gee, jun. (of Boston, U.S.A.)
II. Hucks Gibbs, M.A. (Lord Aldenham)
The Hon. and Rev. Kenneth F. Gibbs
Hon. Vicary Gibbs
W. F. Graham (of Madras)
C. Gray (of Wimbledon, S.W.; 29,000)
Mrs. C. Gray
Mrs. T. H. Green
Rev. W. Gregor, M.A.
Rev. A. B. Grosart
Miss M. Haig (Mrs. A. Stuart, of Edinburgh)
Fitzedward Hall, D.C.L.
W. C. Hazlitt
Dr. H. R. Helwich (of Vienna; 50,000)
T. Henderson, M.A. (48,000)
S. J. Herritage
James Hooper (of Norwich)
J. D. Howell (of London)
E. C. Hulme (of London)
E. Wyndham Hulme (late of H.M. Patent Office)
Miss Jennett Humphreys (of Cricklewood; 18,700)
C. Mansfield Ingleby
Rev. Aiken Irvine (of Ireland)
Miss Eva Jackson (of Bishop's Waltham)
E. S. Jackson, M.A. (of Plymouth)
P. W. Jacob (of Guildford)
W. W. Jenkinson (of London)
Rev. J. B. Johnston, B.D.
Rev. W. M. Kingsmill, M.A.
Rev. E. H. Knowles
Rev. W. Lees, M.A. (18,500)
Miss Lees (of Reigate)
Dr. J. Wickham Legg
Dr. R. J. Lloyd
Prof. A. Lodeman (of U.S.A.)
W. S. Logeman (of Cheshire)
Rev. W. J. Löwenberg, M.A.
A. Lyall (of Manchester)
Falconer Madan, M.A.
S. D. Major (of Bath; 16,000)
Rev. A. L. Mayhew, M.A.
Dr. W. C. Minor
B. A large number of those included in the above list continued to supply quotations for many years while the Dictionary was in progress. The readers given below began their work after 1834.

F. J. Amours (of Glasgow)
Rev. J. Bell, D.D. (of Auchtermuchy, N.B.)
P. H. Butler (of London)
W. J. Bryan (of Oxford)
P. M. Campbell
C. H. Chadwick (of London)
Prof. Ellen Channon
Prof. Albert H. Chester (of U.S.A.)
Rev. Andrew Clark, M.A.
Miss Susan Cunnington
Miss Ada Dewick
B. W. Dexter
James M. Dixon (of Japan)
Edward S. Dodgson, M.A.
John Dormer (of London)
R. Duncan (of Crowthorne, Berks.)
Rev. Henry Ellershaw (of Durham)
Miss Ellis (of Oxford)
J. H. Everett
Miss Eliza Fowler (of Doncaster)
T. C. Snow, M.A.
A. B. Sprange (of London)
W. Barclay Squire (of London)
(Sir) Leslie Stephen
Rev. Dr. C. W. Stocker
C. Stoffel (of Amsterdam)
(Dr.) E. H. Sugden
Rev. W. D. Sweeting
Dr. W. Sykes
Rev. B. Talbot (of U.S.A.; 16,600)
George Tansley (of London)
The Misses Edith and E. Perronet Thompson (15,000)
Alderman Joseph Thompson (of Manchester)
Hon. Mrs. L. Tollemache
Mrs. Toogood (of Kirkby, Yorkshire)
Rev. J. T. Toye (of Exeter)
Pegeet Toynebee, D.Litt.
Richard Chenevix Trench
Rev. Kirby Trimmer, M.A.
Mrs. L. J. Walkey (of Leamington)
Miss P. Walter (of Somerset)
J. L. Ward, M.A. (of Burnley)
T. Ward (of Northwich)
Dr. W. W. Webb
Miss M. Westmacott (of London)
Dr. R. F. Weymouth
The Misses B.M. and R. Weymouth
Rev. G. Wheelwright
Rev. F. Gilbert White
G. H. White (of Torquay; 13,000)
R. Grant White (of U.S.A.)
R. J. Whitwell, R.I.lit. (33,000)
Miss J. E. Wilkinson and Miss Gunning (of Cambridge)
R. D. Wilson (of London)
T. Wilson, M.A. (of St. Albans)
Rev. W. B. B. Wilson, M.A. (of Dollar)
Miss Charlotte M. Yonge
Wendell F. Garrison (of U.S.A.)
I. R. Gillespie (of Newcastle-on-Tyne)
Miss Geraldine H. Gosselin (of London)
Miss Hellier R. H. Gosselin (of London)
Col. C. Gray (of London)
H. F. Hall (of Oxford)
J. D. Hamilton
R. Oliver Haslop (of Northumberland)
Rev. J. W. Hooper, M.A.
Alfred H. Huth (of Oxford)
Miss Ingall (of Manchester)
Albert Jacka
Miss Constance Jacob
George Joicey (of Gateshead-on-Tyne)
(Sir) J. K. Laughton
R. E. Leader
Halkett Lord (of U.S.A.)
L. Marcan
Albert Matthews (of U.S.A.)
H. A. W. Millar (of Oxford)
W. Payne (of Hayward's Heath)
Miss C. Pemberton (of Austria)
James Platt, jun.
Rev. C. Plummer, M.A.
Miss H. M. Poynter (of Oxford)
Richard B. Prosser (of London)
Mrs. Rackham (of Cambridge)
John Randall (of London)
Dr. W. H. D. Rouse
Ahrn. Shackleford (of Birkenhead)
H. F. M. Simpson (of Edinburgh)

J. Challenor Smith (of London)
Miss L. M. Snow
E. V. Stocks (of Durham)
Miss E. H. Taylor (of Suffolk)
John J. Thompson
Miss S. M. Unwin
C. R. Wilkiss
Miss Wilson (of London)
Edward S. Wilson (of Hull)
C. B. Winchester
W. N. Woods, B.A. (of London)

2. Sub-editors

The sub-editing of the material falls into two periods, viz. that done under the direction of Dr. Furnivall between 1862 and 1879, and that carried on during the years while the Dictionary was in course of publication. The following list gives the sub-editors of the later period, but it should be noted that some of these (e.g. H. H. Gibbs, W. M. Rossetti, Rev. T. H. Sheppard, Rev. J. Smallpeice) were also at work during the earlier years. For the earlier period mention should further be made of Rev. W. P. Bailey, Rev. S. J. Bowles, Edward Dowden, W. Gee, jun. (of Boston, U.S.A.), W. F. Grahame, J. D. Howell, Rev. Aiken Irvine, E. S. Jackson, Rev. E. H. Knowles, Rev. J. E. Middleton, Richard Morris, Horace Moule, Rev. A. S. Palmer, Rev. Ralph Proud, C. W. Staunton, Dr. W. Woodham Webb, Rev. G. Wheelwright, G. A. White, Miss Charlotte M. Yonge. Most of these were also readers in the early history of the Dictionary.

W. J. Anderson, portions of M and P (1880-1900)
Walter Browne, portion of S (1881)
Samuel Taylor, portion of H (1881-2)
A. W. Longden, portion of H (1881-4)
A. Lyall, portion of T (1881-5)
Rev. T. H. Sheppard, B.D., portion of M, the whole of U and V (1881-5)
P. W. Jacob, portions of D, E, P, Q, R, and S (1881-6)
T. Henderson, M.A., portions of B and C (1881-7)
T. Wilson, portions of I and T (1881-7)
E. C. Hulme, portions of C and L (1881-90)
Mrs. L. J. Walkley, portions of D and W (1881-92)
Rev. W. B. R. Wilson, M.A., portions of C, revised former sub-editing of T, most of V, and part of W (1881-1919)
Charles Gray, portion of S (1882)
Rev. C. Y. Potts, portion of L (1883)
W. Welch, portion of T (1882)
F. T. Elworthy, portion of D (1882-3)
Rev. J. J. Smith, M.A., portion of M (1882-3)
Miss M. Westmacott, portion of T (1882-3)
James Britten, F.L.S., portion of P (1882-4)
H. H. Gibbs (Lord Aldenham), portions of C, the whole of K and Q (1882-4)
H. M. Fitz-Gibbon, portion of H (1882-5)
Rev. W. Gregor, M.A., the whole of J (1882-5)
E. Warner, portion of L (1882-5)
G. A. Schrumpf, portion of H (1882-6)
H. S. Tabor, portions of I and W (1882-9)
G. L. Apperson, portions of B and C (1882-91)
Rev. A. P. Fayers, B.A., portions of B and N (1882-91)
Mrs. C. H. Pope, portions of C and N (1882-91)
Rev. J. Smallpeice, M.A., portion of M, and X, Y, Z (1882-94)
A. Sweeting, portion of T (1882-96)
Rev. W. H. Beckett, portion of W (1882-1901)

Miss J. E. A. Brown, portions of B, C, D, and P, the whole of I (1882-1907)
J. W. W. Tyndale, portion of D (1883-4)
R. F. Green, portion of N (1883-8)
A. Hallstone, portions of C and N (1883-90)
Rev. W. J. Löwenberg, M.A., portions of O and P (1883-90)
E. L. Brandreth, portions of G, H, and N, the whole of K (1883-1900)
(Prof.) F. E. Bumby, portion of N (1884)
W. M. Rossetti, portions of B and L (1884)
Rev. Prof. W. W. Skeat, portion of R (1884)
Rev. W. E. Smith, portion of D (1884)
Dr. Brackebusch, portions of B (1884-5)
E. Gunthorpe, portions of A and B (1884-5)
The Hon. and Rev. S. W. Lawley, M.A., portion of M (1884-5)
Dr. K. J. Lloyd, portion of H (1884-93)
Rev. C. B. Mount, M.A., portions of A, B, C, D, and V, revised former sub-editing of J and the large part of P (1884-1908)
Joseph Brown, M.A., portion of M, revised former sub-editing of portions of S and U (1884-1914)
Rev. C. G. Duffield, portion of T (1885)
Rev. T. D. Morris, M.A., portion of G (1885)
Rev. (Dr.) E. H. Sugden, portion of I (1885-7)
J. Peto, portions of C, F, and H (1885-92)
Mr. and Mrs. W. Noel Woods, B.A., portions of B, C, and H (1885-92)
Miss M. Haig (Mrs. A. Stuart), portion of O (1885-93)
R. M. M'Lintock, portion of P (1885-96)
James Bartlett, B.A., revised former sub-editing of G and portions of M, O, R, and S (1888-1908)
Rev. Canon R. Morris, D.D., portion of I (1889-92)
John Dormer, portions of D and S (1890-1906)
Miss Edith Thompson, portion of C (1891)
H. A. Nesbitt, B.A., portions of N and O (1893-5)
3. Assistants

The names of these are here divided into three groups, indicative of the relative length of time during which they were engaged on the work. As will be seen from the dates given, those included in the first group were for many years members of their respective staffs, and by their knowledge and experience contributed immensely to the progress of the work. The staff to which each was attached is indicated by the initial letter of the editor's name (M = Murray; etc.).

John Mitchell (1883–94; M.)
Walter Worral, B.A. (1888–1933; M., B., O.)
C. G. Balk (1885–1913; M.)
G. F. H. Sykes, B.A. (1885–1903; M., B.)
W. I. Lewis (1889–1933; B., O.)
F. J. Sweatman, M.A. (1890–1933; M., O.)
H. J. Bayliss (1891–1932; B., C.)
C. T. Onions, M.A., D.Litt. (1895–1914; M., B.; 1914–Editor)

G. R. Carlisle (B.)
P. T. J. Dadley (O.)
James Dallas (B., O.)
Alfred Erlebach, B.A. (M.)
(Dr.) G. F. S. Friedrichsen (M.)
R. Girvan, M.A. (C.)
Dr. A. B. Gough (M.)
Miss I. B. Hutchin (C.)
(Rev.) A. H. Mann, M.A. (M.)
(Dr.) Hereward T. Price (M.)

I. F. Powell, M.A. (1901–21; C.)
J. W. Birt (1906–33; O.)
George Watson, Hon. M.A. (1907–27; C.)
Miss E. R. Steane (Mrs. Lucy F. Powell) (1901–33; C., O.)
Miss Rosalind N. R. Murray (1902–20; M., C., O.)
Miss Elsie M. R. Murray (Mrs. R. A. Barling) (1899–1902; M., O.)
Miss E. S. Bradley (1897–1932; B., O.)

J. M. Ramsay, M.A. (C.)
F. R. Ray (C.)
(Rev.) H. E. G. Rope, M.A. (M., C.)
H. F. P. Ruthven (M.)
A. R. Sewell (M., B.)
J. H. Smithwhite, B.A. (C.)
(Dr.) E. J. Thomas (C.)
Charlton Walker, B.A. (B.)
F. A. Yockney (M., O.)

4. Proof Readers

The following lists give the names of those who, outside of the regular staffs, rendered valuable help by regularly reading the proofs and making suggestions and additions. Those in the first list continued this important service for many years, in some cases from the beginning, and in all cases down to the year of their death or to the completion of the work.

Dr. Fitzedward Hall (†1901)
H. Hucks Gibbs (Lord Aldenham) (†1907)
Rev. J. B. Johnston, B.D.

Rev. J. T. Fowler, D.C.L (†1924)
Miss Edith Thompson (†1929) and Miss E. Perronet Thompson
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

R. J. Whitwell, B.Litt. (+ 1929)
Dr. W. Sykes (+ 1906)

F. J. Amours (+ 1910)
A. Caland (+ 1910).

Prof. F. E. Bumby
G. R. Carlile
Dr. G. F. S. Friedrichsen
H. Chichester Hart
W. W. Jenkins
Dr. G. Ch. van Langenhove
Rev. J. A. Milne

Russell Martineau, M.A.
Rev. C. R. Monteil, M.A.
L. Peersall Smith, M.A.
H. F. Rutter, M.Inst.C.E.
Prof. W. W. Skeat
W. H. Stevenson, M.A.
Rev. W. B. R. Wilson, M.A.

5. OTHER HELPERS

It would require several pages to give even a partial list of those who contributed separate items of information, either of their own accord or in reply to queries addressed to them. Special mention, however, should be made of a few authorities who, especially in the earlier years of the work, freely gave the editors the benefit of their special knowledge in their respective fields, e.g., Prof. Paul Meyer in Romanic Philology, Prof. E. Sievers in Germanic, Profs. W. W. Skeat and A. Napier in English, Prof. Sir John Rhys in Celtic, Sir Frederick Pollock in Law, and Prof. F. W. Maitland in History. For many years Mr. James Platt supplied most of the material for the etymology of words from remote languages, with the dictionaries of which he had an unrivalled acquaintance.

Valuable service was also rendered by a succession of voluntary workers who verified doubtful quotations or references, and searched for special information, at the British Museum; prominent among these were Mr. E. L. Brandreth, down to his death in 1907, his immediate successor in the field, Mr. W. W. Jenkins, and Mr. R. J. Whitwell, who also did verification and research in the Public Record Office and for many years contributed much material of special value.

While similar verification and research in the Bodleian Library was done by several of the regular members of the Dictionary staffs, their work was greatly aided by the generous cooperation of the Librarian and staff of that institution, on which the constant demand for the requisite books has imposed a heavy burden for many years. The share of ‘Bodley’ in furthering the progress, and increasing the value, of the Dictionary is one that deserves to be gratefully remembered, and adds one more reason to those which have given the name of ‘Oxford’ to a work that can no longer be described as ‘New’.

VIII

The following list shows the parts or sections in which the Dictionary was originally published, the dates at which they were ready for publication, and how they were combined in the ten volumes of the finished work:

Vol. I. A-Ant
Anta-Battening November 1884
Battenie-Bozzom March 1887
Bra-Byzen June 1893

Vol. II. C-Casswood
Cast-Clivy June 1888
Cloaca-Consigner October 1891
Consignificant-Crouching May 1893
Crouchmas-Czech November 1893

Vol. III. D-Decet
Deceit-Deject December 1894
Deject-Depravation July 1895

Vol. IV. Disburden-
Disobedient

Disobstetricate-
Distrustful

Distrustfully-Doom March 1897
Doom-Dziggetai July 1897
E-Every July 1891
Everybody-Ezod March 1894

Vol. V. F-Fang
Fanged-Fee April 1895
Fee-Field September 1895
Field-Fish March 1896
Fish-Flexuous September 1896
Flexuous-Feister March 1897
Foist-Frankish October 1897
Franklaw-Gaincoming January 1898
Gaincope-Germanizer October 1898
Germano-Glass-cloth March 1899
| Vol. V | H–Harvillian & Hoveparian
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