

# CORPORATE REUNION: A NINETEENTH-CENTURY DILEMMA

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**B**EFORE THE ADVENT of the Oxford Movement in 1833 and before the young converts George Spencer and Ambrose Phillipps had, shortly before his death, enlisted the powerful support and encouragement of the aristocratic Louis de Quelin, Archbishop of Paris,<sup>1</sup> in the establishment in 1838 of an Association of Prayers for the Conversion of England, the matter of the reunion of a divided Christendom had greatly engaged the attention of Anglican divines. Indeed, as Brandreth in his study of the ecumenical ideals of the Oxford Movement has pointed out, "there is scarcely a generation [in the history of the Church of England] from the time of the Reformation to our own day which has not caught, whether perfectly or imperfectly, the vision of a united Christendom."<sup>2</sup> The most learned of Jacobean divines, Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester under James I, regularly interceded "for the Universal Church, its confirmation and growth; for the Western Church, its restoration and pacification; for the Church of Great Britain, the setting in order of the things that are wanting in it and the strengthening of the things that remain".<sup>3</sup>

In the anxiety to locate the needs of the national church within the context of the Church Universal, Andrewes was followed by a host of Carolingian divines and Settlement nonjurors, themselves the harbingers of that Anglo-Catholic spirit which gave life, albeit by means of a prolonged and painful Caesarian section, to the vibrant Tractarian quest for ecclesial justification. Furthermore, there had been a considerable number of rash but specific attempts to propound schemes of reunion between the Anglican Church on the one hand and the Roman Catholic or Orthodox Churches, or sectors thereof, on the other. Perhaps the best publicized of the schemes are those attributed to Dom Leander and Gregorio Panzani in the reign of Charles I and those attempted in the eighteenth century with the Greek and Gallican churches in which the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake, undertook a personal role.

Perhaps the most interesting of the reunion schemes, on account of the stimulus it provided to the more substantive suggestions of James Warren

<sup>1</sup> During the episcopate of Hyacinthe-Louis de Quelin (b. 1778, d. 1839) the Société de Vincent de Paul and the Soeurs de Bon-Secours were established.

<sup>2</sup> H. R. T. Brandreth, *The Oecumenical Ideals of the Oxford Movement* (London: S.P.C.K., 1947) 2.

<sup>3</sup> P. G. Medd, *The Private Devotions of Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester* (London: S.P.C.K., 1899).

Doyle, the Augustinian friar who was Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin in the early nineteenth century, and to the 1841 proposals of Ambrose Phillippus to J. R. Bloxam, was that published in 1818 by Samuel Wix, Vicar of St. Bartholomew the Less, London. Wix, taking his lead from Shute Barrington, Bishop of Durham, who eight years previously had issued a Charge urging the reconciliation of Rome and Canterbury,<sup>4</sup> proposed the calling of an "ecumenical" council of the Church of England and the Church of Rome to accommodate existing religious beliefs and practices. This was to be a council at which "all the leading articles of difference might be candidly considered, dispassionately compared with early opinion, and uncorrupted tradition,"<sup>5</sup> and one at which "mutual concessions"<sup>6</sup> could be offered. From such a council an overall compromise settlement would emerge: "The Church of Rome might, perhaps, relax in what the Church of England considers her fundamental errors, and the Church of England might incline a little more than she does to some of the favourite opinions or practices of the Romish Church, which are not unscriptural."<sup>7</sup>

Wix instanced transubstantiation and the invocation of angels and departed saints as two important areas for discussion. Others suggested were the custom of conducting the liturgy in a language not understood by the poor, the offering-up of prayers for the dead, the consecrating of oil for anointing the sick, the burning of incense at the altar, and the mixing of sacramental wine with water. It is an agenda made up, in fact, of a curious amalgam of doctrinal matter, liturgical usage, devotional practice, and pious custom. Wix maintained that "the Church of Rome has the foundation of true Faith, and the advantages of a discipline modelled after Apostolical practice. A conference with her, by the Church of England, now that the heat of the Reformation has, in a great degree, subsided, might, under Almighty Blessing given to fervent prayer, be the happy means of leading to the renunciation of error and of bringing about a Christian Union."<sup>8</sup>

Wix's tract, while arousing strong opposition at home, in particular from the Bishop of St. Davids, Thomas Burgess,<sup>9</sup> who roundly pronounced popery to be incapable of union "with a Protestant church" and who declared Wix's proposal to be no "remedy for schism,"<sup>10</sup> was greeted

<sup>4</sup> *Grounds of Union between the Churches of England and Rome Considered, in a Charge Delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Durham* (1810) Shute Barrington had been greatly influenced by close contact with French emigre clergy

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Wix, *Reflections concerning the Expediency of a Council of the Church of England and the Church of Rome* (London Rivington, 1819) 11

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid* 94-95

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid* 13

<sup>9</sup> Translated to the See of Salisbury in 1825

<sup>10</sup> J S Harford, *The Life of Thomas Burgess, D D, Late Bishop of Salisbury* (London Longmans, 1840) 253

in France with some enthusiasm. His scheme was rapidly translated into several European languages and the tract was disseminated on a wide scale. Indeed, Wix's general idea was also to be aired in the House of Commons some six years later when on May 6, 1824, Alexander Robertson, speaking in the debate on the provision of the Church Establishment for Ireland, argued strongly a fortiori on political grounds that a union of "the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches of the Kingdom" would help in the restoration of peace and tranquility to Ireland. He appealed to the Government to take the initiative "to ascertain what the differences of doctrine were, as between the Established Church and the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland," adding that in his view "it will be found that there [are] no essential differences of faith; and that, in the main, the creed of one [is] the creed of the other persuasion." Furthermore, "Rome, he was certain, if applied to, would willingly make any reasonable concessions to meet the spirit of conciliation and of union."<sup>11</sup>

It was in response to the parliamentary initiative that Bishop Doyle addressed his remarkable letter to Robertson a week later, a letter which was given publicity in the *Dublin Evening Post* of May 22, 1824. To Doyle belongs the honor of being the first Roman Catholic prelate in nineteenth-century Britain to espouse openly the cause of corporate reunion with the Anglican Church. His letter provided a blueprint for later proposals of Ambrose Phillipps and in some major respects for the editorial policy of the *Union Newspaper* when the latter was founded contemporaneously with the setting up of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom over thirty years later in 1857. Doyle declared that "if Protestant and Catholic divines of learning and a conciliatory character were summoned by the Crown to ascertain the points of agreement and difference between the churches, and that the results of their conferences were made the basis of a project to be treated on between the heads of the Church of Rome and of England, the result might be more favourable than at present anticipated."<sup>12</sup> He considered that the topics of discussion would center upon "the Canon of the S. Scriptures, Faith, Justification, the Mass, the Sacraments, the Authority of Tradition, of Councils, of the Pope, the Celibacy of the Clergy, Language of the Liturgy, Invocation of Saints, Respect for Images, Prayers for the Dead." Concerning most of these, he argued,

it appears to me that there is no essential difference between the Catholics and Protestants; the existing diversity of opinion arises, in most cases, from certain forms of words which admit of satisfactory explanation, or from the ignorance or

<sup>11</sup> Hansard, new series 11, 568.

<sup>12</sup> H. N. Oxenham, ed., *An Eirenicon of the Eighteenth Century Proposal for Catholic Communion* (London: Rivington, 1929) 317 ff.

misconceptions which ancient prejudice and ill-will produce and strengthen, but which could be removed; they are pride and points of honour which keep us divided on many subjects, not a love of Christian humility, charity, and truth.<sup>13</sup>

If reunion were to come about, Doyle would himself "most cheerfully, and without fee, pension, emolument, or hope, resign the office"<sup>14</sup> he held if it were deemed to be necessary.

Doyle's advocacy of a team of theologians for the purpose of discussing points at issue reinforced Wix's advocacy of a council of the two churches as the stratagem by which to proceed. W. J. Fitzpatrick, Doyle's biographer, writing in 1861, remarks that "had the same religious tone prevailed in 1824 which has of late years characterised the Anglican Church, a louder and more cordial response would doubtless have been given to Dr. Doyle's overture."<sup>15</sup> The proposal brought Doyle a mixed response from his coreligionists and, interestingly, plentiful silence from pre-Tractarian Oxford. Archbishop Daniel Murray, who had succeeded to the Roman Catholic See of Dublin the year before Doyle addressed his letter to Robertson, was himself favorably disposed to the proposal, which he urged ought not to be too hastily abandoned. Murray wrote:

I think I see grounds of hope. There are no such differences that could not be reconciled, nor any that might not be overcome by Him who is the God of concord and charity. Were Church of England people true to the principles laid down in their Prayer Book, the doctrinal differences, which *appear* considerable, but are not, would soon be removed. On our side, as the instruments of the Most High for preaching peace to men of good will, we should leave nothing undone short of sacrificing truth, towards uniting divided Christendom.<sup>16</sup>

Be that as it may, Doyle himself felt strongly, as he informed Thomas Newenham, nephew of the Irish politician Sir Edward Newenham of Coolmore, Co. Cork, that

there are too many sects amongst us, and too many speculators in religion throughout the Empire to suffer any individuals, however able and influential, to succeed in uniting the great churches of Rome and England. The Pope and our Government could alone effect this union, if practicable—as it is in my opinion; but individuals would only create new schisms. . . . The great object to me would be to incline the public will to a union by forcible statements of the advantages to result from it, and of the evils which now arise from a disunion and afflict humanity. If the affections of men were well directed, their assent might afterwards be the more easily gained.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> W. J. Fitzpatrick, *The Life, Times and Correspondence of the Right Rev. Dr. Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin* 1 (Dublin: Duffy, 1880) 335.

<sup>16</sup> Murray's letter to Aeneas Macdonnell is quoted *in extenso* in the first article of the first volume of the *Union Review*, January 1863.

<sup>17</sup> Fitzpatrick, *Life, Times and Correspondence* 1, 341–42.

The task of attuning men's minds to the prospect of union between the two churches could perhaps be more readily achieved through the medium of a crusade of prayer for that end than by polemic and controversy. It was with that strategy consciously before them that George Spencer and Ambrose Phillipps established in France, where they were holidaying together in 1838, an Association of Prayers for the Conversion of England.<sup>18</sup>

#### A CRUSADE OF PRAYER

The time seemed opportune for making European and English Catholics aware of what had happened within the Anglican Church since Keble's Assize Sermon of 1833 and of the consequence of the intellectual ferment currently being generated by the *Tracts* since their inception in 1834.<sup>19</sup> The authors of the *Tracts* were not, of course, consciously unionist in intent, but the renewed emphasis they gave to the theological purity of the primitive Church and to the inherent Catholicity of the formularies of the Anglican Church stressed beliefs held in common with Rome rather than those dividing them. The Association of Prayers for the Conversion of England was thus to become the first significant endeavor in the Catholic response to the challenge presented by the Oxford writers, and it was particularly important because it was envisaged at its inception as a peculiarly Roman Catholic response.

The Association initially addressed itself solely to Catholics and was not concerned with praying for corporate reunion as such but, in the words of Spencer himself, for "the conversion of England to the Roman faith."<sup>20</sup> The obligations involved upon members were flexible: to pray for England "all days and at all times, but especially to offer Mass on Thursday, if they be priests and at liberty, or communion, or assistance at Mass, or visits to the Blessed Sacrament, or, in short, whatever they [do] for God, particularly on that day, for England's conversion."<sup>21</sup> The Association, through the good offices of Archbishop Quelin of Paris, spread rapidly throughout the religious houses and seminaries of France and from thence to Holland, Belgium, Germany, and Italy, Spencer himself preaching and propagating the crusade in a number of European cities in 1844. With Phillipps as companion, he embarked upon a major European offensive.

The English vicars apostolic, while cautiously favorable to the Association, were anxious in the peculiar circumstances appertaining in England

<sup>18</sup> Fr. Pius, *Life of Father Ignatius of St. Paul* (Dublin: Duffy, 1866) 248 ff.

<sup>19</sup> *Tracts for the Times* 1834-41.

<sup>20</sup> See the letter of Spencer to Bishop John Briggs of the Northern Vicariate, dated Nov. 5, 1838, and printed in full in the *Life of Father Ignatius* 248-51.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

that Spencer should adopt what we would term today "a low profile" in its regard. As Spencer's biographer expresses it, "they rather feared the spirit of the times, and did not know when another Gordon riot might arise and overthrow what they had been building up since Emancipation."<sup>22</sup> Their fears are poignant when we consider the furor about to arise in 1850 with the re-establishment of the Catholic hierarchy. Spencer succeeded in securing the unqualified approval of the *Irish* Catholic episcopate, however, and within six months of its inception he had agreed to widen the scope of the prayers to embrace heretics and separatists everywhere.

To pray for the conversion of England was, of course, not novel. In Bishop Briggs's time at Ushaw such prayers had been offered up, and indeed we know they were at Rome in the English College at Wiseman's initiative. But what was unique about Spencer's venture was its formal organization, the pursuit of Continental adherents, and the bond of fellowship produced, which was cemented in the columns of *L'Univers*. Wiseman wrote warmly of the Association, pointing out the importance of its objectives; for England, he declared, "is the only country which has *persisted in and renewed*, in every generation, *formal acts of apostacy*, exacting from every Sovereign, in the name of the nation, and from all that aspired to office or dignity, specific declarations of their holding Catholic truths to be superstitious and idolatrous." Such a "national sin" seemed to require "contrary *acts*, as explicit and as formal, to remove its bad effects."<sup>23</sup> It was a view pregnant with meaning for the crusade's future.

Following an early rebuff at Oxford in 1840 when he first broached the idea that *Anglicans* might also offer up prayers on the same day as Catholics for what he was to designate "unity in the truth, wherever God knows it to be"—an occasion, incidentally, when Newman refused to meet him at lunch, declaring "If R.C.'s and A.C.'s met together it should be in sack-cloth rather than at a pleasant party"<sup>24</sup>—Spencer worked assiduously to build up his plan for the next decade, and the story of those years of endeavor has yet to be fully told. His tour abroad with Phillipps in 1844 was a noteworthy success but progress at home with Anglo-Catholics was slow. By the time he was professed as a member of the Congregation of the Cross and Passion in 1848, events had begun to overtake Spencer, and it was to be but a short time before Phillipps involved himself in establishing in 1857 the new-style A.P.U.C., an Association for Promoting the Unity of Christendom, to meet much more

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 251.

<sup>23</sup> Letter of Wiseman to Spencer, Ash Wednesday, 1839, printed in the *Life of Father Ignatius* 253–57.

<sup>24</sup> Y. Brioth, *The Anglican Revival* (London: Longman's, 1925) 151, n. 2.

explicit reunion objectives. The new body was to be dominated from the start by Anglo-Catholics and was to eschew the pursuit of individual conversion. Spencer, for his part, did not approve of the more liberal philosophy and could not be persuaded by Phillipps to join.<sup>25</sup>

#### GOTHIC IDEALISM

The year 1841 is the acknowledged high-water mark of the Tractarian Movement. As Wilfrid Ward aptly expressed it, "up to [that] time the Movement had not looked beyond the Church of England. Her authority had been regarded as final, her formularies as placing an unquestioned limit to speculation."<sup>26</sup> The animus generated by the publication of *Tract 90*, indeed, led to a polarization and hardening of attitudes; Newman's stance, "Rome is the Church, and we are the Church; there is no need to inquire which of the two has deflected most from the Apostolic standard,"<sup>27</sup> could no longer hold the serried Anglican shock troops in formation. Vague, nebulous dreams of eventual reunion were to assume harsher profile as the positions, emoluments, and career prospects of many were suddenly realized to be vulnerable. Decisions as to the future had to be made, often precipitously, if integrity was not to be compromised. A sense of urgency was pervasive, and so the first trickle of converts—Bernard Smith the rector of Leadenham, A. D. Wackerbarth the curate of Peldon, Pierre le Page Renouf of Pembroke College, Johnson Grant of St. John's, Edward Douglas of Christ Church, Richard Waldo Sibthorpe of Magdalene<sup>28</sup>—presaged the onset of a deluge. As a consequence, the cause of corporate union was to receive a first major setback. In reaction, the Protestant character of Anglicanism was to receive an added stimulus, and ditherers and tremblers were compelled to look increasingly to Roman Catholics on the Continent for anything akin to sympathy and understanding in their position. That support seemed full of promise in 1841 with the publication of Wiseman's letter to the Earl of Shrewsbury in which he urged that "reunion with the Holy See will give vigour and energy to a languid and sickly existence." Clearly envisaging the mass conversion of the Oxford tutors, he added: "such men must be disposed to go to the full extent of sacrifice of personal feelings, necessary to accomplish their sacred purpose."<sup>29</sup> A vague hope for some form of

<sup>25</sup> *Life of Father Ignatius* 390-91.

<sup>26</sup> Wilfrid Ward, *William George Ward and the Oxford Movement* (London: Macmillan, 1889) 185.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* 145.

<sup>28</sup> E. G. K. Browne, *Annals of the Tractarian Movement 1842-1860* (privately printed, 1861) 60-61.

<sup>29</sup> N. Wiseman, *A Letter on Catholic Unity Addressed to the Right Hon. the Earl of Shrewsbury* (London: Dolman, 1841) 77.

corporate reunion in the future was not an acceptable reason for restraint when conscience and conviction were in question. Certainly Wiseman had hopes of corporate reunion, at least in regard to the Anglo-Catholic section of the Church of England, but he was too much of a realist to expect more than a distant fulfilment of the objective. When such reunion did come about, however, "no *retractions* should be demanded," he declared, but only explanations, restraint, and an openness to truth.

The year 1841 is important for the reunion debate because of the momentum it gained as a result of the beginning of the friendship of Ambrose Phillipps and John Rouse Bloxam, Newman's former curate at Littlemore. Bloxam, characterized by James Laird Patterson (sometime curate of St. Thomas, Oxford) as "one of the most curious fossile remains of a bygone age I know of,"<sup>30</sup> and in 1841 fellow of Magdalene, had been drawn to Tractarian theology out of a deep sensitivity to schemes for the revival of ancient ritual and architecture. Naturally attracted to Pugin, with whom he developed a close friendship in 1840, Bloxam was to earn for himself the title of the "father of ritualism" in the Anglo-Catholic movement.<sup>31</sup> An antiquarian rather than a man of speculative ideas, it was but natural that a close relationship should develop with Phillipps, especially in view of the patronage the latter was giving to Pugin and to the Gothic ideal in church architecture, to the revival of a native monasticism at Mount St. Bernard's, and to the purification of ecclesiastical liturgy and chant. Indeed, it was on a visit to see St. Bernard's Monastery that Bloxam first encountered Phillipps, then thirty-one years old. The ensuing correspondence is preserved at Magdalene College and it is from this source that the quotations given here are taken.<sup>32</sup>

Uninhibited by what was to emerge as Wiseman's more circumspect approach, the peculiarity of Phillipps' understanding of the nature of the Catholic Church is indicated in the first letter he sent to Bloxam on January 25, 1841. "It is no new thing," he declared, "for Catholics of *various rites* to dwell together in the same country, each being governed even by *Bishops in ordinary*,"<sup>33</sup> and he was never to abandon his view that the Anglican Church could be united with Rome and retain at the same time a distinct identity as a national church. He went on to detail how this could be achieved. "You shall lay aside your modern common Prayer, we our Roman Rite, and let the ancient rites of Sarum and of York resume their place." These would be celebrated in Latin in cathe-

<sup>30</sup> Westminster Diocesan Archives, Patterson to Wiseman, 23/9/1855. Patterson (1822-1902) was to become auxiliary bishop to Cardinal Manning.

<sup>31</sup> Ward, *William George Ward* 153.

<sup>32</sup> A number of these letters are used in R. D. Middleton, *Newman & Bloxam: An Oxford Friendship* (O.U.P., 1947).

<sup>33</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 1.



dral, collegiate, and conventual churches, whereas "in country parochial churches a portion might be celebrated in English." Bloxam is enthusiastically assured that "the Holy See would give every facility for the restoration of Catholick Unity in England. Thus the present Bishops and Priests might retain their wives" and "the Holy See might sanction the suppression of the direct invocation of saints in the publick Liturgy." Similarly, "the Anglican church having solemnly professed her union with the rest of the church Catholick might regulate for herself the use of pictures and images." With regard to the sacraments and what he termed "all the fundamental points of Xtianity, as Theologians term them, such as the Trinity, the incarnation and atonement of our Lord, the justification of the sinner, the middle state after death, the utility of prayer for the dead, and the merit of good works," he somewhat naively asserted: "there is no difference between the real Anglican and the Members of the French, Spanish, Italian, German or American Churches."<sup>34</sup> He concluded the letter with an earnest desire and prayer "that *negociations* for this *reunion*, or rather for the solemn declaration of an union, which I humbly hope on the part of many at least has never been broken," should commence as soon as possible. As a direct consequence of such a reunion, "many even of the Calvinistic Clergy" might also be converted; the rest "might then be ejected for heresy, and pensioned off for their lives, so that no one could complain." Phillipps acknowledged a firm belief in the genuineness of Anglican orders and in the retention of a sacrificing priesthood as its concomitant.

Robert Williams, Frederick Oakeley, William George Ward, and, of course, Bloxam himself were much stirred by the sentiments thus expressed and they sought to bring Phillipps to Oxford for further discussion. Newman was less affected, pointing out especially that Phillipps did not advert to the doctrinal difficulty of transubstantiation or to the peculiar position of the Roman Catholic Church in England vis-à-vis the Anglican Church. Phillipps expanded upon his ideas in subsequent correspondence. On February 22 he declared: "I firmly believe that the time has arrived for the holy endeavour to effect the reunion of the churches. *Not* that I am so sanguine as to expect *any very immediate result*, but in order to effect a *distant result* I am convinced that it is *necessary* to take *immediate steps*."<sup>35</sup> Referring to the need for "serious negotiations," he outlined a blueprint for action:

Let me say, what I conceive should be the nature of the *preliminary negotiations*. I do not advise that the Anglican clergy should make any communication or proposal whatsoever at present to any authority of the Catholick Church whether on the Continent or elsewhere, and as for the English Roman Catholick body I

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 3.

put them wholly out of the question, it would be most injudicious for the Anglican Church to negotiate anything with them, (when I come to Oxford I will explain more at large my meaning on this head); but what I should advise is, that a rough scheme of the *terms* on which a reunion *might* be effected should be drawn up at Oxford, when so drawn up it should be privately circulated amongst the Clergy [presumably of the Church of England] all through England, in order to ascertain as much as possible their sentiments upon it. To do all this would require time, perhaps years (but what are a few years in the history of God's Church?).

When a majority of the clergy was declared in favor of the measure, "then would be the time for the church to come to an understanding on the subject with the Civil Government of the Kingdom." There would follow a double mission to the Holy See "expressing at once the proposals both of Church and State."

It is obvious, so far, how much Phillipps' scheme for proceeding owes to Bishop Doyle's original suggestion, although Doyle would not have agreed with the intentions of Phillipps to bypass bishops, clergy, and laity of the Roman Catholic Church in England. Phillipps next turned his attention to what he called "the Terms" of reunion, declaring simply that

it is for the Church of England to state her own Terms, [after which] in the profession of Faith that might be proposed for the subscription of the clergy (supposing the terms of reunion already agreed upon) the word Transubstantiation might be excluded. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is the mystery which the Church Universal has ever taught, provided this be believed with simple Faith, this Mother of love will not quarrel about the use of a *word*. . . . [Furthermore,] about the communion in both kinds there is no difficulty whatever—and in reality upon the Question of the true presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar I do not believe any real difference exists between genuine Anglicans and ourselves. In your books I have often seen precisely the very same expressions, which we ourselves use. In the Sacrament we believe that our Lord is present in a spiritualized not in a natural way. . . .

Phillipps was in favor of opening the door of "the Catholick Church" as wide as possible "that so we might ensure the co-operation of so large a majority of your clergy, as to render the success of the reunion certain"; the Catholicizing of men's minds could come later. Phillipps had no confidence in the native English elements of the Roman Catholic Church; they needed stiffening and he was importing Rosminians and Passionists from abroad "determined to render all their assistance to make the terms of reunion on our side, as easy as possible." As an earnest of further goodwill, Phillipps enclosed a letter he had secured signed by sixteen monks of his Cistercian foundation including that of the prior, Dom Bernard John Palmer, rejoicing "at such a charming prospect of our speedy reunion" and declaring "too long, alas, have we been separated,

too long estranged from one another. From henceforth let there be peace and truth, and charity which is the bond of perfection.”<sup>36</sup> The monks were praying that the authorities of the Catholic Church would grant “every *possible* concession” that may reasonably be desired.

#### TRACTARIAN CAUTION

Writing from Oriel on March 2, Newman was not enthusiastic about these proposals.

To any one who comes to me with a proposal of negotiations for the reconciliation of the Church of England to the Holy See, what is my simple answer? is it not “Address my Bishop, not me”? Mr. Phillips in his kind and warm feeling makes much more of two or three people in our Church and University than he has any right to do. He much exaggerates our importance and influence. Some of us are not even in authority, nor are likely to be. To ask us to propose terms of negotiation, is to invite us to forget our places and to take on us the duties of our rulers. Let him go to them; they have the care and the oversight of the Churches, and none but they. Others than they have no right to take the initiative, except when the essential truth of the gospel is in jeopardy.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, Newman pronounced: “I have made up my mind that it would be wrong in me to hold intercourse with anyone” who went to Oxford on the policy proposed in Phillips’s letter or indeed who proposed to introduce foreign theologians to the university for the purposes of such discussions. Newman told Bloxam: “surely we have enough to do, both they and we, in the way of mutual charity, without hastening forward to acts which should be its close and not its beginning. I do not suppose there is any single member of our communion of any religious feeling, but would *abstractedly*, wish a reunion between them and us, but what we are all deeply impressed with, for one reason or another, is its hopelessness.”<sup>38</sup> Bloxam transmitted Newman’s views to Phillips, being careful to add that he did not agree with them *in toto*; Newman’s attitude could be placed in a nutshell—in one sentence, in fact, of the long letter he had sent to Bloxam about Phillips: “Our duty seems rather to lie in trying to be one with each other in heart, and in doing what we can to improve our own bodies respectively.” Even more discouraging to Phillips was a sentence in Newman’s subsequent letter to him of June 28, 1841: “I must ask your leave to repeat on this occasion most distinctly, that I cannot be party to any agitation, but mean to remain quiet in my own place, and to do all I can to make others take the same course.”<sup>39</sup>

Phillips was not easily suppressed. He claimed he had been misun-

<sup>36</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 4.

<sup>37</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 6.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 10.

derstood when he had spoken of "negociations," adding: "if Mr. Newman a Priest of the Church of England has no authority to negotiate, still less can I a simple lay member of the Catholick Church have any such authority";<sup>40</sup> but he complained that when Newman "speaks of himself and of those who think with him as being only '*two or three people in our Church and University*,'" this was "surely calculated to silence me from ever again arguing with English Roman Catholicks that they should not call these two or three individuals a sect within the pale of the Anglican Church." It certainly seemed to Phillipps, and indeed to some extent to Bloxam who was embarrassed also, that by Newman's refusal to meet Phillipps the hand of friendship and co-operation was being harshly spurned. In March 1841, Phillipps was protesting to Bloxam about Newman's recently published letter to R. W. Jelf, canon of Christ Church, in defence of *Tract 90*, in which Newman, while still arguing the theme of the *Tract* that the Articles of the Church of England were compatible with the decrees of the Council of Trent, spoke harshly of what he considered to be aberrations of modern Romanism. Phillipps felt he had to enter "a respectful but firm protest against very many things"<sup>41</sup> Newman's *Letter* contained. He objected especially to the statement that "the Roman system preaches the B. Virgin, the Saints and Purgatory instead of the H. Trinity, heaven and hell." In fact, Phillipps took Bloxam page by page through Newman's pamphlet pointing out the errors and inconsistencies which Wiseman was also to deal with in more masterfully fashion in a published reply to Newman.<sup>42</sup> Phillipps even questioned Newman's sincerity: "How can a man of Mr. Newman's learning seriously assert 'that the main idea really encouraged by Rome concerning Purgatory is that it is a *substitute* for Hell in the case of the ungodly'?" Phillipps claims he can appreciate Newman's mixed motives but says: "I do not think he will be able to satisfy the cravings of really Catholick hearts with the miserable crumbs of Catholicism, which the present rules of the Anglican Church, while she remains in her actual protestant position, will suffer to be doled out." If Newman would come forward boldly to advocate "a reunion of the Churches, I think he would meet with more respect from the members of his own Church, who would see no inconsistency in such a course, and who assuredly are not indisposed at the present day to *entertain the question*, and he would enable me and thousands of other Catholicks who think with me to render real service to the cause of unity and peace and by so doing to advance the truest interests of the Church of England."<sup>43</sup> Phillipps wanted to see "the

<sup>40</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 11.

<sup>41</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 13.

<sup>42</sup> Wiseman, *A Letter Respectfully Addressed to the Rev. J. H. Newman upon Some Passages in His Letter to the Rev. Dr. Jelf* (London: Dolman, 1841).

<sup>43</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 13.

publications that shall issue from Oxford bear more immediately and directly"<sup>44</sup> upon the question of reunion, a desire in which he was to be thwarted until the inception of the *Union Newspaper* in 1857.

On April 5, 1841, Phillipps informed Bloxam of a letter he had received from Wiseman in which the notion of a reunion developed a subtle nuance. The Catholic Church in England was incapable, because of its history of oppression and weakness, to extirpate abuses, but if Oxford men were to take on the task and join the Church of Rome as individuals or as a group, things would soon be put to right and the long-term objective of corporate union would be brought nearer. Wiseman claimed:

Let us have an influx of new blood, let us have but even a small number of such men as write in *The Tracts*, so imbued with the spirit of the early Church, so desirous to revive the image of the antient Fathers, men who have learnt to teach from St. Augustine, to preach from St. Chrysostom, and to feel from St. Bernard, let even a few such men, with the high clerical feeling, which I believe them to possess, enter *fully* into the Spirit of the Catholick Religion, and *we* shall be speedily reformed, and England quickly converted.<sup>45</sup>

This was a high plea for converts. In the same letter in which he quotes Wiseman, Phillipps again feels he has to inveigh against the harsh language of Newman, this time in regard to the latter's letter to the Bishop of Oxford in the wake of *Tract 90*. "Why this eternal use of hard names, *Romanism* etc. which occurs so often," he demands. "Let me ask is anything gained by it either to the force of the argument or to the convictions of those, whose condemnation is implied by it? You claim a Catholick character for yourselves and for your Church, surely you do not substantiate this claim, by branding the rest of the Church Catholick, supposing even that you were already a portion of it, with odious names, with absurd names?"<sup>46</sup> But while Wiseman was urging the Oxford men to join the Roman Catholic Church, Phillipps was less convinced of the long-term benefits to reunion of such action. On April 28, 1841, he wrote to Bloxam:

I frankly own I had rather see a good plan at once set on foot for the reunion of the 2 churches, than the great triumph which *individually* would accrue to *us English Catholics* by the separation from your church of a large section *in order to join us immediately*. I say this because such a plan involves *the junction of your whole Church*, whereas the latter only involves *that of a number more or less great*, because the former involves the rescue of this noble kingdom from anarchy, revolution, destruction: whereas the latter would probably only accelerate this dreadful catastrophe, because the former involves the salvation of

<sup>44</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 16.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 18.

innumerable souls, the latter that only of a few, because the former seems to me much more glorious for God, the latter more glorious for man.<sup>47</sup>

Phillipps quite rightly realized that once individual conversions took place in any number, and especially if these were of recognized leaders of the Movement, "the building of *Via Media*, once so firmly compacted," as Brilioth puts it, "so proud an edifice," would "lay in fragments."<sup>48</sup> Phillipps recognized, however, the inevitable fact that "Men, whose eyes have been opened by God to see the truth of Catholick principles, would be bound to quit the communion of a church, in which those principles were not fully recognized, to join that of the great body of churches, in which they are recognized and in which they have always been recognized."<sup>49</sup>

On April 30, 1841, the long-awaited visit of Phillipps to Oxford took place and he was delighted at meeting Bloxam, W. G. Ward, and J. B. Morris among others. "What I heard far surpassed my most sanguine expectations," he wrote on his return to Grace Dieu.<sup>50</sup> Flattered as he undoubtedly had been by the attention paid to him, Phillipps found his spirits revived to such a degree of certainty that he could write to Bloxam on May 13, 1841: "Oh the glorious day of Christ is not far off: the hour of deliverance is at hand. We shall soon be one in Jesus Christ and in our Catholick Mother."<sup>51</sup> Two weeks later he was prepared to advance the extraordinary suggestion that

if upon the view, which I take of *the oath of supremacy* [that is, that it relates to a purely *temporal* supremacy only], the Bishop of Oxford with his clergy, that is, if the Church of Oxford would come to an understanding with the H. See, I see no reason why in that case *we* should not all (or at least as many as pleased) make our submissions to you, so as in all our proceedings to be regulated by you, and thus to secure a greater unity of plan in promoting the glorious work of reunion. . . . Any such understanding with the H. See would not, I conceive, in any way render it necessary to change any external rite in your service (*pro tempore*) provided that the prayers requisite for the due celebration of Mass were added *in secret* to those which you already have in your Communion Office in the B. of Common Prayer.<sup>52</sup>

Phillipps was particularly anxious that the Oxford group of writers should use the term "rite" rather than "communion" when referring to the Roman Catholic Church. "In the Catholick Church," he wrote, "there neither *is* nor *ever was* a difference of *communion*: but from the Apostles' days downwards there has been differences of *rites*, and in that sense a diversity of Churches, but no other. Let us be accurate and Catholick in

<sup>47</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 22a.

<sup>48</sup> Brilioth, *Anglican Revival* 179.

<sup>49</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 22a.

<sup>50</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 24.

<sup>51</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 25.

<sup>52</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 29.

our terms. The more we are so, the more the reunion of Xtendom will be hastened."<sup>53</sup>

By June 1841, Bloxam was beginning to consider Phillipps a well-meaning but dangerously reckless man and his replies began to assume a brevity which could not but be noticed by Phillipps, who bitterly complained to him: "I have much to say, much to ask, but you are so studiously brief in your communications, you do not encourage one to write all I think and feel, and you make me even feel that I write too much as it is."<sup>54</sup> In June Phillipps was warning Bloxam of the impending conversion of several Anglicans, some of whom he had met recently at the consecration of St. Chad's, Birmingham, and at Oscott College. Bernard Smith had assured him that "the greater part of his parishioners at Leadenham were ready to come over along with him."<sup>55</sup> If sporadic conversions were to be avoided, immediate action, Phillipps felt, was necessary. "Now is the time to come forward at once *boldly* and *distinctly* to demand of your Bishops that they do at once take measures to heal the schism," he wrote, for "if all the Catholick minded Clergy of your Church would do this at once in a body to your Bishop, I am confident such a holy, such a reasonable petition would not be scorned, and the Church of England might yet be saved." On July 24, he wrote again on the trouble which could arise on account of individual conversions:

What appears to me the most effectual mode for *Us* to serve you at the present moment, would be for *us* to obtain from the proper quarter a declaration, which should remove any possible scruples on the part of individuals as to remaining in the Anglican communion, and so to enable them to prosecute their great, their glorious, their divine work with greater freedom and fervour. This you remember I hinted with your approbation when at Oxford in the Spring—now however I see my way in it *much more clearly* than I did then, and in order to carry it into effect I have found a zealous coadjutor in my friend Spencer. I trust the autumn of this year will not pass over without our seeing *this* matter at least *satisfactorily accomplished*.

Two days later, however, George Spencer approached Bloxam dissociating himself from the role of "zealous coadjutor" ascribed to him by his friend: "The object we have in hand in common is the reunion of England with the Universal Church. This is unquestionably and infallibly a good work, and therefore is one which I reckon could never be obstructed or delayed by any act done according to God's Will, and therefore not by any number of individuals joining us, being first fully satisfied that it was right so to do." Furthermore, by such conversions "it is conceivable, easily so, how this might help the great cause."<sup>56</sup> Not only did Phillipps

<sup>53</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 31.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 32.

<sup>56</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 43.

fail to carry Spencer with him in his views on individual conversions but he also could not deliver the support of Lord Shrewsbury as he had also promised. On August 2, 1841, he had to write to Bloxam, for instance, to try to explain away a remark concerning Shrewsbury's "hopes of having some of the Oxford Clergy to serve some of his beautiful new Churches," adding rather lamely: "He must mean after the reunion shall have taken place."<sup>57</sup> Phillipps had hoped that Alton, Shrewsbury's family home, would become in 1842 "a grand centre of the glorious reunion movement."<sup>58</sup>

By October 1841, Phillipps' espousal of the reunion concept was almost paranoic. Writing to Bloxam on the feast of the Venerable Bede and addressing him as "a Priest of that antient Church, which this blessed Saint so gloriously illustrated,"<sup>59</sup> he remarked that, as he had suggested to W. G. Ward, "one way that has lately occurred to me, as affording to persons of your Church *the most perfectly advanced in Catholick knowledge* a means of more effectually promoting the return to Unity of your own Church [is] by embracing that most holy of condition of the Religious State in the Order of Charity (which Order I am persuaded is of all Orders the one most suited for the Church's wants at the present day) and so forming a link of inter-communion between the two Churches." Such a step would be "rather the embracing of a State of Life than the quitting of a communion" and "it would give you a power and an influence for great purposes in our own Church, which I long to see you possess, and which, if you did possess, would quickly produce effects within Her, which must greatly accelerate the perfect reunion of both Churches."<sup>60</sup> It appears that Phillipps envisaged the Rosminians developing an Anglican branch which would work in harmony with that already within the Roman Catholic Church for corporate reunion. Whether or not he had discussed the proposal with Dr. Luigi Gentili is not clear, but the idea predictably fell upon stony ground at Oxford. He was to attempt to revive it later in 1843 when William Lockhart of Exeter College was converted and subsequently joined the Rosminians.

Phillipps' correspondence with Bloxam came to an abrupt termination with the conversion on October 27, 1841, of Richard Waldo Sibthorpe, fellow of Magdalene, and Bloxam's personal friend. A spate of pamphlets was published in 1842 upon the wisdom or otherwise of Sibthorpe's act; Sibthorpe himself published two of them.<sup>61</sup> He grounded his submission

<sup>57</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 44.

<sup>59</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 57.

<sup>58</sup> MS. Magd. 459. 47.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> R. W. Sibthorpe, *Some Answer to the Enquiry: Why Are You Become a Catholic? In a Letter to a Friend* (London: Dolman, 1842); R. W. Sibthorpe, *A Further Answer to the Enquiry: Why Are You Become a Catholic? In a Second Letter to a Friend, Containing a Notice of the Strictures of the Rev. Messrs. Palmer and Dodsworth, upon a Former*



on the principle that "he could not reconcile the unity of the Church as answering to its types in the Old Testament except by admitting the Supremacy of the Papal See." This was the first time that papal supremacy was given as the sole reason for conversion, Philipps in his correspondence with Bloxam having kept the subject well in the background as the last obstacle to be overcome in the process of corporate reunion rather than the first. Bloxam's dismay was exacerbated in 1841 by a pamphlet published by John Dalton, a Roman Catholic priest from the Midland District, urging his coreligionists to prepare themselves spiritually for the reception of the converts. Only "ignorance, pride, want of submission to authority," he maintained, were still holding men back. Dalton argued: "we have had enough of wrangling and bitter controversy: it is now time that we should embrace each other with mutual love and forgiveness."<sup>62</sup> His answer to the question "How is England to become Catholic?" was "by submitting to *authority*" rather than by delaying the day of making a choice in the interest of far-off hopes of corporate union which would hopefully involve no pain and little sacrifice. Bloxam argued that the secession of Sibthorpe and what he called "the evident eagerness of Dr. Wiseman and Mr. Philipps to receive deserters from our Camp" dispelled the notion of a reunion of the churches, which for him now "vanished like a dream."<sup>63</sup> Immediately following Sibthorpe's conversion, Newman threw his weight into the scale arguing, W. G. Ward informed Philipps, that "those who were within our Church ought not to leave her communion so long as they have proof of our Lord's presence with her by their progress in holiness and power of avoiding sin. His argument went to show that even were we in strictness no part of the church at all, still we should be bound to stay where we are and work towards unity."<sup>64</sup>

Francis Diedrich Wackerbarth, a Cambridge man shortly to accompany Sibthorpe into the Roman Catholic Church (he was received in Philipps' private chapel at Grace Dieu), made an impassioned plea to the Government in 1841, taking up Doyle's earlier cry, to initiate a corporate reunion of the Anglican and Roman Churches. "Let those hateful enactments, which prevent the Anglican Bishops from entertaining such a scheme, be repealed, and let the Bishops of both branches of the Church be requested to meet and concert measures for bringing about so glorious a consum-

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*Letter* (London: Dolman, 1842). Sibthorpe was to return to the Church of England in 1843, only to be reconciled to Rome in 1865. See the sympathetic "life" by J. Fowler, *Richard Waldo Sibthorpe: A Biography* (London: Skeffington, 1880).

<sup>62</sup> *A Few Humble Remarks on the Great Question How Is England to Become Catholic by A Member of the Church* (London: Dolman, 1841; published anonymously) 17.

<sup>63</sup> Middleton, *Newman & Bloxam* 161.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from W. G. Ward to A. L. Philipps, "In 'Octava' SS. Innocentium, 1842," quoted *in extenso* in Ward, *William George Ward* 199-201.

mation and I feel persuaded that terms, and easy terms too, for a complete re-union of the Churches of this Kingdom, under the Holy See, would very shortly be agreed upon."<sup>65</sup> In even more strident terms in 1842 Wackerbarth declared he was persuaded "there is but one way to put an end to this miserable state of corruption and secular bondage, and that way is to repent speedily, and return to the obedience of faith:—to replace the Church of England under the dominion of Christ's appointed Universal Vicar, that the weight of his sacred authority may counter-balance the hopeless corruption of the State."<sup>66</sup>

The conversion of Sibthorpe and Wackerbarth undoubtedly marked a significant watershed in the reunion movement; the palmy days of intellectual debate were at an end and reunionists on both sides of the ecclesiastical divide had to come to terms with a decade in which the Established Church's most influential men abandoned their hopes for corporate reunion, and often with them their friends and careers, for a future unknown and uncertain. Phillipps rapidly persuaded himself, however, that the cause of reunion was not lost by the conversions of 1845. Reflecting in old age on this period of rapid development, he informed William Robert Brownlow, the future Bishop of Clifton (himself a convert parson), with some of the old youthful assurance and vigor that "the English Church in the 16th century became Protestant, in the 19th century she will become Catholic once more, and return to her obedience to the Indefectible Chair of Peter."<sup>67</sup> He argued:

All that has taken place for the last 45 years, since I myself returned to Catholic Unity, testifies that a few ripe fruit have indeed during that interval been gathered, but they are only the first fruits and the guarantee of a Harvest, which is yet future—a Harvest which will consist in the return and reconciliation of the English Church as a whole, not in its dismemberment and a consequent ingathering into our own ranks of the *dissecta membra* of an exploded Body. Catholicism is leavening the old Church of England, hence all the discord and confusion we see, but every day the Catholic element is becoming more and more dominant.<sup>68</sup>

#### CORPORATE REUNION AND THE A.P.U.C.

In 1850 Phillipps was able to view the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy as likely to advance the time when his desires would

<sup>65</sup> Rev. Francis Diedrich Wackerbarth, *Tuba Concordiae, or A Letter to the Future Prime Minister relative to the Pacification of Ireland and the Condition of the Church* (Lichfield: Lomax, 1841) 7.

<sup>66</sup> Rev. Francis Diedrich Wackerbarth, *The Egyptian Bondage or A Second Call to Union on the Principles of the Holy Catholic Church and the Everlasting Gospel of Christ* (London: Dolman, 1842) 8.

<sup>67</sup> Letter to Brownlow from Phillipps, 16/3/1872, printed in E. S. Purcell, *Life and Letters of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle* 1 (London: Macmillan, 1900) 310–11.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

be realized, particularly as it was a hierarchy headed by a prelate who had shared so closely his earliest dreams.<sup>69</sup> Shrewsbury in an unpublished letter to Ullathorne considered the hierarchy and the resulting "no popery" agitation as supplying Puseyites with "a diversion from the never-ending divisions and discussions on the Gorham controversy." Although the hierarchy might be thought to gratify "the few Anglican clergy who came over by the idea that they are uniting themselves to a regularly-established Hierarchy," this advantage would be lost, he thought, "since they never can imagine it to be the ancient Hierarchy revived, seeing that the Sees are all altered." If so, Shrewsbury demanded, "Where is the gain?" In his view the establishment of the hierarchy had "given a unity and a vigour to Protestantism which it has not displayed since the time of James 2, when it drove Catholicism from the land." He asked: "Might it not have been better to have allowed the Church of England to exhaust her bile in her own internal struggles? The Evil is but too patent, where is the Good?"<sup>70</sup>

Shrewsbury's pessimism was relieved by a spate of conversions which followed directly from the Gorham Judgement, and particularly by those of Manning, Dodsworth, and Maskell. In March 1850, he had predicted to Ullathorne that if the last two had "an atom of sincerity [they] must come out of an Establishment which they fully acknowledge to have forfeited all right and title to their allegiance, and must move on into another which can alone show them satisfactory claims to their regard and obedience."<sup>71</sup> Of Gorham itself, Manning was to write: "The violation of the doctrine of Baptism was of less gravity to me than the violation of the divine office of the church by the Supremacy of the Crown in Council."<sup>72</sup> W. H. Mill, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, considered that with the Gorham Judgement "the last vestiges of Catholicism are gone, or are at least rapidly passing away from sight."<sup>73</sup> It can be maintained with some truth that the outcome of the struggle with the State over doctrinal orthodoxy was a more serious blow to the Established Church than *Tract 90* had been. It was partly to regroup the ranks of the High Church party that Phillipps published in 1857 his important pamphlet *On the Future Unity of Christendom* and helped to establish in that year the A.P.U.C. for the restoration of visible unity. In his pamphlet

<sup>69</sup> Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, *A Letter to the Right Hon. the Earl of Shrewsbury, Waterford and Wexford, on the Re-Establishment of the Hierarchy of the English Catholic Church, and the Present Posture of Catholic Affairs in Great Britain* (London: Dolman, 1851). Phillipps also signed the *Declaration of the Roman Catholic Laity of England* (1851) (London: Lucas, 1851).

<sup>70</sup> Birmingham Diocesan Archives: Shrewsbury to Ullathorne, March 9, 1851.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*: Shrewsbury to Ullathorne, March 23, 1850.

<sup>72</sup> Manning Papers, Bayswater: Journal, 1887.

<sup>73</sup> J. C. S. Nias, *Gorham and the Bishop of Exeter* (London: S.P.C.K., 1951) 126.

Phillipps proposed a convocation at Paris of theologians from the Anglican, Greek, and Latin Churches to lay down preliminaries for a union of the three main Christian traditions.

For "union" to be lasting, every least point must be maturely weighed, and a perfect concert owned, not only by the Ecclesiastical Superiors on all sides, but also let me add, by the secular powers of Christendom also. Nothing good can be brought about without the approval and consent of the three greatest sovereigns of the world,—the Emperor of Russia, the Emperor of France, and the Queen of Great Britain; and on the other hand nothing must be done without the knowledge and approval of Him whom all Christendom practically acknowledges as the Great Head of the Christian Church, our Holy Father, Pope Pius the Ninth.<sup>74</sup>

It is abundantly clear from the pamphlet that Phillipps is no longer concerned simply with the reconciliation of the schismatic Anglican Church with Rome, but *now* with a grand union of what he considered to be the three main Christian churches as a result of an ecumenical council in which they would treat as equals, retain their traditions, and allocate to the papacy what was essentially but a primacy of honor.

In September 1857, the initiative having been taken some months earlier by Phillipps, Alexander Penrose Forbes (Bishop of Brechin), and Frederick George Lee, the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom was established. Forbes had been curate at St. Thomas', Oxford, at the height of the Oxford conversions in 1845, was an intimate friend of Pusey, and had been the latter's instrument as vicar of St. Saviour's, Leeds, for presenting a model of Anglo-Catholic parochial practice. Lee had been a valued correspondent of Phillipps and a successor of Sibthorpe in the chapelry of Kennington, near Oxford, from which function his passion for High Church practices dates. From Kennington Lee had moved to London to serve a proprietary chapel. A stormy petrel, he was to give much concern to Anglican Church authorities before his deathbed conversion to Roman Catholicism. The Association thus established was something more than a simple confraternity praying for the reunion of the Anglican, Greek, and Roman Churches, as Phillipps somewhat disingenuously was to assert following the papal condemnation of it in 1864. At its outset, for instance, it was concerned with vindicating the validity of Anglican orders, and initially the Association contemplated drawing up a submission to that end for the perusal of Propaganda. Catholics attending the initial meeting were Phillipps, Henry Collins (a convert of 1857 who was about to become a Cistercian monk at Mount St. Bernard), another recent convert convinced of the validity of Anglican orders, H. N. Oxenham, and the convert and Rosminian William Lock-

<sup>74</sup> *On the Future Unity of Christendom* (London, 1857).

hart. The formation of the Association was proposed by Philipps, and the provost of St. Ninian's, Perth, Edward B. Knottesford-Fortescue (destined to become a Roman Catholic in 1872), became master of the Association. The Bishop of Brechin never played a major role in the Association when he saw the lack of what he called "caution and circumspection"<sup>75</sup> in its early proceedings, and it was at his instance that the document on Anglican orders was not proceeded with at Rome. Lee became secretary, the Association being dominated by a closed circle of High Church membership. Roman Catholics were always in a small minority before the papal condemnation and, apart from one or two Continental ecclesiastics, the chief Roman Catholic members were Canon Thomas Sing of Market Rasen, Canon William Knight of St. Mary's, Hartlepool, Fr. George Brent of the parish at Whitwick, Canon T. M. McDonnell of Clifton pro-Cathedral, Fr. Nicholas Rigby of Ugthorpe near Whitby, and Fr. Charles Caccia of Market Weighton. The obligations of the Association were to recite a Pater Noster, and the Collect for Unity in the Roman Missal. Priests were obliged to add "the offering, at least once in three months, of the Holy Sacrifice, for the same intention."<sup>76</sup> Members were assured that they were not being asked "to compromise any principles which they rightly or wrongly hold dear."<sup>77</sup> Sibthorpe took Bloxam to task for joining; he found the expression "offering . . . of the Holy Sacrifice" absolutely astonishing.

What will the whole Evangelical body, clerical and lay, and even the High and Dry, say to such an expression as "offer the Holy Sacrifice", and that, too, with a special intention? The very notion of a holy sacrifice in the sense of this circular is repudiated, written and preached against, *utterly scouted*. . . It is worse than idle to ask the great majority of English church clergymen to join in this association, laudable as is its object. It is to add another bone of contention to the many now on the English platter.<sup>78</sup>

He regarded the Association—as indeed Wiseman did from its inception—as "holding out . . . false colours over the Church of England. It is assuming her to hold and teach what she does not hold nor teach." Sibthorpe added: "I know some few of her Bishops and others have held, and some of her clergy and laity do hold this, but it is not her true doctrine."<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> H. R. T. Brandreth, *Dr. Lee of Lambeth: A Chapter in Parenthesis in the History of the Oxford Movement* (London: S.P.C.K., 1951) 80.

<sup>76</sup> See the *Declaration* for signature for members of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom printed in F. G. Lee: *Essays on the Re-Union of Christendom* (Hayes, London, 1867), p. 299.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* 298.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* 154.

<sup>78</sup> Fowler, *Sibthorpe* 153.

Wiseman, while not actively discouraging Roman Catholic membership of the Association, warned Rome upon its foundation in 1857 of the tendency of Unionists, as evidenced in their new journal, the *Union*, to treat "ecclesiastical unity, that is to say union with the Holy See, not as a matter of absolute necessity, but rather of great utility, as perhaps the only practical means of bringing about what they so earnestly desired."<sup>80</sup> In 1857, however, Wiseman did not think the Holy See should take any action to discourage Catholics from joining the group. He feared "only the imprudence of those who represent his Holiness as favourable to the plea of disregarding the conversion of individuals, in the hope of an approaching national conversion." He took the liberty of adding that "if there should ever be the faintest movement towards so desirable an end, the Bishops, who watch with the utmost solicitude over the religious interests of England, would hasten to announce it to the Supreme Pastor, and would not leave this part of their duty to a layman."<sup>81</sup>

George Spencer, writing to Lee shortly before the papal condemnation of the A.P.U.C., made similar points:

A corporate reunion of the English or of the Greek Church of course would be a most blessed result. Such unions have before now been effected with regard to the latter by negotiations carried on by its rulers, and so they may again. But we cannot but call on each individual to take care of himself first at all costs, and at all sacrifices to place himself under the pastors who indeed hold the authority of our Lord, and who must be alone possessed of it.<sup>82</sup>

Spencer refused to join the Association because he believed he would be in danger of sanctioning "an erroneous view" if he did so. He concluded: "So long as you and your friends conceive it right to remain in your position, what you are doing is of vast importance," but he added: "I trust you will not object to making the prayer that if it should be more according to the Will of God that you should individually, and in the greatest possible numbers, take the step which I did long ago and which some of your associates have lately done, you may be led to it speedily."<sup>83</sup>

What rendered the A.P.U.C. irreparable harm was the establishment of the *Union Newspaper* in the same year as the Association was founded as the organ of the Anglo-Catholic movement. Lee was editor and developed the paper as if it were almost an official mouthpiece of the Association. Extravagant and uncritical in its advocacy of liturgical and devotional practices of Continental Catholicism, it alienated many moderate High Church people. Wiseman drew Rome's attention to its discus-

<sup>80</sup> See the translation of Wiseman's Memorandum in Wilfrid Ward, *The Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman* 2 (5th ed.; London: Longman, Green, 1899) 479 ff.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. 488.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Brandreth, *Dr. Lee of Lambeth* 85.

sion of "the use of confession and of extreme unction, the sacramental character of matrimony, of confirmation, and of orders; the abstinences of the church; the worship of the saints, especially of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the daily celebration of the Lord's Supper, under the names of 'Divine Mystery', 'The Sacrifice', and even 'Mass'; the observances of the different colours in the sacred vestments, indeed the use itself of vestments such as the chasuble, the cope, and the stole (to say nothing of the signing of the Holy Cross, genuflexions, etc.)."<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, he added, the editors "inculcated a more exotic life and the practice of the Catholic devotions; and recommended our books of piety for reading aloud and for study."<sup>85</sup> The extravagance of the approach could only lead to the collapse of the paper and to the alienation of many Anglicans from the A.P.U.C. The *Union Review*, established by Lee as successor to the *Union Newspaper* in 1863, was anxious to adopt a measured and cautious tone, but in developing this approach to assuage Anglican susceptibilities it succeeded in offending Roman Catholics by a sustained antagonism to individual conversions and bitter attacks upon well-known converts. Some examples of its treatment of Roman Catholic issues are not inappropriate. In the second number of the *Review*, in a reference to the temporal power of the papacy, it declared that "had the converts who have left us during the past five and twenty years remained to have strengthened the Catholic element in the Anglican communion, none can say what influence for good, instead of for evil, might have been willingly rendered to the Holy Father in his present great extremity, by the English nation at large." It attacked Newman for having nothing to say on "the position of the Eastern Church, the validity of Anglican ordinations, the probability of the Re-union of Christendom" and other points, preferring instead to maintain "the eloquent silence of a great oracle."<sup>86</sup> The Oblates of St. Charles were referred to as a community "where several fifth-rate Anglican clergymen have been duly shorn and metamorphised."<sup>87</sup> A letter was printed from an anonymous Roman Catholic priest criticizing influential converts who "wish to have—and pretty often obtain—their own way uncontradicted."<sup>88</sup> The editor in a review of Richard Simpson's work remarked that "the truth is that some of the converts are too restless and too clever by half. They have been 'unsettled' themselves, and desire to unsettle other people. One has a theory of development, another nurses a scientific crochet, or propounds a new 'method', a third looks for a political millenium in the triumph of 'liberalism'; while all seem to agree that the old Roman Catholics are very slow coaches indeed."<sup>89</sup>

In July 1863, the *Review* was arguing that in the eighteen years which

<sup>84</sup> Ward, *Wiseman* 2, 479.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Union Review* 1, no. 2 (1863).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* 148 fin.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* 176.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* 186–87.

had passed since 1845 "Dr. Pusey and Mr. Keble are still at their posts" and that "they are certainly exercising greater influence over the mind of England than those who seceded."<sup>90</sup> Anglican converts had found "there was work to be done in the Roman Catholic Church, as well as out of it, to bring it up to their ideal—and they have encountered opposition in doing it there likewise, as formerly in the Church of England. The great Master-mind of their Exodus was certainly never more in voluntary retirement at Littlemore, than he is now at Edgbaston."<sup>91</sup> In September of the same year further criticisms were made of converts. The London Oratory and the Redemptorist house at Clapham were designated strongly ultramontane. At Clapham it was rumored that "persons suspected of disloyalty on the Temporal Power are refused absolution."<sup>92</sup> The Redemptorist house, however, was described as "some way out of London, its services are not attractive, and it has no good preachers. The office of the Redemptorists consisting mainly in giving missions to the poor, is not such as to qualify them for impressing educated audiences." Of Newman it declared that "if report speaks true, one, who before 1845, was the undisputed coryphaeus of his co-religionists can ill brook the neighbourhood of a mind greater than his own."<sup>93</sup> Manning is described as "a remarkable man" but among his fellow oblates of St. Charles there is none "who has made himself a name in his own communion, still less beyond it." Leaving the converts aside, the *Review* argued that "the Gallican or quasi-Gallican party among English Roman Catholics is scarcely influential enough to claim special notice at our hands. It is chiefly to be found among some of the old Catholic families and some of the older clergy; but they do not make themselves felt as a power in the church."<sup>94</sup>

Phillipps himself contributed to the *Union Review* and in 1864, while maintaining that Roman Catholic members of the A.P.U.C. were in no way pledged to oppose or to condemn the union of individuals to the Holy See—indeed, he could but rejoice in such—yet "on the very same ground, he [was] infinitely more desirous," he claimed, "for the corporate Reunion of Christendom than for the conversion of a few single individuals. . . ."<sup>95</sup>

A year after its formation the A.P.U.C. could boast of a membership of over seven thousand, about a seventh of which was estimated to be Roman Catholic. In May 1864, Edmund S. ffoulkes, who had become a Roman Catholic in 1855 and was destined to return to the Church of England in 1870, wrote anonymously in the *Union Review* on the "Experiences of a 'Vert.'" In this important contribution he supported the

<sup>90</sup> *Union Review* 1, no. 4 (July 1863) 330–31

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid* 1, no. 5 (Sept. 1863) 445 ff

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid* 2, no. 8 (March 1864) 157 ff



general contention of the *Review* that individual converts did not rest easily in the Roman Catholic communion. In his forceful article he attacked in particular the way in which married converts had been treated: "From a silly narrow-minded apprehension of being supposed to recognize any inherent validity in our Anglican orders, or perhaps any opening in the ecclesiastical world for married men, we have every one of us had the cold shoulder given to us when we asked for work, or else encouraged to seek employment in any calling, no matter how secular."<sup>96</sup> In the same number as that carrying ffoulkes's letter was printed another one from "Catholicus Dunelmensis" which declared that "there is no material distinction whatsoever of any real importance between the whole of the Anglican Clergy who have approved of the Oxford Movement and the old-fashioned sound and sober Catholic priests. The novelties which have been introduced by Anglican converts serve to make our religion now as different from what it was when I was a boy, as the religion of the C. of E. is to Wesleyan Methodism."<sup>97</sup> This same letter referred to the "sentimental, unmanly priests at Clapham, at Bayswater, and at Brompton."

As the year wore on, the *Union Review* became increasingly offensive to converts. In September 1864, it referred to Newman as "the only man of transcendent genius whom Rome has won from Anglicanism" and approved of his not having gone "on the slavish and half-idolatrous craving for an infallible *person* to pin one's faith and hopes upon," referring to the pope as "a kind of Delphic oracle."<sup>98</sup>

Enough has been quoted from the first few numbers of the *Union Review* to illustrate its manner of encouraging dissatisfaction and disharmony among the body of Roman Catholics, setting "old Catholic" against convert, in the furtherance of the wider aim of corporate reunion—or, certainly, that is how it appeared at the time to the Roman Catholic bishops and other leading ecclesiastics. Strictly speaking, Philipps was correct in protesting that Roman Catholic membership of the A.P.U.C. was forbidden on September 16, 1864, not so much for what the Association was in itself but on account of the dissension being propagated by the *Union Review*. The latter was interpreted as the Association's semiofficial mouthpiece, however, and ample evidence could be culled from it of the views of leading members of the Association to give weight to the papal rescript when it declared that the Association "has resulted from a view, put forward by it in express terms, that the three Christian communions, the Roman Catholic, the schismatic Greek and the Anglican, though separated and divided one from another, yet with an equal right claim the title Catholic." Philipps and his associates protested that

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. 2, no. 9 (May 1864) 277 ff.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. 2, no. 11 (Sept. 1864) 487 ff.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

the A.P.U.C. had been misrepresented, the condemnation being based upon the Latin and French translations of the original Appeal, not the more authoritative English version. This was little more than a semantic quibble; Philipps' cousin, Bishop William Clifford of Clifton, wrote to him:

It cannot be denied that the theory of there being three Christian communions, the Roman, the Greek and the Anglican, all three branches of the true Church, but all more or less in error as regards minor points, has become one of the most prominent of doctrines advocated by the Association. I do not say that all hold it, but by far the greater portion do, and hence the opinion was gaining ground that Catholics who were members of the Association held this view to be true, or at least tenable. The Church could not but condemn such a view as heretical. This is what the letter does in the first place. In the second place it forbids Catholics to join the Association, because by so doing they give scandal, for although they hold orthodox views themselves, still, by belonging to a society which puts forward the aforesaid heterodox view, they give just cause for people to suppose that they are not opposed to it themselves.<sup>99</sup>

In a letter penned two months after the papal prohibition, G. J. R. Gordon in the *Union Review* was firmly averring that "the Anglican is of the Catholic Church as completely as either the Roman or Eastern Branches."<sup>100</sup>

An Address of protest and appeal was sent to Rome, with 198 signatures, in the summer of 1865, but the reply from Cardinal Patrizi of November 8 of that year contained a further firm condemnation of the branch theory. The Roman attitude did not, of course, lead to a cessation of activity in the work of corporate reunion, neither did it deliver an immediate deathblow to the A.P.U.C. The resignation of Roman Catholic members certainly initiated a period of slow decline, however, in the affairs of the Association but it continued formally in existence until 1921. Lee edited the *Union Review* until 1868 but in 1874 the journal itself came to an end, three years before Henry Edward Manning approved the foundation of an Association of Prayers for the Return of the Separated Portions of Christendom to Catholic Unity under the direction of Fr. Lockhart at St. Ethelreda's, Ely Place, and Fr. Tondini of the Barnabite Order. In essence the latter was an approved diocesan association and declared itself to be the successor of "an Association of Prayers for the return of the separated churches of the East, especially of the Greco-Russian Church, to Catholic Unity, . . . the dying legacy to the Barnabite Order of the late saintly Father Schouvaloff, himself a Barnabite and a

<sup>99</sup> Purcell, *Life and Letters of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle* 1, 402.

<sup>100</sup> *Union Review* 3, no. 13 (Jan. 1865).

Russian convert.”<sup>101</sup> In introducing the Association into England, Lockhart “prepared to include in its intention all the separated portions of Christendom, particularly the Anglican and other Christian bodies of this country.”<sup>102</sup> Mass was to be offered for this intention at 10 a.m. every Saturday at St. Ethelreda’s.

<sup>101</sup> F. G. Lee, *The Church under Queen Elizabeth: An Historical Sketch* 2 (London: Allen, 1880) 384–86.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.