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Liddon, Döllinger and the Bonn Conferences of 1874 and 1875: a case study in Nationalism and Ecumenism

Mark D. Chapman

1. Redefining Ecumenism in the 1870s

This paper traces the history of two Conferences held in the University of Bonn in the late summers of 1874 and 1875, which Victor Conzemius has described with some justification as the "most important ecumenical conversations in the nineteenth century".[1] It is a story that deserves to be better known, since it provides a good example of the possibilities and pitfalls of ecumenical dialogue. In some ways the Bonn Conferences prefigure developments in the twentieh century: they were even, in Owen Chadwick's words, "the first type of Faith and Order Conference (to use an anachronistic term) to exist in Christendom".[2] The motives were complex and reflect something of the political context. Most importantly, the 1870s were a period where power was beginning to shift, and the Concert of Europe, which had more or less maintained peace since the time of Napoleon, was threatened by a united Germany and a collapsing Ottoman Empire. The Bonn Conferences took place against the backdrop of the so-called Eastern Question, which meant relationships between churchmen of East and West took on an added political dimension. This early ecumenical dialogue reveals motives that are a blend of the theological, national and political. The same might well be true of other later ecumenical encounters. Indeed, historians of the World Council of Churches might do well to bear such motives in mind when considering ecumenical dialogue during the Cold War and the post-1989 world.

Although the nineteenth century brought with it increasing ecclesiastical bureaucratisation in the Church of England,[3] early ecumenical en-

[1] Victor Conzemius, "Ignaz von Döllinger: the Development of a XIXth Century Ecumenist" in *Hundert Jahre Christkatholisch-theologische Fakultät der Universität Bern, Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, Beiheft, Bern: Stämpfli, 1974, pp. 110–27, here p. 125.

[2] "Döllinger and Reunion" in Gillian R. Evans (ed.), *Christian Authority: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987, pp. 296–334, here p. 316.

[3] See esp. Arthur Burns, *The Diocesan Revival in the Church of England*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000.

deavours were largely private initiatives sponsored by enthusiasts.[4] What made this possible was that even in the 1860s many clergymen of the Church of England still had sufficient resources to be able to devote a great deal of energy to causes not directly linked to their particular pastoral charge. And high stipends also allowed the possibility of frequent and leisurely travel. In 1867, for instance, Henry Parry Liddon,[5] at the time a Canon of Salisbury Cathedral, went to Russia with Charles Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll. In his diary for 28 July he described his impressions of the celebration of the liturgy in St Isaac's Cathedral, St Petersburg: "Today I feel that for the first time in my life I stand face to face with the Eastern Church. ... To call her a petrification here in Russia would be a simple folly."[6] The following day he wrote to William Bright: "There was an aroma of the fourth century about the whole which was quite marvellous. ... Right or wrong, it is a vast, energetic, and most powerful body, with an evident hold upon the heart of the largest of European empires."[7] Liddon's first impressions were confirmed later in his two-month tour. As he wrote to the Bishop of Salisbury, he had found in Russia a church which had moved from isolation towards a genuine interest in the thought of the Western Churches. Bishop Leonide, suffragan Bishop of Moscow, was well informed about the Lambeth Conference and the problems faced by the Anglican Communion in its missionary work, particularly the case of the deposed liberal Bishop Colenso of Natal. Similarly Philaret, the Metropolitan of Moscow, showed great interest in English church matters. Alongside such openness to the outside world, Liddon also found in the Russian Church an authentic expression of devotion, sensing a "presence of God" which penetrated Russian life "far more completely than any of the Western nations which I have seen".[8] Furthermore, the Orthodox the-

[4] See Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill (eds), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517–1948*, London: SPCK, 1954, esp. pp. 263–305.

[5] Henry Parry Liddon (1892–90). Vice-principal of Cuddesdon College, 1854–9; vice-principal of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, 1859–62; Canon of Salisbury, 1864–70; Canon of St Paul's, from 1870. He was also Dean Ireland's Professor of Exegesis at Oxford from 1870–82, resigning to be able to devote his energies to his monumental *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey*, 4 vols, London: Longmans, 1897. On Liddon, see John O. Johnston, *Life and Letters of Henry Parry Liddon*, London: Longmans, 1904; and Michael Chandler, *The Life and Work of Henry Parry Liddon*, Leominster: Gracewing, 2000.

[6] Liddon Diary, 28 July 1867, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 101.

[7] Liddon to Bright, 29 July 1867, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 102.

[8] Liddon to Bishop of Salisbury, 14 Aug 1867, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 105.

ological method, based on the teaching of the undivided church and on the authority of the episcopate as guardians of that faith, was one with which he could sympathise. After all, it was such a method that had provided the original impetus for the Oxford Movement in which Liddon, as a disciple of Dr Pusey,[9] was firmly located. However, what quickly became apparent during his stay in Russia was the influence of international politics. At one point during their conversation Philaret had complained of the tolerance shown towards the Sultan of Turkey by the British Government, which had come about from the post-Crimea settlement: " 'To us Eastern Christians', he said, 'it seems a national repudiation of the Name and Authority of Jesus Christ, when you thus welcome the head of a religion which is His great enemy and which persecutes His servants' ."[10] The paradox was clear to Liddon: first-hand experience revealed a church in touch with the rest of the world, which offered a genuine spirituality to its people, and which seemed to share a theological method with the catholic churches of the west. Yet the political and ecclesiastical circumstances of the day appeared to stand in the way of any further reconciliation.

Liddon's tour of Russia was by no means unique: there had long been overtures and meetings between the Anglican churches and the churches of the East, which continued off and on through the nineteenth century.[11] Indeed the 1860s were not an inauspicious time for discussions with the Orthodox Churches: the year 1863 brought a renewed vigour with the foundation of the Eastern Church Association on the initiative of John Mason Neale, and of which Pusey was a member. There had also been hesitant moves towards the Roman Catholic Church from members of the Church of England and other Anglican provinces for a number of years. For instance, the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christen-

[9] Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800–1882) was Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford from 1823. He led the Tractarian Movement in the 1830s and became leader of the Anglo-Catholic party. He was appointed Regius Professor of Hebrew in 1828. He had visited Germany in the 1820s and was initially attracted to Tholuck. He maintained a German correspondence throughout his life. See Albrecht Geck, "The Concept of History in E. B. Pusey's First Enquiry into German Theology and its German Background" in *Journal of Theological Studies* 38 (1987), pp. 387–408. For Pusey's ecumenism, see Robert H. Greenfield, " 'Such a Friend to the Pope' " in Perry Butler, *Pusey Rediscovered*, London: SPCK, 1983, pp. 162–184.

[10] Liddon to Bishop of Salisbury, 14 Aug 1867, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 104.

[11] On this see Georges Florovsky "The Orthodox Churches and the Ecumenical Movement Prior to 1910" in Rouse and Neill, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 171–216

dom had been established in 1857 by F. G. Lee and a number of Roman Catholics including the aristocratic Tory Catholic, Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle. Directing his not inconsiderable energies towards reunion with the Roman Catholic Church, Dr Pusey, the leader of the Anglo-Catholics, published his first *Eirenicon* in 1865.[12] In many ways this extraordinary book (which was succeeded by two more *Eirenica* in the 1860s) threw down the gauntlet to Roman Catholics, challenging them to explain themselves, particularly the true nature of the Council of Trent, and also offering an invitation to talk with Anglicans who shared so much with them. For Pusey it was the non-essential trappings of Trent that stood in the way of reunion: "I doubt not that the Roman Church and ourselves are kept apart much more by that vast practical system which lies beyond the letter of the Council of Trent, things which are taught with a quasi-authority in the Roman Church, than by what is actually defined."[13] Whatever the success of such ecumenical overtures, however, a decisive blow was dealt on 18 July 1870: overnight the situation changed completely. What had not been defined was now defined, and matters previously not held *de fide* were now declared *de fide*. In despair, Pusey changed the title of his third *Eirenicon* from "Is healthful Reunion Possible?" to "Healthful Reunion, as conceived possible before the Vatican Council".[14] He wrote to John Henry Newman shortly after the declaration of Infallibility: "I have done what I could, and now have done with controversy and Eirenica."[15] Reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church now appeared futile, destined, as Liddon put it, "to a corner in the lumber-room of costly failures and exploded utopias".[16]

This shock to Christendom in 1870 meant that any ecumenical efforts would have to be directed elsewhere, at least for the moment; at the same time the changing policy of the western nations towards Russia and the East, coupled with the insurgent nationalism among the Christian peoples of the Balkans, many of whom were still under Turkish dominion, meant that Eastern Christianity could not be simply ignored, since it was part and parcel of Balkan nationalism. Bulgaria, for instance, on attaining political

[12] *The Church of England a Portion of Christ's One Holy Catholic Church, and a Means of Restoring Visible Unity. An Eirenicon in a Letter to the Author of "The Christian Year"*, Oxford: Parker, 1865.

[13] *Eirenicon*, pp. 98–99.

[14] Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. IV, p.193.

[15] Pusey to Newman, 26 Aug 1870, in Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. IV, p. 193.

[16] Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. IV, p.194.

independence in 1870 had also been declared an autocephalous exarchate, an act that provoked some controversy. It was in such changed circumstances that tentative moves towards reconciliation between the Anglican Churches and the Orthodox churches were made in the early 1870s. The initial impetus, however, came neither from the English nor the Eastern Churches, but from the group of German Catholics under the leadership of Ignaz von Döllinger[17] who found it impossible to accept the definition of the Vatican Council, and who in turn sought reconciliation with like-minded Christians in other churches. Their early declarations which embraced national expressions of catholicity made both Anglicanism and Orthodoxy obvious conversation partners.[18]

In 1872 Döllinger had given lectures in Munich on the reunification of the Christian Churches. These lectures, which were quickly published in English translation,[19] provided inspiration to the future bishop of the Old Catholics in Germany, Professor Reinkens of Bonn,[20] for his vision of the

[17] Johann Joseph Ignaz Döllinger (1799–1890) was the doyen of Catholic German Church historians in the nineteenth century. From 1826–73 he was professor in Munich. Given his many contacts with England, and the huge German bibliography, it is surprising that there is no English-language biography. The only resources are *Conversations of Dr. Döllinger*, recorded by Louise von Kobell, tr. Katherine Gould, London: Bentley, 1892; Alfred Plummer, *Conversations with Dr. Döllinger, 1870–1890*, ed. Robrecht Boudens, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1985. The most important work on Döllinger and the Bonn Conferences is Peter Neuner, *Döllinger als Theologe der Ökumene*, Paderborn: Schöningh, 1979.

[18] On the origins and development of the German Old Catholic Church, see Urs Küry, *Die Altkatholische Kirche*, Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1966; Victor Conzemius, *Katholizismus ohne Rom. Die altkatholische Kirchengemeinschaft*, Zürich: Benziger, 1969; Angela Berlis, *Frauen im Prozess der Kirchenwerdung. Eine historische-theologische Studie zur Anfangsphase des deutschen Altkatholizismus (1850–1890)*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998; and Claude Beaufort Moss, *The Old Catholic Movement, its Origins and History*, London: SPCK, ²1964. For the Bonn Conferences see pp. 257–270. A lengthy early account of the movement was published by "Theodorus" (James Bass Mullinger of St John's College, Cambridge): *The New Reformation: A Narrative of the Old Catholic Movement*, London: Longmans, 1875. For the Bonn Conference of 1874, see pp. 231–275, which reprints most of the Report.

[19] The lectures, published in German as *Über die Wiedervereinigung der christlichen Kirchen: sieben Vorträge, gehalten zu München im Jahr 1872* (Nördlingen: Beck, 1888), were immediately translated by Henry Nutcombe Oxenham: John J. I. von Döllinger *Lectures on the Reunion of the Churches*, London: Rivingtons, 1872. On this see Chadwick, "Döllinger and Reunion", p. 304.

[20] Joseph Hubert Reinkens (1821–1896), Professor of Church History and from 1873, first Old-Catholic bishop in Germany.

Old Catholics as charged with a special responsibility for bringing about Christian Unity on behalf of the wider church. For Reinkens, unity was not to be an imposed uniformity, but rather he saw it as one which embraced difference and freedom. The basis for this unity was to be found in "Holy Scripture and the ecumenical confessions of the early church, interpreted according to the teaching of the undivided church of the first centuries". Such a method, he held, could appeal to all those who called themselves Christians: "We are only saying that whoever wants to be a Christian has to stand on Christian soil. And where do we find Christian soil if not in the early church?"[21] In turn he sought like-minded members of other churches, not necessarily at the official level, but in organisations in which a genuine desire for union could be found. Such union would not come about immediately, but was to be brought about through a process of increasing unification. To this end, conferences were to be held. A commission, which elected Döllinger as its chairman, was thereby appointed which set about convening a conference and preparing a theological method which focused on the shared teaching of the undivided church as the basis for unity.[22]

In both the Anglican and Orthodox Churches, Döllinger had contacts who could easily be persuaded to participate in such a conversation. Two societies were particularly prominent. From the Anglican side there was the Anglo-Continental Society, which had been founded in 1853 with the aim of making Anglican principles, "her doctrine, discipline and *status*, better known throughout the Continent of Europe, and throughout the world than is at present the case." It did not seek to proselytise but rather hoped for the "internal reformation of National Churches and other religious communities" making alliances with those who rejected the pope, wherever they were.[23] Its secretary for more than forty-six years was Frederick Meyrick,[24] who had a huge range of personal contacts throughout

[21] See *Die Verhandlungen des zweiten Altkatholiken-Congresses zu Köln*, Cologne, 1872, p. 75.

[22] On this see Neuner, *Döllinger als Theologe der Ökumene*, p. 175. On the background to the conference see also Christian Oeyen, "Die Entstehung der Bonner Unions-Konferenzen im Jahr 1874" (unpublished Habilitationsschrift, Bern, 1971).

[23] *What is the Anglo-Continental Society?* London: Rivingtons, 1878, pp. 2, 5.

[24] Frederick Meyrick (1827–1906) founded the Anglo-Continental Society in 1853. He was a Prebendary of Lincoln, and Rector of Blickling in Norfolk from 1868–1906. His ecumenical endeavours were inspired by a strong anti-Romanism. See Frederick Meyrick, *Memories of Life at Oxford, and Experiences in Italy, Greece, Turkey, Germany, Spain and Elsewhere*, London: Murray, 1905.

Europe and who edited *The Foreign Church Chronicle and Review*. Meyrick had several acquaintances in the Friends of Spiritual Enlightenment,[25] a branch of which had been established in St Petersburg in 1872, which, as an equivalent of the Anglo-Continental Society, had the express aim of removing western prejudices about the orthodox Church. Meyrick's contacts included Archpriest J.L. Janyschev (1826–1910), Rector of the St Petersburg seminary, Professor Ossinin, and Colonel Kireev, aide-de-camp to the Grand-Duke Constantine,[26] all of whom played a leading role in the Bonn Conferences. Crucially Meyrick was a regular correspondent with Döllinger, keeping him informed of events in the Church of England. Döllinger, who described himself to Meyrick as a "constant reader of the Guardian",[27] the leading Church newspaper of the time, was also in close contact with many other influential English churchmen, including Liddon and Pusey.[28]

Perhaps the most important of Döllinger's contacts in England, however, was the extraordinarily energetic William Ewart Gladstone (1809–1898),[29] who played a prominent role behind the scenes of the Bonn Conferences and who was preoccupied with ecclesiastical affairs for a period following his General Election defeat in January 1874 and his subsequent resignation from leadership of the Liberal Party. Like Döllinger he was shocked by the Vatican Decrees, and similarly felt that union with the Eastern Churches, partly based on his esteem for Hellenism as a counterpart to the Hebrew tradition of the Bible,[30] was a pos-

[25] The French name was slightly less portentous: "Amis de l'Instruction Religieuse".

[26] See esp. *Memories*, p. 275. A brief account of the early ecumenical conversations between the Old Catholics and the Eastern Churches is given by Clément Lialine in "Vieux-catholiques et Orthodoxes en quête d'union depuis trois quarts de siècle" in *Istina* 5 (1958), pp. 22–64, esp. pp. 25–29.

[27] Döllinger to Meyrick, 12 April 1872, in Meyrick Papers, Pusey House Library, Oxford [hereafter PHL], MEY 1/5/1.

[28] Döllinger's friendship with Pusey dates from at least as early as 1842, Liddon's from at least as early as 1870. See Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. II, p. 295, and Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 138.

[29] They had first met in 1845. See D. C. Lathbury (ed.), *Correspondence on Church and Religion of William Ewart Gladstone*, 2 vols, London: Murray, 1910, vol. 2, p. 383. See also Michael R. D. Foot and H. Colin G. Matthew (eds), *Gladstone Diaries*, 14 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968–1994, vol. 3, pp. 488–489 (10 Oct 1845).

[30] H. Colin G. Matthew, "Gladstone, Vaticanism and the Question of the East" in Derek Baker (ed.), *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1978, pp. 417–442, here p. 425.

sible way forward for the Church of England. As Colin Matthew put it: "If 'national religion' could not be maintained entire, perhaps pluralism could be accompanied by a general movement towards that vision of a reunited apostolic Christendom" which Gladstone had outlined earlier in his career.[31] Döllinger and Gladstone were in regular contact; indeed Döllinger was "perhaps the only man of his contemporaries whom Gladstone regarded as heroic".[32] Not long before the 1874 Conference Gladstone travelled to Munich primarily to see Döllinger, writing back to his wife that he was a "most remarkable man, and it makes my blood run cold to think of *his* being excommunicated in his venerable but, thank God, hale and strong old age. ... I know of no one with whose mode of viewing and handling religious matters I more cordially agree".[33] For Gladstone, the ideal church was a national catholic church, quite different from the pseudo-Romanized ritualist church which some of his fellow high churchmen wished to create. Indeed it was an "utterly hopeless and visionary effort to Romanise the church and people of England".[34] Like Döllinger Gladstone was bitter about the Vatican Council which threatened the very substance of the faith itself and the integrity of conscience. "No one can become her convert without renouncing his moral and mental freedom, and placing his civil loyalty and duty at the mercy of another, and when she has equally refuted modern thought and ancient history".[35] For Gladstone, infallibility destroyed the very basis of faith, substituting instead a doctrine of certainty. In distinction, the sheer provisionality of national catholicism offered the only hope for the future.[36]

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[31] Matthew, "Gladstone, Vaticanism", p. 420. Matthew is here referring to *Church Principles Considered in Their Results*, London, 1840. Gladstone was also a regular correspondent with Meyrick and a supporter but not member of the Anglo-Continental Society.

[32] H. Colin G. Matthew, *Gladstone 1875–1898*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 12.

[33] W. E. Gladstone to Catherine Gladstone, 12 Sept 1874, in John Morley, *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, London: Macmillan, 1903, vol. 2, pp. 513–515.

[34] "Ritual and Ritualism", *Contemporary Review*, 24 (1874), pp. 663–681, here p. 674.

[35] "Ritual and Ritualism", p. 674. Gladstone added the notorious passage to the proofs of his article on Ritualism during his stay with Döllinger (*Gladstone Diaries*, vol. 8, p. 525. 13 Sept, 1874).

[36] A similar point was made by Malcolm MacColl in a letter to Döllinger (9 Sept 1874) shortly before the conference: "One of the evil characteristics of Ultramontanism is the too successful attempt to suppress all national and local developments. ... A monotonous uniformity is inconsistent with a vigorous life. ... We are still suffering

The background to the 1874 Conference thus contained a vision for a possible future for the re-orientation of European Christianity, as the counterpart to a re-orientation of its political system.

2. The First Conference of 1874

Invitations to the first Bonn Conference were sent out in the mid summer of 1874[37] and expressed the hope that there might be a move towards reunion in words reminiscent of Reinkens' original proposals: "The aim which will be kept in view will not be the absorptive union and radical fusion of existing churches but only the bringing about of ecclesiastical intercommunion and religious fraternity on the principle of 'unitas in necessariis', side by side with the liberty of individual religious bodies or national Churches in regard to those peculiarities of doctrine and constitution which do not touch the substance of the faith as it was professed and taught by the undivided Church."[38] Henry Liddon received his invitation on 4 September,[39] leaving for Germany on 9 September. After attending High Mass and later in the day Solemn Vespers and Benediction at Cologne Cathedral (which included an hour-long sermon) he made for Bonn, staying at the Goldener Stern Hotel. He held long conversations with his fellow English participants, Professor John

in the Church of England from having allowed foreigners to interfere with the development of our Reformation" (in *Report of the Proceedings at the Reunion Conference held at Bonn on September 14, 15, and 16, 1874 translated from the German of Professor Reusch by EMB with a preface by H. P. Liddon*, London: Rivingtons, 1875, pp. 99–101). The German Report was published the previous year: *Bericht über die am 14., 15., und 16. September zu Bonn gehaltenen Unions-Conferenzen, im Auftrage des Vorsitzenden Dr. von Döllinger*, ed. Franz Heinrich Reusch, Bonn: Neusser, 1874. Thanks to Döllinger's fluency in the language, most of the proceedings of the Conference were conducted in English. The Report was based on very sketchy notes of speeches taken by Reusch and the English chaplain in Düsseldorf and correspondent of *The Guardian*, George Edgar Broade, together with notes supplied by Döllinger. The theses presented by the Committee for the Advancement of reunion in the Church were all written in English. The clearest account of the Conference is in Neuner, *Döllinger als Theologe der Ökumene*, pp. 181–193. See also Chadwick, "Döllinger and Reunion", pp. 319–325. *The Guardian* of 23 Sept 1874, col. 1221–1223, published Broade's extensive notes.

[37] *The Guardian* printed the invitation on 5 Aug (p. 991).

[38] The invitation is printed in the 1874 Report, pp. xxxv-xxxvii.

[39] Liddon Diary, 4 Sept 1874, in Liddon Papers, PHL.

E. B. Mayor, Professor of Latin at Cambridge[40] and Dean Howson of Chester,[41] a low churchman, who, Liddon remarked later, "behaved very honourably throughout".[42] The following day began early with an ordination of a deacon by Reinkens, who had been consecrated bishop by the Bishop of Deventer in August 1873, in the University Chapel. Conference business began at 9 a.m. in what Liddon describes as the "musick sale" [*sic*] of the University.[43]

Döllinger's introductory session stressed that the meeting was in no sense official, but was composed of private individuals,[44] and would focus on a set of theses which had been prepared beforehand by Döllinger and his Committee. Meyrick, who was unable to attend, had helped in this preparation by listing the most important differences between the churches which needed to be discussed for any reconciliation to be possible, and which became the substance of the theses for debate, all of which were derived from the teaching of the undivided church of the first five or six centuries.[45] Throughout the Conference, Döllinger proved to be a very active chairman, giving lengthy lectures and steering the conversation with his "ready tact and patient guidance" in a constructive direction (which often included explaining Orthodoxy to the Orthodox).[46] After the Conference Liddon explained that "Döllinger's commanding learning kept possible criticism and opposition at bay".[47] At 11 a.m. the English delegation met together to discuss the line to be taken. The Bishop of Winchester, Harold

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[40] John Eyton Bickersteth Mayor (1825–1910), a philologist, extraordinary polymath and prominent member of the Anglo-Continental Society had earlier translated *Bishop Reinkens' speeches on Christian union and Old Catholic prospects, delivered in the congresses of Cologne and Constance. With a preface by Bishop Reinkens and a biographical notice of the bishop*, London: Rivingtons, 1874. On Mayor see John Henderson, *Juvenal's Mayor: the Professor who lived on 2d. a Day*, Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1998.

[41] John Saul Howson (1816–1885) was Principal of Liverpool Collegiate Institution from 1849–66 and Dean of Chester from 1867–85.

[42] Liddon Diary, 15 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 184.

[43] Liddon Diary, 14 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 183.

[44] 1874 *Report*, p. 2.

[45] Meyrick's letter to Döllinger of 5 Sept 1874 is reproduced in the 1874 *Report*, pp. 94–95. See also Meyrick, *Memories*, pp. 259–260, and *The Guardian*, 23 Sept 1874, col. 1221.

[46] *The Guardian*, 23 Sept 1874, col. 1221.

[47] Liddon to C. L. Wood, 26 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*. p. 184. See also, Meyrick, *Memories*, p. 265.

Browne,[48] who provided the episcopal lead as Chairman of the Anglo-Continental Society "was very firm and moderate".[49] After lunch, the Conference reconvened at 3 p.m. with a long debate between the Old Catholics and Anglicans on the *Filioque*, a subject which was to dominate the proceedings for the remainder of the Conference, and which formed the dominant theme for the following year. The proposal of the German committee was clear: "We agree, that the way in which the word 'Filioque' was inserted into the Nicene Creed was illegal, and that, with a view to future peace and unity, the original form of the Creed, as put forth by the General Councils of the undivided Church, ought to be restored."[50] This could easily be conceived as a declaration of war on Rome, and certainly it would make any reconciliation with the Vatican impossible. Not surprisingly, some of the English Churchmen were sensitive to this, Browne asserting that "we cannot acknowledge that a false doctrine was thereby introduced into the Creed. We hold that the teaching of the Eastern and of the Western Church on this point is equally orthodox. ... We could not assert that the Filioque clause should be removed."[51] However, the reluctance to lose the double procession was not shared by the American delegates. Bishop Kerfoot of Pittsburgh, who was representing the Episcopal Church, noted that already there had been moves in his church to drop the *Filioque* from the Creed.[52] Liddon, representing himself and also his mentor, Pusey, remarked, however, that he "should have much hesitation in accepting the article in its proposed form, and Dr Pusey would also oppose it. ... The removal of the words would be sure to be interpreted in such a

[48] Edward Harold Browne (1811–1891) was Bishop of Ely from 1864–1873 and Winchester from 1873–1890. See George Kitchin, *Edward Harold Browne Lord Bishop of Winchester, A Memoir*, London: Murray, 1896. Browne maintained close relations with the Old Catholics and Döllinger. On this see Kitchin, *Edward Harold Browne*, ch. 11. He wrote to the Bishop of Melbourne on 9 October 1874 commenting that "I would gladly welcome to Christian brotherhood men so much to be loved and honoured as Döllinger" (Cited in Kitchin, *Edward Harold Browne*, p. 410).

[49] Liddon Diary, 14 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 183.

[50] 1874 *Report*, p. 7.

[51] 1874 *Report*, p. 10. Browne had to leave after the first day, but felt he had made a significant contribution. He wrote on 14 Sept: "Döllinger was very wise and conciliatory. The English and Americans were good enough to say my help was of great importance, and that I had succeeded in getting through difficulties which would have been insuperable without me; so I feel thankful to have been there" (Cited in Kitchin, *Edward Harold Browne*, p. 409).

[52] 1874 *Report*, p. 12.

manner as to convey the idea that the doctrine expressed therein was to be considered as false, or at least as doubtful".[53] Howson and Henry Oxenham,[54] the only Roman Catholic present, agreed. The modified thesis recognised the "illegality" of the insertion of the clause, and desirability of its removal from the creed, but with a guarantee that the "truth which is expressed in the present western form" would be preserved.[55]

On the following day, after the priestly ordination of the man ordained deacon the previous day, debate resumed at 9 a.m. Döllinger's anti-Vatican motives were revealed in the conversation between the Old Catholics and the Orthodox: "Until the year 1870", he said, "it was, as a rule, only with schism or resistance to Papal authority, and not with heresy, strictly speaking, that the westerns charged the Orientals." But things had now changed: what was now required was unconditional submission to doctrines which could not be found in the teaching of the undivided church.[56] After more lengthy discussion a thesis was eventually agreed which suggested that the *Filioque* could be removed only by a council of the whole church.[57] As Liddon wrote in his diary: "The question of the Double Procession was finally settled by a formula to the effect that it was desirable that the whole Church should consider the question of the *Filioque's* being in the Creed."[58] After the Conference, Liddon wrote to Pusey that "the 'Filioque' caused a great deal of difficulty; and I thought at one time that we should never get through it. We finally agreed in a proposition to the effect that it was desirable that the *whole* church (the whole Roman Catholic Communion being of course included) should consider the question of the position of the formula in the Creed, as having been irregularly introduced. As there is no possibility of the Roman Catholic Church ever doing this, no harm was done."[59] Liddon thus proved himself a master of the ecumenical fudge.

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[53] 1874 *Report*, p. 12.

[54] Henry Nutcombe Oxenham (1829–1888) was a convert Anglican priest, who, though retaining his title "Revd", was never ordained priest in the Roman Catholic Church. He was a professor at St Edmund's seminary at Ware. See Chadwick, "Döllinger and Reunion", p. 317.

[55] 1874 *Report*, p. 17.

[56] 1874 *Report*, p. 28. See also Meyrick, *Memories*, p. 265.

[57] 1874 *Report*, p. 45.

[58] Liddon Diary, 15 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 183.

[59] Liddon to Pusey, 16 Sept 1874 (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, vol. I, fol. 185).

After the discussion of the *Filioque*, the conference moved on to consider very briefly the vexed question of Anglican orders. The Old Catholics acknowledged an unbroken episcopal succession whereas the Greeks were less willing to concede this point. It was agreed that further work was needed.[60] The Conference then proceeded to discuss what Liddon called the "very delicate ground"[61] of the Immaculate Conception. The original thesis tabled for discussion was a clear rejection of the "new Roman doctrine" as "contrary to the tradition of the first thirteen centuries, according to which Christ alone is conceived without sin."[62] This worried Oxenham who wished to retain the possibility that the Immaculate Conception might be held as a "pious opinion."[63] Liddon wrote to Pusey that "I did what I could for him, not as holding it, but in the interests of liberty. The Greeks and Germans however – Döllinger himself especially – were bent on condemning it altogether."[64] However, Liddon's amendment to the thesis which was "an endeavour to avoid condemning the Immaculate Conception as *an opinion*", was defeated, and in the process he upset the Bishop of Pittsburgh.[65] Döllinger's opposition to the doctrine was straightforward: "the Pope's dogmatic definition of it was undoubtedly made with the object of preparing the way for the definition of papal infallibility."[66] Oxenham wrote to *The Guardian* expressing his anxiety with the motives of Kerfoot's (and by implication Döllinger's) "fanatical attack on a doctrine he does not accept." If the object of the conference was to promote unity, the discussion was "simply suicidal" and a "direct and arbitrary violation of liberty of religious thought." Indeed, "there was something almost grotesquely paradoxical in inaugurating a work for the reunion of Christendom by ostracising some 200 million Christians."[67] Liddon may not have been free to write a similar letter, but he could hardly have disagreed: like Pusey, he could never accept such gratuitous attacks on Roman Catholicism.

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[60] 1874 *Report*, pp. 50–54.

[61] Liddon Diary, 15 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 183.

[62] 1874 *Report*, p. 55.

[63] 1874 *Report*, p. 55.

[64] Liddon to Pusey, 16 Sept 1874 (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, vol. I, fol. 185).

[65] This defence of the possibility of holding the doctrine as an opinion was later attacked by the *Times* (30 Sept 1874). Liddon wrote a lengthy response explaining the German motives in opposing him (2 Oct 1874) reprinted in Johnston, *Liddon*, p.195–197.

[66] 1874 *Report*, p. 57.

[67] *The Guardian*, 30 Sept 1874, pp. 1238–1239.

This debate was followed by what Liddon called a "lively discussion on Prayer for the Dead"[68] which had long been a divisive issue between different parties within the English Church. Dean Howson claimed that the Anglicans were silent on the matter, and asked that he too might be allowed to be "silent too".[69] Liddon, as the spokesman for the Anglo-Catholics, however, was clear about the importance of prayer for the dead. While recognising that there had been abuses in the Reformation period, he nevertheless claimed that the "proposed thesis contains the genuine substance of the doctrine of the primitive Church". And he went on to acknowledge his dependence upon his mentor: "Dr Pusey would highly disapprove if I did not assent to it."[70] Anglican divisions began to show in the heat of debate, however eirenic in intention. The next discussion, however, brought problems for the Orthodox, who were unable to accept the invocation of the saints as a matter not necessary for the salvation of every Christian.[71]

On the final day, the conversation moved to the subject of eucharistic sacrifice, which again proved to be a sensitive point among the Anglicans themselves. Liddon wrote to Pusey that although he had anticipated "great trouble with Dean Howson and the Bishop of Pittsburgh", there was in the event little discord about accepting the thesis (with which Liddon believed Pusey would not have found fault)[72] which proclaimed sacrifice as a "permanent memorial, not a continuous repetition or renewal of the propitiatory sacrifice."[73] The only unease with the relatively moderate statement was expressed by Daniel Trinder, vicar of Teddington, an otherwise silent member of the English delegation. However, in a comment to Pusey, which proved accurate in the light of Howson's "retractation" a year later, Liddon noted: "I could not but fear that Dean Howson did not see the whole force of the language they admitted."[74] After a lengthy and learned discussion of the relationship between scripture and tradition, where scripture was defended by both Döllinger and Liddon as the primary rule of faith, and which caused some concern to the Greek representative, Pro-

[68] Liddon Diary, 15 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 184 (corrected).

[69] 1874 *Report*, p. 63.

[70] 1874 *Report*, pp. 63–64. Liddon comments on this in his letter to Pusey of 16 Sept 1874 (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, vol. I, fol. 185).

[71] 1874 *Report*, p.65. See also Liddon Diary, 15 Sept 1874, in Johnston, p. 184.

[72] Liddon to Pusey, 16 Sept 1874 (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, vol. I, fol. 185).

[73] 1874 *Report*, p. 67.

[74] Liddon to Pusey, 16 Sept 1874 (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, vol. I, fol. 185).

fessor Zikos Rhossis of Rhizarion Seminary in Athens,[75] the Conference concluded with some "considerable difficulty" about baptism.[76]

Overall, the real point of difference between the Western and Eastern Churches which emerged from the Conference was over the *Filioque*, a subject which was to be "reserved for future discussion"[77] and would become the main issue to be debated the following summer. Other issues including Anglican Orders and Invocation of Saints did not seem insurmountable. At the end of the final day Liddon dined with four professors, including Janyschev, as well as Döllinger and Reinkens, the meal being followed by what he describes as "much German 'hoch'-ing".[78] Liddon wrote to Pusey to express his own feelings about the Conference, and thought that "some good may have been done, and some barriers partly removed. The Greeks and the Old Catholics are very pleased on the whole. It is of course easy to exaggerate these things. It is also easy to undervalue them."[79] On the day after the Conference Liddon took leave of Döllinger, who "expressed his great pleasure at the results of the Conference".[80]

On his return to England, Liddon wrote to Charles LindleyWood (second Viscount Halifax) that "The Bonn Conference may, I hope, have done some good in the way of showing that, with a little forbearance, there is a real possibility of 'doing something' in that direction. What was done does not go very far; at least I think not. But some of the difficulties which might have been foreseen were surmounted much more easily than we might have had any right to expect."[81] Similarly, in his preface to the *Report* published the following year, Liddon claimed that "the Bonn Conference was a tentative effort. It left large tracts of controversy untouched. ... But something was done, it may be humbly hoped, towards a more complete work in the future."[82] *The Guardian* correspondent also noted that "our Bonn Conference was, in a small way, a success where the Florentine

[75] 1874 *Report*, p. 77.

[76] Liddon Diary, 16 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 184. The debates were over the age at which confirmation was to be administered. Liddon acknowledged that this rite was normally administered too late in the English Church (*Report*, p.85).

[77] 1874 *Report*, p. 91.

[78] Liddon Diary, 17 Sept 1874, PHL.

[79] Liddon to Pusey, 16 Sept 1874 (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, vol. I, fol. 185).

[80] Liddon Diary, 17 Sept 1874, PHL.

[81] Liddon to C. L. Wood, 26 Sept 1874, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 184.

[82] 1874 *Report*, preface, p. xxvii-xxviii.

Council had been, in a large way, a failure".[83] Gladstone concurred with such a view, again raising the importance of provisionality rather than infallibility in the church. He wrote to Döllinger: "It strikes me that it is in principle far less anarchic to seek for Christian ordinances at the head of a provisional but orthodox organization such as the *alt-Catholische* than to claim the title at once to be within the pale and privileges of a certain communion and to exercize the powers of annulling by private judgement its solemn and formal ordinances of faith."[84] Indeed provisional national catholicism based on the teaching of the undivided church seemed to be the only way forward, and Bonn seemed to offer a model for the European Churches to adopt.

3. Preparations for the Second Conference

Gladstone's motives became even clearer later in the year. In the autumn – ominously on Guy Fawkes Day, 5 November – Gladstone published his pamphlet on the Vatican Decrees,[85] which developed the themes he had earlier put forward in his pamphlet on Ritualism. Liddon and Gladstone discussed the article over dinner on 8 November 1874, Liddon noting that Gladstone said: "It was necessary that somebody should speak, and I could do it better than anyone else, because I had asked the English people to do justice to our Roman Catholic fellow subjects."[86] The champion of freedom could not tolerate the freedom of an Infallibility which threatened the nascent pluralist political settlement itself. The pamphlet eventually sold 150,000 copies and provoked the only personal letter from Bismarck to Gladstone: "It affords me deep and hopeful gratification to see two nations, which in Europe are the champions of liberty of conscience encountering the same foe, stand henceforth shoulder to shoulder in defending the highest interests of the

[83] *The Guardian*, 23 Sept 1874, col. 1221.

[84] Gladstone to Döllinger, 23 Sept 1874, in Lathbury, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 57.

[85] *The Vatican Decrees in their Bearing on Civil Allegiance: A Political Expostulation*, London: Murray, 1874. On the background of the *Vatican Decrees*, see Josef Altholz, "Gladstone and the Vatican Decrees", in *The Historian*, 25 May 1963, pp. 312–324; Jonathan P. Parry, *Democracy and Religion. Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867–1875*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 421–428 and H. Colin G. Matthew, *Gladstone, 1809–1874*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, pp. 245–248.

[86] Liddon Diary, 8 Nov 1874, PHL. Liddon describes another meeting with Gladstone on 10 Jan 1875 where Gladstone was full of his campaign against Infallibility.

human race."[87] Although Gladstone was no Bismarck, there was a blend of nationalism and liberty which meant that the trans-national certainty of the Catholicism of the Vatican Council could hardly find a proper place within the modern state. Liberty, the Reformation and the liberal state were all championed by Gladstone and found their natural expression in a national church which could find no infallible authority, at least in this world.[88] And it was the Eastern Churches that bore eloquent witness to this "balance of Church-power" against the infallibility of a centre.[89]

Not surprisingly, Gladstone had shown hospitality towards the Greek Church during his first administration, entertaining in 1872 Archbishop Alexander Lycurgus of Syros and Tenos (who was later to participate in the second Bonn Conference). They continued to correspond in order to advance "still further the object of brotherly approximation".[90] In 1875 Gladstone went as far as conceding that the *Filioque* could (perhaps) be dropped from the Creed, feeling "strongly the claims of the eastern position".[91] For Gladstone, the second Bonn Conference held out hope for revitalised national churches against the Vatican, "establishing", as he wrote to Döllinger, "the voice of the undivided Church as the legitimate traditional authority".[92]

Gladstone's pamphlet served to change the mood for the next round of conversations, a fact that was already reflected in Liddon's preface to the English edition of the 1874 Report which was published on 10 June 1875.[93] He began with a quotation from Döllinger:

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[87] Otto von Bismarck to Gladstone, 1 March 1875, British Library, Add. 44446/293 (cited in Roland Hill, *Lord Acton*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 258).

[88] See Agatha Ramm, "Gladstone's Religion" in *Historical Journal* 28 (1985), pp. 327–340.

[89] W. E. Gladstone, *Rome and the Newest Fashions in Religion*, London: Murray, 1875, p. 119.

[90] George Williams (ed.), *A Collection of documents: relating chiefly to the visit of Alexander Archbishop of Syros and Tenos to England in 1870*, Occasional Papers of the Eastern Churches Association 14, London: Rivingtons, 1872, p. 11. Meyrick was instrumental in the mediation of messages to Lycurgus. See *Memories*, p. 272.

[91] Gladstone to Lycurgus, October 1875 (no precise date given), in Lathbury, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 64.

[92] Gladstone to Döllinger, 29 Aug 1875, in Lathbury, *Correspondence*, vol. 2, p. 63. Gladstone even held out hope that an Eastern bishop might take part in the consecration of an Old Catholic bishop.

[93] Liddon Diary, 10 June 1875, PHL.

> 'When so many threatening forms of infidelity are attacking our Christian belief on one side, and Vaticanism is putting forth its altogether new propositions about the constitution and faith of the Church of Christ on the other, might not all we, who profess to follow the ancient Catholic Church as the keeper and unfolder of the Holy Scriptures to be able to come to an understanding with each other? Surely this should not be impossible, unless we are rather stupid, or, perhaps, even self-willed'.
> These were almost, if not quite, the exact words in which, in the course of a walk at Munich three years ago, the revered and distinguished President of the Reunion Conference first introduced to the writer his plan for assembling members of the Eastern, English, and American Churches to confer with himself and with other German theologians upon some of the vexed questions which have for so many centuries impaired the visible unity of the Body of Christ.[94]

Where some, including Keble, had given up hope for union after the declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, Liddon went on, there were now grounds for "encouragement and hope" which were to be found in the Old Catholic movement under the influence of Döllinger, "the most learned ecclesiastic in Christendom".[95] However the opportunity offered by the movement could be lost, somewhat ironically, on account of Bismarck's support. Indeed he had "succeeded in morally rehabilitating [Roman Catholicism] through persecuting it; he will fail, we may hope, to demoralise the Old Catholics by befriending them".[96] Such political circumstances should not be allowed to conceal the true importance of the Old Catholics, which, Liddon claimed, held "out to the English Church an opportunity which has been denied it for three hundred years. Catholic, not papal; episcopal, with no shadow of doubt or prejudice resting on the validity of its orders; friendly with the orthodox East, yet free from the stiffness and one-sidedness of an isolated tradition; sympathising with all that is thorough and honest in the critical methods of Protestant Germany, yet holding on firmly and strenuously to the faith of antiquity."[97] In short, the Old Catholics appeared to Liddon to be identical with what the Oxford Movement and its heirs and successors had always claimed to be true for the Church of England. Liddon thus asks in conclusion: "Is it irrational to hope that a body such as this, uniting all that is sincere in modern inquiry, with all that is deepest and most tender in ancient Christian self-devotion,

[94] 1874 *Report*, preface, p. iii-iv. Liddon had met with Döllinger in Munich several times before including the summer of 1870. See Johnston, *Liddon*, pp. 138–139.

[95] 1874 *Report*, preface, p. xxii.

[96] 1874 *Report*, preface, p. xxiv.

[97] 1874 *Report*, preface, p. xxv. Cf. "Theodorus", *The New Reformation*, p. 291.

may yet hope to win the ear of Europe, and to bring succour to the intellectual and moral ailments of our modern world?"[98] For Liddon, as for Gladstone, the future of European religion seemed to rest with national catholic churches: the hope was for a "future which will be neither Papal nor Puritan – neither English nor Ultramontane".[99]

Something similar can be discerned in Döllinger, though with more explicitly racial connotations. He wrote to his friend, Lady Blennerhasset, "By the by, was meinen Sie denn mit der Germanischen Orthodoxie, die in Bonn verkündet worden sei". He went on: "Dass wir Deutsche und Engländer von alt-Germanischem Stamme und also blutsverwandte Vettern sind, hat an sich mit der Religion nichts zu thun, aber wahr ist, dass der Hass gegen Lüge und bewusste Täuschung bei den Völkern Germanischer Race starker, lebendiger ist als bei den Romanen."[100] Nations, both ancient and modern, had thus to cast off the Roman yoke in the pursuit of a truth more apparent to the Teutonic nations than the Latins: national catholicism and racial superiority could easily go hand in hand.

4. The 1875 Conference

Preparations for the 1875 Conference had been in hand throughout the year, and there was much correspondence between the members of the co-ordinating committee which had been appointed the previous summer to deal with the remaining contentious issues. This committee comprised Döllinger, Kireev, Rhossis, Meyrick and Nevin, the American chaplain in Rome.[101] The statement on the Holy Spirit produced by the Committee proved to be an admirable summary of the problems which proved to be the main points of contention at the Conference: "We frankly acknowledge", they wrote, "that the *Filioque* crept into the Creed, and that it ought not to be in it. On the other hand we hold the doctrine of the Double Procession; and we believe that it was maintained by great doctors, both of the Eastern

[98] 1874 *Report*, preface, p. xxvi.

[99] 1874 *Report*, preface, p. xxviii.

[100] Döllinger to Lady Blennerhasset, 10 Nov 1874 in Victor Conzemius (ed.), *Döllinger Briefwechsel 1820–1890*, vol. 4, Munich: Beck, 1981, p. 576–577.

[101] Some of this material was published by Meyrick in *Correspondence between the Secretaries of the Friends of Spiritual Enlightenment and the Anglo-Continental Society Containing Statements on the Validity of Anglican Orders, the Eternal Procession of the Holy Ghost, the Intercession and Invocation of Saints*, London: Rivingtons, 1875.

and Western Churches in primitive times, while, at the same time, we deny, with them, the doctrine of the two principles of Deity."[102] The resolution to this dilemma led to copious amounts of research over the next year.

Liddon too played his part in the preparations for the Conference: not long after the publication of the English edition of the 1874 *Report*, he set off for Europe, primarily to consult with Döllinger in Munich. He was accompanied by his sister, Louisa, as well as Plummer[103] and Nevin. On 17 July he dined with Döllinger, and afterwards conversation ranged over Newman's reply to Gladstone's *Vatican Decrees*, disestablishment, the forthcoming Bonn Conference, the preface to the 1874 Report and the eucharist. The following day they spent "writing and translating" for the conference.[104] The *Filioque* was to be once again the main business. Indeed, Liddon wrote to Pusey: "I hope that Dr Döllinger may be able to keep off sacramental questions this year".[105] Döllinger reported on Liddon's visit to Lady Blennerhassett: "Ich bemerke immer mehr dass die Zukunft der Englischen Kirche den ernsteren Männern ernste Besorgnisse einflösst; sie sehen die furchtbare Frage des disestablishment näher und näher kommen."[106]

On his return to England, Liddon asked Pusey to send copies of his preface to his son's new *Library of the Fathers* edition of St Cyril's commentary on St John's Gospel to Döllinger and Reinkens,[107] which contained a lengthy discussion of the problem of the *Filioque*, where Pusey wrote: "The loss of 'And the Son' would to our untheological practical English mind involve the loss of the doctrine of the Trinity."[108] Pusey counselled caution: the *Filioque* was, after all, not the only problem preventing reunion between the churches, and, besides, it was the product of the good providence of God:[109] "The thirst for visible unity has directed itself the more towards the Greek Church, since the Roman Church has shut

[102] *Correspondence*, p. 17.

[103] Alfred Plummer (1841–1926) was Master of University College, Durham and an eminent Church Historian and New Testament scholar.

[104] Liddon Diary, 17 and 18 July, PHL.

[105] Liddon to Pusey, 6 Aug 1875, PHL.

[106] Döilinger to Lady Blennerhasset, 20 July 1875 in *Döllinger Briefwechsel*, vol. 4, p. 602–603.

[107] Liddon to Pusey, 6 Aug 1875, PHL

[108] S. Cyril, *Commentary on the Gospel According to S. John*, 2 vols, Oxford: Parker, 1874. Pusey's preface, dated July 1874, runs to sixty pages. Liddon had mentioned this Preface in his own Preface to the 1874 Report (p. xxviii) as a useful discussion of the problem.

[109] S. Cyril, *Commentary*, preface, p. lviii.

against us what seemed to be a half-open door. But therewith there has, among some, seemed to be a rising impatience of the 'Filioque', as though it were *the* hindrance to an union with the Eastern Church. ... One thing is certain, that we must not, in a desire for a premature union, abandon the expression of our faith of at least 1200 years."[110] All in all, truth (at least as he saw it) was more important for Pusey than unity.

Döllinger's invitation was more general than the previous year,[111] which annoyed Liddon. He wrote to Gladstone, who continued to show a great deal of interest in the Conference:[112] "The general invitation appears to me to be less successful than private invitations to persons believed to be competent and interested in the subject."[113] Pusey had expressed a similar concern, writing to Liddon: "While Döllinger opens his conference to all comers, I am afraid it will be more like one of the tournaments of old than serve any practical purpose. ... I suppose that agreement would only be attained by suppression of the truth."[114] The battle lines were being drawn.

Liddon left again for Germany on 10 August, having been able to rearrange his period of residence at St Paul's.[115] There was a much larger British contingent than the previous year, numbering about fifty (although few of them contributed to the debates), some of whom Liddon met on the

[110] S. Cyril, *Commentary*, preface, pp. lix–lx.

[111] *Report of the Proceedings at the Reunion Conference held at Bonn between the 10th* and 16th of August, 1875, translated from the German of Professor Reusch by Alfred Plummer with a preface by H. P. Liddon, London: Pickering, 1875. See also Neuner, *Döllinger als Theologe der Ökumene*, pp. 197–210. *The Guardian* included a number of reports: 18 Aug, pp. 1046, 1053; 25 Aug, pp. 1081–1084. The invitation was printed in *The Guardian* on 28 July, p. 947.

[112] In a postcard to Meyrick, Gladstone remarked, that, although he could not attend the Conference, he regarded "the meeting with great interest – and have written fully to Dr Döllinger on the subject". (Gladstone to Meyrick, 2 Aug 1875, Meyrick Papers, PHL, MEY 1/9/20). Gladstone's rather cryptic letter is printed in the 1875 *Report*, pp. 143–146. His suggestion is that, since the Eastern Church is not very flexible, and since the only grounds for the removal of the *Filioque* would be a lack of sufficient authority for its insertion in the first place, "with due correction of language, I suppose that valuable boons might be tendered to the East, should there be prospects of accommodation all round" (p. 145).

[113] Liddon to Gladstone, 12 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 186.

[114] Pusey to Liddon, Aug 1875 (date unspecified) (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, fol. 116). After the Conference, "Scrutator", writing in *The Guardian*, expressed his hope that "next year I trust that no general invitation to the Conference will be given ... Much time is wasted by outsiders ... airing their crotchets" (25 Aug 1875, p. 1085).

[115] Liddon to Pusey, 8 Aug 1875, PHL.

train. The delegation included Meyrick[116] but not Browne.[117] Unlike the previous year, there was no American bishop present, although both Houses of the General Convention had sent their secretaries. The Orthodox contingent was also much strengthened, with about twenty representatives, although again it was the same voice who contributed to the debates. Soon after reaching Bonn, Liddon went to see Döllinger, together with the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative, Bishop Sandford of Gibraltar,[118] and Lord Plunket[119] and Master Brooke from Ireland.[120]

The Proceedings began on 12 August with conversations between the Eastern Churches and the Old Catholics, introduced with a typically lengthy speech (of ninety minutes) by Döllinger.[121] The Russians, Liddon commented, "criticised sharply the basis of agreement drawn up by the Professors." In the late afternoon Döllinger met with Liddon, the Dean of Chester and the Russians to discuss the theses.[122] On 13 August "the morning discussion was on the Patristic theses, submitted to the Greeks by Dr. Döllinger. They objected to them (1) on the ground of the immediate and remote content; (2) as paraphrasing the original rather than translating it; (3) as giving too much weight to the Fathers."[123] After lunch, discussion moved to the *Filioque*, and specifically to Liddon's amendment, where he suggested the phrase be retained subject to the decision of an Oecumenical Council, noting, however, that "we do not believe that there are two principles or two causes in the Godhead; but we believe in one principle and one cause".[124] Nevin attacked this as deceptive, given that such a council was extremely unlikely. Howson also objected, claiming that Liddon took no account of non-episcopal protestant bodies.[125]

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[116] Liddon Diary, 10 Aug 1875, PHL.

[117] Browne, however, wrote a lengthy letter to Döllinger on 3 Aug. The difference between the Orthodox and Western Churches was "one of words, not of truth" (in Kitchin, *Edward Harold Browne*, p. 411).

[118] Charles W. Sandford (1828–1903), Bishop of Gibraltar (i.e. Europe) from 1873.

[119] William Conyghan Plunket (4th Baron Plunket) (1828–1897) was treasurer of St Patrick's, Dublin from 1864–75, becoming Bishop of Meath (1876–1884) and Archbishop of Dublin in 1884.

[120] Liddon Diary, 11 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 185.

[121] *The Guardian* correspondent noted that "Our president, Dr Döllinger has been speaking to us hour after hour" (18 Aug 1875, p. 1046).

[122] Liddon Diary, 12 Aug 1875, PHL.

[123] Liddon Diary, 13 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 187.

[124] 1875 *Report*, pp. 38–39.

[125] Liddon Diary, 13 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 187.

Later in the evening Liddon reported to Gladstone about the day's proceedings, pointing to Döllinger's supreme knowledge, which met the Greeks on their own ground: thanks to his speech, "The Greeks cannot condemn us without condemning their own great names."[126] The same evening he also wrote to Pusey that he found the Eastern representatives "more conciliatory than was the case last year." They appeared to "come *nearer* to an admission that between the Holy Ghost and the Eternal Son there *is* a relation antecedent to all time." He went on, however, noting that "Our main difficulty is with our own people. Meyrick has been very kind and conciliatory throughout. But the Americans have a very reckless way of dealing with the great questions: they are *all* for expunging the 'Filioque' from the Creed. I proposed a formula which spoke of our retaining it subject to the decision of a truly Oecumenical Council. Thereupon Dean Howson asked me to define this last term; and objected to my including Roman Bishops, and to my excluding Presbyterians and non Episcopal Protestants generally. In this he was supported by Lord Plunket. ... Master Brooke, – another Irish apparition, – asked me for Scriptural proof of the Double procession, in the usual Protestant manner ... Bp. Sandford made a speech in the style of Archbishop Tait, about the insignificance of these old world questions as compared with practical matters which address themselves to modern thought. Altogether I could have cried, at the exhibition we made as a Church: the Times has its reporter here and will make great fun of us. The only comfort is that something may yet be done between the Easterns and the Germans, – and we practically have our share in this, when the disruption of the times are [*sic*] forgotten. A Dr. Perry, who is here as Secretary to the American Convention, said that the Americans mean to bring the question of the *Filioque* before the proposed Lambeth Synod of 1877, and that if the English bishops do not open to its exclusion from the Nicene Creed, the Americans will *probably* act independently in this."[127] Liddon found such unilateralism quite unacceptable.

[126] Liddon to Gladstone, 12 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 186.

[127] Liddon to Pusey, 13 Aug 1875, PHL. Liddon also wrote of these events in his diary: "Bishop Sandford made a speech *à la* Tait, on the mistake of discussing old-word questions of dogma. Master Brooke asked me to prove the Double Procession from Scripture, etc. In the evening took a long talk with Lord Plunket about the Irish Church and its doings. He was very conciliatory, but not very satisfactory" (Liddon Diary, 13 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 187). "Scrutator" in *The Guardian* noted that the Irish found the Conference "an uncongenial atmosphere" (*The Guardian*, 25 Aug 1875, p. 1085).

"I do not for one moment believe", Liddon said in the Conference, "that the General Convention of the American Church would be competent to remove the *Filioque* from the Creed, and I hope it will not do it".[128]

On 14 August the smaller committee met to work through the still unresolved question of the Double Procession. The Eastern representatives were keen on condemning "the doctrine that the Holy Ghost has his *huparxis* through the Son. They were half afraid of Cyril of Alexandria on this question, and they wanted John of Damascus. We finally agreed to 'the Fathers of the Church'."[129] In the evening Liddon wrote a pessimistic letter to Pusey: "I do not see any serious prospect of our arriving at an agreement with the Orientals. The 'concession' they 'were prepared to make' turned out to be worth little or nothing. ... The Archimandrites – at one point in the discussion betrayed an odd feeling towards St Cyril: 'Ich fürchte Cyrillos' said one."[130] The eastern representatives asked that John of Damascus should be the theologian from whom the theses were drawn, whereas "Meyrick and I pleaded for St Cyril and Epiphanius". After some discussion a compromise was reached which "at any rate lets in the Latins – 'the Fathers of the undivided Church'".[131] After five hours of debate, Liddon felt any accommodation to be impossible. Nevertheless proposals on the *Filioque* were put forward by Döllinger, which accepted the dogmatic decisions of the Oecumenical Councils of the undivided church, the irregularity of the insertion of the *Filioque*, the adherence to the "form of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost as taught by the Fathers of the undivided Church" and "the rejection of any expression of the acceptance of two principles or *archai* or *aitiai* in the Trinity".[132]

The afternoon session proved to be the most divisive. Julian Joseph Overbeck, the Western convert to Orthodoxy, insisted on asking the Con-

[128] 1875 *Report*, p. 72.

[129] Liddon Diary, 14 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 187.

[130] Liddon to Pusey, 14 Aug 1875, PHL.

[131] Liddon to Pusey, 14 Aug 1875, PHL. The discussion is reported very briefly in the Proceedings: 1875 *Report*, p. 83. Overbeck was perhaps the strangest participant. He was a convert from the Roman Catholic Church via the Lutherans to the Anglicans. He became a Russian Orthodox priest in London. See Peter Anson, *Bishops at Large*, London: Faber and Faber, 1964, pp. 48–52. The *Saturday Review* commented on the part he played in the proceedings: (21 Aug 1875): "The first note of discord was introduced into the conference by him, and it was only the mingled tact and firmness of Dr Döllinger and the honest conciliatory temper of the Orientals which prevented a rupture". See also Rouse and Neill, *History of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 205--209.

[132] 1875 *Report*, p. 88.

ference on whether they included the seventh council among those of the "ancient undivided Church".[133] *The Guardian* correspondent wrote that "Dr Overbeck may be accused of trying to raise a tempest in this peaceful sea, by demanding that we should define the period of the 'ancient undivided Church'".[134] A second anonymous *Guardian* correspondent who signed himself "Scrutator" commented that this took the Orientals by surprise and created a moment of discord. However, he went on, "As a set-off against this little *contretemps* among the Orientals, we Anglicans had a surprise in store for us on the same day."[135] Dean Howson shocked the Conference by retracting from the previously agreed statement on eucharistic sacrifice causing consternation to both Liddon and Meyrick,[136] the former going on to restate his understanding of the "reality of that gracious gift of a present Saviour, which alone secures to the Eucharistic Sacrifice its value, and, indeed, makes it the most powerful appeal to God which man can make".[137] Liddon was aware that Howson's retraction demonstrated the long-standing disunity between Anglicans of different parties.[138] "Dr Overbeck", he observed, "made great use of this. It will, I fear, be fatal to our making any way whatever with the Greeks."[139] "Scrutator" agreed: "The Dean must have realised the mischief which *might* have ensued from his retractation when Dr Overbeck went up to shake his hand ... It was not peace that Dr Overbeck wanted, but war."[140] Noting that

[133] *The Guardian*, 25 Aug 1875, p. 1083.

[134] *The Guardian*, 18 Aug 1875, p. 1053.

[135] *The Guardian*, 25 Aug 1875, p. 1085.

[136] 1875 *Report*, p. 98. Howson's letter was included in an appendix, pp. 150–151. His main point was that the once and for all nature of Christ's sacrifice had not be given proper weight.

[137] 1875 *Report*, p. 99.

[138] This was also picked up by Colonel Kireev in a letter to Meyrick: "The question only is, whether all the members of the Established Church agree with their representatives at Bonn, with men like you, like the Rev. Canon Liddon, etc.?" He went on: "Will Bishop Colenso agree in all points with, e.g. the Bishop of Winchester?" (cited in *Correspondence of the Anglo-Continental Society with oriental Churchmen and Old Catholics*, Part III, London: Rivingtons, 1876, pp. 6–7. Further correspondence relating to the Bonn Conferences was published the following year in a fourth series of letters).

[139] Liddon Diary, 14 Aug 1875, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 187. Liddon notes in his diary for 1 Sept that Howson had written him an "invidious letter" about his approval of the Greek explanation of the eucharist.

[140] *The Guardian*, 25 Aug 1875, p. 1085.

Howson immediately handed his speech to the *Times* reporter, Liddon wrote to Pusey: "Meyrick, who has behaved admirably all through, – at once explained that Dean Howson only spoke for himself, and did not represent us, and I followed less explicitly – in the same sense. But – as far as the leading Orientals were concerned – I could see that this episode had done its work, by exposing our divisions, and the high place which anti-sacramental teaching holds against us."[141] On his return to England, Liddon wrote to Meyrick, thanking him for all he did in Bonn, and remarking: "How I wish that the Dean of Chester could have left his eucharistic theories to himself." He then adds, without attributing a source, "I have had good reason to know that he has played only too effectively into the hands of the ultramontanes".[142] Anglican divisions made any ecumenical manoeuvres fraught with danger.

On 15 August Liddon attended an Old Catholic mass where Bishop Reinkens celebrated and Knoodt preached. "The Mass, low, was accompanied by hymns in the Rhineland style." He then helped Döllinger draw up the propositions taken from John of Damascus,[143] whom Liddon was later to call "the Aquinas of Eastern Christendom".[144] In the evening the propositions were put forward to the Committee, with the Easterns dissenting from the third proposition (that the "Holy Ghost issues out of the Father through the Son"),[145] "the keystone of the whole." After this Liddon had to leave.[146] The provisional report submitted by *The Guardian* correspondent was pessimistic: "I do not think matters look hopeful, but we do not lose heart."[147] On his return to London, however, Liddon met

[141] Liddon to Pusey, 14 Aug 1875, PHL. Liddon asked Pusey to send the letter on to Gladstone who "takes a great interest in the proceedings".

[142] Liddon to Meyrick, 24 Sept 1875, Meyrick Papers, PHL, MEY 1/13/1. On his return to England, Howson wrote to *The Guardian,* to complain at "Scrutator's" description of his "retractation", a word he denied, preferring instead "explanation". He was aware too that he had upset Liddon: "One thing I most deeply regret. I fear I caused much pain to Canon Liddon ... Occasions, however, for such regret must inevitably occur in times of religious division if men are faithful to their convictions" (1 Sept 1875, p 1118).

[143] The list of propositions on the *Filioque* taken from John of Damascus is included in the 1875 *Report*, p. 103.

[144] 1875 *Report*, preface, p. xxix.

[145] 1875 *Report*, p. 103.

[146] Liddon Diary, 14 Aug 1875, in Johnston, p. 187.

[147] *The Guardian,* 18 Aug 1875, p. 1053.

Meyrick[148] who reported that "all was happily settled. The Greeks accepted the third article. Sandford seems to have made a very good conciliatory speech in conclusion. Dr Overbeck was greatly discouraged. Dr Döllinger got hold of Howson, and begged him not to make any statement about prayer for the dead which would distress the orientals."[149] On the final day, Döllinger delivered an extraordinary lecture of about five hours in length on the disastrous effects which in his view had been wrought by the Papacy throughout the whole of history.[150] Sandford ended the proceedings with a moment of triumph: "If Christians ever had a good cause for singing a *Te Deum*, we have one in the success which has attended our endeavour to re-unite the Churches of the East and West in the holy bonds of Christian truth and love."[151]

Some time after the Conference, Döllinger was presented with an illuminated address, organised by one of the leading Anglo-Catholic laymen of the time, Alexander James Beresford Hope, M.P. for the University of Cambridge, on behalf of the Anglo-Continental Society.[152] This was eventually signed by 3,838 clergy including 38 bishops and 4,170 laity, mainly from the British Isles, which recorded "the agreement reached between Old Catholics, Orthodox, Oriental and Anglican Churches to mark the indebtedness for the healing of wounds of God's people and the visible reunion on earth, under Christ, their head, in His One Catholic Apostolic Church, especially to its originator, Dr Döllinger".[153] In a letter to his friend, Lord Acton, Döllinger reported that the Conference had gone off well, the gravest problems remaining the "Misstrauen der Orientalen und Russen und der Furcht vor ihren heimischen Autoritäten, und in der inneren Zwietracht der Anglikaner." Nevertheless for the most part the proceedings had been harmonious, Liddon and Meyrick having performed a special service.[154] He wrote in a similar vein to Lady Blennerhassett: "Es

[148] Not MacColl as mentioned by Johnston, p. 187.

[149] Liddon Diary, 17 Aug 1875, PHL.

[150] This was printed in *The Guardian,* 1 Sept 1875, pp. 1117–1118 which considered it a "brilliant review".

[151] 1875 *Report*, p. 133.

[152] The announcement and the early signatories were published in *The Guardian* on 2 Feb 1876, p. 137.

[153] The address, bound in red velvet, is kept in the Bayrisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv. On this see Hill, *Lord Acton*, p. 470.

[154] Döllinger to Acton, 18 Aug 1875 in Victor Conzemius (ed.) *Döllinger Briefwechsel 1820–1890*, vol. 3, Munich: Beck, 1971, p. 150.

ist alles sehr gut gegangen, aber Geduld, sehr viel Geduld war nöthig – nicht sowohl bei den Engländern und Amerikanern, als bei den Russen und Orientalen. Sie sind alle höchlich befriedigt, und mit der Absicht nächstes Jahr wieder zusammenzukommen von dannen geschieden."[155] Liddon commented in his preface to the Report that patience had been displayed from the other side (possibly on account of Döllinger's prolixity), noting the Eastern representatives' "spirit of patience, charity, and resolution".[156]

5. The aftermath of the 1875 Conference

The Conference received widespread attention from the press for a number of weeks: the *Times* attacked it on 18 August, whereas the *Spectator* a few days later was, according to Liddon, "much fairer".[157] Not surprisingly, given his earlier warning in the preface to S. Cyril, Dr Pusey expressed anxiety over the theses which were accepted. He wrote to Liddon on 19 August: "I do not see any occasion for any formula in which the Greeks and we should agree. We are content to let them alone. ... We ask nothing of them, in case of reunion, but to go on as we are. We do not ask them to receive the *Filioque*, but only not to except against our expressing our belief in the way in which their own great writers St. Epiphanius, St. Cyril and others did. ... But I fear that they are animated now by an evil spirit of ambition; and that they are unwilling to have their old battle-cry against Rome 'You are heretics believing two *archai* in the Godhead', taken from them." Pusey went on, in a telling passage not included by Liddon in his biography, to dispute the fact that the *Filioque* was inserted illegally in the Creed. It was, he claimed, admitted "bonâ fide ... I fear that Döllinger's strong anti-Roman feelings prejudice him against the Filioque. ... I fear that all the winds are let loose ... upon the English church. It might be so strong, but the daemon of discord (this time under the plea of concord) seems to loom upon it."[158]

Liddon responded to this bitter outpouring with a conciliatory letter trying to show how moderate the theses really were. For instance, "no. 4 means only that, while accepting the Filioque, we Westerners entirely re-

[155] Döllinger to Lady Blennerhasset, 20 Aug 1875, in *Döllinger Briefwechsel*, vol. 4, p. 605.

[156] 1875 *Report*, preface, pp. xxx–xxxi.

[157] Liddon Diary, 21 Aug 1875, PHL.

[158] Pusey to Liddon, 19 Aug 1875. Liddon Bound Volume, Appendix, vol. 3; parts in Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. 4, p. 295.

pudiate the Photian charge about two principles". Similarly, the use of St John of Damascus was a compromise between the Greeks who would not refer the matter to Cyril and Epiphanius and the Westerners who would not allow it to be referred solely to Gregory and Basil. Liddon went on: "It is perfectly understood by the Easterns that we claim to retain the Filioque in the Creed. But we have made the ablest explanation of the sense in which we do so, and in their own language. This explanation, Döllinger hopes, will make complete union on the subject possible without their falling back on the old demand to exclude the Filioque from the Creed. This seems to be, perhaps, too sanguine: but I am not able to form an opinion." Finally, he looked forward to talking directly with Pusey about the decisions: "I hope that when I have had an opportunity of talking to you, you will trust that we have not done wrong." His moment of despair came, however, when he came to reflect on the "real difficulty" which was the "much deeper division that exists between [Howson] and ourselves, than any that divides us from the East ... If the Conferences are to go on, Döllinger must make a selection of English representatives – or they will do us, at any rate, much more harm than good."[159]

The next day Pusey wrote back to Liddon, again disputing the alleged illegality of the *Filioque*. It was there in the Creed, he felt, "because it was true, in the good providence of God. I should think that the legitimate consequence of their program [*sic*] would be the removal of the Filioque. I fear that the United States people will be like the dog who caught up its shadow in the water and so dropped what it had. The Greeks, as you say, will not unite with us, while people of authority among us deny the real presence. ... However, it is done, and all that remains to be done is to strike out the Filioque. Döllinger is in high spirits, they say, at this concession of the Greeks. I fear that it will really pave the way for the rejection of the Filioque, and our loss of faith."[160] Later in the year Pusey was to become even more hostile to the theses agreed at the conference, jeopardising the future of the Conferences altogether.

In the autumn work was well under way with the production of the English version of the Conference Report, which was translated by Plummer, Liddon correcting the proofs on 20 October.[161] Meyrick and his Anglo-Continental Society were also organising a subscription to support

[159] Liddon to Pusey, 20 Aug 1875, PHL.
[160] Pusey to Liddon, 21 Aug 1875 (PHL, Liddon Bound Volume, Appendix, vol. 3).
[161] Liddon Diary, 20 Oct 1875, PHL.

Old Catholic Students, a fund to which Liddon subscribed, although he was unable to join the society, primarily because of his own (and Pusey's) hostility towards its anti-Roman stance.[162] Pusey also began to re-cast his preface to S. Cyril with the proposed next Bonn Conference in mind. He wrote to Newman in October 1875: "I am recasting that little Preface to my son's St. Cyril, which I sent you; so many stupid prejudices against the *Filioque* seem rising; and now the Vatican decree has so scared people, that they are looking to the Greek Church for reunion, and seem ready to part with the *Filioque*. ... My impression is that the *Filioque* came into the Creed through the Athanasian, in that, through the Athanasian, as being devotionally recited, it became our Western formula and so crept unawares into the Nicene."[163]

At the same time Liddon was hard at work in writing a preface for the Report, a task which took longer than intended thanks to Pusey's outburst at the end of the year. Pusey wrote to the *Times* on 28 December, complaining of the agreed thesis on the *Filioque* in strong (though by now familiar) terms and attempting to prevent the testing of the "soundness" of the resolutions reached at the Bonn Conference by Convocation, which had been suggested by the Eastern Church Association: "Particular questions are ... better left to the discussion of private theologians", he suggested, rather than being aired in public. Although he did not wish to deprecate the work done in the Conferences, nevertheless he thought "the results are unhappy." It would have been better to leave things alone, while "disclaiming any error which the Greeks have erroneously imputed to it, or any wish that they should adopt it".[164] On reading the letter, Liddon remarked that "it is likely to cause us great distress. Both Puritans and Roman Catholics will rejoice at it."[165] Meyrick wrote to *The Guardian* on

[162] Liddon to Meyrick, 24 Sept 1875, Meyrick Papers, PHL, MEY 1/13/1. A letter from Meyrick appealing for funds was published in *The Guardian* on 6 October 1875, p. 1251.

[163] Pusey to Newman, 11 Oct 1875, Liddon, vol. 4, p. 297. Pusey later defended this in his "letter" to Liddon, *On the clause 'And the Son' in Regard to the Eastern Church and the Bonn Conference. A Letter to the Rev H. P. Liddon*, Oxford: Parker, 1876, pp. 51–67. There were similar discussions emerging in Russia and Germany. See esp. Joseph Langen, *Die trinitarische Lehrdifferenz zwischen der abendländischen und der morgenländischen Kirche*, Bonn: Weber, 1876. For the Russian literature see Rouse and Neill, p. 208.

[164] Pusey to The *Times*, Liddon, *Life of Pusey,* vol. 4, pp. 297–299.

[165] Liddon Diary, 28 Dec 1875, PHL.

5 January 1876 complaining of Pusey's intransigence and suggesting that even a man of his learning was not qualified to settle the matter of the *Filioque* on his own.[166]

Pusey sent another angry letter to the *Times* which was published on 10 January 1876. He noted that "the Eastern and Western formulae, rightly understood, do, (as the Council of Florence acknowledged) confess the same truth. But were we to abandon our mode of confessing the faith, we could not replace it by the Eastern, to which we are wholly unaccustomed, and should by parting with it part with the truth which it confesses." Moreover, he considered that the matter had not yet been fully explored: the Bonn resolutions were nothing more than "one-sided and imperfect propositions, one of which, in the natural sense, gives up our faith".[167] Writing to Newman the following day, Pusey noted that "union at any cost" could easily be seen as standing in the way of the truth: "Döllinger, of course, attempted an impossibility – to squeeze the principle of our Western Confession into the words of St. John Damascene, who rejected it."[168] A great deal was at stake for Pusey with the *Filioque*.

Although Liddon's preface to the 1875 *Report* is dated Epiphany 1876, he actually spent much time later in January revising it in the light of Pusey's criticisms. He noted in his diary that on 21 January he "completed the version of the proofs of the preface to the Report – making some considerable additions".[169] A week later he had attempted to "soften" Pusey "as to the mind of the Greeks and as to there being no risk of getting rid of the *Filioque*".[170] Throughout January Liddon spent much time discussing the Conference with his friends and acquaintances including Benjamin Jowett[171] and Tom Arnold.[172] He also continued to reassure Pusey of the limited nature of the Bonn decisions. Pusey wrote to Liddon on 8 February that he sympathised with the efforts at reunion with the East, and was glad that no concessions had been made by the English to

[166] *The Guardian*, 5 Jan 1876, p. 6.

[167] Reprinted in *The Guardian*, 10 Jan 1876, p. 53. The editor noted that Liddon's preface would contain a summary of the problem and the method by which the Bonn resolutions had been worked out.

[168] Pusey to Newman, 11 Jan 1875, in Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. 4, p. 300. See also *On the Clause 'And the Son'*, p. 96.

[169] Liddon Diary, 21 Jan 1876, PHL.

[170] Liddon Diary, 28 Jan 1876, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 189.

[171] Liddon Diary, 4 Feb 1876, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 189.

[172] Liddon Diary, 5 Feb 1876, PHL.

the Greeks in giving up the *Filioque*. He was also pleased that the "English never entertained the *irregularity* of the introduction", and felt that if the Greeks really understood their Fathers they would never wish "to reject our communion because we use language which her forefathers also used (and which, it appears, was adopted in an Eastern Council, that of Seleucia ... if only we are not eager to sacrifice it". Most importantly, however, he was reluctant to give up any fragment of the truth: "I should be very glad of any explanation to the Greeks, as promoting the great cause of unity, if only we do not therewith give up that which has been the expression of our faith for 1,200 years at least and which could not be replaced."[173] On 14 February Liddon forwarded this letter to the *Times* which, he thought, might achieve some degree of reconciliation, at least on general principles.

The following day Liddon thanked Meyrick for his comments on the proofs, expressing his hope that "we shall ... live down present difficulties." After mentioning Pusey's *Times* letter of the previous day, Liddon commented that Pusey "still – as was to be expected – maintains his criticisms on the propositions; but the effect of the letter will I hope be to show that there is no split as to general principles".[174] Meyrick, who was evidently suspicious that Liddon had succumbed to his mentor's will (and was always very suspicious of Pusey's high regard for Rome), published a "very angry" letter in the *Times* on 17 February accusing Liddon of deceiving the Conference.[175] Liddon replied to Meyrick on the same day that he had told the Americans that had the question of removing the Filioque from the Creed been seriously mooted at the Conference, he would have had to leave immediately. "Nor did I say", he went on, "one word to encourage the Greeks or Germans in thinking that any authority short of an Oecumenical council could, in my belief, deal with this subject, without impairing the faith and without increasing the division of the English Church". He apologised for any misunderstanding, concluding that "we ought to have understood each other better at an earlier stage of the proceedings".[176] Pusey was by this stage quite desperate, telling Liddon that "if the English Church gave up the *Filioque*, he must either shut his eyes and go to Rome, or trust that God would save him out of any Church at all.

[173] Pusey to Liddon, 8 Feb 1876, in Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. 4, p. 300.
[174] Liddon to Meyrick, 15 Feb 1875, Meyrick Papers, PHL, MEY 1/13/4.
[175] Liddon Diary, 17 Feb 1876, PHL.
[176] Liddon to Meyrick, 17 Feb 1875, Meyrick Papers, PHL, MEY 1/13/5.

He could have no part in it."[177] At Liddon's prompting, Pusey gave up his revision of the Preface to Cyril, writing instead a long open letter to Liddon (*On the clause 'And the Son'*) of nearly two hundred pages on the *Filioque*, explaining the origins and meaning of the clause.[178]

After sending the proofs to Pusey again on 13 April, and having them read by Dean Church of St Paul's,[179] the book was eventually printed later in the Spring. In his preface Liddon made a further effort to be conciliatory to Pusey, while at the same time hoping that the Conferences might continue into the future. He began by building on the constructive achievements of what had been achieved in 1874, noting the contribution of the "tranquil dignity" of Harold Browne.[180] However, throughout he is looking over his shoulder to Pusey, who had contributed so much to Liddon's own understanding of the history of the *Filioque*. He asserted, lest there should be any doubt, that no pledge had been given to remove the *Filioque*, and that the Eastern Churches had certainly not made this a condition for reunion. Indeed this would lead to disaster, erecting a "fresh barrier – and what true Christian would desire this? – between ourselves and the larger portion of western Christendom".[181] That said, however, he still insisted in the importance of maintaining links with the Old Catholics, who, like the English Church, had been forced into separation from the "Roman see by its unwarranted and ever-advancing claims".[182] Liddon concluded by citing Bishop Forbes of Brechin's final charge of 5 October 1875 written shortly before his death, which claimed that the Old Catholics have "found rest in a system, the philosophy of which is similar to that of Anglicanism, both in its respect for history and in its appeal for nationalism".[183]

Later in the year the Conferences were still very much a subject of discussion in the Church of England. Addressing the Church Congress at Ply-

[177] Liddon Diary, 18 Feb 1876, in Johnston, *Liddon*, p. 189.

[178] This strange little book repeats many of the assertions that had previously been made in the preface to S. Cyril, but with longer citation from the texts. He repeats familiar themes: "However the faith may be maintained by tradition in the East, but, in fact certainly is, more or less widely, *not* maintained there, we, by parting with our inherited expression of it, should forfeit the belief itself, and become misbelievers in our God." (pp. 180–181).

[179] Liddon to Pusey, 13 April 1876, PHL.

[180] 1875 *Report*, preface p. xx.

[181] 1875 *Report*, preface, p. xliii.

[182] 1875 *Report*, preface, p. xlviii.

[183] 1875 *Report*, preface, p. xlix. See also Rowan Strong, *Bishop Forbes of Brechin*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 227.

mouth, Bishop Browne agreed with Forbes: "Can there be anything more consistent with the fundamental and large Catholic principles of the English Church, than to give help to brothers in necessity so noble and true as these Old Catholics?"[184] Speaking about the Conference itself, Meyrick claimed that the "Battle of Unity seems to be half won",[185] the Greeks and Russians surprising the Western participants by the depth and breadth of their knowledge.[186] He concluded by suggesting that "it is the first genuine, sustained, and hopeful effort to recover primitive Christianity, to turn the hearts of Christians towards one another, and to reunite divided Christendom on the basis of Catholic, Apostolic, and Evangelic truth, that has been made for the last 300 years. As such, I entreat – might I not say, I demand? – for it the sympathies and co-operation of the Church of England."[187] Others, however, were less sure. And besides, the international situation had changed.

6. The end of the conferences

On 23 June 1876, Liddon wrote to Pusey that he had been forwarded a letter from Döllinger "in which he announced their resolution not to hold a Conference at Bonn this year. Dr Overbeck is the reason. He appears to have persuaded the Russians that they ought to insist at once on our explicit adhesion to the viith General Council, – about the Icons. Dr Döllinger thought that this issue, raised markedly, would lead to a scene at Bonn, and – to expressions of opinion in England which could wreck everything. He does not, I think, despair of bringing the Russians to terms by correspondence; the viith council is disciplinary, he maintains – not dogmatic, and may at least be allowed to fade into the background as much as the disciplinary canons of the earlier councils."[188] Liddon noted in a letter to Meyrick that Overbeck seemed "quite implacable" in a pamphlet, con-

[184] *Two Papers on the Old Catholic Movement and the Bonn Conference by the Very Rev. the Dean of Lichfield and the Rev. Prebendary Meyrick*, London: Wells Gardner, 1877, p. 20. There are also speeches by several other participants at the Church Congress.

[185] *Two Papers*, p. 11.

[186] *Two Papers*, p. 16.

[187] *Two Papers*, p. 16.

[188] This suggestion was made by Overbeck at the Conference (1875 *Report*, p. 88). On the reasons for the cessation of the Conferences, see Neuner, *Döllinger als Theologe der Ökumene*, pp. 211–219.

cluding that "I suppose that no great good is ever achieved, except after a great deal of disappointment and trouble".[189] Liddon, however, still held out some hope for the future, and was grateful for the extra time allowed for discussion. He reported that he would send Döllinger a copy of Pusey's book on the *Filioque* as soon as it appeared. "It will do great good, both in keeping alive general interest in the question of reunion and in raising questions for which there will now be plenty of time in which to give full consideration."[190]

Döllinger wrote to Acton giving his reasons for the postponement of the Conference: "Es haben dabei", he noted, "mehrere Gründe zusammengewirkt. Die Russen und Orientalen wollten, dass man über das 7te Concil (von Nicäa – Bilderdienst etc.) verhandle, und damit wäre ein Feuerbrand in die Englische Kirche geschleudert worden; zugleich zeigte sich, dass bei ihnen die Zustimmung zu den Bonner Artikeln über den H. Geist doch noch nicht constatiert sei – so galt es, Zeit zu gewinnen. In England haben auch Pusey, Overbeck und – leider auch Liddon der Sache geschadet – so dass mir, wenn wir im August oder September die Verhandlungen wieder aufgenommen hätten, sehr bange war."[191] Meyrick agreed with Döllinger as to one of the causes of the postponement of the Conference: Pusey's hostility meant that the Conferences could not continue, and further that there could be no official discussion of the resolutions in Convocation.[192]

Postponement of a Conference was not, however, caused solely by theological intractability. On receiving a copy of Pusey's book, Liddon noted that "the probable course of politics in Eastern Europe hardly makes a conference easy for some time to come".[193] By the summer of 1876 the Eastern Question was dominating discussion in England, especially after

[189] Liddon to Meyrick, 20 June 1876, PHL MEY 1/13/6. Overbeck's belligerent attitude found its way into a book which was originally written in English: J. J. Overbeck, *The Bonn Conferences and the Filioque Question with reference to the Nicene creed*, London: Trübner, 1876; *Die Bonner Unions-Conferenzen, oder Altkatholicismus und Anglikanismus in ihrem Verhältnis zur Orthodoxie. Eine Appellation an die Patriarchen und Heiligen Synoden der orthodox-katholischen Kirche*, Halle: Schmidt, 1876. Meyrick complained to *The Guardian* that Overbeck had an "ultramontane heart" (*The Guardian*, 12 Jan 1876, p. 39).

[190] Liddon to Pusey, 23 June 1876, PHL.

[191] Döllinger to Acton, 29 June 1876, in *Döllinger Briefwechsel*, vol. 3, pp. 165–167.

[192] Frederick Meyrick, *Memories*, p. 263.

[193] Liddon to Pusey, 21 Aug 1876, PHL.

Gladstone's pamphlet on the Bulgarian atrocities was published in September.[194] Liddon wrote to Pusey lamenting the many "'old Turks' about the clubs, and in high military circles who retain the old prejudices of Lord Palmerston, against Russia, and in favour of the Porte".[195] A few days later he commented that he was about to start for Germany to visit Döllinger with a copy of Pusey's book, the Eastern Question still dominating his thoughts: "How possible are these Bulgarian massacres!" he exclaimed.[196]

On 8 September Liddon went to Munich, spending the morning with Döllinger, who was also "full of the Eastern Question." Conversation then moved on to the Bonn Conferences. Döllinger had heard that Overbeck's pamphlet had had great influence in Russia, and the Greeks were keen on saying that "we must accept the 7th Council. That will be the subject of the next Bonn Conference; and it is desirable to prepare people for it. Döllinger thinks that an Eirenicon can be discovered in the fact that the decrees of the council teach discipline and not doctrine."[197] The following day, Liddon walked out with Döllinger, when the conversation turned to Pusey's book. Döllinger said that "it had made him very sad. Pusey could not put himself in the position of the orientals ... He allowed no part of our work at Bonn to stand, not even the Repudiation of the two principles in the very words of the Council of Florence. This book threw everybody back."[198] The following day, the Eastern Question was again the main topic of conversation between the two men, but later they returned to Pusey's book and his "misunderstanding" of the Council of Seleucia.[199]

After leaving Munich, Liddon proceeded to tour Croatia and Serbia, dining with the Metropolitan in Belgrade,[200] who, after discussing the Eastern Question, (perhaps rather surprisingly) "asked anxiously about Bishop Colenso".[201] Liddon then went on to a lengthy audience with one of the dissenting voices at the Vatican Council, Bishop Josip Juraj Stross-

[194] *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, London: Murray, 1876.

[195] Liddon to Pusey, 21 Aug 1876 (Liddon Bound Volume, PHL).

[196] Liddon to Pusey, 30 Aug 1876 (Liddon Bound Volume, PHL).

[197] Liddon Diary, 8 Sept 1876, PHL.

[198] Liddon Diary, 9 Sept 1876, PHL.

[199] Liddon Diary, 10 Sept 1876, PHL.

[200] Meyrick had organised an letter of introduction to be written on 3 Sept 1876: Liddon "has great influence in England. Will you receive him as your friend? He is also a friend of Döllinger and much interested in all that concerns the orthodox church". No name is given on the letter. Included in Pusey to Liddon Correspondence, PHL.

[201] Liddon Diary, 21 Sept 1876, PHL.

mayer of Djakovo in Croatia, who much impressed him. "If all Roman Catholic bishops were such as he", he wrote to Pusey, "there would not be much difficulty in restoring union to the church." Strossmayer was on good terms with the Metropolitan of Belgrade, and thought that the Vatican decrees will "not really prevent unity among believers hereafter: they are a warning that it is to come about in God's time, not ours." Liddon continued, stressing the importance of actions over words: "If we could really get England to help the oppressed Christians in Turkey, it would do more for Christian unity than fifty Bonn Conferences. Bishop Strossmayer said that in the presence of the unbelievers it was impossible to lay much stress on his own differences with the Easterns. The Archbishop of Belgrade said that whatever the present English government might do in the way of upholding the Turks, it was a comfort to him to think that the English Church and clergy sympathised with the persecuted Christians."[202] Returning home via Munich, Liddon reported on his visit to Döllinger, who was much amused by Strossmayer's stoicism.[203]

By 1877 the situation in the Balkans had grown worse: Turkey was "going to pieces",[204] war had broken out, and there was little hope for further ecumenical discussions with the Churches of the East. Liddon wrote to Meyrick: "No Conference is possible until after the war. And I fear that for some time after it, too much feeling will have been roused, especially among the Russians to allow us to do much. Alas! What a miserable part we have played, as a nation, during the last year! It will be an undeserved mercy if God saves us from the enormous crime of going to war on behalf of the Infidel Power under the plea of defending our national interests."[205] Similarly at Easter 1878, Liddon wrote to Döllinger complaining that "so

[202] Liddon to Pusey, 30 Aug 1876 (Liddon Bound Volume, vol. II, PHL).

[203] Liddon Diary 30 Sept and 1 Oct 1876. Liddon wrote an account of his meeting for *The Guardian* in which he reported sympathetically on Strossmayer's understanding of the Eastern Question and his admiration of Gladstone's pamphlet: "I should like, Catholic bishop as I am, to cross the Channel for the first time in my life, only for the purpose of kissing the hand that wrote it". Liddon was, however, silent on his position towards the Vatican: "On this interesting and vast subject I must not enter, after taxing your columns too severely as it is" (11 Oct 1876, p. 1332–3). Later in the year Liddon lectured at Sion College on "The Future of the Slavonic Provinces in Eastern Turkey" (published in *The Guardian*, 7 Dec 1876, pp. 1666–1669).

[204] "The Future of the Slavonic Provinces in Eastern Turkey", p. 1668.

[205] Liddon to Meyrick, 21 July 1877, PHL, MEY 1/13/7.

many good Churchmen (– for instance Mr. Beresford Hope) are political allies of Lord Beaconsfield".[206] Consequently, as Gladstone later noted in something of an overstatement, Disraeli's Eastern policy had served to ensure the end of ecumenical negotiations in much the same way as had Pius IX's declaration of Infallibility.[207]

Following the breakdown of the Bonn Conferences the Old Catholics changed direction, seeking Union with the Dutch Old Catholics, which was achieved at Utrecht in 1889. This caused Meyrick consternation since he regarded the Dutch Church as grossly superstitious and "all but Roman Catholics".[208] Döllinger too had reservations about the direction being taken by the German Old Catholics and sought to distance himself from the Movement: the breakthrough which many predicted never happened, and they remained (and remain) a small denomination. Consequently, Gladstone's vision, which was shared, to some extent at least, by Döllinger and Liddon, of a communion of national catholic churches each seeking the truth, yet not in possession of the whole truth (a vision which later developed into mainstream Anglican theology)[209] and therefore tolerant of pluralism, proved impossible to realize in the complex international situation of collapsing empires and national self-assertiveness. This failure in ecumenical relations was reflected in international politics: Gladstone's humble and tolerant nationalism was replaced with a belligerence that saw Europe's Empires plunging into war thirty years later. At the same time, Pusey, in many ways the dinosaur of the period, nevertheless pointed to the pitfalls of bilateral negotiations. Unity with one communion can easily estrange others: more important is truth. The

[206] Liddon to Döllinger, Easter Sunday, 1888. In Liddon papers, Keble College, Oxford. Cited in Matthew, "Gladstone, Vaticanism", p. 440.

[207] Gladstone, "Soliloquium and Postscript" (1896) in *Later Gleanings*, London: Murray, 1897, p. xiii.

[208] Meyrick, *Memories*, p. 271.

[209] The classic statement is in A. Michael Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, London: Longmans, 1936, e.g. p. 180.

[210] Chadwick, "Döllinger and Reunion", p. 334. The Lambeth Conference of 1878 was forced to consider precisely what was necessary for Church unity, adopting the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. Ecumenical negotiations continued between Anglicans and Old Catholics leading eventually to full communion in 1931. On this see Gordon Huelin (ed.), *Old Catholics and Anglicans*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. See also the strange impressionistic history by Alan M. Cole, *The Old Catholic Phenomenon*, London: Avon Books, 1997.

Filioque controversy, and the whole thrust of the Conferences, masked much anti-Vaticanism: Western Christendom almost seemed to lose its vision of unity. That said, however, the effect of the declaration of Infallibility made such a vision very difficult to maintain.[210] Few had Pusey's staying power – and even he sometimes despaired.[211]

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[211] Liddon, *Life of Pusey*, vol. IV, p.194.