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Robin Sinclair Wheeler

'Between East and West: the Anglican Career of William Palmer of Magdalen, 1811-1849.'

PhD Thesis Abstract 2003

Deacon William Palmer of Magdalen was unique among those connected with the Oxford Movement in that he travelled to Russia seeking communion from the Russian Orthodox Church, on the basis that the Church of England could rightly claim to be part of the one Holy, Catholic & Apostolic Church. Derided by the expatriate English in Russia as an 'ass', a Madman', and 'a strange enthusiast', he was nonetheless highly respected by the Russians themselves as 'an excellent defender of a bad cause.' Rejecting with incredulity his representations on behalf of the Church of England, the Russians urged him instead to accept Orthodoxy without qualification or question.

This thesis charts Palmer's increasing disillusionment with Anglicanism, and his desperate search for some part of it that would affirm his understanding of the Church of England as a truly catholic institution, albeit corrupted by Protestantism. It recounts the opposition he faced from his own family, and in particular his clergyman father, whose initial support gave way to alarm and dismay over his son's actions, particularly as they revealed an increasing orientation towards Rome. It describes the hostility he faced from the highest authorities of the Church of England, who paid lip-service to the idea of unity with the Churches of the East, but in practice took every opportunity to court the Protestant churches of Europe. It tells the story of Palmer's rejection by the Episcopal Church of Scotland. It also considers why after years of discussion with the hierarchies of the Orthodox Church in Russia and Greece, and complete intellectual acceptance of Eastern doctrine, Palmer nevertheless became a Roman Catholic, and how his conversion to Catholicism cost him his career and drove him to exile in Rome.

Between East and West: the Anglican Career of William
Palmer of Magdalen, 1811-1849.

Robin Sinclair Wheeler

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PhD Thesis

University of Durham

Department of Theology

2003



28 APR 2004

DECLARATION

I, **Robin Sinclair Wheeler**, the author of this thesis, do solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm that none of the material submitted in this thesis has been previously submitted by me for a degree at the University of Durham or any other university.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AC Venn, J. A., *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (Cambridge: CUP, 1922-54), Part II.
- AM William Palmer's Aunt Mary
- AO Foster, J., *Alumni Oxonienses* (London: Foster, 1888).
- ASC William Palmer, *An Appeal to the Scottish Church* (Edinburgh: Laurie, 1849).
- ATR William Palmer, *Aids to Reflection on the Seemingly Double Character of the Established Church* (Oxford: Parker, 1841).
- BL British Library
- BO Birmingham Oratory
- CB Cokayne, G. E., *Complete Baronetage* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1983).
- CCD *Crockfords Clerical Directory* (London: Horace Cox, 1876).
- CP Cokayne, G. E., *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland and the United Kingdom* The Hon. Vicary Gibbs (ed.) 13 vols. (London: St. Catherine Press, 1913).
- CTR Gorman, W. Gordon, *Converts to Rome* (London: Sands & Co., 1901).
- CW Charles Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews.
- DNB Stephen, Leslie, and Lee, Sidney (eds.), *The Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1885-1900)
- DP Dorothea Palmer, mother of William Palmer.
- DUC Vapereau, G., *Dictionnaire Universel des Contemporains* (Paris: Lahure, 1858).
- EA William Palmer, *Examination of an Announcement Made in the Prussian State Gazette* (Oxford: Parker, 1842).
- Ed P Edwin Palmer, Archdeacon of Oxford, brother of William Palmer.
- Em P Emma Palmer, sister of William Palmer.
- ES Brockgauz & Ephron, *Encyclopedeskii Slovar*, 82 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1890-1902).
- FT Thomson, Francis, 'William Palmer and the Orthodox Church' (Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 1964).
- GHP George Horsley Palmer, brother of William Palmer.
- L&D Dessain, Charles Stephen, et al., *The Letters & Diaries of John Henry Newman, 1801-1890* (London: Nelson).
- LP Lambeth Palace Library
- MAG MSS at Magdalen College, Oxford
- MCR Bloxam, J. R., *A register of the presidents, fellows, demies ... and other members of Saint Mary Magdalen College in the University of Oxford* (Oxford: Graham, 1853-85).
- MEB Boase, Frederic, *Modern English Biography* (London: Cass & Co., 1897).
- MFP Palmer, Roundell, Earl of Selborne, *Memorials Family and Personal*, vols. I & II (London: Macmillan, 1896).
- MID Middleton, R. D., *Magdalen Studies* (London: SPCK, 1936).
- NBG Didot, F., and Hofer, J. C. F., *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, 46 vols. (Paris: Didot, 1860-66).
- NV Newman, John Henry, *Notes of a Visit to the Russian Church* (London: Kegan Paul Trench, 1882).

- RBS *Russkii Biograficheskii Slovar*, 8 vols. (New York: Kraus, 1962).
- RBSI *Russkii Biograficheskii Slovar Index* (Vaduz: Kraus, 1963).
- RGIA Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv, St. Petersburg..
- ROM Macray, W. D., *A Register of the Members of St. Mary Magdalen College, Oxford, from the foundation of the college* (New series) (London: Frowde, 1894-1915).
- RP Roundell Palmer, later Earl of Selborne, brother of William Palmer.
- RWB The Rev. R. W. Blackmore, chaplain at Cronstadt.
- SEC Bertie, David. M., *Scottish Episcopal Clergy, 1689-2000* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000).
- T L C Thomas Legh Claughton, Bishop of St. Albans.
- WEG William Ewart Gladstone
- WJP Rev. William Jocelyn Palmer, father of William Palmer
- WP Deacon William Palmer of Magdalen
- Z Zernov, Nicholas, *William Palmer*, unpublished MS, in the possession of the author.

INTRODUCTION

If William Palmer is known at all today, it is as a strange Anglican obsessive on the margins of the Tractarian movement, a man who for all his considerable learning was entirely lacking in common sense and judgement. Little wonder perhaps, when in books such as P. E. Shaw's *The Early Tractarians and the Eastern Church* Palmer is described as 'sincere but eccentric and misguided'¹, or in John Lawrence's centenary tribute in *Sobornost*² as 'a vintage Oxford eccentric.' Nor is this view a retrospective one. It is entirely of a piece with the way that Palmer was regarded in his day. A friend, Canon Frederick Meyrick,³ described him as 'an ecclesiastical Don Quixote,'⁴ a description that Palmer applied to himself with grim humour in his correspondence,⁵ as he did the sobriquet of 'monomaniac'⁶ accorded him by Bishop Terrot of the Scottish Episcopal Church. When James Barmby went to St Petersburg in 1849, he found that the British living or trading there remembered Palmer only as 'a fool', 'a Madman', 'an ass,' or 'a strange enthusiast.'⁷ But Palmer was far from being a blinkered fool. Meyrick saw that this Don Quixote was also 'a man of noble soul, unselfish, honest, true, lovable'. In his preface to *Notes of a Russian Visit* Cardinal Newman paid tribute to Palmer's 'many and winning virtues;

¹ P. E. Shaw, *The Early Tractarians and the Eastern Church* (hereafter Shaw) (London: Mowbray, 1930), p.176.

² John Lawrence, 'William Palmer of Magdalen and the Russian Orthodox Church', *Sobornost* vol. 2:1 (1980), pp. 80-82.

³ Frederick Meyrick (1827-1906), Scholar of Trinity College Oxford, deacon 1850, priest 1852, Inspector of schools 1859, non-residentiary Canon of Lincoln 1869, Principal of Codrington College, Barbados, 1886. DNB.

⁴ Frederick Meyrick, *Memories of Life at Oxford* (hereafter Meyrick) (London: John Murray, 1905), p.79.

⁵ W. J. Birkbeck, *Russia and the English Church* (London: Rivington, Percival, 1895), p.152.

⁶ BO MS v.49, f.163.

⁷ LP MS 2823, f.125.



to his simplicity, to his unselfishness, to his gentleness and patience, to his singular meekness, to his zeal for the Truth, and his honesty whether in seeking or defending it; and to his calmness and cheerfulness in pain, perplexity and disappointment.’⁸ He too characterised Palmer as ‘a true and loyal friend’ whose memory was ‘very dear’ to him.⁹

The aim of this thesis is to draw the fullest possible picture of the man who could provoke abuse from some, yet inspire affection in others. It will span the period from his upbringing in rural Oxfordshire, to the eve of his departure for Constantinople as a refugee from the Church of England that he had so long and vainly championed. For this I draw not only on the thorough and surprisingly frank *Memorials* of Palmer’s brother Roundell¹⁰, and Palmer’s own weighty publications such as the *Appeal to the Scottish Church*, but on his extensive correspondence and journals. A prolix and wordy writer, he dealt at length with the controversial episodes for which he became famous, or in some people’s eyes, notorious; his private writings reveal a soul tormented by consciousness of sin, a sufferer from depression and a Victorian aspiring to the monastic asceticism of the Middle Ages.

His writings also reveal the price he paid for his idiosyncratic quest for truth, not just in his stoical renunciation of a successful academic or legal career, but in his growing isolation, and a frequently awkward and angry relationship with his father. We can see the dignity with which he dealt with humiliation and rejection, notably in

⁸ NV, p. xvi.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

¹⁰ Roundell Palmer (1812-1895), first Earl of Selborne, matric. Christ Church 1830, scholar Trinity College 1830-4, BA 1834, MA 1836, barrister Lincoln’s Inn 1837, Q.C. and bencher 1849. M.P. Plymouth 1847-52 and 1853-7, for Richmond 1861-72, Solicitor-General 1861-3, knighted 1861, Attorney-General 1863-6, Lord Chancellor 1872-4 and 1880-5, created Baron Selborne 1872, Earl Selborne and Viscount Wolmer 1883. DNB, AO.

Roundell Palmer was the second of six brothers. The third, Tom died in infancy (see n. 27), the fourth,

Scotland. How, too, he faced what amounted to betrayal by his own Church, in the character in which he presented it in France and later in Russia. Palmer had it seems only to make an assertion about the Anglican Church for some member of its hierarchy, often at the very highest level, to subvert it by act or word, and by so doing expose him to ridicule and contempt.

Elsewhere in his journals we find another Palmer, the evocative travel writer. These journals present a piquant contrast to the sedate life of an Oxford don for which he appeared to be destined. In them we see Palmer the Imperial adventurer, braving the privations of a ship's hold to reach Mount Athos, refusing at spearpoint the demands of an Arab tribesman, or struggling back to his Roman palazzo through the revolutionary troops of Garibaldi. A more esoteric and mystical side of his character is shown in Palmer's interest in dreams and their meaning, which he saw throughout his life as highly significant.

I would hope also to shed light on episodes that for reasons of tact or expediency he could or would not publish in his lifetime. These include his treatment by the bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church, his contest with the unpredictable and temperamental Princess Galitzin, and later his unsuccessful attempts to take his *Appeal* to the Episcopal Church of America, which unlike the Scottish Church recognised his qualities and treated him with courtesy. I intend to chart in his journals and correspondence with his family the course of his disillusionment with Anglicanism, his complete intellectual conviction of the truth of Orthodox doctrine, but paradoxically his growing emotional longing for the Roman Catholic Church. To follow this process is gain some insight into how 'a man "of highest ability and

Henry Palmer, was lost at sea in 1835. The fifth, George Horsley Palmer, succeeded his father as rector of Mixbury, and the youngest, Edwin, became archdeacon of Oxford. There were also a number

learning, singleness of heart and noble purpose ... one of the very ablest and best men the College had”¹¹ came to end his days in self-imposed exile in Rome, where he died and was buried.

of sisters, Dorothea, Eleanor, Emily and Emma. DNB, and MFP pp. 154-5.

¹¹ MID, p. 124.

CHAPTER 1

Childhood, Rugby and Oxford.

William Palmer was born on 12 July 1811 at Mixbury in Oxfordshire. William displayed from his infancy ‘uncommon signs of ability, and a marked individuality of character.’¹² He ‘was the favourite at Gledstone’, the home of his maternal grandparents. A letter from his Aunt ‘EAP’ (presumably his Aunt Elizabeth) from Gledstone,¹³ has a note at the top by Roundell Palmer which confirms this favourite status ‘WP there - worshipped by Grandparents - EAP to take him back to Mixbury or Beachampton’.¹⁴ His Aunt said of the three year old William:

He is certainly a very uncommon child in understanding: & it is this consciousness of superiority, I suppose, that makes him dislike so much the company of other children of his own age: ... W. has another quality of a very dangerous tendency, if not early noticed & guarded against; a very fertile invention; so much so, that he will tell a long history about a bear, horse, or anything else without the slightest foundation: and when you tax him with it, & say this is not true, he very readily answers, It is only Willy's imagination! But I must leave talking of this dear & interesting child. Pray God he may grow up a good and religious character! - or else I think he will be removed from this world, before he can be responsible for his own notions!¹⁵

Apart from its charming aspect, the letter ironically foreshadows the many times that those who heard him on the Anglican Church would ascribe what they heard to his ‘very fertile invention’.

¹² Ibid., p.64.

¹³ LP MS 2497, f. 25.

¹⁴ William Palmer senior was presented to the parish of Beachampton by his father after Bishop Horsley's death in 1806. He exchanged it for Finmere in 1814. MFP, p.38.

¹⁵ LP MS 2497, f. 25.

His family was a distinguished one that included a seventeenth-century member of parliament, Archdale Palmer, and merchants in the City of London, Thomas and William Palmer, William Palmer's great-grandfather and grandfather respectively, who began a connection with the Mercers' Company that extended to include William. On his mother's side there was Bishop Samuel Horsley, the leading prelate in the Church of England in his time, and 'a distinguished mathematician, editor of Newton's works, and secretary to the Royal Society' as well as 'a learned theologian.'¹⁶ His uncle Edward was a Royal Naval Commander who was lost when his ship, HMS Nautilus, was wrecked in the Dardanelles in 1807.

Palmer's father, William Jocelyn Palmer, was educated at Charterhouse and Brasenose College, Oxford. At Oxford he both hunted and shot, but gave up field sports on ordination. Lord Selborne remarks that 'there were no honour examinations in those days,' and he has no reason to suppose that his father 'received from his college any strong intellectual impulse.'¹⁷ However his later correspondence with William, particularly as he saw him moving inexorably towards Rome, displays a strong intelligence and a capacity for logical argument that would have made him an impressive figure in any court of law, had he chosen the Bar over the Church. More than once he had the best of the argument, sometimes displaying an unexpected talent for a sardonic and sarcastic turn of phrase that reduced William to evasion or silence.

William Palmer senior was ordained deacon in 1801, and priest in February 1802.¹⁸ He was presented to the Rectory of Mixbury by his uncle Samuel Horsley,¹⁹

¹⁶ MFP, vol. 1, p.5.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.37.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Bishop Samuel Horsley (1733-1806), admitted a pensioner at Trinity Hall, Cambridge 1751, graduated LLB 1758, Fellow of the Royal Society 1767, domestic chaplain to Bishop Lowth, Bishop of London, and prebend of St. Pauls, 1777, Archdeacon of St. Albans 1781, Bishop of St. David's 1788, Bishop of Rochester 1793, translated to St. Asaph's June 1802. DNB.

then Bishop of Rochester, the same year. He was clearly a conscientious Rector, taking a personal interest in the 'five or six hundred poor people at Mixbury and Finmere' in his charge, and so generous to them as to make some of his parishioners speculate that he must have had some funds for the purpose, rather than his own money, although the latter was the case.²⁰ His preaching was 'thoughtful but not ambitious', with 'no thought of self; no aim at display.'²¹ His churchmanship appears to have been Broad rather than High, as we would now understand High Church Anglicanism, although he subscribed whole-heartedly to the proposition that the Anglican Church belonged to the 'one Catholic and Apostolic Church,' the credal proposition on which William was to rely so heavily in Russia. He had no sympathy, emotional or intellectual, for the Roman Catholic Church. Above all he had none of William's restlessness. He was entirely content to discharge the duties he had been given, although as Roundell Palmer says 'There was no position in the Church which he could not (in my belief) have worthily filled, and which he might not have ennobled and adorned.'²² He also sat as a magistrate, and in the 1830s at the time of the 'Captain Swing' disturbances displayed both presence of mind and strength of character in confronting and calming a possibly dangerous mob.²³

William's mother, Dorothea Roundell, was herself the daughter of a clergyman, the inheritor of an estate near Skipton. Except as the occasional addressee of his letters, she seems to have played hardly any rôle in William's life. In 1832 she was struck by a mysterious illness, that began, so Lord Selborne tells us, with the 'loss of power' in one foot, 'the foot gradually turning round.'²⁴ This illness failed to

²⁰ MFP, vol. 1, p.59.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.57.

²² *Ibid.*, p.58.

²³ *Ibid.*, p.63.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.147.

respond to surgical treatment, and indeed went on to deprive her of movement, speech, hearing and sight. ‘An eminent Oxford surgeon,’ Mr. Tuckwell,²⁵ diagnosed ‘the nervous system as the seat of the disorder,’²⁶ and advised that only time would be the cure, as was the case. There may be some connection between the illness and the tragic loss of Dorothea’s son Tom²⁷ after an accident in 1823; but the gap in time is large. At any rate, it ‘continued for years.’²⁸ In February 1834 Palmer’s father wrote that she ‘... has certainly been gaining ground ... tho’ she does not yet speak, and we are occasionally troubled with distressing states of inquietude.’²⁹ And again in March the same year:

Certainly her case is an extraordinary one of a very strange and extraordinary complaint. Her want of speech is attended with a difference of affection from any that has occurred before. She has the use of the organs of voice so far as the throat is concerned but the mouth and the tongue refuse to act in concert.³⁰

Her condition made her less than easy to live with. In his journal for 1840, Palmer noted ‘Resolutions: ... Patientius cum matre (her bodily ails causing her to be often very excitable.)’³¹

Lord Selborne recalls how he and William were taken by their father on walks or on horseback on his visits to parishioners, or on fishing expeditions, and how they learned from him to ‘find a pleasure in the observation of nature’. This extended from the habits of birds and animals to amateur astrology, chemistry and mineralogy. The boys spontaneously developed an interest in botany and entomology,

²⁵ William Tuckwell, ‘“chirurgus”, privilegiatus, 10 November 1808’ AO, p.1445.

²⁶ MFP, vol. 1, p.148.

²⁷ This occurred as a result of hydrocephalus, after receiving ‘some accidental hurt on his head, during some of our games.’ The results were devastating for William’s parents: ‘The hearts of my Father and Mother were all but broken. My Mother’s cheerfulness did not return for years; my Father’s health suffered so much that ... he was very seriously ill.’ (MFP, vol. 1, p.69). The episode may lie behind Palmer’s dream of the angry and implacable mujik whose son he had killed (BO MS v.25, vol. 2, f.17).

²⁸ MFP, vol. 1, p.147.

²⁹ LP MS 2834, f. 48.

³⁰ LP MS 2834, f. 50.

helped by their Aunt Mary, and created a ‘museum’ in their schoolroom ‘for insects, fossils, and other objects of natural history.’³² This became something of a trial for their father when they went away to Rugby. He wrote to William in October 1823 ‘I like the specimens of stuffed birds for the Museum far better than the living ones which are troublesome unprofitable things for those who have anything else to do’³³ and later in the same month ‘I am pleased that you have parted with the linnets.’³⁴ Their interest in nature led them to invent their own names for butterflies and wild plants, and this ‘faculty of imagination increased in power. It coloured all our childish pleasures; it accompanied us upon the ice and into the woods; it mixed dreams of the supernatural with the most ordinary things’. They fancied themselves, in the middle of a frozen pool, on ‘the islands discovered by Columbus or Cook,’ and had an early sense of the magical, or miraculous:

We carved out of cleft sticks what passed with us for images of humanity, and stuck them into the damp ground at night, hoping ... that we might find them endowed with life when we came to look for them in the morning.³⁵

However, their childhood was by no means all a bucolic idyll of walks and butterfly collecting. They were schooled at home by their father ‘with great assiduity, and admirable regularity, patience and judgement.’³⁶ It was no easy programme.

We rose early, and began every day by reading with him the Psalms for that morning. We began Latin at five years old and Greek at six ... by the time we were nine years old, we were fairly well grounded in Virgil and Horace, and not unpractised in verse translation, and had begun the Greek Testament. Pope’s Homer and Dryden’s Virgil were familiar to us, and before we went to school we had made some progress in the original of Homer, and had read though the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus. Nor were we ignorant of Shakespeare, Milton, and some other English classics.³⁷

³¹ LP MS 2457, f. 250.

³² MFP, vol. 1, p.66.

³³ LP MS 2457, f. 1.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ MFP, vol. 1, pp. 66-67.

³⁶ Ibid., p.64.

³⁷ Ibid.

Their father was ‘not technically an exact scholar, but, in a practical sense ... a good one.’ Lord Selborne concludes ‘I do not think we could have been better prepared for a public school by any teacher then living in England.’³⁸

This encomium has, however, to be balanced against the explanation he gives for the difficulties he faced at Rugby, that led to his being removed and sent to Winchester. ‘Our parents,’ Selborne says, ‘managed us upon a regular and methodical system, and we sometimes chafed at it. I had to be taught the government of my tongue and my hands by correction, more severe on some occasions than my conscience acknowledged to be just,’³⁹ presumably caning on the hand or the backside. Although he piously expresses himself ‘thankful’ that ‘those aberrations were effectually checked,’ this was ‘at some cost to the openness and unreserve which is so important between parents and children,’⁴⁰ and possibly by ‘openness and unreserve’ he may mean natural love and trust. When Palmer’s younger brothers were also educated at home, ‘the strictness of the original method may have been somewhat softened.’⁴¹ In dealing with his parishioners Palmer’s father was ‘not demonstrative, nor a man of many words; he kept his feelings, which were naturally warm and strong, quite under command.’⁴² That their father’s feelings were warm, and that he was affectionate, emerges convincingly enough from his correspondence with William, even when relationships between them were at their most strained; but he appears to have been a demanding and stern figure. Resentment of the strictness of this early upbringing may have contributed to William Palmer’s stubborn insistence on following his own course at the cost of a successful conventional career.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

³⁹ Ibid., p.77.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

1. Rugby School

The brothers' home education ended in the summer of 1823 when they were both sent to Rugby, partly because Rugby was the nearest public school to Mixbury, partly because the nephew of a family friend was already there.⁴³ Rugby was founded in 1567 by Laurence Sheriff as a local charity, but by the second half of the eighteenth century the school had ceased to serve the needs of the local population and the children of the poor, and had become instead the provider of a classical education to the children of the higher ranks of society.⁴⁴ The school had fallen into dilapidation in 1750, but thanks to the initiative of the trustees ('twelve gentlemen of Warwickshire') in moving the school to a new site, it prospered and 'achieved national reputation under the headmastership of Dr. Thomas James, (1778-94), under whom the number of pupils rose to nearly three hundred.'⁴⁵ However in 1797, the next headmaster, Dr. Henry Ingles, faced a rebellion during which 'desks and other furniture were burned in the Close, the headmaster's door was blown off its hinges, and troops (in the guise of a recruiting party) were brought to the scene.'⁴⁶ Fortunately under the next headmaster, Dr. John Wooll, 'Rugby's reputation was fully restored'⁴⁷; he was headmaster when Roundell and William Palmer went there in 1823.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.149.

⁴² Ibid., p.58.

⁴³ Ibid., p.74.

⁴⁴ John Chandos, *Boys Together: English Public Schools 1800-1814* (hereafter Chandos) (London: Hutchinson, 1984), p.25.

⁴⁵ Brian Gardner, *The Public Schools* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1973), p.101.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 101-102.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.102.

Contemporary public schools were frequently anarchic places. Drunkenness was rife at Rugby and elsewhere; in 1814 two boys, Fisher (the grandfather of Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury 1945-61) and Cook were in trouble for persistent drunkenness. Fisher was flogged, and Cook ran away from the school, the headmaster refusing to take him back again. J. H. Macaulay wrote home that the boys had got into a scrape ‘for drinking which has lately got into the school very much.’⁴⁸ Fighting was equally commonplace, not in the form of some momentary scuffle, but in gladiatorial contests designed to test the combatants’ powers of endurance of pain and fatigue.⁴⁹ Roundell Palmer records his ‘first and only pugilistic encounter with a Manx boy of about my own size, in which neither can be said to have come off victorious, for our backers made us go on till we were both fairly exhausted.’⁵⁰

The Rev. Lucas Collins, who was at Rugby in 1833, found that ‘there was a terrible amount of flogging.’⁵¹ Lord Selborne writes that he ‘had a taste of the birch-rod, compared to which the Winchester instrument of castigation was child’s play.’ Bullying was a feature of life at Rugby, although allegedly ‘the worst excesses of bullying, “buffeting”⁵², “chairing”⁵³, “clodding”⁵⁴, were put down in 1815.’⁵⁵ Nonetheless, ‘civilisation had not yet found its way into our great public schools. I was sensitive to bullying, and was (no doubt for that reason) a great deal bullied.’⁵⁶ Roundell’s father ‘thought it prudent’ to remove him from Rugby after two years; it

⁴⁸ Chandos, p. 133.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.139.

⁵⁰ MFP, vol. 1, pp. 76-77.

⁵¹ Rev. William Lucas Collins, *The Public Schools* (1867), cited in Chandos, p. 221.

⁵² ‘Running the gauntlet of two lines of the upper remove armed with knotted handkerchiefs up and down the great schoolroom’ Chandos, p. 255.

⁵³ ‘hoisting a boy in a chair and pinching him in the “most sensitive parts of his body”’ Chandos, p.255.

⁵⁴ ‘pelting (of novitiates in the fifth form) with hard balls of dried slime from a pool’ Chandos, p.255.

⁵⁵ Matthew Holbeache Bloxam, *Rugby, the School and its Neighbourhood* (1889, 1923 edition), cited in Chandos, p.255.

⁵⁶ MFP, vol. 1, p.77.

is surprising that even after his experiences there that Roundell wrote to his father begging him not to send him to Winchester, as ‘There is a dreadful system of fagging and bullying there, and ... I am just the kind of fellow to be individually subjected to it.’⁵⁷ Looking back, he felt that ‘it was certainly best for me to be removed, though I did not like it at the time.’ He thought that ‘my brother derived from Rugby more benefit than I did, and was fitter, morally and physically, to hold his own there. It might perhaps have been better for him to have remained there longer than he did ...’⁵⁸

What William made of Rugby can be seen from what he wrote to the Roman Catholic convert George Spencer⁵⁹ in 1840, when Spencer had raised with him the question of

the horrible state of English Public Schools & Universities in respect of morals: I said that I could find no simile to express the difference between my early education at home and the new world I found myself in at School better than that of a transplantation from Paradise to Pandemonium & yet I have reason to think that Rugby was considerably less vicious than some other Public Schools.⁶⁰

His ‘first letter after reaching school,’ as it is annotated, dated August 1823, reflected his shock:

Dear Papa and Mama,
I find my expectation more than realised for surely I never saw such a complication of wickedness since I was born. Out of 19 boys whom I know there are only two who have not in my presence done or said something which ought alone to be sufficient to prevent my associating with them ...⁶¹

⁵⁷ RP to W J P, May 1825, LP MS 1878, f. 3.

⁵⁸ MFP, vol. 1, p.76.

⁵⁹ The Hon. & Rev. George Spencer (1799-1864), son of the second Earl Spencer, educated at Eton & Trinity College, Cambridge, Rector of Brighton, and chaplain to Bishop Blomfield the Bishop of London, converted to Roman Catholicism 1830, became a Passionist priest and rector of St. Anne’s Retreat, Sutton, St. Helen’s, Lancashire, later Superior of the Passionist Order. CTR, p.255.

⁶⁰ BO MS v. 17 ff. 243-4.

⁶¹ WP to parents, Aug. 1823, LP MS 2457, f.1.

His next letter, written in September, gave examples, as well as indicating the extraordinary freedom that public schoolboys of the time enjoyed, despite the official rules:

Dear Mama,

There has been a great commotion here: two boys have been expelled one for refusing to do a punishment set him, the other for stealing money from my drawer ... I go out of bounds every day, for there is not one boy in the whole school who does not, sometimes to fish and sometimes to walk or get flowers and insects.⁶²

Their father wrote to Roundell in November

I am extremely concerned to hear of the repeated rows and expulsions that have taken place this half-year at Rugby in all of which the master seems to have conducted himself with great propriety while his scholars have equally disgraced themselves.

It is well for them that I am not their master. I think they might find my hand somewhat heavier than the Doctor's.⁶³

In the mention of the 'hand' that might be 'somewhat heavier than the Doctor's' is a possible indication of the 'correction' administered in the Mixbury schoolroom.

Roundell Palmer says that when letters home mentioned 'anything disagreeable', their father 'advised us to bear silently what we could not help, unless it were of a corrupting as well as a tormenting kind,' in which case they were to seek the help of 'the elder boy to whom we had been recommended,'⁶⁴ presumably the nephew of the family friend. He also urged them to remember what they had gone through so that when they were older and bigger, they would not do the same again to the younger boys. When faced with immorality of whatever kind they should hate the sin and love the sinner. In September 1824 he wrote to William

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ LP MS 1878, f.1.

⁶⁴ MFP, vol. 1, p.78.

... No doubt what you allude to is wrong, very wrong, and I pray God you may ever be sensible of it and ever able to keep yourselves from it. But ... when you see others speak and act as they ought not and shock you even perhaps by indecency and profaneness, while you cannot but hate the thing you should regard the person ... at least with pity and compassion.⁶⁵

It might be, after all, that they had reason for self-examination. In the same letter he wrote:

My Dear Willy ... remember also that no place will bring satisfaction with it unless you are liked as well as respected by your schoolfellows; therefore be kind and considerate and beware of a forward carriage or presumptuous manner, which are sure to make one disliked and often deprive us of the credit we otherwise deserve. But the remedy against this is a lowly opinion of oneself, therefore remember always what a poor helpless boy you yourself are, and have regard to the merit of another.⁶⁶

Most likely this was precautionary advice after an academic success that might have led to over-confidence. Mr. Moor, one of the masters, wrote to their father: 'Your elder son was removed a few weeks since into Mr. Birch's form, who speaks very well of him, though he complains that he takes it for granted that he understands things, without always ascertaining that fact with sufficient care.'⁶⁷

Both William and Roundell were made vividly aware by their father of the importance of not incurring debt. On one occasion William brought home some stuffed birds as presents for his sisters. On examination by his father he confessed that he had not yet paid for them, but proposed to do so the next term, as the tradesman concerned was willing to wait. His father despatched him with the birds back to Rugby ('a three days' journey, 'there and back') in the gig, to return them to the dealer. He also carried a letter to the headmaster, requesting him to instruct the

⁶⁵ LP MS 1894 f.2.

⁶⁶ LP MS 1894, f.1.

⁶⁷ Moor to W J P, 9 Dec. 1823, MFP, vol. 1, p.75.

Rugby tradesmen not to supply his sons, unless for ready money. ‘This,’ wrote Emily Palmer, ‘was a lesson the boys never forgot.’⁶⁸

There was no repetition, during William’s time at Rugby, of the riots of 1797, but there were certainly what he describes in letters to his father as ‘commotions.’ On 15 March 1825 he wrote to his father that somebody had thrown stones at the house of ‘the Supervisor or Master Exciseman’ whose house was just across the Dunchurch road from the school playground. The Supervisor, understandably furious, ‘collared the first Rugby boy ... who passed by, and with very gross language told him that he would break his head.’ The tables were turned however when the boy ‘roared out’ for help ‘to his schoolfellows in the Playground,’ who ‘immediately came and rescued the boy, and well licked the Supervisor, who went off muttering vengeance in which however the boys anticipated him, for the next evening they assembled to the number of 50 or 60 and utterly demolished all his windows!’ ‘I rather think,’ William remarked drily in closing, ‘the Supervisor will be attacked again.’⁶⁹ His father, in reply, having suggested appropriate punishment for the damage done, rather surprisingly took the side of the boys: ‘I do not pity the man the licking he got in the first instance at all,’ and thanked William very much for giving him an account of ‘these commotions.’⁷⁰ In June the same year there were other excitements: ‘the other day Wombwell’s caravan of wild beasts came here, and in it there was the great lion [Nero?] which is to fight 6 mastiffs on Warwick race course in August.’⁷¹

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.79.

⁶⁹ LP MS 2457, f. 6.

⁷⁰ LP MS 1894, f. 5.

⁷¹ WP to W J P, 15 June 1825, LP MS 2457, f. 9.

2. Magdalen

On 27 July 1826, at the age of 15, William Palmer matriculated at Magdalen College, Oxford. This was by any standards a remarkably young age at which to do so:⁷² ‘it was a disadvantage to him ... to be a boy among men,’ and that ‘at each step of the race, during his undergraduate course, he felt himself thrown back by having to work, as it were, against time.’⁷³ It was particularly galling when with ‘a powerful intellect, strong will, and ambitious temperament’ he knew himself to be ‘superior in natural abilities, and in the desire of distinction, to those around him.’⁷⁴ The practical effect of his comparative youth was to delay the success that he knew himself to be capable of; he was beaten for the Ireland Scholarship by ‘Shrewsbury men, well “crammed”, but not otherwise remarkable,’⁷⁵ and failed to win the Chancellor’s prize for Latin verse until just before he took his degree. However, he did win that prize with a poem on Tyre in 1830, taking a First class in Classics the same year; and in 1833 he won the University Latin Essay Prize. ‘He did everything very well, but nothing without the discipline of previous disappointments.’⁷⁶

Initially, Palmer swung between anxiety and intellectual self-confidence. When the Porter brought him a note reminding him of a lecture on Herodotus, he was ‘terribly frightened,’ indeed ‘in the utmost consternation,’ for he ‘did not know what sort of thing Ellerton’s lecture was.’ But after frantic study of ‘the History grammatical construction Chronology Geography and the like,’ leaving no time to

⁷² But not the youngest: Frederick Bulley, President of Magdalen after Dr. Routh, matriculated at age fourteen (‘a mere boy in a round jacket’) as Routh himself had done. Middleton, p. 83, quoting, ‘In Memoriam: the President of Magdalen College’, *The Oxford Magazine*, 21 Oct. 1885.

⁷³ MFP, vol. 1, p. 252.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

look at the text itself, he 'found it was "Montes parturiunt, nascetur ridiculus mus," for the whole lecture consisted of a shabby loose construe of a chapter of Herodotus apiece and as I had the luck to be on last I had plenty of time to look over my part'. His verdict on the lecture was scathing: he 'could not help thinking it a perfect farce and my hour completely thrown away - for I knew about as much when I came out as I did when I went in as not one question or observation of any sort passed during the whole time.'⁷⁷

His domestic arrangements, too, failed to come up to the mark: 'the Scouts are never stirring before a quarter past seven so that before that I am obliged to sit in my bedroom and their cleaning my sitting room occupies till at least 8 o' clock.' Worse, 'All my linen comes so damp from the laundress that I am obliged to air at my own fire every article I put on.'⁷⁸ There was however some light relief. In January 1827, 'during the vacation after Christmas ... a Dancing Master came to give us lessons, and amused us a good deal by the importance he attached to [his] art and the pomposity with which he harangued us on it.'⁷⁹

In 1829 he tried for the Ireland Scholarship but 'had the honour of being third, when two men of junior standing to myself, (though how much older it is needless to say) were first and second,' he wrote furiously to his father. 'I hope Roundell, at least, will be spared so much a mortification ... the whole of this next year ... I shall employ in working to wipe off some of my disgrace.' His frustration at being so much younger than his contemporaries, already hinted at, burst out: 'I will not recur to a sore subject, but ... this would never have happened if I had come to the University, at the same age that other men do. You cannot conceive how vexed I

⁷⁷ WP to W J P, 5 Nov. 1826, LP MS 2834, f. 1.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

am, nor how tormented with the congratulations! of my illiterate acquaintances.’⁸⁰ He even berated himself for having headaches and being so unwell during the papers he knew best and was most secure in that he ‘could do nothing, except what I should have been flogged for in the upper fourth at Rugby.’⁸¹

His father in reply confessed that his early entry to Oxford was a matter of financial necessity. Family expenses had already entailed making ‘some inroads more or less upon the capital’:

... it is clear ... that the earlier the period at which we may be relieved from the charges of maintenance and education for the older brothers, the freer will be our means of doing the same part for the younger. Hence the beneficial influence is apparent, which your early entrance at the University your conduct there, which is deserving of all praise, and your prospects, may have upon those who are to follow.⁸²

He reassured him:

You have stood forward even with the very first, and you are not disgraced. Nay, you have pressed them hard who had every advantage over you. What patient and persevering industry may achieve, we have still to see. But no matter. I care not for this crown: Yet you will certainly attain.⁸³

He felt it necessary to add a cautionary note, about some ‘fears’ which may be ‘ridiculous’: ‘Do not neglect society - do not grow formal and precise in speech; but be cheerful and easy and confident without sauciness or presumption.’ To some Palmer could appear aloof and ‘formal.’ The writer⁸⁴ of a waggish and anonymous article in *The Rock* related that he

occupied in my undergraduate days rooms almost close to those of Mr. Palmer ... he was very studious, very dry, and very cold. I do not think I ever heard him laugh! One morning I was startled by a merry peal from Magdalen tower at an unwonted time, and on asking “the reason why”, was informed

⁷⁹ LP MS 2457, f.15.

⁸⁰ WP to W J P, 1829 (undated, probably Nov.), LP MS 2834, f. 3.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² W J P to WP, 18 Nov. 1829; LP MS 2834, f. 5.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ In MAG MS 827 (ii) (unfoliated).

that “Mr. Palmer had won the Chancellor’s Prize for Latin verse”, so I hastened to congratulate, and found him as happy as his impassive nature would permit. This was repeated next year⁸⁵ when the prize for the best Latin essay was adjudged to him.⁸⁶

There were those who were more unsympathetic. His friend Edward Whately⁸⁷ asked teasingly: ‘You want to know the V-P’s private opinion of you?’ and after some prevarication described a meeting with the Vice-President at Whately’s house, at which the Vice-President affected, when asked, not to know who Palmer was: ‘Palmer - Palmer - do you mean a young man who has won a prize or something of that sort?’ Whately retorted that not only had he got ‘some prize but that by his degree he had established a reputation which reached beyond the walls of his college and that he might be known by name at least to one of its officers, for I was somewhat nettled at this commonplace affectation.’ The Vice-President then admitted, ‘as if it was extorted from him,’ that he did know Palmer. ‘ “He is no favourite of yours?” “No, nor of anybody else.”’ Whately suggested that he was mistaken, told him ‘that you were a favourite of mine,’ and pressed him to explain his remark:

He then proceeded to say that an overweening confidence in your own abilities produced an insufferable conceit which made you despise the acquirements of everybody else. That to the Tutors etc. of your College in particular you used a most contemptuous manner, and the care and advice they were willing to bestow, you rejected or perhaps ridiculed.

He went on to describe an occasion on which Palmer allegedly cut short a tutor’s recommendation to read Livy with the languid observation that ““One takes up Livy, sir, as a post-chaise companion but you cannot expect to see him on my study

⁸⁵ In fact Palmer won the Latin essay prize three years later, in 1833.

⁸⁶ ROM MS 827 (ii).

⁸⁷ Edward Whateley (post Pyddoke) (1808-1894), Educ. Rugby School, adm. Pens. at Trinity Coll. Cambridge 1826, MA 1843. Adm. Lincoln’s Inn 1832, migrated to the Inner Temple, 1835. Called to Bar Nov. 1835. Ordained deacon 1843, priest 1846. Curate of Badgeworth & Shurdington, Gloucs.,

table.”⁸⁸ Whately said that he expressed his surprise at this, and the stories like it that followed. Palmer could be blunt in his assessment of what he perceived as second-rate (‘a shabby loose construe,’ for example) but this sort of studied insolence was not in his style. It is certainly conceivable, however, that his confidence in his very evident ability may have given others the impression of conceit - others who knew they could not match him, perhaps. It is unlikely that the President of Magdalen, Dr. Routh⁸⁹, could have been fond of Palmer had Palmer been as conceited and contemptuous as the Vice-President allegedly thought him.

As a corrective to the view of Palmer as remote and ‘cold’ there is the testimony of his brother to the close friendships he had, most notably with Charles Wordsworth of Christ Church⁹⁰ and Thomas Legh Claughton⁹¹ (‘the glory of Rugby, and of my own College’⁹²). Palmer’s diary describes a wider circle, ‘the Club’: ‘dined with Wordsworth at the Club till 12 (present W’worth, Hamilton, Claughton, Twiss, Dudding, Grant, Walker, Hillyard, Wilson).’⁹³ The ‘Club’ in question appears to have been ‘the Bachelors’ Club’, referred to more than once with nostalgia by Claughton in his letters to Palmer after leaving Oxford: ‘I could not have remained in

1843-7. Took the name of Pyddoke, 1847. Curate of Bisley 1847-55 & 1857-75. SPG Chaplain to the forces in the Crimea, 1855-6. m. Oct. 1862. AC p. 421.

⁸⁸ Edward Whately to WP, 21 Nov. 1831, LP MSS 2457, ff. 25-6, and 2837, ff. 136-7.

⁸⁹ Martin Joseph Routh (1755-1854), matriculated at Queens College Oxford May 1770, age 14, demy of Magdalen College 1771-5, MA 1776, ordained deacon 1777, Proctor 1785, BD 1786, DD 1791, Bursar 1786, President 1791-1854, ordained priest 1810 on institution as Rector of Tilehurst, nr. Reading, internationally renowned classical and patristic scholar. DNB.

⁹⁰ Charles Wordsworth (1806-1892), of Christ Church Oxford, matriculated 8 July 1825, MA 1832, DCL 1853, DD of Edinburgh and St. Andrews 1884, Master of Winchester College 1835-45, Warden of Trinity College Glenalmond 1847-54, Bishop of St. Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane 1853. AO, p. 1609.

⁹¹ Thomas Legh Claughton (1808-1892), Professor of Poetry at Oxford 1852-58, ordained 1834, Bishop of Rochester 1867, first Bishop of St. Albans, 1877. DNB.

⁹² MFP, vol. 1, p.115. ‘Roundell Palmer matriculated as a commoner of Christ Church, Oxford, in May 1830, but was elected a scholar of Trinity College almost immediately afterwards.’ (MID, p.128.) By ‘my own College’ he therefore means Trinity.

⁹³ Entry 26 Nov. 1831, LP MS 2458, f. 3.

Oxford “ultimus Romanorum”... Romanorum signifying here the Bachelors’ Club,’⁹⁴ and ‘I do not repent of having left Oxford - only excepting those desolate moments when I sigh for the jolly Bachelors - for the clerical Wordsworth, for the philosophical Palmer, for the vivacious Jeffreys - even for the garrulous Twiss!’⁹⁵

William Palmer senior wrote to Roundell of these friendships that ‘It has often been the fashion to say, that the days spent at college were the happiest of a man’s life; and I feel assured the friendships you have both formed will make you and William consider it so,’ and elsewhere that ‘nothing ... gives me more satisfaction than the strict and warm friendship that subsists between these young men.’⁹⁶

Claughton, who according to Roundell Palmer, ‘had a great charm of countenance and manner, and a disposition which nobody could help loving ... a quick sense of humour, and an inexhaustible command of playful irony, which only enhanced his affectionateness.’⁹⁷ This appears in his letters to Palmer, not least in his penchant for peculiar nicknames. He urged Palmer in July 1833, ‘Do not delay to write to me, my dear Loo Choo - on any account’, and in November that year ‘I hear you Loo-Chooed them a little.’ Perhaps at a dinner of the Bachelors’ Club the ‘philosophical Palmer’ had alluded pompously to the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu, and this was Claughton’s way of teasing him about it. In 1835, apropos of a projected visit by Palmer to Ireland, where Claughton was tutoring the children of Lord and Lady Ely, he wrote (rather startlingly): ‘What shall I say of you, who fall in love with Children of 4 years old - you setter at nought of all ordinary rules and proprieties, you

⁹⁴ T L C to WP, 23 July 1833 LP MS 2837, f. 23.

⁹⁵ T L C to WP, 11 Dec. 1833, LP MS 2837, f. 28.

⁹⁶ MFP, vol. 1, p.119.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 120-121.

inexplicable old Sphinx - What are you coming into this horrid country for at Easter? To floor some Jesuits?’⁹⁸ and elsewhere, apropos of nothing in particular, ‘for it is to be allowed that you are a most profound old Monster’⁹⁹ before going on to speak of receiving a letter from an Oxford friend of Roundell’s, John Thomas: ‘He told me that you and Roundell were two excellent fellows - but ascribed to you this singular superiority - that you were great fun into the bargain. I hope you have had no more gout, Old Gentleman.’¹⁰⁰ He rebutted Palmer’s accusation of ‘profligate facility’ in passing a student - ‘a very serious accusation, coming from some people - but from you I don’t mind it - because you are a most tyrannical old monster.’¹⁰¹ Sometimes nicknames were forsworn in favour of absurd ‘Franglais’: ‘Dites-moi, je vous prie, que faites vous avec vous même? Combien de fois avez vous diné chez le Docteur Pusey?’¹⁰² Palmer was no bloodless, dusty academic. He was capable of inspiring and reciprocating friendship, to the extent of being described as ‘great fun’. His capacity for extreme seriousness (which Claughton’s teasing probably reflects, to some degree) was the other side of this coin; but one side of his character did not exclude the other.

His father admitted that he hoped Palmer would follow him into the Church: ‘It is indeed my desire and my prayer that you may be found worthy of the Ministry. But things may not appear to you as they appear to me ... ’¹⁰³ Palmer responded ‘What you seem to wish ... that I should not even think of Politics ... is impossible -

⁹⁸ T L C to WP, 5 March 1835, LP MS 2837, f. 36.

⁹⁹ T L C to WP, 1 Nov. 1838, LP MS 2837, f. 46.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ T L C to WP, 21 Nov. 1838, Ibid., f. 48.

¹⁰² T L C to WP, 19 April 1837, Ibid., f. 40.

¹⁰³ W J P to WP, 18 Nov. 1829, LP MS 2834, f. 6.

I should lose every spur to exertion every hope of success by exertion - and should be like a ship without any destination, a labourer without an object.’¹⁰⁴

Despite this surprising declaration he must, by 1831, have raised again the question of ordination with his father, who, possibly as a ploy to stimulate his son’s decision, refused to be drawn:

You no longer possess that elastic mind, which might receive any impression from me and I cannot, therefore, choose your profession. I dare not to choose for you the Church as a profession, unless ... you choose it for yourself. If that may not be, I see no alternative but the Law.¹⁰⁵

In December Palmer confessed ‘that, though I feel the superiority of the Church, I never felt any preference for the species of life which a clergyman is obliged to lead.’¹⁰⁶ Nine days later the Church was not ruled out, although Medicine and the Law were: ‘Of Law or Physic I do not even dream, but if circumstances do in any way drive I would rather be driven anywhither than into the Church, though perhaps I had rather choose the Church than any thing else.’¹⁰⁷ The series of underlinings may indicate a consciousness on Palmer’s part of pressure on him to choose a profession. In the same letter he remarked ‘I feel that I am unfit to decide for myself and hope for advice from you and direction from above.’

¹⁰⁴ WP to W J P (undated), Ibid., f. 8.

¹⁰⁵ W J P to WP, 11 Nov. 1831, LP MS 1894, f. 13.

¹⁰⁶ WP to W J P, 9 Dec. 1831, Ibid., f. 14.

¹⁰⁷ WP to W J P, 18 Dec. 1831, LP MS 2834, f. 17.

CHAPTER 2

France and Durham

On 9 December 1831, a prospectus had appeared for ‘The University of Durham, Durham College’, which it was intended should open in October 1832. One of the proposed posts was ‘Junior Tutor and Censor’. The first Warden of Durham, Archdeacon Thorp,¹⁰⁸ wrote to Palmer’s grandfather, the Reverend W. D. Roundell: ‘I attended the Chapter on Saturday to put down Mr ... Palmer’s name as a Candidate for the Junior Tutorship.’¹⁰⁹

Palmer’s father dismissed other possibilities: ‘Would you be a man of the world, a diplomatist? I think not. Would you make letters a profession? I advise it not’¹¹⁰ (wise advice, given the struggle Palmer had to make a living as a historical writer during the last twenty-four years of his life). On the other hand ‘the Durham appointment, if they will have you, promises ... to one of your standing who does not object to work, a year or two of useful pastime’ in particular because

... we (of the Church I mean) stand in need of all the learning and all the talent we can enlist ... nor need you fear ... the least necessity or inducement to confine your energies hereafter to the care of a parish, or even accept of such a cure.¹¹¹

He still considered that

If you do not ultimately take Orders, the Law must be your lot ... I do not agree ... that the Durham appointment is incompatible with the future profession of the Law. There is one branch of the Law to eminence in which

¹⁰⁸ Charles Thorp (1783-1862), of University College Oxford, matriculated 10 December 1799, fellow & tutor 1803, MA 1806, BD 1822, DD 1835, Rector of Ryton 1807, Archdeacon of Durham 1831. ‘A man of singular disinterestedness and liberality.’ DNB.

¹⁰⁹ LP MS 2837, f.127.

¹¹⁰ W J P to WP, Jan. / Feb. 1832, LP MS 1894, f. 15.

¹¹¹ W J P to WP, 19 March 1832, LP MS 2834, f. 22.

some ten or twelve years of active employment in a University has been no impediment and may be none again.

Strangely, he even appears to have begun to favour his son's idea of a political career:

I think there are other circumstances which might lead you to consider the Commons as more eligible in your case than the Inns of Court - And with such a view as this a previous connexion with a University and with a Church especially such a Church as Durham promises much advantage ... ¹¹²

This last observation seems rather at odds with his earlier pronouncement that

'Nothing ... that is of this world is, or ought to be considered as separate, distinct, opposed to the service of God; - except worldly ambition ... '¹¹³ He also encouraged him: '... have more confidence in yourself: nothing more is wanting. The power is in you.'¹¹⁴

Meanwhile his son entertained himself by compiling lists in his diary:

Pack up making a list of Clothes: Linen etc. as follows:

12 Shirts	4 satin stocks
11 pr cotton stockings	1 silk waistcoat
7 silk pocket handkerchiefs	2 cambric pocket handkerchiefs
6 black silk neckcloths	1 Black cloth waistcoat
3 coloured ditto	1 Black coat
6 pair calico drawers	1 Green ditto
4 buff waistcoats	1 Black frock
3 cotton neckcloths	1 pair buff trousers
4 cotton night caps	1 pair black trousers
1 Black coat	1 pair Plaid Trousers
1 Invisible Green do	2 pair washleather gloves
1 pair rough trousers	7 pair silk socks
1 Black waistcoat	3 pair white gloves
1 Flannel dressing gown	3 pair white gloves
	1 Petersham. ¹¹⁵

¹¹² Ibid., f. 26.

¹¹³ W J P to WP, 18 Nov 1829, Ibid., f. 5.

¹¹⁴ W J P to WP, 26 Jun 1832, Ibid., f. 30.

¹¹⁵ LP MS 2458, Diary from Nov. 1831- Jun. 1832. A 'Petersham' was a heavy overcoat.

Another was no doubt attributable to the voyage of his brother Henry, a midshipman in the naval service of the East India Company, to India and China in 1832:

Write out list of things that may be procured from China - or India	
+ Betel-nut toothpowder	White Nankin trowsers
+ Nankin trowsers	China Duck Trowsers
White silk Trowsers	White silk P. handkerchiefs
Thin shoes	Set of chess men
+ Ricepaper paintings	Backgammon board
Bows & arrows	Corals & shells
Manila hats	Edible swallow nests
Wafer stamps	Mother of pearl pens or ivory
Writing desks. ¹¹⁶	

It is unclear why Palmer supposed 'bows and arrows' to be peculiar to 'China - or India,' or whether he seriously intended to sit down, on his brother's return, dressed perhaps in white Nankin 'trowsers' and a Manila hat, to a meal of edible swallow nests. Perhaps it was more the sort of exercise of the imagination that Palmer later seems to have found it satisfying to make in the course of his theological controversies - as in devising whole services for the reconciliation of schismatics to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, or in drafting hypothetical letters to the Archbishop of Canterbury for Princess Galitsin.

In 1832 he was making resolutions. The first, 'Resolve to write in a flashy style next year and learn some of Cicero's orations by heart,'¹¹⁷ so far as we know came to nothing. However, he also recorded that he was seeking information about a French master 'the first indication ... of a wish or plan for going abroad.' He also

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Entry 24 Jun 1832, LP MS 2460.

explained the logic that led him, as one who had until now been concerned with the study of Classics, to form:

an intention of specially cultivating acquaintance with the clergy whether Protestant or Catholic, which I took up while reading an article, I think, on Boswell's Life of Johnson in the Quarterly. Dr. J. gave Boswell this advice as the Clergy, he said, commonly think more about subjects of importance and know more about them than the Laity. And I generalising from the few opportunities I had had of observing English Squires and Parsons in conversation together, fancied that I had come to the same conclusion.¹¹⁸

To Charles Wordsworth he described how he had 'been more engaged with hunting antediluvian Elephants & excavating gravel-pits than with my books.'¹¹⁹ He was also reaping the rewards of his undergraduate achievements. In July 1833 he was 'admitted ... actual Fellow of Magdalen, and attended as such the College Meeting afterwards'¹²⁰. On 2 October there were 'letters from Durham announcing my appointment to the Junior Tutorship and I resolve to accept it, and write the next day to the Warden and to RP.'¹²¹

Palmer moved up to Durham on 22 October 1833, and lodged 'at first for a few days in the house of the Archdeacon Prebendary Mr. Thorp Warden of the new University, and afterwards in Mr. Gisburne's house in the College.' Archdeacon Thorp, whom Palmer noted 'holds also the living of Ryton in Northumberland and is one of the Crewe Trustees,'¹²² was the object of Roundell's suspicion:

In spite of this smoothness of manner and other pleasing qualities, every one who has had experience of the reverend Archdeacon finishes his encomium upon them with a - "but" - ... so you must not be off your guard - particularly after the experience we have had of him ourselves.¹²³

¹¹⁸ LP MS 2457, ff. 26-27.

¹¹⁹ WP to C W, (undated), LP MS 1824, f. 69. The letter mentions the prospect of going to Durham, and must therefore have been written in 1833.

¹²⁰ Entry 26 July 1833, LP MS 2457, f. 33.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, f. 47.

¹²² *Ibid.*, f. 56.

¹²³ RP to WP, 20 Nov. 1833, LP MS 2836, f. 205.

Palmer's first impressions of Durham organisation were mixed: 'On my arrival I found no such preparations made as I expected; no rooms ready for tutors, no houses for Professors, no places for Lectores, in short nothing.'¹²⁴ The college was initially housed on Palace Green in a building known 'anciently' as 'Archdeacon's Inn', which had been made into two houses. These were bought and eventually made into one building, which later became Bishop Cosin's Hall, and later again University House: 'it was not very large, and some of the undergraduates had to be lodged in houses round about.'¹²⁵ Palmer found that 'There were a good many workmen employed in separating three private houses which belong to the Chapter into as many minute sections as possible just large enough to hold a huge clumsy French bed and a chest of drawers - each of the students has one of these and no sitting room!' His own position was not much better: 'I am to have a house to myself in time: this sounds very fine, doesn't it? But I can tell you that you are a good deal better off in your rooms in Trinity. This house is a sort of cottage consisting of four rooms - each of which is a most curious shape ... ' He nonetheless concluded: 'My opinion of the whole is good'.¹²⁶

It would seem that he gave a less favourable account to his friend Thomas Legh Cloughton, who responded sympathetically:

I must say, my dear Palmer, I cannot forgive the Durhamites their behaviour to you - tho' there is something in what you say of your age. Nobody could imagine that such a stiff steady old Cock as you are, covered with laurels, could be found of one and twenty ... That is your time of life, is it not? But however you are quite wise to bury all this in oblivion, and shew them what a fine animal you are.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ WP to RP, 5 Nov. 1833, LP MS 1878, f. 164.

¹²⁵ C. E. Whiting, *The University of Durham* (London: The Sheldon Press, 1932) p.57.

¹²⁶ WP to RP, 5 Nov. 1833, LP MS 1878, f. 164.

¹²⁷ T L C to WP, 7 Nov. 1833, LP MS 2837, f. 25.

Claughton wrote again in December, perhaps influenced by his own experiences tutoring, with the brittle comment that: ‘The backwardness of the boys must be a great bore - one’s soul does not expand in drumming rudiments into their dense little craniums.’¹²⁸

The rudiments that Palmer was set to drum into the craniums of the new students were decided upon at a Council at the Warden’s held on 19 January, 1834. It was first put to the Council by the Warden that ‘a daily ch[apter] of Greek Text [was] to be read by all the Students as a religious exercise’. A struggle then seems to have taken place between Palmer and T. W. Peile,¹²⁹ a Senior Fellow of Durham, and later Headmaster of Repton, as to who should teach what to whom. ‘Peile proposed that he should lecture the Upper Division in Horace - I the Lower in Xenophon & Virgil ... I proposed that I should lecture the Upper in Aeschylus Agamemnon & Peile in Horace and the lower Division should have Xenophon’s Apologia or Memorabilia and Virgil.’ Eventually it was ‘agreed that Peile should lecture in Horace & Xenophon’s Anabasis, I in Aeschylus ... and Virgil.’

The lowering of standards in the University system in the interests of business is no modern phenomenon. Palmer noted the Warden’s resolution to encourage admission at 15, and worse, ‘to admit bad (vile) scholars saying he will examine them himself - but at the same time he admits the danger of our turning a poor school from the changes and general expense being lower than that even of North-Country schools.’¹³⁰ Claughton’s comment about backwardness appears to have been

¹²⁸ T L C to WP, 11 Dec. 1833, *Ibid.*, f. 28.

¹²⁹ Thomas Williamson Peile (1806-1882), educated at Shrewsbury & Trinity College Cambridge, fellow 1829, MA 1831, DD 1843, appointed headmaster Liverpool collegiate school & ordained, 1829, tutor at Durham 1834, Headmaster of Repton 1841-54, Vicar of Luton 1857, Vicar of St. Paul’s, South Hampstead, 1860-73. DNB.

¹³⁰ Entry 21 Jan. 1834, BO MS v.52, f. 21.

justified; two days later Palmer noted an agreement with Peile 'to admit no more incapables whatever.'¹³¹

There were a number of issues preoccupying the staff in the early days of Durham. One was its constitutional status, as it began as both University and College, after the model of Trinity College, Dublin, and was effectively governed by the Dean and Chapter of the cathedral. Palmer's efforts to resolve this issue were frustrated by the Warden's foot-dragging. On 21 April he spoke to the Warden about the necessity of 'printed or at least accessible Statutes as well for the details of discipline as for the course of Study & manner of examination and the constitution of the college & University.'¹³² On 22 and 23 May there were two Senate meetings, at which everybody agreed that it was essential that the Convocation of the University should have a veto on all legislation affecting the University, so that there was at least parity between the powers of the Convocation and the Bishop and the Dean and Chapter. Everybody, that is, apart from the Warden. 'So the Warden,' wrote Palmer in irritation, 'after having helped me by his casting vote to reproduce all the features of a University in detail has no intention of assisting me nor any of us to give life and independence to the dead image of a University so created.' The result was to make Durham 'a university which should be in truth the mere temporary creation of the Dean & Chapter of Durham & liable to be remade and remade and have all its statutes changed from time to time by the same Dean & Chapter.'¹³³

When Palmer returned from a journey to France in October things seemed little better. 'Peile and Jenkyns ... were ... in despair of seeing any constitution & thought matters had retrograded. It seems that several rows took place at the end of

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, f. 25.

¹³² Entry 7 April 1834, BO MS v. 48 [unnumbered].

Lent Term ... ' although progress had been made to the extent of the Chapter having 'passed Provisional Statutes recognising the principle of the double system of a University & College.'¹³⁴ A week later he noted:

We all talk of nothing but development at present. The Warden said last night that the Dean and Chapter and the Warden were the University¹³⁵ ... Jenkyns ... "means to tell the Warden a little of his mind" Mr. Greenwood thinks we are already a University - because "nothing is necessary to the idea of a University".. even the Warden laughed at this defence.¹³⁶

By November the Warden, slippery though he was, was coming under pressure:

The Warden is regularly at bay for he can find nobody to speak of the University as founded and the Chapter are all beginning to find that something must be done - but nobody knows what - it is impossible to say what the Warden's thoughts are upon the subject - his mind seems to be something like a quicksand.

Whoever heard of a University governed by a Warden ... or of tutors and Professors members at once of a University and a College in one? ¹³⁷

No wonder that Palmer wrote to Roundell: ' ... pray inquire and let me know what the rule is at Magdalen with respect to taking orders as a Fellow - and also what indulgence is customary as to the time.'¹³⁸ The matter was at last resolved by a set of statutes drawn up by one of the prebendaries, Dr. Smith, being put before the Chapter on 21 November 1834, and passed.¹³⁹ There was likewise a struggle to obtain recognition of the degrees of the new university, but by January 1834 Palmer could write that

The 2 Archbishops of Canterbury & York have distinctly recognised the BA degrees of the University of Durham as carrying all the privileges of an Oxford or a Cambridge degree - the Bishop of London also, and their

¹³³ LP MS 2457, f. 88.

¹³⁴ Entry 20 Oct. 1834, BO MS v.48.

¹³⁵ Entry 27 Oct. 1834, , Ibid. [Also in LP MS 2457, f. 84.]

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ WP to RP, 10 Nov. 1834, LP MS 1878, f. 170.

¹³⁸ WP to RP, 26 Nov. 1834, Ibid., f. 171.

¹³⁹ Whiting, p. 57.

Lordships will receive the testimonial of the Divinity Professor from Candidates for Orders quite as freely as that of Dr. Barton of Oxford.¹⁴⁰

Of more immediate concern to Palmer was the question of discipline. Palmer had had to institute a system of 'sconcing' or fining in Hall 'In consequence of some rude noises in Hall yesterday during dinner.' 'Two Seniors' were made responsible to the Censors, of whom Palmer was one, for 'any unseemly noise, or any breach of gentlemanly manners & decorum ... perceived by the High Table.'¹⁴¹ In addition 'the Butler wishes to know what things and Persons are to be permitted to enter the gates (in consequence of a noisy party last night)' - very likely those responsible for the rude noises earlier in Hall. By 'things' the Butler perhaps referred to musical instruments rather than drunken undergraduates: 'Put up a notice that no Key Bugle or other loud instrument be played in College except between the hours of 2 & 4 (3 & 5 in Winter).'¹⁴² A confrontation between Palmer and a freshman called Curwen ('Mr. Curwen declined giving me the names of his friends') led to the observation that

'Some regulations are wanting also with respect to hours of Parties, and continuance of strangers in college after the gates are locked.'¹⁴³ Curwen's Durham career appears to have been enjoyable but short. Palmer noted in his journal 'Curwen left much in debt'.¹⁴⁴

His approaches to the Warden for statutes dealing with discipline amongst other questions had been accompanied by the reminder that 'every Freshman on being matriculated at Oxford received a Book of the Statutes which he promised to

¹⁴⁰ Entry 19 Jan. 1834, BO MS v.52, f. 22.

¹⁴¹ Entry 30 April 1834, BO MS v. 48.

¹⁴² Entry 15 May 1834, Ibid.

¹⁴³ Entry 24 April 1834, Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Entry 20 Oct. 1834, Ibid.

obey.’ The reaction was predictably unhelpful. ‘Yes - & great Humbug - for nobody reads them.’¹⁴⁵

In June Palmer was again having to draw attention to the effects of the haphazard University discipline: ‘During the last week there has been no Watchman - The gate has sometimes been open, sometimes the men have got over the gate. There was a drunken rowing Party on the river a few nights ago.’¹⁴⁶ The struggle to contain drunken undergraduates had probably led to the request that followed:

Will the Warden impress on the Bp & Chapter the extreme necessity of shutting up the green & the ease with which it might be done ... by having a handsome iron railing from M. Hurrel’s [?] house to the passage into the Walks? There might be two gates in it to which certain persons might have keys.¹⁴⁷

The railing was one of a number of proposals by Palmer to improve or preserve parts of the Peninsula, by for example ‘raising a fund to inclose University Walks,’ and improving ‘the Paths on the Bank before they are inclosed’. He was keen for the new University to seize the chance to consolidate its physical position, by hastening ‘the appropriation of the Almshouses’ and ‘building a Porters Lodge across Queen Street.’¹⁴⁸

The question of gates and hours had become a pressing one. The presence of students had created a stir in the town, and the fascination was mutual:

The people are quite wild, the ladies especially about the gown. There being few young men in Durham, they declare that they will begin to dance at one in the day if necessary; but Academical beaux they will have! On the other hand the students are no less enchanted.¹⁴⁹

A 9 o’clock curfew, imposed in February 1834, was consequently a relief to ‘the young gentlemen of the town,’ who were ‘very glad of the new regulations as the

¹⁴⁵ Entry 27 April 1834, *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ Entry ‘June 1834 ?’, *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

ladies would scarcely notice them in the presence of the student ...¹⁵⁰ The students themselves were moved to protest, in the person of 'Mr. Siddons ... grandson of the great actress,' that 'it would be better to let the students go into society in the town than that they should sit and drink all night, as they did last Term.'¹⁵¹ As it was 'they by common consent do nothing but sit & talk over the probable persons present, dresses, partners &c on the nights of those parties to which they cannot go!!!!'¹⁵² The students' keenness to make the acquaintance of the local females sometimes took a rather disturbing form. Some of the undergraduates were reported to Palmer as having been seen 'following women of the town in the streets'.¹⁵³ Other amusements were of a robust kind: 'There is boxing and wrestling with two or three fiddlers, Watson, Stephenson and Moorhouse Thompson,'¹⁵⁴ while student eccentricity in 1834 was potentially lethal: 'Maddison is looked upon as mad, and has madness in his family - He threatened to shoot Wright and actually cocked his pistol the other day - he walks six miles every week to get his linen washed a penny cheaper ...'¹⁵⁵

Palmer's concern over the 'Walks' indicates that he was alive to the beauty of Durham and the countryside around it. In April 1834 he 'launched a skiff which I had procured from Oxford on the Wear; and kept it moored at the foot of the Old Mill now the Reading Room and Museum in the Walks.'¹⁵⁶ He told Christopher Wordsworth 'If you have never spent any time here - you will be surprised to hear

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Entry 5 Feb. 1834, LP MS 2457, f.60.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Entry 5 Feb. 1834, BO MS v. 52 f.34.

¹⁵³ LP MS 2457, f.62.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., f.60.

¹⁵⁵ BO MS v. 52 f.34.

¹⁵⁶ Entry 29 April 1834, LP MS 2457, f.88

that no place, I should think in England has more interesting walks in the environs - besides "the Banks" which are well known ...¹⁵⁷

His father and brother both encouraged him to look on the positive side, rather than on the frustrations, of life at Durham. 'Your account of the state of things at Durham leads me to expect that you will go on pretty smoothly,' wrote Roundell,¹⁵⁸ and his father 'You seem likely to be well provided where you may do good for some years to come, and that with leisure enough to cultivate your friends and the improvement of your own mind and the advancement of your future sphere of action.'¹⁵⁹ But as early as March 1834 Palmer had begun to chafe at his life as a Durham Tutor. 'You seem to use' wrote his father 'rather strong expressions with regard to the occupation of your time - "perfect slavery" - "great nuisance" - but you do well to consider the length of the vacations also.'¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ WP to C W, May 1835, LP MS 2141, f.9.

¹⁵⁸ RP to WP 20 Nov. 1833, LP MS 2836, f. 205.

¹⁵⁹ W J P to WP, 19 / 22 Nov. 1832, LP MS 2834, f.42.

¹⁶⁰ W J P to WP, 5 March 1834, Ibid., f.50.

1. Travels and Religious Disputation in France.

It was astute of Palmer's father to highlight the advantages of long vacations, for Palmer had formed the habit of spending the long summer holidays in France. His first taste of life abroad was in August 1833, when he 'crossed from Southampton to Havre' with his cousins. The novelty of being in a foreign country made a dramatic impression on him. It was

as if we had dropped or disembarked into another world. Not only was there on all sides the sound of a strange language of which I could not make out a word, but what met the eye, vehicles, dresses, everything in short was more or less different from what we had been used to in England.¹⁶¹

His father had taken pains to ensure that so far as possible his son's churchgoing at least should remain exactly the same abroad as in England. It had been agreed that the natural choice, if available, should be 'a service of our own ... i.e. an English chaplain,' but the alternative was to be 'the Protestant Church for the prayers or ordinary worship, but not perhaps ... the Communion as their Pastors [sic] were not episcopally ordained.'¹⁶² This was in accordance with Palmer's disposition 'to favour the Foreign Protestant'; but his 'prejudices against the Foreign Churches' were soon 'reversed by my personal acquaintance with both.'¹⁶³ From a bookstall in the Place de la Pucelle Palmer purchased three Catholic books, a 'Parisien' (i.e. a Missal of the local use), "L'Ange Conducteur", and a one volume History of the Church. 'I underlined everything "new or contrary to my own Anglicanism".'¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ LP MS 2457, f. 35f.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Conversation with a Mr. O' Ryan in 1838, LP MS 2818, f.18.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

He was in France again the following year from 3 July to 19 September, accompanied by Charles Wordsworth.¹⁶⁵ According to Palmer's journal, he again bought a History of the Church, in which he 'afterwards underlined some statements, e.g. that in the Council of the Apostles at Jerusalem S. Peter presided.'¹⁶⁶ In Paris he saw two people who were to play significant parts in his life in the 1840s. The first was Benjamin Harrison,¹⁶⁷ shortly to be engaged in controversy in the columns of *L'Univers* with the abbé Jager,¹⁶⁸ and later chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Howley.¹⁶⁹ Harrison had come to Paris 'to learn Arabic under a pupil of De Sacy'. The second was 'Bp. Luscombe, who is Chaplain to our Embassy,'¹⁷⁰ with whom he had dined in England in April of 1834.¹⁷¹ In Paris Palmer attended the Comic Opera and found the English an occasion for French hilarity: 'The jest of the evening was a Milord Anglais who made false concords & talked of coaches, to the great amusement of the Company.'¹⁷² This was by no means necessarily affectionate laughter. Palmer recorded a conversation with his French hosts about English boorishness and xenophobia:

They said to me the English cannot laugh like the French. They are less cheerful, and freeze society instead of enlivening it. The Abp has often heard himself called in London and elsewhere in England "French dog" and "d...d Frenchman"; and when he spoke English imperfectly, he was often laughed at

¹⁶⁵ FT, p. 2.

¹⁶⁶ LP MS 2814, f. 1.

¹⁶⁷ Benjamin Harrison (1808-1887), matriculated at Christ Church Oxford 1826, BA 1830, wrote several of the 'Tracts for the Times,' domestic chaplain to Archbishop Howley 1838-48, Canon of Canterbury and Archdeacon of Maidstone, 1845-1887. DNB.

¹⁶⁸ The abbé Jean-Nicolas Jager (1790-1868), schoolmaster, army chaplain, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris. He engaged in a controversial correspondence with Benjamin Harrison and then with Newman in '*L'Univers*' August 1834 - March 1835. Louis Allen, *John Henry Newman & the Abbé Jager* (London: OUP, 1975), pp. 4 ff., 184.

¹⁶⁹ William Howley (1766-1848), matriculated at New College Oxford 1783, Canon of Christ Church 1804, Regius Professor of Divinity 1809, Bishop of London October 1803, Archbishop of Canterbury July 1828. DNB.

¹⁷⁰ Michael Henry Thornhill Luscombe (1776-1846), of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, Master of the East India Company's school at Hertford, 1806-1819, consecrated to a continental bishopric by bishops of the Scottish episcopal church 20 March 1825, chaplain at Paris the same year. DNB.

¹⁷¹ LP MS 2457, f. 87.

¹⁷² BO MS v.57 (travel diary) part I, f.44.

most insultingly, even by people of the higher classes, a thing which would never happen to an Englishman in France.¹⁷³

From Paris, Palmer went to Tours, where he agreed to live with a French priest, the abbé Robert,¹⁷⁴ ‘en pension paying 130 francs a month.’¹⁷⁵ Lord Selborne describes the abbé as a man ‘of much *bonhomie* and simplicity, but not otherwise remarkable,’¹⁷⁶ although he had been a Professor at the College Royal for a year, ‘when he lost his place by refusing to take the oath to Louis Phillipe.’¹⁷⁷ Palmer ‘was installed with M. Robert’ and his sister on 4 August. Palmer’s theory of the Church, which made it simply a question ‘of history and of human reason’ as to the ‘true opinion about the definition of the Church, and ... the limits of her power,’ met with no sympathy from his host: ‘There are not here two opinions equally matter for private judgement ... that indeed of the Protestants is, like all their religion, a mere opinion, and a very shallow one.’ His response to Palmer’s assertion that despite the Reformation the Anglican Church had preserved essential Catholic doctrine was both scathing, and in some respects prophetic: ‘if the Anglican Church has always preserved the same doctrine, it is only because its priests [ministers] are well paid to preserve it: and when once its revenues shall be taken away, your Church will dissolve of itself, and give place to the Catholics who are already making great progress in England.’¹⁷⁸ The abbé disliked Palmer’s penchant for argument, rebuking him in terms that must have stung, given Palmer’s voracious appetite for theological

¹⁷³ On 2 September 1834, LP MS 2457, f. 78.

¹⁷⁴ The abbé Jean-François Robert, born at Abbeville 3 September 1797, honorary Canon of Tours, author of works of piety and *Souvenirs d’Angleterre et Considérations sur l’Eglise Anglicane*. (Louis Allen, unpublished MS (hereafter Allen), p.598, and DUC (1st Ed’n, Paris, 1858) p.1478.

¹⁷⁵ Entry 16 July 1834, LP MS 2814, f.1.

¹⁷⁶ MFP, vol. 1, p. 254.

¹⁷⁷ LP MS 2814, f. 19.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 21.

and ecclesiological reading: 'You love to discuss, while I detest it, because I find it useless to argue against ignorance & prejudice. You ought to read more.'¹⁷⁹

Palmer found a more patient audience in M. Robert's sister. To her he rehearsed the view of the Reformation that he was to propound later in Russia, that it was at least as much the fault of the Pope as of Henry VIII, involving only the rejection of 'some doctrines ... contrary to the Scriptures (and to primitive usage)', and 'certain customs' which were found to be 'inexpedient'. 'Their conscience, (not their reason alone) justified resistance,' but in 'other indifferent matters' not contrary to their consciences they did not wish to reject the authority of the Pope. From this Palmer deduced that there was in the Church of England 'a true authority: but in a case which touches one's conscience one may be justified in resisting the authority, because the authority is not absolute nor infallible; but always with the prospect of having to give an account of our conscience to God.'¹⁸⁰

In ascribing all to the exercise of individual conscience and/or expediency this principle comes close, if it does not altogether conform, to M. Robert's description of 'a mere opinion'.

Despite these views, Palmer did not appear to others as a conventional Protestant Englishman. Indeed Monsieur de Martigny, out shooting with Palmer's friend Charles Whateley,¹⁸¹ described him as 'Moitié Jesuite'.¹⁸² Palmer wrote in his journal: 'Today being meagre day a fast day rather [the Vigil of the Assumption] I

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., f. 30.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., f. 40. Compare Cardinal Newman's determination, in the context of papal infallibility, to drink 'to Conscience first, and to the Pope afterwards.' S. W. Gilley, *Newman and his Age* (hereafter Gilley) (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990), p. 376.

¹⁸¹ Charles Whately (1815- c.1878), matriculated at St. Mary Hall 1833, MA 1840, Rector of Rise, Yorks., 1839-50, and of Taplow, Bucks., 1850, Rector of Burnham, 1865, Rural Dean of the Deanery of Burnham, 1855-73. AO, p.1532, and CCD.

¹⁸² LP MS 2814, f. 7.

dined as a Catholic though I had breakfasted as an heretic.’¹⁸³ If this was written partly tongue in cheek there is no doubt that he did very soon begin to practise fasting and rigorous self-examination. M. Robert ‘said often “You will be Catholic: your heart has not been entirely corrupted by Protestantism”’¹⁸⁴ and ““I hope you will be a Catholic, and a Catholic priest””.¹⁸⁵ It is moving to read that when Palmer requested a letter of introduction to the Prefêt des Etudes at the College Stanislas in Paris (which in the event was never used) ‘the old priest’ wrote of him as

a young Englishman who is seeking the true faith ... I have taken the liberty of addressing him to you in the persuasion that you will do all you can to gain a soul to God, and withdraw it from error. He likes nothing so well as conversing about religion. If I were ever to hear of his return to the Catholic Church, I should be happy beyond expression.¹⁸⁶

His parting with Palmer was evidently an affectionate one, with an embrace in the French manner. Palmer had obviously described it to his friend Edward Whateley as ‘affecting,’ and in reply Whateley suggested mockingly that he would have been ‘titillated’ to observe the scene: ‘had he, as I wonder he did not, fallen on your neck without invitation I should have laughed out right - It would have been no joke ... the effect of which added to the weekly beard and shirt must have certainly killed you - you who faint at the smell of Beer and turn pale at metal buttons on a waistcoat.’¹⁸⁷ It would seem that Palmer had established a reputation for fastidiousness among his friends.

Palmer was back in France in March 1835, in Paris with Bishop Luscombe. The Bishop bewailed the lack of zeal of the English for the evangelisation of

¹⁸³ Entry 14 Aug., Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., f. 54.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. f. 55.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., f. 58.

¹⁸⁷ Edward Whately to WP, 1 Nov. 1834, LP MS 2837, f. 144.

France.¹⁸⁸ He had spent £7000 of his own money in building a chapel in the Rue Aguesseau, while the English had only given enough to pay for the organ. Whilst 'il voudrait surtout avoir une service en Français,' the French themselves and their habits were another matter. 'Il ne juge pas apropos d'admettre une congregation Française dans sa Chapelle pour cracher sur le nave etc.'¹⁸⁹

Palmer was also the guest of M. Monod,¹⁹⁰ Moderator of the French Calvinist Consistory, and expressed an intention (apparently not acted on) to spend his Long Vacation between Paris and Geneva as there was a Jubilee meeting of Pastors in Geneva at that time.¹⁹¹

The question of Palmer's future had not ceased to occupy his father, who it seems had come round to his son's view that Durham had served its purpose: 'I think,' he wrote, 'you will have the satisfaction of knowing you have been of use in the formation of the University and in giving it a name and an efficiency exceeding those of ephemeral quackeries of the age.'¹⁹² Palmer's contribution to Durham was recognised in March, when he was asked by the Warden to be an examiner for the AB and AM degrees.¹⁹³ To these academic honours was added a family distinction dating from 1469, when Gilbert Palmer became a member of the Mercers' Company. Palmer's father wrote to him in May 1835 that his Uncle George was anxious for him

¹⁸⁸ B/O MS v.48 f.2.

¹⁸⁹ LP MS 2815, f.37.

¹⁹⁰ Adolphe Monod (1802-1856), studied theology at Geneva and ordained pastor in 1824, served in Naples and Lyon, professor of Dogma, Hebrew and Exegesis in the 'Faculté de Montauban' from 1836 to 1852, Moderator of the French Calvinist Church, renowned as a moralist, preacher and author. DUC (1858 ed'n.), p.1237, and FT, p. 3.

¹⁹¹ LP MS 2141, f. 9.

¹⁹² W J P to WP, 27 Jan. 1835, LP MS 2834, f. 59.

¹⁹³ LP MS 2837, f. 130.

to 'put on his gown ... at Guildhall,'¹⁹⁴ which entailed first taking up the Freedom of the City.

Palmer's father thought the Durham post might nonetheless be retained 'for a short time, two or three terms ... Perhaps it would be best to defer your return to Oxford for another year ... you will not be so rich a man at Oxford perhaps as you are at Durham.'¹⁹⁵ Roundell, however, saw no point in waiting. 'You know it is my Father's wish, and I need hardly say it is mine, to see you once more established at Oxford.' He hoped his brother would leave Durham 'this very Summer,' giving as reason

the care and vexation and responsibility of your present employment. Nobody would bear the labour and annoyance of working hard for an inadequate remuneration, and being thwarted in his attempts to do good and even regarded with personal jealousy, (for such your letters lead me to think must be the case) by narrow-minded co-adjutors; unless for some solid prospect of future advantage ...

This was unlikely to be had at Durham. 'It will never be a University; for you will never have degrees like those of Oxford and Cambridge.' Stalls would not be annexed to the Professorships, indeed the Professorships themselves would never be filled up. Without a beneficial foundation they could not hope to attract 'a constant succession of students,' which made likely 'a sudden evacuation of the university whenever your original set of undergraduates leave; for the numbers appear marvellously stationary.' Oxford, on the other hand, held out the prospect of 'a very large and extensive field for doing good,' with 'a sure prospect of rising to an eminence and independence proportionate to the free enjoyment of literary society in general, and especially of the society of your dearest friends.' Should money be a problem, he could match his Durham salary by taking private pupils. In time

¹⁹⁴ LP MS 2834, f.70.

succession to a College tutorship might add to his income, or a post as resident tutor 'to some nobleman or man of fortune.'¹⁹⁶ He cited as example their mutual friend Claughton, then making £500 a year from his tutoring in Ireland.

In February Palmer's father related a conversation with Dr. Routh, in which the President of Magdalen 'observed you must be thinking of offering so[on] for Holy Orders, presuming such to be your intention and he desired me to suggest to you that the time was come or soon would be.' Having sown the seed he tactfully left the decision to his son: 'Nothing on that subject has passed between us for some time - and you have not expressly acquainted me with the conclusion you may have arrived at - you know I leave the matter of your profession wholly to divine providence and yourself -'¹⁹⁷

In the meantime, Palmer was vacillating. He had called on Dr. Routh at Oxford, and noted the hints dropped by the President that 'I must not suffer myself to become a stranger in my own College at Oxford - and that he did not see things at Durham, which should make it worthwhile to lose that connexion with Oxford which I had before'¹⁹⁸; but felt that he 'should be unwilling¹⁹⁸ to give up my situation here, before things are a little more settled and the University established upon a fixed basis; especially after having taken part in its first Institution.'¹⁹⁹ He was part of a group that went on a reconnaissance of the Castle ('much as if we were come to take possession') and was impressed by the Hall which he thought 'would be inferior to few either at Oxford or Cambridge', and some of the rooms which struck him as 'very handsome', although he believed the Castle to be 'very cold'. But he felt that

¹⁹⁵ W J P to WP, 21 May 1835, *Ibid.*, f.72.

¹⁹⁶ RP to WP, 20 Nov. 1833, LP MS 2836, f. 205.

¹⁹⁷ W J P to WP, Feb. 1836, LP MS 2834, f. f. 79.

¹⁹⁸ WP to Aunt Eleanor, 28 May 1836, LP MS 2836, f. 271.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

rooms in the Castle would be a poor exchange for the '3 tolerable ones' he currently occupied; and besides he did not think he would 'remain at Durham long enough to see the Castle in full occupation by the University' but looked forward 'to a return to Magdalen about this time next year'.²⁰⁰

Certainly he seems from his diary for April 1836 to be in need of change and stimulation: 'My thoughts are wandering and incoherent, hands and feet cold, two thirds of my time escapes me - I am lazy in the morning, too late at night, take no exercise, live on pills, have little memory, cannot compose, nor write straight - cannot readily express my thoughts in words.'²⁰¹ This listlessness extended to his spiritual life. 'Lazy - thoughts wandering at Church; irritable or spiteful: broke two resolutions, one not to waste time in reading the newspaper, the other to fast.'²⁰² This drifting emboldened his father to press him to leave Durham and start making decisions:

... I would press upon you the necessity of coming to some certainty of decision in your own mind on these three points; 1. The time of entering into Holy Orders; 2. taking your leave of Durham; and 3. The new course of study and employment to be entered upon when you return to the University. ... These considerations ... seem to involve the necessity of leaving Durham at the end of this term ...

He mentioned as reason for returning to Oxford 'the duties you owe your College,' which had recently appointed him to 'an Office requiring to a certain extent your presence and attention,'²⁰³ likely Palmer's appointment to a Lectureship in Moral Philosophy.²⁰⁴ 'It is to no purpose to linger on; and that the advantage you are likely to afford by continuing is not equal to the sacrifice'. Just in case his son failed to get the message, he ended bluntly: 'You see that I have given you my opinion that it is

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ LP MS 2457, f. 93.

²⁰² Entry 6 May 1836, Ibid.

advisable to quit Durham now.’²⁰⁵ Roundell welcomed ‘the probability of a graceful and honourable retreat,’ and reiterated that ‘Durham cannot be much longer a place for you,’ not least because Lord John Russell had made government funding for Durham conditional on the admission of Dissenters: ‘Surely this is insuperable’.²⁰⁶ Apart from the prospect of Durham becoming ‘a liberal establishment,’ the Durham appointment ‘was never meant to go further than what might be compatible with a first connexion ... Oxford and Magdalen must not be neglected.’²⁰⁷ Whether or not he was swayed by these considerations, by summer 1836 Palmer had taken leave of Durham.²⁰⁸ This is confirmed by a letter to his father of ‘28 Aout’ from the ‘Cité d’Aosta’, assuming his father’s approval of ‘my removal from Durham.’²⁰⁹

In 1836 Palmer travelled to Switzerland to meet the Vaudois and renew his friendship with M. Monod. He found the Vaudois pastors ‘desirous of cultivating the Anglican connection’, and ‘all more or less Episcopalians, and were finding their way towards the adoption of our Liturgy.’ On his return to England he sought to be placed on a committee to help the Vaudois congregations.²¹⁰ In June 1836 he returned to France. There is a different tone in his journals for this period, introspective and gloomy, almost at times hysterical. At the end of his diary for 1835 he had written: ‘Lapsus graviore XX, ignavia, vitiositates etc. innumerabiles deploro’²¹¹ (‘20 serious failures, idleness, I bewail innumerable vices’), and at the start of his 1836 diary is the observation ‘In the diary of this year there are frequent

²⁰³ W J P to WP, 30 May 1836, LP MS 2834, f. 83.

²⁰⁴ W J P to WP, Feb. 1836, *Ibid.*, f. 80.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 83.

²⁰⁶ RP to WP, 3 June 1836, LP MS 2836, f. 221.

²⁰⁷ W J P to WP, 8 June 1836, LP MS 2834, f. 86.

²⁰⁸ MFP, vol. I, p. 256.

²⁰⁹ WP to W J P, 28 Aug. 1836, LP MS 2834, f. 89.

²¹⁰ MFP, vol. 1, p. 256.

²¹¹ LP MS 2457, f. 91.

observations about myself as *distract - triste - mismanaged time, idle & irritable etc.*' But the entry for '*Dimanche Juin 26 a Dieppe*', written in unaccented French, is a frenzy of self-disgust: '*Si je savais que la vie d'aucun de mes amis avait ete telle que la mienne, que penserai j'en? Mon estime ne serait-il pas changé en horreur et en aversion?*' he asked at the start, going on to describe how '*chacque fois que je me trouve priant ou lisant a peu pres mechaniquement, je suis porté a penser, ou je suis le plus insensible, le plus endurci, le plus sensuel des êtres ... je pense quelquefois m'etre déjà si entierement corrompu, que je suis ruiné.*' He continued bleakly:

La vie même m'est ennuyeuse. J'aime ma famille, mes amis. Et mon coeur et mon esprit se portent exclusivement a des choses bonnes et importantes. Cependant ma vie est un mensonge contre tous les deux. - Si je me repent quelque jour, si je prie, et crois etre pardonné je revolte plus dangereusement que jamais le jour suivant.

He expatiated on his feeling that his life was an exercise in hypocrisy:

Avec de telles pensées, continuellement dans mon âme.. cependant je porte toujours la meme visage, je parais interessér [sic] seulement aux choses vraiment importants et edificants, je remplie mes devoirs externes d'une maniere satisfaisante a mes amis et a mes voisins - je jouis d'une reputation élevée.... je me sens etre aimé. Ceci est-il supportable?

This hymn of self-hate concluded by wondering whether the better course would not be to

confesser le bassesse, la depravité, l'impiété de ma vie, de m'humilier, en acceptant le deshonneur et la honte que me sont dues et de me retirer quelque part en cherchant quelqu'autre chemin pour mener une vie nouvelle dans la penitence et dans l'obscurité?²¹²

Some indication of the occasions for his self reproach emerge from his description of a '*voyage sans prieres a peu pres mais fortuitement sans crime,*' and '*les tentations au moment meme d'entrer a Lausanne les Catholiques pieuses a Pontarlier - Les dereglements du matin et du soir au Lion d'Or - especialement au moment meme ou*

je faisais une prière'; later, his going to 'la Chapelle sans m'y etre preparé ... l'interet intellectuel que je prenais neanmoins,' as well as 'les belles choses que j'ai dits a Mr. Robert (belles si elles avaient venues d'un coeur droit - les regards pas merites que la pensé intellectuelle peut s'atténir meme quand elle n'est pas fondée.'²¹³

What the 'crime' or the 'dereglements' [sic] were is obscure. Palmer's personal and religious standards were far stricter than today's. If they were of a sexual nature, which the reference to the 'Catholiques pieuses' might suggest, then it is a great rarity in his papers, as there is virtually no entry suggestive of love or sexual interest to be found in them.²¹⁴ Palmer is astute in identifying the 'interet [sic] intellectuel' which often seems to have the upper hand over genuine spiritual feeling in his religious enquiries. In his approach to church doctrine and history he can appear more a religious archaeologist, and in controversy more a barrister manqué, than a humble seeker after truth.

A week later he bemoaned 'les vains efforts que j'ai faits [sic] de fixer quelque epoque d'amendment' and wondered whether he should confess and seek absolution before his ordination ('ma consecration' [sic]), and whether he should be ordained at all 'etant dans l'etat que je suis.'²¹⁵ His self-analysis was unsparing:

What is my real position?... I am not worthy of the communion of the faithful: when I speak as a member of the Church I am an impostor, when I meet with interest, friendship, love, respect or praise from others, I ought to be in torture at it: It is true that from my cold heart I wish as I have always wished to walk in the Commandments of God; but I am at once, cold & corrupted. I pray from time to time & sometimes with fervency; but the evil habit of sin has the mastery over me, and is for ever returning: rebellion gets stronger, and my state worse and worse ...²¹⁶

²¹² Entry 26 June 1836, BO MS v.48 sect. 3 f. 4 ff.

²¹³ Ibid., f.21.

²¹⁴ Lord Selborne told Newman in 1887 that he was planning to write a biography of his brother, and may have destroyed any such material in the papers he subsequently received from Newman. LP MS 1887, f. 197.

²¹⁵ BO MS v. 48 sect. 3, f. 23.

²¹⁶ In French in the BO MS v.47 f. 97, translated by Palmer in LP MS 2457 ff. 27-8.

He reviewed his attempts to pray more fervently, powerfully and continually, but concluded hopelessly 'I have already tried, but such as I am myself, such will be my prayers. There is no health nor power towards safety & salvation in me. I am slipping down rapidly towards destruction'. All this when 'there are now only four months & the time will come for me to be Ordained.'²¹⁷

There followed in the original French passage a series of passionate appeals to his relatives alive and dead, which will strike the reader as either heart-rending or absurd:

O mon frere Thomas .. mon cher frere Henri... O mon cher frere R - O mes soeurs et mes freres innocents - O mon bon pere qui ... ne me faisais jamais de reproches ... qui m'as toléré patiemment qui m'as aimé et meme as été fier de moi - O ma mere dont j'ai reproché avec impiété ta maladie forte et douloureuse - O vous tous mes amis bons dont je suis indigne - de la profondeur de mon ame je me jette je me roule a vos pieds ...²¹⁸

As Palmer's cast of mind was naturally objective, logical and analytical, this orgy of chest-beating is rare, although the theatrical style resurfaces in his initial draft of a Memorial to Archbishop Howley over the Jerusalem Bishopric.

His father reassured him that he possessed the qualities 'requisite for successful enquiry ... you are kind patient and persevering and not conceited'²¹⁹ but to no avail: 'How weak we are! ... I need tears of repentance, a discipline more severe, more constant & sincere prayers, a more lively charity, a more true repentance, a stronger faith, and above all more confirmed habits of virtue.'²²⁰ If such remarks put us in mind of a monastic standard of asceticism, it is the less surprising

²¹⁷ LP MS 2457, f. 97.

²¹⁸ BO MS v. 48 ff. 27-8.

²¹⁹ W J P to WP, 10 Aug. 1836, LP MS 2834, f. 87.

²²⁰ Entry 11 Aug. 1836, LP MS 2457, f. 99.

to read that Palmer told 'M. Hilaire, a Jesuit from Lyons' that he was 'a sort of Protestant monk or member of a Protestant monastery; which it surprised him much to hear'²²¹ (as no doubt it would have surprised the other members of Magdalen) who had 'come here to study the present state of religion & of the Church.' He made similar assertions in September at Turin, when he went to see 'les Oblati' - 'j'ai parlé avec le Père Raymondi et deux autres d'abord de mon College ou Monastère scholastique sans vaux à Oxford.'²²² The startled Jesuit predicted, as had M. Robert, that 'going so far as I did, & having such principles, I would find it impossible to persist in denying the Pope's authority, when I should have studied more the writings of the Early Fathers.' Palmer denied that he would ever leave the Anglican Church, but when they parted M. Hilaire told him that he was on the high road towards the truth, a view shared by the convert to Roman Catholicism, Miss Trelawney²²³, who had engineered the visit. Palmer's misgivings about the state of his own soul did not prevent him from telling Miss Trelawney confidently that 'she had simply become a schismatic by separating from the Church of her country to follow her own imagination.'²²⁴

As with M. Robert, his claims for the Anglican Church were met with scepticism or contempt, although often combined with respect or affection for Palmer himself. In a discussion at Aosta on the Apostolic Succession in the Church of England, for example, his question 'Qu'est-ce qu'on en pense ici?' met the dismissive reply 'On n'a aucun motif pour l'examiner'; and the verdict of a priest on the Church of England was that 'Une armée tout composée de Généraux ne serait que

²²¹ Entry 10 Aug. 1836, *Ibid.*, f. 100.

²²² Entry 28 Sept. 1836, LP MS 2816, f. 119.

²²³ Despite Palmer's spelling, probably the daughter of the Rev. Sir Harry Trelawny, 7th Baronet (1756-1834), Prebendary of Exeter and Vicar of St. Austell and Egloshayle, he became Catholic before his death at Laveno in Italy in 1834. CB, vol. II, p.45.

confusion.²²⁵ Likewise at the Jesuit College in Aosta he was told ‘Je ne comprends point votre idée de Catholicité. Vous détruisez de fond au comble l’Eglise visible. Souvenez vous de la promesse, Tu es Petrus &c.,’ to which he gave the elliptical reply that while the promise would doubtless be fulfilled, it was a promise and not a doctrine.²²⁶ Later he was frankly told ‘L’Eglise Anglican tombera sans doute: elle n’a point de racine: comme d’autre eglises, quoique tenantes à l’unité, sont tombés.’²²⁷ By the end of September and beginning of October M. Robert was tiring of endless argument: ‘ces discussions n’ont point de fin, ni de conclusion ...’²²⁸ He mellowed enough to tell Palmer ‘souvent’ ‘Ah, vous êtes Catholiques jusqu’au Pape,’ and ‘vous êtes libre; nous sommes esclavés. Je voudrais être comme vous, pour être libre’²²⁹; but this was ‘en plaisantant, dans un moment d’abandon’.

The Archbishop of Tours paid Palmer ‘des compliments exaggerés, et se plait à croire que Dieu operera un miracle en ma faveur pour me convertir,’ although when Palmer described the Church of England as ‘ma mère,’ he was less polite. ‘Votre mère est bâtarde; nous ne sommes pas d’accord sur les choses essentielles’. He urged him solemnly to pray to be led into the truth, and even to reject and condemn the Church of England ‘“parce que” dit-il, “vous êtes grand Docteur, et non pas un petit enfant.”’²³⁰

At Paris Palmer was driven to see the Bishop of Pignerol, whose face and manner he instinctively disliked, a view not altered by the Bishop’s description of the

²²⁴ LP MS 2457, f. 99.

²²⁵ LP MS 2816, f. 1.

²²⁶ Ibid., f. 16.

²²⁷ Ibid., f. 21.

²²⁸ LP MS 2816, f. 121.

²²⁹ Ibid., f. 125.

²³⁰ Ibid., f. 129.

Church of England as ‘a sect calling themselves Episcopalian.’²³¹ The abbé Jager, the epistolary opponent of Benjamin Harrison and then Newman in *L’Univers*, felt that ‘si tous les Anglais étaient comme moi, on pourrait facilement faire un reconciliation,’ saying of Palmer ‘Il est Gallican lui-même’. This was a reasonable description of Palmer’s view of the Church of England as a national Church that was part of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, and so far as the Reformation was concerned, at least as much sinned against as sinning; but it draws attention to a sort of ecclesiological schizophrenia on Palmer’s part at this time. He wrote in his diary while at Aosta in September: ‘Je defends les Reformateurs et les Protestans [sic] [continentaux]. J’admire leur vertu, leur courage, leur zèle, [leur piété], leur savoir. Je les regarde comme des Chrétiens échappés à leur Mère cruelle et corrompue.’²³² However, he was to find, to his surprise, that his natural sympathies were with the Roman Catholics and not (however much he might sympathise with the Vaudois) with the Protestants, as he confessed to a Mr. O’ Ryan in 1838.²³³

He also found that the behaviour of the Anglican clergy on the Continent undermined his defence of the Church of England: ‘I most heartily regret that there should be so little disposition among our stray clergy to act together in unity under that form of discipline they profess to recognise.’²³⁴ he wrote to Roundell; ‘Bp. Luscombe & the Bp. of London are on bad terms & some congregations invite the one of them and some the other.’²³⁵ Human frailty and the fissiparous nature of Anglicanism combined to subvert the ideal picture that he wished to present.

²³¹ LP MS 2834, f. 93.

²³² LP MS 2816, f. 95.

²³³ Undated entry, LP MS 2818, f. 18.

²³⁴ WP to RP, 17 Oct. 1836, LP MS 2457, f. 109.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 113.

CHAPTER 3

Return to Oxford

On his return to Oxford in autumn 1836 Palmer was struck by the ‘very great change’ in public opinion during his three year absence, in particular the emergence of what he called the ‘High Church party’,²³⁶ later known as the Tractarian Movement after the *Tracts for the Times*. He was initially baffled by the ‘party language’ he heard, ‘especially against the “Oxford opinions”’, which failed to mention any specific doctrine but was ‘always of a trimming-Latitudinarian kind full of such expressions as “going too far,” “verging towards Popery,”’ with “sect, party, exclusiveness, formality” in abundance’²³⁷. He felt that with ‘only a general idea of what it is that Newman and Pusey teach,’ his best course was ‘to abstain carefully from reading the Oxford *Tracts*, or attending any of Pusey’s lectures,’ until he had had the chance to discuss the matter with those concerned, when at last ‘something tangible’ might emerge.²³⁸ For the time being the only differences he could discern were ‘of disposition & tendency, but not of doctrine. It seems to me they are all essentially Anglican.’²³⁹

One thing that had not changed was the behaviour of the undergraduates, apparently ‘a very bad set’, who reminded him ‘much of the time when I first came

²³⁶ WP to R P, 24 Nov. 1836, LP MS 1878, f. 181.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 187.

²³⁸ MFP, vol. 1, p.258.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*: Lord Selborne agrees, judging that it was not until 2 years later, with the publication of Froude’s *Remains*, that a turning towards Rome and against the English and Continental Reformation became apparent. MFP, vol. I, p.259.

up myself by the noises which they make nightly. Faber²⁴⁰ has been treating them with excessive indulgence - which they have repaid, as might have been expected, with all kinds of riot.²⁴¹

On Sunday 18 September 1836, Palmer finally took the step over which he had so much agonised, and was ordained deacon by Bishop Bagot of Oxford. Finding that it was customary to issue a Licence to Preach to all newly-ordained deacons with their Letters of Orders, with characteristic contrariness he wrote to the authorities requesting 'that none be made out for me, as I had no intention of applying for any such permission.'²⁴² It was not until two years later, at a time when his father was seriously ill, that he wrote to the Bishop to obtain the Licence, preaching his first sermon on 9 December 1838.²⁴³ As deacon he assisted his father at both Mixbury and Finmere 'by reading the Morning & Evening Services with one of the printed Homilies instead of a Sermon, Catechising the children & occasionally Baptising.'²⁴⁴ It is clear from correspondence with his father that he was initially reluctant to carry out baptisms, apparently on two grounds, first the mode of administration and secondly the standing with the Church of the sponsors. His father wrote to him: 'It will be well if you can overcome your reluctance to take an infant in your arms ... But if you really have a scruple about the mode of administering, you shall decline the office till you have satisfied yourself, or have had licence and opportunity to instruct the people in the reason of the thing,' and 'if a stranger offers himself as sponsor I conclude without particular enquiry that all is right, and that he is as well acquainted

²⁴⁰ Francis Atkinson Faber (1805-1876), of University College Oxford, matriculated 26 March 1822 as a scholar, Bursar 1836, Vice-President 1841, Dean of Divinity 1843, Rector of Sanderton, Bucks., 1845- 1876. AO, p.443.

²⁴¹ LP MS 1878, f. 187.

²⁴² LP MS 2457, f. 113.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, ff. 183, 187.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 118.

with what ought to be, as they for whom he appears.' His father's approach foreshadowed, in terms, the difference between Palmer and the Anglican hierarchy over Passive Communion, and by extension the question of authority in the Church, that largely determined his decision to leave the Church of England. His father evidently thought him over-scrupulous:

Conscience I know must be satisfied, but then discretion should be used. And there is some danger of doing serious injury for want of it by insisting stiffly on a form which may be more correct in opposition to one that is established, tho' it be less so, in matters not essential.²⁴⁵

In any event, by March Palmer had overcome his scruples sufficiently to carry out his first christening, although he was 'not a little nervous for fear I should not hold it [the child] properly.'²⁴⁶

His family's predictions that a wider and more successful career lay open to him at Oxford were vindicated by a sequence of appointments. He was already Praelector of Moral Philosophy, and gave his first lecture in the ante-chapel at the end of the Michaelmas term 1836. In early 1837 he became Junior Bursar, went as Examiner to Durham and to Rugby, and was appointed Public Examiner in Litteris Humanioribus in the Schools of the University.²⁴⁷ His duties as Bursar meant that he could expect to spend little time at home, as he was 'obliged to be in almost constant residence'. One chance to escape lay in performing the duties of 'what they call the riding Bursar whose business it is to go to those places of which the College hold[s] the Manors and hold Courts' - a prospect he looked forward to if 'it happened to be

²⁴⁵ W J P to WP, 20 Feb. 1837, LP MS 2834, f. 95.

²⁴⁶ WP to Aunt Eleanor, 31 March 1837, LP MS 2836, f. 273.

²⁴⁷ LP MS 2457, f. 118.

the year for giving the Lincolnshire Progress as it is termed, for I have some curiosity to see a little more of that county.'²⁴⁸

Busy as he was with his new duties, he did not abandon his attempts at self-improvement, although he met with a disturbing lack of success. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the very ambitious goals he set himself. His resolutions for 1837 were:

To attend to Moral Philosophy & Chronology; Then 1 To rise at 4 am if possible: 2 To say the Morning & Evening Prayer of the Church according to the Rubric ... 3 Hoc agere i.e. to be intent on the business in hand avoiding idle thoughts & interruptions: 4 To fast on fast-days 5 To keep diary & accounts regularly: 6 To keep away from the fire: 7 To answer letters immediately: 8 To walk for exercise regularly: 9 To leave the Common Room at 7 pm: 10 To drink no wine 11 To read original authors by preference; & to make some short analyses of what I read 12 To read some Hebrew daily 13 To read Classics in preparation for the Schools from 10 am to 1 pm daily 14 To write an analysis of the same from 7 pm to 8 pm 15 To read German: 16 To read Italian & 17 To read French.

Alas he was soon writing that he had been 'late in rising, too long in dressing', had wasted much time avoiding 'Hoc Agere', followed Resolution 2 ('saying the Office Morning & Evening daily') 'carelessly, unprofitably & impatiently', had read no Classics, broken his resolutions to fast ('no distinct rule for the manner of doing it laid down') and to keep away from the fire, and had taken no exercise.²⁴⁹ His diary for early 1837 is filled with entries such as this one:

Headache: no circulation: sit listlessly over the fire: always up too late in the morning: near 10 am before I am at work: scarce set down to it when called to early dinner, nor well at it again when called to Tea, after which there is nothing to be done. Even in going to bed I frequently waste an hour. Do not even take a healthy walk partly from habit, partly from the weather: inside gouty: head confused, and I feel my body beginning to give way already: no energy for work; no relish of life: think of past opportunities wasted, and faults contracted: think of those that are gone and the certainty of all following: dream on in this state: Prayers & reading make me feel how I have

²⁴⁸ WP to Aunt Eleanor, 31 March 1837, LP MS 2836, f. 273.

²⁴⁹ Entry 11 Jan. 1837, LP MS 2457, f. 119.

blunted my mind for both: that it is not now for me to cultivate, develop, improve, strengthen, build, but to labour listlessly & apparently with little effect for the extirpation of vicious habits of soul, intellect, feeling & body. How the time flies! How is all past, and passing!²⁵⁰

In March he returned to the theme of withdrawal from the world in which he moved:

‘When shall I see my real position? Humility & penitence are my real business for life. Neither conversations, nor publishing, no thinking, nor books can be without great danger for me.’²⁵¹ He still felt himself to have ‘no energetic motive’, with an intellect that was ‘dissipated, enfeebled, & nerveless; my will for work is so too’. His mind was ‘very corrupt’, in fact delighted in ‘vanity & corruption’; his body was ‘governed by love of ease & softness.’ Spiritually he veered between indifference and ‘a deep degree of rebellion’. However much he might spend his time ‘in formal efforts & right-minded conversation, yet a practical rebellion breaks out on the slightest occasions’. The cold-heartedness mentioned in the French diaries of the previous Summer was still evident: ‘In the world I take little interest; only just mechanically mention in my prayers even my nearest relations; much less have I any warm charity for strangers, and for all men’.²⁵² He noted that ‘Bad thoughts are perpetually recurring’, that he seemed to have gained no benefit from Lent, on the contrary his attempts at fasting had produced only ‘a growing discontent’. His readings of Morning and Evening Prayer (described in Tractarian style as ‘the Breviary’) had become ‘irregular, formal with distractions almost a profanation; it begins to be irksome’. With this disinclination to pray went a drift to the secular, to ‘lose myself in intellectual questions & interests’. He even shrank ‘from professional duty’. ‘Sloth’ overcame him: ‘feel numbed: sit with my legs before the fire; waste

²⁵⁰ Entry 17 Jan. 1837, *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ Entry 7 March 1837, *Ibid.*, f. 164.

²⁵² Entry 3 April 1837, *Ibid.*, f. 165.

time especially in reading the newspapers: feel an aversion for good practical thoughts, and for all energy: have no spirit to work or write, but sit dawdling, & unable to satisfy myself.'²⁵³ He made the strange observation 'In mind I am still young, in body ageing rapidly', with 'time ... lost - evil ingrained - practical professional habits unacquired' and even worse 'new evils (hypocrisy & false principle) in prospect'.²⁵⁴ This may well refer to his increasingly uneasy attempt to be 'a Catholic & a Protestant at once'²⁵⁵ mentioned in his journal in the context of his visit to the Vaudois.

Wanting to relieve his conscience by confessing these failings, Palmer asked his father to hear his Confession. His father refused, unless, in accordance with the first Exhortation in the Communion Service in the Book of Common Prayer²⁵⁶, Palmer told him he would not or could not go to Communion without it. Palmer recorded that for the time being he deferred to his father's decision ('partly from timidity, & partly from not liking to seem to dictate my own opinion to him') taking the refusal as satisfying his own conscience, and removing any difficulty over taking Communion. However either from stubbornness or the genuine need to unburden himself he continued to look for a Confessor, finding one in the other father-figure in his life, the President of Magdalen Dr. Routh, who 'made no difficulty' and absolved him 'by the same form as is prescribed in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick'.²⁵⁷ Thereafter if he was unable to confess to Dr. Routh he simply asked the nearest

²⁵³ Entry 14 April 1837, *Ibid.*, f. 127.

²⁵⁴ Entry 13 May 1837, *Ibid.*, f. 132.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 131.

²⁵⁶ 'If there be any of you, who... cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me... and open his grief.'

²⁵⁷ 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him; of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'

available priest, regardless of churchmanship; he ‘only in two or three cases failed of my object ... I used to say simply I cannot otherwise satisfy my conscience.’²⁵⁸ He may also have found consolation in a letter from his friend Claughton, who wrote that he had asked ‘young Whitley’ (presumably an undergraduate) ‘whether they understood you ... W. said “Oh yes - they understood Palmer and liked him very much.”’²⁵⁹

Summer 1837 found him back with M. Robert at Abbeville. Instead of rebuking him for his love of religious discussion, the priest decided to field him as a secret weapon in a discussion with a friend, one M. Duquin, who, he told Palmer ‘aime la discussion’. Sure enough the Frenchman found that he had met his match in debate, exclaiming in dismay ‘Mais il va toujours en devant: il m’anticipe à chaque pas!’ Palmer noted with amusement that ‘M. Robert a été très content de l’embarras de son ami.’²⁶⁰ M. Robert was not, however, persuaded that his guest’s idiosyncratic views about Anglicanism were shared by other Englishmen. He told Palmer: ‘J’ai vecu longtemps avec les Anglais à Tours: ils ne partagent point vos principes.’ A Mr. Hughes, asked if all the English thought as Palmer did, had described Palmer’s ideas as ‘beaucoup exagérées’. ‘(Ce Mr. Hughes était Radical et Latitudinaire)’ wrote Palmer dismissively by way of explanation.²⁶¹ M. Robert returned to his theme the following day: ‘Je sais bien les faits de votre Histoire; car j’ai connu beaucoup d’Anglais: mais vous avez corrompu l’Histoire ...’²⁶² He continued, nonetheless, to be fond of Palmer, repeating that his guest deserved ‘être Catholique, et prêtre Catholique ... qu’on me trouvera une [sic] Curé en France’, and that he would pray

²⁵⁸ LP MS 2457, f. 169.

²⁵⁹ T L C to WP, 20 July 1837, LP MS 2837, f. 42.

²⁶⁰ LP MS 2816, f.140.

²⁶¹ Ibid., ff. 150-151.

²⁶² Ibid., f.158.

for him; 'Il faut prier le bon Dieu six mois; ... et nous prions que Dieu fasse un miracle en votre faveur. Pour cela il faut un miracle de grace.' His sister recommended saying the Rosary, which could be 'efficace'.²⁶³ Palmer was quite prepared to admit, on the other hand, that the state of England was not favourable to the Anglican (or perhaps any other) Church: 'La Nation va commettre une suicide politique et religieuse ... nous sommes arrivés au dernier developpement des erreurs contraire de la Reformation. Le mystère de trois siècles commence à se denouer.'²⁶⁴

At the seminary 'de M. Haffreingue,' Palmer's views were scornfully rebuffed, first by Saint Augustine's argument against the Donatists - 'securus iudicat orbis terrarum' - that had such a powerful effect in converting Newman; secondly, and more humiliatingly, by the contention that at the end of the day the Church of England was completely insignificant. 'Vous avez tout le monde contre vous: il nous faut une microscope pour voir L'Eglise Anglicane: toute l'Antiquité aussi; et les Grecs sont avec nous pour condamner les Protestans [sic].' When Palmer responded that it was for God to judge between the two Churches, he was met with more French sarcasm: 'Ah! Il faut donc d'abord mettre cette petite Eglise Microscopique à côté en égale avec l'Eglise de tout le Monde, et puis attendre!' But for Palmer the Branch Theory of the Church meant that 'il n'y a aucune absurdité en supposant que pas seulement les Eglises Anglicans mais aussi les Eglises Grecques et Russes fassent part à la véritable Eglise Catholique avec les Eglises Latines qui recoivent le Concile de Trent.'²⁶⁵

²⁶³ Ibid., f. 166.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., f.170.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., f. 189-90.

It was a meeting in Autumn 1837 that led Palmer, in Lord Selborne's view at any rate,²⁶⁶ to begin to take an interest in the Eastern Churches as opposed to those of France or Switzerland. One of the librarians in the British Museum told him of 'a Syrian priest from Mount Lebanon' who wished to examine some Manuscripts in the Bodleian. This turned out not to be a priest, but a Mr. Christian Rassam of Mosul ('the ancient Nineveh, on the banks of the Tigris',²⁶⁷), a member of the Nestorian Church of Chaldea and Kurdistan. Palmer offered him 'any civility in my power if he came to Oxford,' with the result that he stayed a fortnight in Magdalen, and visited Mixbury.²⁶⁸ After leaving for Mosul he wrote to Palmer asking him to write whenever he had an opportunity 'but with clear hand'- an occupational hazard of corresponding with Palmer, whose handwriting was often indecipherable. It was typical of Palmer's romantic and impulsive nature to reply to his new friend that so far as fostering close ties between the Nestorian Church and the Church of England was concerned, there was nothing

which I would not willingly do to contribute any thing however little to so good an end whether by undertaking the education of Chaldeans here or going to Mesopotamia, if I could render any service by so doing, & was sent by my superiors.²⁶⁹

In the event the service that Palmer rendered was to look after Christian Rassam's younger brother Hormuzd, who came to England to complete his education in 1848. Lord Selborne recalls that Hormuzd 'spent a considerable amount of time at Mixbury,' and takes occasion to remark on one of his brother's most engaging

²⁶⁶ MFP, vol. 1, p. 262.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ LP MS 2836, f. 275.

²⁶⁹ WP to C R, (undated), LP MS 2819, f. 229.

characteristics, witnessed by his many letters: 'Constancy and fidelity were qualities in which William resembled my Father; he never neglected or dropped a friend.'²⁷⁰

The same Autumn Palmer caused a storm in the Oxford teacup by wearing a stole over his surplice, and over his left shoulder. This is the custom for deacons in the Orthodox Church, although Palmer seems never to have relied on this fact as a reason for doing so. The President, Dr. Routh, was asked to speak to him about it, but chose not to.²⁷¹ Dr. Pusey, on the other hand, sent for Palmer and advised him to stop the practice, 'as you are one of us, and must be careful not to give offence in unimportant matters.' Palmer 'thanked him for his kind intentions' but went on 'As I did not ask your advice, I shall hold myself at liberty to do as I think best'. 'What business was it of his? He is not the President of Magdalen,' he later remarked to his family.²⁷² He was more polite to Newman who had had remarks made to him about the stole 'and suggested that it might be better to discontinue it.' Palmer apologised to him for having been bothered about it, reassured him that the idea had certainly not come from Newman, 'but told him what reasons I saw for doing it; and he seemed to feel that they had force.'²⁷³ Palmer's father was less easily persuaded. He confessed himself 'a good deal annoyed by the feeling with which your adoption of a certain singularity in the use of the clerical costume appears to be regarded in College'.²⁷⁴ This was partly because of the potential damage to 'the cause we have at heart' (presumably the vindication of the Church of England as part of the Catholic Church worldwide) by Palmer's being described in print as 'affecting the rags of Popery',²⁷⁵

²⁷⁰ MFP, vol. 1, p.264.

²⁷¹ LP MS 2457, f. 151.

²⁷² MFP, vol. 1, p. 260. It appears that this was the first time that Pusey and Palmer had met, see FT p. 6.

²⁷³ LP MS 2457, f. 151.

²⁷⁴ W J P to WP, 26 Oct. 1837, LP MS 2834, f. 102.

²⁷⁵ MFP, vol. 1, p. 260.

and partly because of the injury he might be doing to his prospects at Magdalen. 'For,' he said, 'I am persuaded, if it please God, that you have not only a mind, but a power and talent also, to profit much in the society where you have been cast - and I would not have such promise so marred'.²⁷⁶ He wondered that his son could not see that in itself 'the width of a scarf, and the manner in which it is worn' were matters 'of very great indifference', but that after a change in practice had occurred, 'a return to the ancient mode in an individual by its singularity ... seems only to provoke animadversion on himself'. He asked his son to 'note down, chapter and verse, his authority' for what he was doing; but Palmer 'continued his own practice, without, as far as I know, alleging for it any Anglican authority'.²⁷⁷

Lord Selborne sees the episode as emblematic of his brother's character and approach to life. His virtues he describes as 'alloyed with some combativeness, perhaps with excessive tenacity' - citing as corroboration Claughton's description of him as 'ὁ μέγας, ὁ πολεμικός, ὁ λογομάχος' - 'the great, the polemical, the disputatious'. Of these attributes he wrote sagely that while young men of great mental ability are often combative, they generally find out that their 'ideal of abstract and absolute perfection' must yield to the 'disturbing forces' that operate everywhere. 'My brother William,' he wrote, 'had not that flexibility; and, for want of it, he was always more or less out of his element, and leading forlorn hopes in the battle of life'.²⁷⁸ His sister Emily remarked of his response to Pusey, 'William was never really of any one party, he was his own party!'²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ W J P to WP, 26 Oct. 1837, LP MS 2834, f. 102.

²⁷⁷ MFP, vol. 1, p.261.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 260-261.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p.260.

Nor were his sartorial idiosyncrasies the only matter causing his father concern. He also warned him against introducing 'extraneous matter' into a College Meeting, particularly those regarding 'your own strict views of duty to the Foundation' which he guessed had probably already created some alarm.²⁸⁰ Palmer explained that this referred to a sort of monastic and charitable rule that he had romantically proposed for the residents of Magdalen:

I used to say that we ought all to reside under discipline and obedience, and work for the good of the foundation: that being fed & clothed & having a reasonable allowance of money for our statutable vacation of two months in the year, we ought not to divide amongst ourselves any surplus revenues; but rather employ them in feeding poor scholars, or as times are now, in founding affiliated Colleges with estates & farms & benefices dependent on them in the Colonies ...²⁸¹

This went in tandem with a scheme for a sort of University scriptorium in which 'scholars should be trained & afterwards associated together in preparing a re-edition of the Fathers.'²⁸² He was evidently enamoured of the idea of reviving monasticism, if not in Oxford, then in Chaldea. Having urged Christian Rassam to 'practise devotion as strictly as if you were a hermit in the first ages, and ... study theology as carefully as if you were to be Bishop or Patriarch to have the charge of all the churches,' he exhorted him to turn his entire attention as soon as possible to making 'a School and College'

for the study of Divinity and ... the practice of Devotion. For this purpose you will want 1st a kind of Monastery or College in which the Brethren can live at little expense under a rule of holy discipline & perhaps also supporting themselves by their own labour in cultivating the ground. I should think perhaps the rule of St. Basil which the Greeks profess to follow in their Monasteries would do very well ...²⁸³

²⁸⁰ W J P to WP, 26 Oct. 1837, LP MS 2457, f. 150.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ WP to C R, 17 May 1840, LP MS 2821, f. 41.

No wonder Claughton dubbed him 'the Monk of Magdalen'.²⁸⁴

None of these eccentricities seem to have affected his career. In early 1838 he became Tutor in his College.²⁸⁵ The prospect of this appointment had caused him 'considerable anxiety' because he feared that he would 'lose for an indefinite period that leisure for study which I hoped to obtain when I left Durham'. As it was he had been

completely occupied, I might almost say night and day with the business of the Schools ... it is the hardest work I have ever had ... we are obliged to sit examining in Public from ten o'clock in the morning every day to five at night - and besides this to read over carefully and compare with each other about 1500 closely written foolscap pages in every variety of hand - and this for the Honours alone ...²⁸⁶

After accepting the tutorship he found that it gave him 'more work than is convenient at present considering the number of things wh. I ought to read for the Schools. I have 3 Lectures a week in Aristotle's Ethics, 2 in Sophocles 2 in Logic and one on Sunday in St. John's Gospel. Besides this a great deal of time is taken up in interruptions consequent on the business'.²⁸⁷ Reminded teasingly by his father of his dismissive account of an undergraduate lecture on Herodotus, he replied ruefully that 'I am afraid a College Lecture is very apt to be a shabby Construe - but of course I mean to do my best to make it otherwise'.²⁸⁸ He was more taxed than ever before, and still plagued by the 'disinclination to shave, walk or in fact do anything requiring exertion, also especially to write letters'.²⁸⁹ Nor did his professional advance bring him any inner contentment: 'What a diseased chaos of vanity, regret, envy, jealousy,

²⁸⁴ T L C to WP, 2 Jan. 1840, LP MS 2837, f. 54.

²⁸⁵ MFP, vol. 1, p. 265.

²⁸⁶ LP MS 2836, f. 275.

²⁸⁷ LP MS 2834, f. 110.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., ff. 110-111.

²⁸⁹ Entry 7 March 1838, LP MS 2468 [no folio numbers].

is now in my mind through my perverse obstinacy'.²⁹⁰ He was still attempting to keep a rule of discipline; he records in hieroglyphics, later translated by himself, that he had a 'Fast headache,' and goes on to mention 'several strokes of a whip.'²⁹¹

On 21 May 1839 the Grand Duke Alexander of Russia, later the Emperor Alexander II, visited Oxford, and William Palmer, as one of the Public Examiners, was invited to meet him 'at dinner in the Hall'.²⁹² Palmer decided to seize the chance to present to the Grand Duke a petition in French, which he took to Dr. Routh for approval. The passage in *Notes of a Visit to the Russian Church* describing the conversation that ensued is one of the most comic in the book. Palmer proposed first that 'some Russian ecclesiastic' should come to Oxford to be taught English by Palmer himself while living in Magdalen College, so as to be equipped to make known to the Czar and the Eastern Bishops the best books of Anglican theology. Conversely Palmer sought the protection of the Grand Duke should he go to Russia 'to study there the theology and ritual of the Russian Church' - the first time that this is mentioned as a concrete possibility. The aim was that unity to which the whole Catholic Church ought to aspire.²⁹³ Palmer described Dr. Routh's reaction to his draft:

"While the Catholic Church of England"-

"Leave out the word 'Catholic', sir; it will not be understood."

"While the Church of England constantly defends the rights of Christian Sovereigns, invaded equally by the ambition of the Roman Pontiff and by democratical licentiousness, she is herself at present in great danger, isolated in a corner of the West, unsupported by the Civil Government and"-

"I would leave that out, sir."

"In a corner of the West, and threatened by the hatred of all the Protestant sects"-

"Leave out the word 'Protestant'"-

²⁹⁰ Entry 18 August 1838, LP MS 2457, f. 175.

²⁹¹ LP MS 2468.

²⁹² LP MS 2457, f. 193.

²⁹³ NV, pp. 1-3.

“Of all the sects, which have leagued with schismatical Papists to overthrow her ...

May God bless the throne of the Emperor of Russia, and may all the peoples committed to him obey him as a father. May he never see the anarchical principles of heretical Protestantism coming to disturb his Empire and its churches; and may it be given to him, on the occurrence of some just opportunity, to deliver the East from the yoke of the Infidels.”

“I would leave out this last sentence, sir,” said Dr. Routh; “the first clause will not be understood, and the second will seem un-English.”²⁹⁴

The last ‘un-English’ clause shows Palmer’s romantic and impulsive side, and how, whilst it was politic to omit the clause from the petition, he was never afraid to step outside the confines of Englishness. The proposals emerge in distorted form in an article written by another alumnus of Magdalen, Goldwin Smith.²⁹⁵ ‘Palmer had, or was supposed to have, a scheme for his great object [‘bringing the Anglican and Greek Churches into communion with each other’] by an interchange of monks between Magdalen and a Russian monastery. To this Magdalen demurred, having heard that the monks ... oiled themselves instead of washing.’²⁹⁶ This sort of speculative facetiousness neatly illustrates the apocryphal stories that were told of Palmer.

On the other hand, the encouragement given to Palmer by the President, and the care he took to curb Palmer’s romantic excesses, indicate his affection and respect for him. Lord Selborne describes him as

always his friend, admiring the strength, simplicity, and disinterestedness of his character, sympathising with his pursuits, and agreeing to a large extent

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Goldwin Smith (1823-1910), ‘controversialist,’ of Christ Church Oxford, matriculated 26 May 1841, demy Magdalen College 1842-6, MA 1848, Fellow 1850-68, tutor 1851-4, DCL June 1882, Regius professor of modern history 1858-66, professor of English and constitutional history Cornell University 1868-71, also barrister and author. A friend of Roundell Palmer, although ‘his views on political and religious questions were ... pronouncedly liberal.’ He ‘was impatient of the Oxford Movement and scornful of all clerical influences.’ DNB, AO, p. 1314. He seems, however, to have respected Palmer, describing him in 1895 as ‘a man of genius and a most interesting person.’ MFP vol. II, p. 59.

²⁹⁶ *The Oxford Magazine*, 11 Nov. 1885.

(though not wholly) with his disposition ... to try all theological questions, which might reasonably be considered open, from a Catholic and Primitive rather than a merely Anglican standard.²⁹⁷

He adds that Dr. Routh would have been 'glad to see him devote himself to College work sufficiently to acquire a position and influence worthy of his abilities.' Perhaps he is swayed too far by fraternal loyalty, but he adds 'I believe there was no one whom he would have been better pleased to see qualifying himself for that succession than William, who certainly excelled all the other members of the Society in learning and intellectual power, and was not excelled by any of them in virtue.'²⁹⁸ Whether these admirable qualities were to some degree cancelled out by Palmer's lack of judgement and flexibility is a moot point; but Routh's loyalty to Palmer, and his willingness to protect him in his absence, were to be amply demonstrated during the 1840s.

Although the East was beginning to call Palmer, he had not yet done with travelling in France, returning there in summer 1839 accompanied by his brother Horsley,²⁹⁹ and going 'to Rennes, Nantes, Angers, and Tours, and remaining for some time with M. Robert at Abbeville,³⁰⁰ where Roundell and their younger brother Edwin³⁰¹ joined them for a night. The nervousness with which Palmer's opinions and churchmanship were regarded within the family is shown by the stern warning Horsley was given by his father (Palmer's Uncle George) before he left: 'Now when you are abroad with your brother William if he tries to take you into any

²⁹⁷ MFP, vol. 1, pp. 264-5.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ George Horsley Palmer (1822- c.1890), of Exeter College Oxford, matriculated November 1843, BA 1847, deacon 1850, priest 1852, Rector of Mixbury 1852-1881. AO, p.1060, & CCD (1850), p.1852.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

³⁰¹ Edwin Palmer (1824-1895), of Balliol College Oxford, deacon 1854, priest 1868, Archdeacon of Oxford & Canon of Christchurch 1878 to death, Corpus Professor of Latin literature 1870-78. MEB, pp. 1316-17, and CCD (1887), p.926.

Church or monastery or to see Priests leave him at once, and come straight back to England.'³⁰² Palmer engaged in the usual arguments with sceptical French protagonists. Again and again he was taxed with being a man on his own. M. de Gesvrolles 'said all the English he had known had spoke [sic] very differently - He did not think Mr. Oxenham the "Ministre" would agree with me ...',³⁰³ and "some English persons" objected to Palmer's views of the doctrine of the real presence 'that I must hold very singular notions ... nobody else spoke so.'³⁰⁴ Madame de Montesquieu told him '... if I were to talk of this to the English who I meet in Society not one in a hundred would speak as you do ...'³⁰⁵ Another 'French gentleman' was 'exceedingly astonished' at what Palmer told him of the English Church, as the other English people he had spoken to, whilst admitting that 'the Prayer Book contained many relics of Popery,' had said 'that nobody thought of following them - and whenever there was an opportunity we should have a new Prayer Book.'³⁰⁶

The response of the Archbishop of Angers to Palmer's assertion that the Church of England had all the 'days of abstinence & fasting; the ember days - Lent &c vigils' was forthright: 'Bah! Bah! He said I lived at Oxford many years & remember how they eat & drank & gave dinners & parties all the same on all of them. I said I can only speak for myself - I know that common practice is very bad.'³⁰⁷ At dinner with the Curé de Tabori on 17 September he was 'asked how the doctrine of the Church of England was ascertainable - whether there might not be as many opinions as men and what right I had to suppose that what I thought was the

³⁰² LP MS 2457, f. 199.

³⁰³ Entry 25 Jun 1839, LP MS 2820, f. 20.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 28.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 82.

³⁰⁶ WP to W J P, 12 July 1839, LP MS 2834, f. 130 ff.

doctrine of the Church.³⁰⁸ He did not record his response; but his position can hardly have been helped by the testimony of a 'Mrs. C', a Catholic convert, who before her conversion from Anglicanism 'had the instruction of four Bishops at least & none of them agreed with one another.'³⁰⁹ He contended as before that 'the Church of England no more pretends to be the whole Catholic Church than the Church of France does - ... we say this Church consists of the Greek & Russian Communion the Continental Latin & the English.'³¹⁰ He spoke of 'the moral evidence afforded by Charles' [the First's] conduct that the English Episcopate was not the mere creation of the State,³¹¹ and again 'blamed Henry VIII in violence against the Pope and the Pope against Elizabeth equally.'³¹² He denied that the Oxford Movement was introducing new doctrines, but maintained that its object was solely 'to make people learn & follow & obey better the true, & old & constant doctrine both of the University & of the Church of England & indeed of the whole Catholic Church.'³¹³ However, his admission to the Archbishop that 'common practice is very bad' was typical of a much greater readiness on his part to admit openly the faults both of the Anglican Church and the English Government. To a M. Gesvrolles he 'admitted that the surface of English society presented every appearance of Heretical Protestantism,'³¹⁴ and that

ever since the Revolution of 1688 & the rebellious introduction of a Presbyterian King - the Government of Great Britain has been essentially Philosophe having either no religious conviction or one made out of its two establishments & agreeing with neither ... it is evident that the whole

³⁰⁷ LP MS 2820, f. 161.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 201.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 208.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 90.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, f. 49.

³¹² *Ibid.*, f. 86.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, f. 47.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, ff. 20-21.

influence of the Civil Power in matters of religion must have gone during the last 140 years to the recommendation of a latitudinarian compromise.³¹⁵

He even identified a peculiarly English heresy, that with Protestantism devastated Christendom, which he called 'the Gentleman heresy ... for in truth it is rare to meet any person of the Higher classes with anything like humility or simplicity marked on their countenance & yet though God has instituted divers ranks, yet the mind of the King should be as humble as that of a slave.'³¹⁶ He hoped, with naïve optimism, that the Executive by their actions were without knowing it 'unloosing one by one & removing all the chains & shackles which Henry VIII & his successors bound upon the Church' and 'untying the hands of the Bps which will one day or other lance the thunder of an anathema against them & against their principles.'³¹⁷

He found that the behaviour of the English congregations, 'sitting through the Doxology and even the Nicene Creed,'³¹⁸ and even more that of the English clergy abroad, had made an ineradicably bad impression upon the French with whom he spoke. M. de Gesvrolles 'had seen a great many English clergymen but had no idea that any of them received orders except for the sake of a provision.' Those whom he had seen in England he had nothing against: they 'were very good fellows quite Gentlemen,' although 'they all drank enormously.' But they were 'anything rather than Priests - he mentioned one man by name who was at a party when a dying man sent for him, but said he could not come.' On the Continent he had seen a great number, one of whom had been in the army but 'was ordained for preferment - now holds two livings in England, where he goes 3 or 4 times a year - residing here on pretence of ill-health. He was dressed like a Gamekeeper and his cards are inscribed

³¹⁵ Ibid., f. 47.

³¹⁶ Ibid., f. 157.

³¹⁷ Ibid., f. 48.

Mr. &c. He was not long ago Steward of a ball here.' Another young clergyman 'was distinguished for his love of gaiety and for his vanity & impudence. Another was remarkable for his voracity - several he had seen intoxicated - of one or two he mentioned still worse faults ...' This was not French prejudice talking. Palmer notes that what he heard from other English people 'went far to bear him out in his assertions.'³¹⁹ Still he dared to think that one day unity would come - perhaps

When the Pope & his Church see our Communion extending itself - united with the Orientals purified from all false differences & heretical ἡθoς & praying for him night & day & willing to concede everything lawful for peace's sake to the dignity of his See - perhaps he will be brought to admit that he has erred on some secondary points which now divide us ...

Small wonder that a M. Dupont 'cried out "Quel rêve!"'³²⁰

However bad a face the Anglican Church might show abroad, Palmer was still loyal to it, and impatient with the Roman Catholic expectation of unquestioning obedience to authority. He noted with irritation of a conversation with the Abbé Dupont des Loges that he 'brought in the eternal "Il faut" as usual.'³²¹ When a M. Blancart said to him sympathetically that Palmer had to admit there were great presumptions in their [the Roman Catholics'] favour, and that he 'seemed to him to be in a most unhappy position - fixed blindly in one idea,' Palmer replied 'I cannot force my understanding. My understanding is with my Church.'³²² Even so on his return he did not scruple to raise again with his father the question of confession. Perhaps to add force to his request, he told his father that he had sins 'worthy of excommunication' to confess. His father, unconvinced, pressed him to describe his understanding of what these might be. Palmer replied that they were those sins whose

³¹⁸ LP MS 2834, f. 134

³¹⁹ LP MS 2820, f. 27.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 113.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, f. 41.

³²² *Ibid.*, f. 222.

perpetrators St. Paul had advised Christians to avoid, in his own case ‘deliberate lying, theft, drunkenness a certain sin of uncleanness.’³²³ With the possible exception of the last, which might perhaps refer to occasional masturbation, this seems remarkably unlikely. An Oxford Tutor and Junior Bursar could hardly hope to perform his duties while leading the Jekyll and Hyde existence entailed by habitual lying, theft, and drunkenness. His father was sceptical: ‘I cannot believe that you ever lived in the allowance or practice habitual of any of those sins which you enumerate, and I have a good hope you never will.’ On the broader question of confession, he reiterated the Anglican position: ‘In the exercise of our functions we are restrained by the order and discipline of the Church whose servants we are. That Church discourages the use of private confession ...’³²⁴ He was suspicious both of his son’s motives in asking for confession - ‘I fear that you are moved now by a notion of the propriety and usefulness of this sort of confession, the comfort to be derived from a particular and special absolution, more than by the sense of sin itself’³²⁵ and of his glib use of the formula in the Exhortation:

I intreat of you to search & examine, & deceive neither yourself nor me. In any other case than that of your being unable to satisfy your own conscience not as to the use of Confession, but as to sin itself & the pardon of it, I feel that I ought not to comply with your request.

Despite all his reservations he still expressed himself ready

to hear you, to give you counsel & advice, & the sentence of absolution, which for our Lord’s sake is promised to the penitent & believing. And I desire in so doing my feelings may not be considered.³²⁶

³²³ LP MS 2834, f. 143; also in MS 2457 f. 230, where the last sin is described as ‘impurity’.

³²⁴ LP MS 2834, f. 147.

³²⁵ LP MS 1894, f. 24.

³²⁶ LP MS 2457, f. 230.

Palmer confessed to Dr. Routh instead: 'I felt a very great moral relief and happiness at having at length done this.'³²⁷

Soon after his return to England he was drawn into controversial but friendly disputation with George Spencer, who had converted to Roman Catholicism 'at a time when such conversions were rare.'³²⁸ A female relation of Spencer's, meeting Palmer in Abbeville and thinking him a possible convert, had caused Spencer to write a 'long and very pleasing letter'³²⁹ to Palmer on 21 October 1839. In reply Palmer described his interest in 'Romanists,' giving credit for the good motives which 'generally & apparently' had carried them into the Roman Church, and conceding that 'the Society itself has all the organisation of a Church though I think a schismatical one ...'³³⁰ Logically either the Church of England or the Church of Rome must be the true Church, but both could not be; he therefore felt himself bound to ensure that he had done all he could to live up to what was good in the Church of his Baptism before quitting it. Otherwise the fault if any would lie not with his Church but with him³³¹ - no doubt referring more to Spencer's decision to leave the Church of England than to any future move by Palmer. Thinking as he still did that despite its manifest faults the Church of England was the true Church, Palmer set out to Spencer his reasoning for that belief, rehearsed and refined by endless debates in France. He described how he had recognised in the Catholics he had met abroad 'not new but my own inherited principles and the plain and notorious principles of my own Church,' certainly with differences of detail, but agreeing on the 'fundamental principles concerning the Unity, Catholicity & Apostolicity of the visible Church';

³²⁷ Entry 8 April, 1840, *Ibid.*, f. 259.

³²⁸ MFP, vol. 1, p. 269.

³²⁹ Dated 20 Oct 1839, *Ibid.*

³³⁰ BO MS v.17 f. 13.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, f. 20.

how 'in spite of strong principles against them as Papists ... they were Brethren & of one and the same the same religion.'³³²

Conversely when, considering himself a Protestant, he had gone to see the Protestants of France and Switzerland, 'with the strongest prejudices in their favour', he found that he 'had no community of sentiment or principle with them but that they were the Dissenters of the Continent.'³³³ He maintained that the Church of England could not be said to have followed the Lutheran and Zwinglians in their heresies, proved by the fact that when the latter first came 'into contact with her "Reformed" as she was ... they commenced an internecine war against her.'³³⁴ He denied that the Reformation had brought in any 'new religion.' The Church [in England] had taken no lead in anything, but 'merely & barely assented and submitted to what was proposed to or rather thrust upon her rejecting some few things and qualifying others.' He cited the submission of the English clergy 'with a safe conscience' to the Reformation, as against their resignation from their benefices 'a century after ... rather than symbolise with Calvinistic Protestantism supported by the Temporal Power.' As for the laity, the old wills showed that they perceived no change of religion.³³⁵ He would agree that there was a change in 'certain accidents & ornaments as well as of some errors & abuses & corruption of religion', but not of anything essential, 'and held on Ecumenical authority to be essential in 1500 AD. You say that you have returned to 1500. I say that I have never departed from 1500.'³³⁶

He was at pains to refute Spencer's assumption, like so many others, that he was an integral part of the Oxford Movement. 'You take it for granted that I belong

³³² Ibid., f. 106.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid., f. 125.

³³⁵ Ibid., f. 126 ff.

³³⁶ Ibid., f. 135-136.

to a body of Divines here with whom I have never had any sort of connection,³³⁷ not having so much as read their writings,' he protested, and described his feelings of annoyance and offence when the movement first began to attract notice at finding what he had 'always been used to take for granted, as the clear & undoubted inheritance of the Church,' appropriated as the "views" of a new School of Theology.'³³⁸ The congruence between Palmer's understanding of 'the clear and undoubted inheritance of the Church' and the views of the Oxford Movement was well demonstrated by Palmer's *An Introduction to the 39 Articles*. This work, approved and corrected by Dr. Routh, took 'as the governing rule for their [the Articles'] interpretation, the principle of "agreement with the known sense of the Fathers and of the Church" laid down in the Canon (which never had legal authority) of A. D. 1571,' and explained the Articles 'according to what he understood as the sense of the Fathers "even if in any places they might be suspiciously or ambiguously worded".'³³⁹ Newman was not to read the *Introduction* until after Palmer's death, but said of it that 'its spirit and drift is the same as that of *Tract 90* of the *Tracts for the Times*'³⁴⁰ although it was written a year before *Tract 90*. Although Palmer wrote the *Introduction* for his pupils at Magdalen, he took it to Russia with him to show in what sense he took the Thirty Nine Articles, and thought they might fairly be

³³⁷ This is confirmed by Newman in the context of Spencer's visit to Oxford. Newman was invited by Palmer to dine with Spencer, but refused, considering him 'in loco apostatae'. He remarked: 'Palmer was annoyed. Poor fellow! he has put himself in a false position. People *will* assume he is one of us, and come to him for introductions to us; and he does not *know* even a number of us, and does not know the feelings, etc., of those he does know. So he has been hard pressed to entertain the said Mr. S.'

L & D, vol. VII p. 205

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 137.

³³⁹ MFP, vol. 1, p. 271.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

explained. 'The Russians, however, thought the Introduction was more orthodox than the Articles themselves.'³⁴¹

By coincidence at this same time Palmer described in his diary what it was like to hear two of the greatest figures of the Oxford Movement, Pusey and Newman, preach, and the effect on the hearers. He began with Pusey preaching the University Sermon at Christchurch:

When Dr. P preached the Cathedral was always crowded, and though the greater part had to stand and his sermons were always very long, and his style perplexed and anything but easy to follow, he was heard in breathless silence. The same indeed was true of Newman's sermons also ... but Newman is the only one whose peculiar monotone and long pauses, and rapid utterances & falls of voice between them, and risings of voice again to an emphasis which were all very natural & impressive in him but by no means fit for general imitation, were actually mimicked (unconsciously I suppose) by numbers; as were also certain habitual phrases and divisions and introductions of his which adhere still to the style written or spoken by some even of those who were never willing to be thought his followers.³⁴²

Invitations were extended by Palmer and Spencer to Oxford and Oscott respectively. Palmer, 'with more regard to prudential considerations than was usual with him,'³⁴³ declined to go to Oscott. His father had assured him that he was 'not in the least afraid' of any possible conversion to Roman Catholicism on his son's part, despite the fears of a friend that Palmer might be reconciled to the Roman Church, and 'help to convert others also.' He added rather uneasily 'I know you think fasting a duty and practice [sic] it.'³⁴⁴ Palmer replied that he certainly thought fasting a duty and could not conceive 'that anybody who thought about it at all could do otherwise, at least if he could read and had a Prayer Book'; but he did not intend to go to Oscott

³⁴¹ MCR, vol. VII, pp. 299-300.

³⁴² Entry 17 Nov. 1839, LP MS 2457, f. 235.

³⁴³ MFP, vol. 1, p. 270.

³⁴⁴ W J P to WP, 18 Nov 1839, LP MS 2834, f. 149.

to see Spencer 'for it would look to other people as if I either fancied I could convert the whole Community or was inclined to be converted myself.'³⁴⁵

Spencer came instead to Magdalen during the Christmas vacation of 1839, and found that in Palmer he had bitten off more than he could chew. Of the visit Palmer wrote in his diary: 'I myself had no scruple, nor fear of being compromised, no more than I had had when I invited the Bp. and the professors of Ushaw College to dine with us in Hall at Durham; as I was simply desirous to benefit them & to reconvert Mr. Spencer ...'³⁴⁶ Taking up where he had left off in their correspondence, as evidence that the English clergy at the Reformation were neither innovators, nor perceived as such, Palmer quoted the insults of 'the more zealous Reforming party', who called them 'Dumb dogs, Massing Priests &c.'³⁴⁷ He relied on the recognition 'of the jurisdiction of the unreformed Bishop of Coutances over Jersey'³⁴⁸ to refute any idea that the Church of England was a Calvinistic sect, although reasons of expediency or simple inertia might equally well explain that particular anomaly. He relied on the clergy's refusal to submit to the Civil Power in the Republic, or to James II or William III, against the accusation that the Church of England was Erastian; and on their putting down the Calvinists under Elizabeth to refute the accusation of Calvinism. He again relied on the martyrdom of Charles I and Laud to contradict the idea that the Church of England had 'substituted a merely Human for a Divine Episcopate' at the Reformation or afterwards:³⁴⁹ 'He [Charles I] would have been no better than a fool to have died for an Episcopate of his own or

³⁴⁵ Ibid., f. 153.

³⁴⁶ LP MS 2457 f. 246.

³⁴⁷ BO MS v.17 f. 189

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., f. 191

Henry VIII's creation.³⁵⁰ In response to a question from Spencer about the Royal Supremacy he conceded as before that Henry VIII had deprived the Pope of his jurisdiction over the Church in England 'violently & tyrannically not from any desire for the just liberty of this Church or Kingdom but from wicked passions,' but did not agree that the Church in England had ceased to exist thereby, nor that 'any Heretical Supremacy' was given to the Civil Power by the bishops and clergy. That he felt was proved by the words 'quantum per Christum legem fieri licet' by which Convocation limited its recognition, and by the express limitation in the Royal injunctions, the Canons, and the 39 Articles of the Royal Supremacy to 'that of the Jewish Kings and Christian Emperors.'³⁵¹

No specific heresy, he told Spencer, had ever been alleged against the Church of England that could by rights have led to any formal breach of Communion with the Catholic Church, and even if it had, it might have been held 'without any Heretical intention', and abjured forthwith had convincing proof been brought against it.³⁵² In Russia, this argument was to be dismissed with impatience; Spencer's reaction was that, as he put it to Palmer, his metaphorical masts and rigging had been carried away by Palmer's shot. He frankly admitted that Palmer had gained the advantage over him, suggesting that as an unlearned man, he was no match for Palmer's erudition. Palmer had no patience with this: 'With respect to what you say in your letter of the advantage I had over you ... I did not attempt then to examine with you or prove any point by learning ...'³⁵³, and later, 'You cannot hurt me more

³⁵⁰ LP MS 2818, f. 59.

³⁵¹ BO MS v.17 f.192.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, f. 195.

³⁵³ WP to GS, 15 Feb. 1840, *Ibid.*, f. 290.

than by talking about my Learning & ingenuity in such matters.’³⁵⁴ In conceding defeat, Spencer echoed M. Robert:

I do not think there are many of us, whom at a first encounter, you would not considerably puzzle: because you make out a case for the Anglican Church, which I never dreamed of ... I would tell others as I tell you, that I was greatly surprized and extremely baffled by your conversation ...³⁵⁵

Going further than M. Robert, he analysed Palmer’s position and character with objective but painful accuracy. He identified Palmer’s over-confidence: ‘I do not think you are yet in the way to be convinced by any one. I may be judging you too hard, but I think you want more diffidence in your own judgement, than you have gained,’ and predicted Palmer’s future isolation:

I will tell you the impression which your conversation makes upon me about you: It is that you have admirable Catholic principles in your mind, that in a great many things you apply them to practice beautifully, but when I look at the whole exposition and defence which you make of your position, as a Churchman I see [you] most plainly to be standing almost alone. If you have the success which I formerly would have wished to have, when I was following my own ideas, you may have followers soon & not be quite alone. Others may take your explanation of the foundation of the Church of England & of her doctrines; but if you are as I trust you are incapable of being settled into a Party leader, you will have I am convinced no real associates until you come to that communion which, notwithstanding your clever & learned reasoning I still must say most confidently & clearly, our fathers chose to leave, thinking, but presumptuously, to reform what could not be reformed.
³⁵⁶

This was an astute assessment, whose faintly feline quality seems to be reflected in Newman’s impression of Spencer. After Spencer, together with Palmer, had called on him, Newman wrote: ‘He is a gentlemanlike, mild, pleasing man, but sadly smooth.’³⁵⁷ Spencer, smoothly describing himself as ‘one who is truly humble, diffident of his own powers,’ declared that there was no prospect of Palmer’s

³⁵⁴ Ibid., f. 317.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., f. 261.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., f. 266 ff.

³⁵⁷ L & D, vol. VII p. 206.

converting him back to the Church of England, as he would, if he found himself 'perplexed,' do 'as a child will do, fly to his mother for refuge and comfort.'³⁵⁸ When he did so, Spencer was forbidden by his superiors to read any more of Palmer's letters, and the correspondence ceased.

In responding to Spencer's criticisms, Palmer set out two of his main objections to Roman Catholic attitudes and doctrine:

... I have generally found myself that they attempt first to beg & assume the whole question. Then if all is not conceded at once to browbeat and bully simple people into calling them Catholics & themselves by implication Heretics ... I really believe that this is one great reason why the whole question between our church and Rome has seldom if ever yet been fairly worked out. It has always been taken for granted.³⁵⁹

He also objected to the 'most dangerous and Anticatholic doctrine' of 'blind and unreasonable submission ... to the self-asserted absolute supremacy of the Roman Bishop and the new definition of the Church itself & its doctrine ... which follows upon the assumption of that Monarchy.'³⁶⁰ He admitted that Roman Catholics were given an insuperable prejudice *in limine* against the Anglican Church by its 'weak, divided, ignorant & corrupt state,' and that if the Church of England had clergy who were 'good and holy' rather than 'ignorant and worldly,' many a Dissenter might be converted rather than rail or even preach against them.³⁶¹ He even confessed that 'I have found myself ... quite as often hasty & presumptuous against my own as against the Foreign Churches,' and that 'all my first prejudices (since I have been used to study Theology) in every question lean very much against my own Church, and in favour of Rome.'³⁶² Palmer admitted too that he had 'too great confidence' in his own judgement, and was 'deficient in humility and docility'; he assured Spencer that

³⁵⁸ BO MS v.17 f. 261.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 296.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 308.

he prayed constantly for improvement in those respects. Conscious that his understanding was 'better than that of many people,' he both feared and knew that it was better than his feelings and his habits of action. 'By following my own selfish & proud & carnal mind, I have both come to be greatly & justly humbled, and am quite conscious that I am a very different creature indeed from what I might & ought to have been, & should have been if I had always done my duty from my Childhood ...' But whilst admitting the faults Spencer charged him with, he did not see how he could 'pursue with the wreck of my faculties any other method than that which I do try to pursue ...'³⁶³ It is unclear in what way and when he thought he had been 'greatly & justly humbled' or how he reconciled his understanding being better than many with his faculties being 'wrecked'; perhaps consistency was sacrificed for dramatic effect.

In private he indulged in further self-flagellation at resolutions made and broken. Having resolved '1. Surgere statim 2. Hoc agere'³⁶⁴ 3. Avoid useless & idle self reflection whether by dwelling on the past or anticipating the future 4. Patientius cum matre'³⁶⁵ (her bodily ails causing her to be often very excitable),³⁶⁶ by 6 March he was writing:

1. I lay in bed till as near 6am as I could
2. I was indisposed to begin
3. Wasted time more or less between 7 & 10 am
4. Had wandering thoughts in Chapel
5. Again indisposed to work:
6. Impatient of the cold
7. Stayed too long, wasting time, in the Common Room;
8. Talked in a bad tone.

Having broken all but one of his original resolutions, he reiterated them and added: 'Not to sit by the fire: Not to stay after half past 6 or (if there are strangers with us)

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Ibid., f.317.

³⁶³ Ibid., ff. 314-315.

³⁶⁴ '1. To get up at once. 2. To get on with business.'

³⁶⁵ '4. To [deal] more patiently with mother.'

after 7pm in the Common Room.³⁶⁷ But the very next day he wrote: '1. Nequeo surgere mane; 2 totum fere diem tero nihil agendo; 3. Je lis les journaux; 4. Minimi "hoc ago"; 5. Frigoris impatiens ad focum sedeo.'³⁶⁸ Just over a week later he reviewed his continuing laxness - 'I have lately wasted my time- lain in bed - neglected my Prayers - said my private Prayers, with distractions and & by rote' - and concluded 'I am full of pride, vanity, laziness, hypocrisy sensuality & all this in Lent'³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ Entry 21 Jan. 1840, LP MS 2457, f. 250.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., f. 259.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., f. 257: '1. I cannot get up early; 2. I waste almost the whole day in doing nothing; 3. I read newspapers; 4. I do very little pressing business; 5. Impatient of the cold I sit by the fire.'

³⁶⁹ Entry 15/27 March, LP MS 2470.

1. The S P C K

Lord Selborne described 1840 for William and himself as ‘an epoch of transition from the privacy of domestic and collegiate or professional to larger and more public spheres of activity.’³⁷⁰ A series of public controversies were to bring Palmer to general notice, the first over the general function and control of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. William Palmer senior had summarised the problem in a letter to Roundell in 1838, with reference to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel: ‘I should like to see the objects of the Society taken up *by the Church* - the Church should lead - the Society might be made its agent and handmaid ... I feel no confidence in the usefulness of societies, *per se*, to to effect objects truly and properly ecclesiastical where a Church exists.’³⁷¹ Palmer shared these views, and in April 1840 proposed to put to the SPCK a Resolution that it renounce its ‘usurpation of episcopal powers.’ He was spurred to do so by unedifying squabbles, in the absence of episcopal authority, between Evangelical and High Church clergymen over publications approved by the Tract Committee. Archbishop Howley, chairing one meeting, had to intervene with the words ‘the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.’³⁷² Roundell Palmer ‘with some misgiving ... consented to act the part of Sancho Panza to his Don Quixote’³⁷³ by giving notice in Palmer’s name of a motion to be put to a meeting of the Society. The reaction was as he had feared: ‘I have done your bidding today - not without some tremor of nerve, I assure you. To my apprehension, the members of the ... Society received your notice

³⁷⁰ MFP, vol. 1, p.277.

³⁷¹ W J P to RP, 16 June 1838, LP MS 1878 f. 47, quoted in MFP, vol. 1 p.278.

³⁷² James 1:20, MFP, vol. 1 pp. 277-8.

³⁷³ MFP, vol. 1, p.277.

much in the same way that they might have received a thunderbolt if it had fallen among them. Some were disposed to laugh at what evidently seemed to them to be the extravagance of the proposition ...³⁷⁴ He remonstrated with his brother for not giving him notice that would have allowed him time to voice objections, and without which he felt bound to act for fear of appearing cowardly. He asked, though he must have known the answer, if William had 'consulted Dr. Pusey and Mr. Newman, before venturing upon so decided a step.' To this Palmer typically replied, 'I have not mentioned my intention to anybody, nor do I intend to trouble myself about anybody's vote or opinion,' seeing it as a matter of 'discharging my own private duty and conscience ... having placed myself from the first, in a false position by becoming a member of the Society at all, which I did without due consideration.'³⁷⁵ Pusey was later consulted, and wanted the notice withdrawn, but Palmer 'was not the man to give such a notice and afterwards withdraw it, at Dr. Pusey's or any other man's bidding.'³⁷⁶

Roundell was concerned that his brother should 'in speaking upon the motion, use the most guarded temperance and calmness and discretion of language ... nothing but the most exemplary discretion on your part can prevent the discussion from assuming a very strong and perhaps personal and disgraceful character. Whatever happens, do not let us be agitators, or adopt anything in the least resembling their tone.'³⁷⁷ A postscript to the letter revealed an unexpected side to Palmer: 'P.S. It would be no surprise to me if the adversaries should scout up and ... bring forward to your prejudice stories of your indiscretion (as I must call it) in France &c. Such as

³⁷⁴ RP to WP, 7 April 1840, *Ibid.*, p. 279.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 279-80.

playing at cards on Sunday &c. &c.’³⁷⁸ Palmer replied reassuringly that he intended ‘to do my best to observe the caution and temper which you recommend.’³⁷⁹

The Resolution proposed that the Society should rid itself of any function or responsibility, ‘which belongs of right to the Bishops of the Church.’ In particular it should not ‘pronounce any decision upon doctrine’ nor choose books or tracts for churches at home and abroad. It was to confine itself instead to the raising of money, whose expenditure was to be determined by the archbishops and bishops. Palmer put forward the motion on 6 May to a full meeting, at which 257 voted, though more were present. The Chairman, the ex-Headmaster of Charterhouse, Dr. Russell,³⁸⁰ ‘obtained for him a very fair and patient hearing,’³⁸¹ although himself opposed to the motion. He read the motion ‘with a suppressed smile,’³⁸² stopping ‘some attempt from a few members to make confusion.’³⁸³ Roundell had anticipated that the obvious question would be whether the bishops themselves been consulted about the motion, which would otherwise be disrespectful. This was indeed put by the celebrated Evangelical vicar of Harrow, Mr. Cunningham,³⁸⁴ but Palmer ‘parried’ it by saying that the question would be answered in his speech. Palmer then began to read the speech, which was itself objected to as being out of order, but again this was overruled by Dr. Russell. The speech ‘was long, and occupied about an hour in

³⁷⁸ LP MS 2836, f. 246.

³⁷⁹ WP to RP, 9 Apr 1840, LP MS 1878, f. 206.

³⁸⁰ Rev. John Russell (1787-1863), of Christ Church Oxford, BA 1806, ordained 1810, Headmaster of Charterhouse 1811, prebendary and Canon residentiary of Canterbury 1827, President of Sion College 1845 & 1846, Treasurer of the SPG. DNB.

³⁸¹ MFP, vol. 1, p.281.

³⁸² LP MS 1878, f. 62.

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Rev. John William Cunningham (1780-1861), of St. John’s College Cambridge, Vicar of Harrow 1811 to death, editor of *The Christian Observer* 1850-1858, and author of *The Velvet Cushion*, a popular novel. DNB.

reading³⁸⁵ and 'was much more religious in its tone than ... usual at these meetings, scarcely less so than a sermon.'³⁸⁶

Although it 'went very much into detail, and, in parts, without sufficient care to make the relevancy of the detail apparent'³⁸⁷ it 'was listened to with much respect and attention.' 'Upon the whole' wrote Roundell to his father afterwards, 'I must praise our opponents for their forbearance ... I think (to say nothing of the *reading* it) it was a speech which no other man in the room would have made ... It might have been framed more skilfully, and better and more concisely expressed in many parts. It was delivered, on the whole, calmly and without excitement ... the temper with which he took interruption was perfect ...'³⁸⁸ This was no doubt a huge relief both to Roundell and his father. A motion 'that the question be not put' was carried by a majority of only 27, 'a virtual triumph' for the Palmers, given the numbers they had expected to support them.³⁸⁹ Satisfied, Palmer published the speech and then resigned from the Society. Lord Selborne commented that 'many others besides my father and myself thought he had done good service,'³⁹⁰ although these sentiments were not apparently shared by Bishop Bagot of Oxford:

I entirely sanction (as it is more satisfactory to yourself to have that sanction) your publication of your late speech at the monthly meeting of the SPCK, and much regret the course which has led to the letter, and to the necessity of the step you feel it right to take by withdrawing from the Society - a step I am sure you would not have taken without very strong grounds.³⁹¹

It is pleasing to read that in the same month the abbé Robert, so often Palmer's host in France, was entertained by the family at Mixbury. Lord Selborne

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ MFP, vol. 1, p.282.

³⁸⁷ LP MS 1878, ff. 63-64.

³⁸⁸ MFP, vol. 1, p.282.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., p.283.

³⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 284.

wrote a touch condescendingly that he 'equipped himself, along with other habiliments which he supposed to be appropriate to such an occasion, in a blue coat with bright brass buttons,' and was driven about in an elderly family gig which had descended 'from prehistoric times' and was consequently 'not too elastic in its springs.' The abbé on his return wrote up his experiences 'not without some embellishments' for French readers, 'horses of all work' appearing as 'mettlesome steeds', and 'the ancient vehicles transformed into "*beaux charabancs*".'³⁹²

2. Preparation for Russia

By summer 1840, Palmer was a brilliant if anguished young man, well respected within his College and the University of Oxford, who had done more than his share of useful work in setting up a new university. His travels abroad had widened his ecclesiastical and linguistic horizons, profoundly altering some of the prejudices with which he had set out, and given him the opportunity to refine his theories of the claims and status of the Church of England as a rightful part of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. That this had made him a formidable controversialist had been shown by the unexpected and unsettling *bouleversement* of George Spencer. His speech to the SPCK had shown that he could curb his impetuosity and by his sincerity persuade others to a point of view that they might otherwise have dismissed with incredulity or laughter. He had stepped onto the stage of English public life with some success; now, in Russia, he was to move into an even wider

³⁹¹ LP MS 2837, f.3.

³⁹² MFP, vol. 1 p.284.

arena. He had chosen, with some misgivings, to be a clergyman; but with his abilities a golden future seemed inevitable in whatever sphere he chose to act.

In summer 1840 he began an acquaintance that was to last for the rest of his life, with R. W. Blackmore,³⁹³ the chaplain to the English Russia Company, who was stationed at Cronstadt.³⁹⁴ He explained to Blackmore his reasons for going to Russia, and his plans once there:

I have been intending now for several years to make this journey for the purpose of studying the Oriental Church and learning the Russian language ... I am firmly convinced that Communication and better knowledge of each other would unite the English and Oriental Communions ... My present idea is to procure letters under the seal of the Society, sending me as it were on a mission by their authority to study the Russian Theology, and recommending me to the charitable assistance of the Authorities of the Russian Church, requesting them both to examine into the orthodoxy of my belief and to countenance and assist study of their Church & doctrine with a view ultimately ... of working towards a restoration of unity to the visible Church.³⁹⁵

He raised for the first time the idea of living in the Spiritual Academy, 'following all the rules of the society' or of being 'placed in attendance upon some Bishop or Archbishop till I should have both learned the language and the whole system both of their doctrines and ceremonies.' He also proposed in all seriousness that: 'if I found it possible I should very likely seek to be admitted into Priest's Orders ... by some Russian Bishop,' although he realised that he would need 'the consent and approbation of my superiors at home', and agreement by the Russian spiritual

³⁹³ Rev. Richard White Blackmore (1791-1882), of Merton College Oxford, chaplain to the Russia Company 1819-47, Rector of Donhead St. Mary near Salisbury from 1847 to his death, author of the *History of the Church of Russia* (1842), and *The Doctrine of the Russian Church* (1845). MEB, vol. 1 p.298.

³⁹⁴ Blackmore outlived Palmer, and wrote after his death to his brother Edwin Palmer that: 'He was one of my oldest and most esteemed friends - I always had more pleasure in his company than of any one I know and learned far more from him than any one I ever conversed with ... I think I may say that in our long acquaintance never an angry word passed between us.' R W B to E P, 12 May 1879, BO MS.

³⁹⁵ WP to R W B, 15 June 1840, BO MS v. G.37 f. 90.

authority in his interpretation of the 'Filioque'.³⁹⁶ 'I do not see myself,' he wrote naively, 'how there could be any other obstacle to my admission to their Communion.'³⁹⁷ He agreed with Blackmore, who had obviously written to him already on the point, that 'no solid union between Churches is to be gained by straining points nor by "explaining away" on either side' but only by 'clear and ascertained agreement or honest admission of error on Conviction and amendment.' Then latitude might be given to matters of secondary importance relating to discipline or tradition, distinguished of course from those articles essential to 'the saving Faith.'³⁹⁸

He then digressed to the Oxford Movement, about which Blackmore clearly shared his views; Blackmore had told Archbishop Philaret that they were not, as the Archbishop had been informed, wishing to 'bring back Popery', but 'only to return to the true principles of our Church.' Palmer agreed: 'If what they wish to bring back is Popery I have been bred up in Popery ever since I was born'; what they and their opinions stood for was 'the true doctrine and character of our own Church.'³⁹⁹ He recalled his distaste on returning to Oxford in 1836 at finding the 'unpleasant air of a party or School hanging about' the writings of Pusey and Newman, and at being branded a 'Newmanite' whenever he 'spoke on Church matters with people who were less of Churchmen', or had more 'information on any point of Divinity' than they did.⁴⁰⁰ He had resolved as a consequence to avoid reading the writings of the Oxford Movement, so that he could truthfully say to 'people who had prejudices against them and their principles' that he knew nothing of their writings. Over the

³⁹⁶ The clause in the Creed stating that the Holy Spirit 'proceeds from the Father and the Son.'

³⁹⁷ BO MS v. G.37 f. 90.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., f. 93.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., f. 94.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

four years since his return his initial suspicions had been replaced by admiration for the 'constant and repeated signs of sincerity, industry, learning, holiness, patience and charity with the greatest desire to submit to all legitimate authority and to avoid doing any thing upon any other principles than those of legal and dutiful Churchmen' that the leaders of the Movement had shown.⁴⁰¹ The only reason why they attracted a kind of School was 'the natural influence and attraction of a very shining superiority.'⁴⁰²

Palmer also mentioned in the letter the correspondence between the Non-Juring bishops of Scotland and England and the Russian and Greek Churches. Begun in the early 1700s with a view to union, this had foundered in 1725 when Peter the Great died, and Archbishop Wake of Canterbury wrote to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Chrysanthus, warning him that he was corresponding with schismatics. The Archbishop, 'a liberal Churchman,' went out of his way to affirm the identity of the faith of the Church of England 'in every fundamental article' with that of the Eastern Church, 'adding "We shall not cease ... to hold communion with you, and to pray for your peace and happiness".'⁴⁰³ Palmer in his letter to Blackmore said that he suspected that the correspondence 'was mismanaged on both sides, and that if there had been a little more communication and a better understanding before they began it would have had a very different result.'

The Non-Juring bishops were less than frank about their position in England, styling themselves 'the Catholick remnant of the British Churches.'⁴⁰⁴ For George

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., f. 95.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ MFP, vol. 1, p.287.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 5.

Williams they were 'ecclesiastically' in 'an utterly false position.'⁴⁰⁵ In addition, 'the whole ecumenical endeavour was vitiated by a lack of clear understanding about the doctrine of the Church.'⁴⁰⁶ Perhaps Palmer should have taken closer note of the reaction of the Patriarch Chrysanthus, who replied to the Non-Jurors in July 1718 that the Orthodox Faith was 'the only true, religious and right Faith,'⁴⁰⁷ and that there was 'no room for adjustment or dispensation in matters of doctrine - complete agreement with the Orthodox faith [was] absolutely indispensable.'⁴⁰⁸

The significant difference between Palmer and the Non-Jurors was that Palmer did not seek reunion with the Eastern Church. He firmly believed that the Church of England had never lost communion with the Eastern Church, much as Wake had stated in his letter to Chrysanthus. Relying on the 'Branch theory', he could demand admission to Communion as of right, and seek the priesthood at the hands of a Russian bishop. Newman set out this belief with lapidary conciseness in the Prefatory Notice to *Notes of a Visit to the Russian Church*. Palmer considered the Church

at present to exist in three main branches, or rather in a triple presence, the Latin, the Greek, and the Anglican, these three being one and the same Church, distinguishable from each other only by secondary, fortuitous and local, though important, characteristics ... it followed that Christians generally, wherever they were, were bound to recognize, and had a claim to be recognized by, that one, ceasing to belong to the Anglican Church, as Anglican, when they were at Rome, and ignoring Rome as Rome, when they found themselves at Moscow.

This, Newman said,

is what Mr. Palmer intensely believed and energetically acted on when he went to Russia. It was his motive cause for going there; for he hoped to obtain

⁴⁰⁵ The Rev. George Williams, *The Orthodox Church of the East in the Eighteenth Century* (hereafter Williams) (London: Rivingtons, 1868), p. xxii.

⁴⁰⁶ Ruth Rouse, and S. C. Neill, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948* (hereafter Rouse & Neill) (London: SPCK, 1954), p. 193.

⁴⁰⁷ Williams, p. 16.

⁴⁰⁸ Rouse & Neill, p. 192.

from the Imperial Synod such a recognition of his right to the Greco-Russian Sacraments, as would be an irrefragible proof that the doctrine of Anglican divines was no mere theory, and that an Anglican Christian was *ipso facto* an Oriental Orthodox also.⁴⁰⁹

Hence the importance of the letters Palmer sought from his College, and his talk to Blackmore and elsewhere of examination into the orthodoxy of his belief. In this he sought to conform to the letter of the Church of England Canon XXIII 'of those called Apostolical', which stated:

Let no stranger Bishop or Priest or Deacon be received without Letters Communicatory; and when such Letters are brought, let the parties be nevertheless first examined, and if they be found professors of godly doctrine, let them be received.⁴¹⁰

As a first step in the process of obtaining the letters, Palmer spoke to Dr. Routh, whom he asked, notwithstanding his belief in the Branch theory, whether he 'ought voluntarily to separate myself from the Russian Church, or rather seek the Communion from the local Bishop.' Routh approved of the latter course, but recognised the realities of the situation: 'It will lead to nothing, I fear, sir, for a separation there unhappily is; but it will show that there are some among us who wish it were otherwise.'⁴¹¹ He confirmed what Palmer had argued with Spencer, that the English Church had never by any public or synodical act renounced the communion of the Eastern Church, nor had those Churches excommunicated the English Church by name.

Palmer therefore drafted a letter of recommendation, which was corrected by Dr. Routh, and engrossed on parchment. This was read to a College meeting on 27 July 1840, and the President proposed that the College seal be affixed to it. However

⁴⁰⁹ NV, pp. v-vii.

⁴¹⁰ LP MS 2457, f. 283.

⁴¹¹ NV, p.10.

Richard Waldo Sibthorp, a Fellow of Magdalen,⁴¹² who was himself received into the Roman Church the following year, objected excitedly to ‘giving encouragement to the idea of intercommunion with the *idolatrous* Greek Church’, at which others including the Vice-President also objected. Dr. Routh remarked urbanely ‘Unity, gentlemen, is very desirable’ and moved on to other business. A compromise in the form of a Certificate of leave of absence from the College for study was proposed and accepted. The next day Dr. Routh sent for Palmer and told him that ‘I should be sorry, sir, that you should go to Russia with only that meagre document’, pointing out that ‘there is nothing to prevent *my* giving you, in my own name, any letter I please.’ He returned the parchment abbreviated and altered, saying that he could find precedents for what he was doing, ‘but that in strictness such letters ought to be from a Bishop.’⁴¹³ This was true, and was later to present Palmer with problems in Russia. The body of the letter reflected Palmer’s aims as stated to Blackmore, requesting ‘the Russian Bishops’ and ‘especially the Most Holy Spiritual Synod’ that by their ‘favour and protection’ Palmer might ‘become acquainted with the doctrines, rites, and ceremonies of the Russian Church, and may learn the Russian language, either in the Spiritual Academy or elsewhere’. A request for admission to communion followed, couched in archaic and dramatic terms:

Further, I ask, and even adjure in the name of Christ, all the most holy Archbishops and Bishops, and especially the Synod itself, that they will examine him as to the orthodoxy of his faith with a charitable mind, and, if they find in him all that is necessary to the integrity of the true and saving faith ... will ... admit him to communion in the Sacraments.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹² Richard Waldo Sibthorp (1792-1879), matriculated at University College Oxford 1809, demy of Magdalen 1811, ordained Anglican priest 1815, received as a Roman Catholic 1841, ordained RC priest 1842, returned to the Church of England October 1843, readmitted as an Anglican minister 1857, but returned to the Church of Rome January 1865, although the Anglican burial service was read over his grave: DNB.

⁴¹³ NV, p. 12.

⁴¹⁴ NV, pp. 13-14.

The President's seal was affixed under the closing wish that Palmer might 'submit and conform himself in all things to the injunctions and admonitions of the Russian Bishops', always providing that he neither affirmed nor did anything 'contrary to the faith and doctrine of the British Churches.'⁴¹⁵ Routh approved Palmer's proposal to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury to countersign or authorise the letter, and urged him to take up introductions to the English residents in St. Petersburg, including the Ambassador, Lord Clanricarde⁴¹⁶, that Palmer had declined 'as making nothing to my purpose'.⁴¹⁷

The letters of introduction Palmer received from Lord Clanricarde were to Count Pratasoff,⁴¹⁸ the Ober Prokuror or High Procurator of the Russian Synod⁴¹⁹, and M. de Barante,⁴²⁰ the French Ambassador. "You will be surprised" said Clanricarde "to see a General of Hussars in his uniform, an Aide de Camp of the Emperor, holding such a position, presiding in the Synod, and directing the Bishops, and governing the Church."⁴²¹ Pratasoff must have been equally surprised to read, in Clanricarde's uncertain diplomatic French, of the 'désir ... bizarre' of this 'jeune homme très

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

⁴¹⁶ Ulick John de Burgh, Earl of Clanricarde (1802-1874), created Marquess of Clanricarde 1825, Baron Somerhill 1826, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1826-7, PC 1830, Ambassador to St. Petersburg 1838-41, Postmaster-General 1846-52, Lord Privy Seal for three weeks in 1858 (his appointment brought down Palmerston's government). CP, vol. III, pp. 237-8.

⁴¹⁷ LP MS 2457, f. 277.

⁴¹⁸ Pratasoff, Count Nicolai Alexandrovich (1798-1855), Officer of the Life Guard Hussar Regiment, 1817, fought in the Turkish War 1828, decorated for role in taking Warsaw 1831, promoted Colonel 1834, Ober-Prokuror of the Holy Synod 1835, Lt-General 1848, member of the State Council 1853. RBS, pp. 81-4.

⁴¹⁹ The Holy Governing Synod was formed in 1721 by Peter the Great as an alternative to the Moscow patriarchate. It was composed of the three metropolitans (of Kiev, Moscow, and St. Petersburg) and of other bishops appointed for fixed periods by the Tsar. In 1722 Peter created the office of Chief Procurator [Ober-Prokuror], who was to be a lay official, with a large bureaucracy under him, reaching down to the full-time lay secretaries of the episcopal consistories. See H. Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire, 1801-1917* (Oxford, 1967), 34. Leon Litvack, *John Mason Neale and the Quest for Sobornost* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), p. 46, n. 25.

⁴²⁰ Amable-Guillaume-Prosper, Baron de Brugière (1782-1866), 'Auditeur' in the Council of State 1806, Sub-Prefect of Bessuire 1808, Prefect of the Vendée 1809, Prefect of Nantes 1813, on the return of Louis XVIII, made Councillor of State and Secretary General of Ministry of the Interior, after the July Revolution Ambassador to the Court of Sardinia, and to the Court of Russia 1835-48. DUC, (1st Ed'n., 1858), pp. 99-100.

instruit ... etre reçu dans l'Eglise Greco-Russe, communier, et faire les etudes necessaires, dans une seminaire à Moscow [sic], pour devenu d' etre Pretre de cette Religion.'⁴²² To be received into the Orthodox Church and to become a priest was by no means what Palmer sought, although he certainly wished to be granted communion and study in the Spiritual Academy.

On 1 August the Archbishop of Canterbury had told Palmer he was willing to provide his countersignature to Dr. Routh's letter, but as with the College meeting, problems immediately arose. Palmer had left the letter at Lambeth Palace on 5 August, with a copy of his *Introduction to the 39 Articles*. The *Introduction* was not to be given to the Archbishop, but held for reference in case of queries from Russia about Palmer's interpretation of the Articles. The next day Harrison, the Archbishop's chaplain, wrote to say that the Archbishop could not sign the letter, because it would commit him to Palmer's interpretation of the 39 Articles. If Palmer's application 'to be received into Communion' were then rejected, that would involve 'the rejection of the English Church, and the denial of its orthodoxy by the Russian.' The Archbishop would willingly have given Letters Commendatory to Palmer had he been going on a visit of enquiry, but 'would altogether object to a Clergyman of our Church offering himself for ... examination to the Bishops & Clergy of the Russian Church, with a view to joining, if possible, their Communion.'⁴²³ Plainly either Harrison did not share or understand Palmer's view that the English and Russian Churches were essentially one, or was engaging in a spoiling operation behind Palmer's back, using the Archbishop as cover. Lord

⁴²¹ NV, p.14.

⁴²² RGIA, fond 797, opis 87, dēlo 64.

⁴²³ NV, p.14. Perhaps Lord Clanricarde's misunderstanding of Palmer's intentions had been communicated to the Archbishop.

Selborne saw Harrison as a man who was originally in many respects 'like-minded with' his brother - 'though not in force or tenacity of purpose' - but who from the time of his appointment as domestic chaplain to the Archbishop 'was ... identified with the *status quo* of the English Church, and the measures taken or accepted by the Episcopacy of the day - a position from which my brother's mind was continually recoiling.'⁴²⁴

Palmer explained to Harrison that he was not asking or expecting the Archbishop to endorse his *Introduction to the 39 Articles*, but simply required a certificate that both he and Dr. Routh were in communion with the Church of England. Hearing nothing, but hoping the certificate would follow, on 11 August 'at half past 10 p.m. [he] went on board the Hamburg [sic] steamer, the John Bull ... which weighed anchor at about 1 o'clock am. We were in Hamburg at 6 am. On Friday the 14th I went on shore.'⁴²⁵

Writing from the ship, Palmer asked Harrison directly whether the Archbishop disapproved 'of a member of the English Church seeking or accepting the Communion of any foreign Church or Bishop,' providing he did not affirm or do anything 'contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of England.'⁴²⁶ He reiterated that the English Church had never separated itself from the Eastern, and that he was not seeking to leave one Communion to join another. His failure to obtain a certificate that he and his College were in Communion with the English Church would speak for itself, were there any danger of his views being taken as representing anyone but himself.⁴²⁷ Harrison replied that he thought 'it was rather de trop to have the Abp's

⁴²⁴ MFP, vol. 1, pp. 265-6.

⁴²⁵ LP MS 2457, f. 287. I assume the delay was due to quarantine regulations - no other reason is given.

⁴²⁶ BO MS Book 2 p. 7 ff.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

signature ... to testify that you & your College were in Communion with the Church of England ... Dr. Routh's Letters were evidence enough.⁴²⁸ He denied that the Archbishop had refused Palmer a certificate, and suggested that Palmer could as easily have taken with him 'the Liturgy, & Articles of the Church of England ... and then, if objections were made to things in them ... refer, for their interpretation, to the Standard & recognised Divines of our Church.' Less convincing, perhaps, was his introduction of the 'very grave consideration' ... of 'what is likely to promote or hinder, eventually, the cause of Christian unity at home & abroad, within our Church, and between it and other branches of the Church Catholic'⁴²⁹, 'eventually' being a conveniently elastic term that left open the comfortable option of indefinite inaction. Zeal for unity with the East had not hitherto been a conspicuous feature of Howley's Archbishopric.

Perhaps neither party was being entirely honest with the other. Palmer hoped to obtain high-level backing for a practical test of his belief in the Anglican Church as part of the Church Catholic, almost forcing the Archbishop's hand to endorse his 'old plain A & C principles.'⁴³⁰ Harrison was not prepared to let that happen, nor have Palmer a *de facto* spokesman for Anglicanism. The episode was a warning to Palmer that he could expect little, if any, support whilst in Russia from the hierarchy of the Church of England.

Subsequently a letter from Palmer to his father about the matter was passed on by him to Mrs. Howley,⁴³¹ whom his father knew socially. Mrs. Howley reported that 'His Grace was much pleased with it', and considered that Palmer had a much

⁴²⁸ B H to WP, 7 Sept., *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33:

⁴³⁰ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. I f. 94; 'A' for Anglican, 'C' for Catholic.

⁴³¹ When they met 'at a ball in honour of the Queen Dowager,' FT, p. 24.

better chance of success without his signature, 'as no suspicion could attach to an individual acting independently, but if authorized by his Grace, it might excite alarm'. His declining to sign was therefore 'a matter of caution equally beneficial to both parties.' Mrs. Howley also told Palmer's father that his son had 'created an interest and left a favourable impression behind ... at Lambeth.'⁴³² This simply caused Palmer more confusion. Writing to his father about the difficulties caused by his lack of proper episcopal accreditation, he confessed himself:

considerably embarrassed by the contrary impressions which your report of some conversation with Mrs. Howley about me at Stowe and a note from Mr. Harrison (the Archb'p's Chaplain) had left upon my mind - for what you reported seemed to imply that the Abp had not refused to put his name to the President's Letters ... but Harrison's note had already given me a contrary impression ... I could not help feeling a suspicion that the Abp had not in fact ... been much disposed to approve of that course which I intended ... to pursue ...⁴³³

⁴³² NV, p. 19.

⁴³³ WP to W J P, Jan. 1/13 1841, B/O MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. II ff. 90-91.

CHAPTER 4

Russia, 1840-41

1. First Impressions

Palmer 'left by the Omnibus and reached the Stadt von Hamburg at Travemunde at 3pm. Went on board the Alexandra steamer, and dined. It was raining and blowing; but the wind was in our favour.'⁴³⁴ The steamer arrived off Cronstadt at 11 am on 19 August, or 7 August in the Russian Old Calendar.⁴³⁵ There they were boarded 'by the police and custom-house officers, and with a boat's crew of rough hard, brown-faced, shaven men, in long, brown overcoats.' In other boats were 'blue Kaftans, and merchants with magnificent beards.' Passports were surrendered and a 'tedious inquest' followed, after which they passed on between 'the pier and commercial port with its forest of masts, and then the naval port, with some thirty great men-of-war, many of them three-deckers.'⁴³⁶ Nearing St. Petersburg, Palmer saw the wide waterway in, the rocks and buildings of Oranienbaum on the right, and 'towards the left, and in front, the city itself, in very bright colours and of great extent, seeming, though still far off, to rise immediately out of the water.' Unfortunately they ran aground and had to wait 'under a burning sun' for three hours until they boarded a smaller steamer for Cronstadt. Then the churches of St. Petersburg came into view:

⁴³⁴ Entry Saturday 15 August 1840, LP MS 2457, f. 287.

⁴³⁵ The Russians at this time still adhered to the Old Style (O. S.) or Julian Calendar, then twelve days behind the New Style (N. S.) or Gregorian Calendar used in the West. Hence the alternative dates in Palmer's correspondence from Russia.

⁴³⁶ NV, p. 25.

one great cupola (that of the unfinished church of St. Isaac), and presently four lesser cupolas round it, all gilt and flashing brightly in the sun, and several other large churches, with five, or even more domes each, with a bell-tower perhaps besides, unlike anything to be seen in the West; some of the domes, as those of the St. Catherine's Institute, were of a pale green, others of a bright copper colour. Those of the Trinity Church ... were of a bright blue, studded with stars of gold. The tall, slender, gilt spires ... of the Admiralty, and of St. Peter and St. Paul in the fortress, especially the latter, attracted my attention. As we came nearer, trees and lines of building were reflected upside down in the water along the shores.⁴³⁷

Making a turn to the left, they found themselves 'almost at once in the heart of the city, alongside of a magnificent granite quay, with rows of palace-like buildings, of light cheerful tints on either side of the greater Neva.' Palmer was struck by 'a bridge of boats' ahead of them, and the exotic-looking local transport:

Opposite the landing-place were drawn up ... carriages with four horses, and immensely long traces, a bearded coachman on the box, and a boy riding one of the leaders. Similar equipages drove past at a rapid pace, the boy screaming in a shrill tone to all to get out of the way. Droshkies too, that is, padded boards on four wheels, with a seat for the driver in front, and rests for the feet of the passenger like flat stirrups on either side, were standing to be hired, or passing in numbers. These open, rough vehicles, which well deserve their name of *Droshkies* (i.e., *Shakers*), afford no protection against either dust or rain. A man mounts them, and rides astride behind the driver, as if on horseback, but a woman or any second passenger sits sideways, and holds on as it were to a pommel ... The dresses of the ladies in the carriages probably came from Paris, but the blue Kaftans of the coachman and outriders, and of multitudes of other people on foot, with red, blue, or yellow sashes and caps, intermixed with peasants in sheep-skin (all with beards), private soldiers (these without beards), in long grey or brown cloaks, and numerous officers in all sorts of uniforms and plumes, with now and then a Circassian, or something else equally Oriental ...⁴³⁸

He listed 'the points of contrast' with London:

the blue, cloudless sky; the clear, broad river; the quays, lined with palaces; the clean, lively tints of the buildings, without a trace of smoke or soot; the vast places comparatively empty, instead of crowded thoroughfares; while of the people visible few comparatively were women, and every third man seemed to be a soldier.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁷ Ibid., pp. 26-27.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., pp. 27-28.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., p. 29.



Before he had even set foot on Russian soil, Palmer was attempting to distinguish himself from the Protestant denominations of Europe. More policemen boarded their vessel and again interrogated the passengers, asking, 'Of what Government are you a subject? Of what confession of faith?' Palmer replied that he was 'of the Orthodox or Catholic Religion, and a deacon'; but seeing 'le Révérend' in his passport, the police wrote him down 'as a *Prediger* or Pastor of the Anglican Reformed or Lutherano-Calvinistic confession of faith.'

Leaving his books for a twelve-week scrutiny by the censor, Palmer established himself in an unlicensed lodging house 'in the Galernaia, a long street parallel to the English Quay' known as 'Miss Dees,' 'full of American Captains - with only one or two English', but 'very comfortable & I liked the people who keep it very well - & indeed they did all I wanted for me.' There were only two problems: its location - 'it was quite at one end of the City and a good way from every place almost I wanted to go to' - and its expense: 'living was dear there being at the rate of from fifteen to twenty pounds a month.'⁴⁴⁰

Woken the next morning between four and five am by the 'gong-like, booming sound' of the church bells, Palmer saw, under an arch at the end of the Galernaia, on the left the palace used by the Holy Governing Synod, and on the right a corresponding palace for the Governing Senate. Peter the Great had begun the transfer of the Senate to St. Petersburg from Moscow in 1712, and imposed the Synod upon the Church in place of the Patriarch in 1721. The Nefsky Prospekt, 'the chief street of all Petersburg', had a double line of carriage-way paved with hexagonal blocks of wood, and houses, 'stucco fronts coloured with a pleasing variety of light tints', with porches and awnings. The churches of the Dutch-Swiss,

and French Calvinists, the German Lutherans, and the Roman Catholic church of the Poles, gave the street the nickname 'la rue de la tolérance.'⁴⁴¹ This tolerance was only for foreign visitors to Russia: any minister who received a proselyte from the Russian Church would be expelled from Russia, the penalty for the proselyte being 'civil death.' The Russian Church could receive proselytes from any of the foreign communions.⁴⁴²

That evening Palmer visited the 'Kazanski Sobor', then the main church of St. Petersburg, with its balustrade of solid silver looted by, but later recovered from, the French, solid silver doors into the sanctuary and silver icon lamps:

The separation of the sanctuary, its richly ornamented screen, and the severe supernatural expression of the older icons, made on one an impression of mystery and awe. There was an abundance of pious gesticulations, bowing and crossing, kissing the icons, prostrating and touching the ground with the forehead (sometimes with an audible thump), and bowing and crossing again and again, and by men, young and old, as well as by women ... there were a good many poor in and about the church, and beggars at the doors, to whom those passing in and out gave kopecks freely.⁴⁴³

His overall impression was of 'great splendour and magnificence, and of neatness too.' His first reaction to

the outward devotion of the people ... [was] one of wonder, curiosity, suspicion, and a certain repugnance (all being so contrary to English habits, and going far beyond those of Roman Catholics), mixed at the same time with respect for the simplicity and reverence, and for the almsgiving with which they were joined.⁴⁴⁴

The next day Palmer visited the Church of the Assumption, and recorded that:

there was something so new and striking in the singing, which was sweet and distinct, and unaccompanied by instruments, and in the life and feeling with which the crowd joined in chanting frequent responses of *Hospodi pomilui*

⁴⁴⁰ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. II ff. 47-48

⁴⁴¹ NV, p.35.

⁴⁴² Ibid., p. 36.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., p. 41.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 41-42.

(i.e. Kyrie eleison) that I remained rivetted in attention for an hour or more, though I understood nothing. ... I had never before heard anything so stirring and so congregational in divine worship.⁴⁴⁵

Later, he was 'surprized and edified at the sight of the numerous Congregations with which the Russian Churches are filled ... even on common week days' there seemed to be 'a very fair congregation' for each of the three services, at 4 o'clock in the morning, the Liturgy at 10 am, or vespers at 6 pm. 'It is wonderful to see Merchants even leaving their business on a weekday to go to Church.'⁴⁴⁶

'The chanting and singing even in the smaller or common churches is most striking and sometimes makes one wonder if one is in Heaven or earth: I never heard anything at all like it'⁴⁴⁷ he wrote, almost certainly quoting the emissaries of Prince Vladimir of Kiev who in 986 reported to their monarch that in Byzantium they had been led by the Greeks to 'the place where they worshipped their God; and we knew not whether we were in heaven, or on earth: for on earth there is no such vision nor beauty ... '⁴⁴⁸

Another striking difference from the Church of England was the social mix. 'It is pleasing to observe that all ranks and both sexes are equally believing: common soldiers - captains & generals with officers of the navy and peasants are all mingled together in one dense mass - and on the women's side the assembly is equally varied though I think the ladies manage to get more together.'⁴⁴⁹ Again the almsgiving was noticeable: 'The crowd of beggars, who stood ranged in two rows both within the doors and without as we passed out, was great, and everybody seemed to give to

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., p.51.

⁴⁴⁶ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G37 Bk. II f.14.

⁴⁴⁷ LP MS-1894, f. 30.

⁴⁴⁸ Dimitri Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth* (New York: SVSP, 1974), p. 253.

⁴⁴⁹ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G37 Bk. II f.14.

them. I saw children giving.⁴⁵⁰ He could not resist slipping into a description to his father of the deacon's part in the Liturgy the fact that the deacon appeared 'with his scarf over his left shoulder.'⁴⁵¹

2. The State of Religion in Russia

His English landlady's view of Russian religion was typical: the Russians had a great deal of religion 'in their way', but were 'very superstitious'. They were 'very ignorant, and it would be a good thing if they were taught to read and write.'⁴⁵² This ignorance was later confirmed to Palmer by Princess Dolgorouky,⁴⁵³ who told him that although the peasants knew the Lord's Prayer, she doubted if they could repeat the Creed, and would certainly not know the Ten Commandments. They were generally not catechised, but if they were, the language was above them. If the Princess asked them what and how much they understood at church, they were surprised, replying 'How should we understand, as we cannot read?'; their illiteracy was seen by the priest as making instruction impossible.⁴⁵⁴ Palmer saw this for himself when he asked a serf to name the three members of the Trinity. The man replied 'God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Most Holy Mother of God.'⁴⁵⁵

The Russians had in every room of their houses an icon of 'some Saint of the Church or of our Lord', which provided a point in the room to which to say prayers, and served to make 'a Chapel of every room.'⁴⁵⁶ Palmer told of Mr. Blackmore

⁴⁵⁰ NV, p. 52.

⁴⁵¹ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G37 Bk. II f.14.

⁴⁵² NV, p. 44.

⁴⁵³ Ekaterina Dimitrievna Dolgoroukoya, née Galitsin (1801-1881). RBS, vol. VI p. 497.

⁴⁵⁴ NV, pp. 398-9.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., p.401.

⁴⁵⁶ BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. 2 f. 50

calling up into his house 'a poor nun' whom he had seen passing. 'On entering the drawing-room she looked from one corner to another for the *Icon*, and seeing none, she crossed herself to an ornamented clock which stood just opposite.'⁴⁵⁷ Princess Dolgorouky thought that the inability of the Church to fulfil the religious cravings of the people had led to a growth in the 'Raskolniki', or schismatics, and the inroads of Western sectaries. In fact Tsar Alexander I of Russia, who according to Zernov saw himself as 'a universal Christian standing above dogmatic and confessional barriers',⁴⁵⁸ had encouraged English evangelicals to proselytise among the Russian people, resulting in the founding of a branch of the British Bible Society in St. Petersburg in January 1813. It enjoyed great success, becoming the Russian Bible Society in 1814 and opened a number of further branches.⁴⁵⁹ The Emperor was himself a member, and Prince Alexander Galitsin, the Minister of Education and Religion, was the President.⁴⁶⁰ However the Society met increasing opposition, and in 1824 Galitsin was dismissed, replaced by Metropolitan Serafim Glagolevsky. Dr. Pinkerton, the foreign agent of the Bible Society, described the Metropolitan 'with several other Prelates, and one or two fanatical monks', as having 'for some years entertained unfriendly feelings towards the institutions', mainly due to the effects on 'the people in different provinces ... which seemed suspicious to the lovers of ignorance, error, and superstition.'⁴⁶¹ The Bible Society was defunct within two years of his appointment. A 'Protestant Bible Society' was formed in March 1831 but

⁴⁵⁷ NV, p. 78.

⁴⁵⁸ Z, p. 59.

⁴⁵⁹ Fifty-seven according to Z, p. 61; Palmer mentions 289 'affiliated or auxiliary Bible Societies', NV, p. 521.

⁴⁶⁰ Alexander Nikolaievitch Galitsin (1773-1844), Ober-Prokuror of the Synod 1805, in charge of all other confessions 1810, Minister of People's Enlightenment 1816, (consolidated into the Ministry of Spiritual Affairs in 1817), President of the Philanthropic Society, Prisoners' Aid Society, and Asylum Society. A mystic and pietist, he enjoyed a saintly reputation. ES, vol. IX, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁶¹ NV, pp. 522-523.

prohibited from publishing in Russian. Zernov sees the main motive for the crushing of the Bible Society the fear of a threat to the fabric of the Empire (and presumably also to the Russian Church) posed by a non-hierarchical Christian democracy.⁴⁶²

The Jesuits had also for a time enjoyed considerable success in Russia, converting, amongst others, a nephew of Prince Alexander Galitsin, and instilling in ‘a considerable number of ladies of rank ... sentiments unfavourable to the Greek Church.’⁴⁶³ According to Dr. Pinkerton they had by 1816 ‘houses in Petersburg, Moscow, Mohilef, Astrachan, Odessa, and other places ... in Polotsk their establishment was splendid and attached to it were 11,000 serfs and extensive territories’, there being 674 of them in Russia by 1820. In March 1820 an ‘*oukaz*’ was issued expelling them from the Empire, ‘never to return under any name or character,’ and confiscating their property which was to be applied to the benefit of the Catholic Church in Russia.⁴⁶⁴ Palmer had no patience with these ‘foreign influences’ as ‘religious movements against the Orthodox Church.’ About the Bible Society he was particularly harsh: ‘a good deal of their mischief must have been corrected in passing through the *Censura*⁴⁶⁵; still no Russian seems to have any notion how subtle a poison is concealed and mixed with every portion of the enlightened zeal, or zeal for enlightenment, which they possess.’⁴⁶⁶

Palmer was told by one Russian⁴⁶⁷ that his introduction to Count Pratasoff ‘was the very best [he] could have.’ Whether through this initial introduction or otherwise, the majority of Palmer’s contacts were with the upper classes of St.

⁴⁶² Z, p. 63. The ‘Decembrist Revolution’ of 1825 may also have hastened the demise of the Bible Society, FT, p. 32.

⁴⁶³ Dr. Pinkerton, quoted in NV, p. 516.

⁴⁶⁴ NV, pp. 519-520

⁴⁶⁵ Russian Censor.

⁴⁶⁶ NV, p. 515.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid., p.139.

Petersburg, and in particular with a number of society ladies who took an interest in religion and were both intelligent and honest enough to admit to Palmer the real state of religion in Russia. If the lower classes in Russia had a simple piety that, lacking education, drifted into superstition, the case of the upper classes was arguably worse. There was an enormous social gap, and an unbridgeable cultural divide, between the gentry and the serfs. The language and culture of the upper classes was French, when it was not German.⁴⁶⁸ There were some 70,000 Germans in Petersburg. The result was an impatience with Orthodoxy verging on scepticism, or a syncretistic liberalism and a 'religion of the heart'. Princess Sophia Galitsin⁴⁶⁹ told Palmer on 9 November 1840 that

Our upper classes are not very religious. The services of the Church are very fatiguing, and we understand but little of them, especially the Vespers and the Matins; and scarcely anybody (of the higher classes) goes to the Matins. They are very long and you must stand the whole time. We are more at home in the Liturgy, and can follow it better.⁴⁷⁰

The solution, suggested Palmer, would be to read through the services in the books beforehand, so as to become familiar with them. The Princess admitted that 'that is what some of the old people do; and so they are able to stand out all the services, without finding them tiresome, which we cannot.'⁴⁷¹ She gave no indication, however, that she intended to follow their example.

The priest with whom Palmer eventually lodged, Father Fortunatoff, was more blunt: 'The nobles are nearly all bad. In Petersburg scarcely any of the laity of the higher classes keep the Fasts, but in Moscow, very many do ... the higher classes think it fine to be like the Germans and the French.' When the priests went round to

⁴⁶⁸ Z, p. 41.

⁴⁶⁹ *Writer*, d. 1858. RBSI, p.160.

⁴⁷⁰ NV, p. 307.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

the houses of their parishioners at Christmas, as was the custom, they scarcely ever went to the houses of the 'Kniazes and Grafs (Princes and Counts).' The peasants loved to see 'the Frenchified or Germanized Russian nobles, who, they say, are *not* Russians' held up to ridicule in comedies. Fortunatoff told Palmer 'Truly, they are like *you*. They are quite against all ceremonies, as superstitious; they respect neither the Saints, nor their *Icons*. It would be a good thing for them to be a little more on their knees, and to bump their heads a little against the pavement like the *mujiks*.'⁴⁷² Fortunatoff believed all the professors and students in the University to be free-thinkers, and all the medical men unbelievers, who never communicated. This free-thinking influence came, according to Prince Meshchersky (himself once Ober-Prokurator) from the 'foreign Protestant preceptors and governesses' by whom 'all Russians' (presumably the higher classes of Russians) were bred up. Madame Potemkin⁴⁷³ added that as a child she had been taught no catechism.⁴⁷⁴

When Palmer spent the first day of the Advent Fast, 15 November, with the Potemkins, they confirmed that children were often dispensed from fasting by their parents up to the age of seven, but few young people of the higher classes fasted thereafter until they were grown up. Then, however, they were 'so Protestantized, that very few of them observe the fasts at all', the influence of the Germans in Petersburg being blamed. Some kept the first and last weeks of Lent, although the poor kept the whole of each fast 'most religiously.'⁴⁷⁵ The Princess Eudoxia

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 314.

⁴⁷³ Tatiana Borisovna Potemkin, née the Countess Galitsin (1797-1869), dedicated her life to charity, 42 years the Chairman of the St. Petersburg Committee for Prisoners' Aid, took in the children of prisoners, paid for orphanages and homes for the weak and old, supported Orthodox mission, paid for new churches and the repair of the Sviatogorsky monastery. RBS vol. XIV, p.646-7.

⁴⁷⁴ NV, p. 284.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

Galitsin⁴⁷⁶ also admitted the 'want of zeal' among the higher classes, suggesting that for some there was a 'social attraction' to the Latin Church that might induce them to convert, albeit out of weakness. 'The people are the real strength of our Churches.'⁴⁷⁷

The mischief among them, one lady told Palmer at a breakfast in January of 1841, was 'a foolish desire to imitate foreigners, which Peter the Great left as a legacy to his empire.' This was most likely the result of his upbringing among the foreigners of the Koukou or Nalivaiki suburb of Moscow, where his youthful playmates ('Germans and other foreigners, chiefly Protestants') grew up to form two regiments of guards, the Preobrajensky and Semenovsky, 'drilled after the German fashion, officered in part by foreigners', who had 'imbibed his anti-Russian ideas.'⁴⁷⁸

Of the religious liberals that Palmer met, M. Mallof,⁴⁷⁹ a priest of the Isaac Church, was typical. He told Palmer: 'there are Christians everywhere and ... the great thing is the religion of the heart.' Palmer would have none of it: 'It is not enough for men to have a good intention to practise virtue in the sect in which they happen to be; they must also seek to be Catholics in faith and to believe in the Catholic Church, as being the one only way of salvation.' And again, responding to M. Mallof's quotation of the example of Cornelius, 'Doubtless there are honest and good people in all the sects ... but it is impossible for the Church to call their errors truth, or to regard truth as indifferent, or to call them disciples or brethren.'⁴⁸⁰ He had indeed come a long way from his early sympathy for the Vaudois.

⁴⁷⁶ 1780-1850. RBSI, p.160.

⁴⁷⁷ NV, pp. 391-2.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 22.

⁴⁷⁹ Alexei Ivanovich, Magister, preacher. died 1855. RBSI, p.7.

⁴⁸⁰ NV, p. 175 ff..

The Archpriest Koutnevich,⁴⁸¹ the High Almoner of the Army and Fleet, was unflinching in his conviction that the Eastern Church was right, and that the others had fallen away, going so far as to state that the Easterns 'could not give up even the non-essential perfections of the true Visible Church'. Nonetheless, he told Palmer that good Christians might exist wherever there was true baptism in the name of the Trinity, and that there was as it were a sliding scale of heresy. 'A fraternal charity' might be cultivated by the Eastern Church with those who had been regenerated in baptism, and had gone on to cultivate their inner life, not dwelling on their errors; there would be 'an invisible unity' between them and their Orthodox brethren, although an outward separation would remain. Palmer thought that this would encourage liberalism and indifference to religious truth within the Church under the name of Charity, and lead those in error outside it to underrate the importance of Orthodoxy and conformity to the whole will of God. Koutnevich's reply was close, though he may not have realised it, to being *ad hominem*: 'I would shrink from the very notion of a man in the Church, perhaps barely, coldly, intellectually orthodox, judging such Christians, whose regeneration and spiritual life is so evident.'⁴⁸² Palmer was not swayed: 'amabilis sane sententia, sed perniciosissima doctrina.'⁴⁸³ Koutnevich continued to maintain that it was not 'formal Orthodoxy of dogmatic opinion or ... rite' that constituted 'essential Christianity', but the 'principle of faith and love,' which meant that 'some who are without the pale may be better Christians

⁴⁸¹ Vassily Ivanovich Kutnevich (1787-1866), teacher of mathematics, philosophy and languages at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, and professor 1815, member of the Spiritual Consistory 1826, Over-priest of the Army and Navy 1832, member of the Synod 1849, Chief Priest of the Army and Navy 1858, expert on Synod procedure. RBS vol. IX, pp. 618-9.

⁴⁸² NV, p. 269 ff.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.: 'A lovely sentiment to be sure, but a most pernicious doctrine.'

than many of those who are within', although the distinction of Baptism remained to define the limits of the principle.⁴⁸⁴

Nor would Palmer accept indifferentism as a virtue of the Orthodox Church.

Mr. Skreepitsin,⁴⁸⁵ an official of Count Pratasoff's Chancery, told him that:

Our Church has, and we have, one good point; that is its *tolerance*. We are not like Rome, which anathematizes all others; we have our own rite, but can be at peace with others, for they are all essentially one. The same Christ is worshipped by us all, and all things else are matters of comparative indifference.⁴⁸⁶

Palmer thought that this was to admit 'two or more religions', and saw only a stark choice: 'either we are of the same religion, or one of us is a heretic. There is one faith, one Church, one baptism etc.'⁴⁸⁷

With the various society ladies he met who held similar opinions he was equally direct. To the Princess Dolgorouky, the wife of the Governor of Vilna, who was inveighing against Catholic intolerance, he suggested that the difficulties of the Russian Orthodox arose because they did not really believe their own claims to be the true Church. Having abandoned their exclusivist position, they were at a loss as to where to draw the line, and degenerated into liberalism and indifference. The Princess, like the Archpriest or M. Mallof, thought the difference was between those who believed in Christ and wished to obey him, and those who did not. If a man took the former line 'with honesty of purpose', then even if he was 'out of the pale, one must feel and admit that he is a Christian, and in the way of salvation.'⁴⁸⁸ As before,

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 270-271.

⁴⁸⁵ Valeri Valerivitch Skreepitsin (1799-1874), served in the Guards, transferred to the Civil Service, was adviser to the Government of Kursk, moved to work for the Ober-Prokuror, became Director of the Department of the Religious Affairs of Foreign Confessions, and was instrumental in reconciling the Uniats to Orthodoxy in 1839. RBS vol. XVIII, pp. 618-9.

⁴⁸⁶ NV, pp. 372-3

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 378.

Palmer's objection was that such an open category was all but impossible of delimitation.

Even had there not been an iron grip on the Russian Church by the State through the medium of the Synod, the condition of the Russian clergy would not easily remedy either ignorance or liberalism, for the Russians themselves admitted that the clergy were often as ignorant as their flocks. The Unter-Prokurator of the Synod, M. Mouravieff,⁴⁸⁹ speaking to Palmer in September of 1840, conceded that 'the ignorance of the clergy is very great in Russia ... there is little knowledge of theology.'⁴⁹⁰ The chaplain at St. Petersburg, Mr. Law,⁴⁹¹ told Palmer that the Russian clergy were 'a caste apart', who received 'some kind of respect' while officiating, but very little otherwise. Few had received any education; they were 'mere peasants.' He thought that Palmer would find it 'utterly impossible' to live with them.⁴⁹² Princess Sophia Galitsin told Palmer that the clergy 'had by no means all left off their bad low habit of drinking.'⁴⁹³ M. Mallof contrasted the education that he presumed an English priest would be given with the situation in Russia: 'we have scarcely any.' Some clergy 'seem sincerely to seek Christ'; others were 'mere bigots to outward forms, and think all religion to consist in them.'⁴⁹⁴

The monastic view of the secular clergy was as harsh. When Palmer visited the Sergievsky Hermitage, or Monastery, in the same September, he was told by a

⁴⁸⁹ Andrei Nikolaievitch Mouravieff (1806-1874), writer and traveller, Imperial Councillor, Unter-Prokurator of the Holy Synod, member of the Russian Academy of Travellers & Writers. DUC p.1257, RBSI pp. 45-6. Despite Newman's remarks at p. 130 of *Notes*, Mouravieff does not appear to have been at any time a cavalry officer. Newman may have confused him with Pratasoff who had been an officer of Hussars.

⁴⁹⁰ NV, p. 164.

⁴⁹¹ Edward Law (1791-1868), of Christ Church Oxford, matriculated 27 May 1808, chaplain to H. M. Embassy, St. Petersburg 1820. AO, p.822.

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 77: Law was wrong in that Palmer did manage to live with a priest, albeit in some discomfort. Mr. Blackmore thought that even after 20 years in Russia, Law could not get out of the habit of 'speaking only from his English point of view' (NV, p.76) which may explain his remarks.

⁴⁹³ NV, p. 308.

monk that 'the secular clergy are infected with liberalism' through the influence of 'Lutheran and other bad foreign books.' Father Tchihacheff went further, saying that the secular clergy were 'kept in a hypocritical orthodoxy only by fear of the people', in a Church that had 'preserved all the rites and ceremonies, and the creed of the early Church', but despite 'a fair outside' was 'a dead body', with little life. He feared a possible 'explosion of heretical liberalism.'⁴⁹⁵ Count Pratasoff admitted to Palmer at their very first meeting that some Russian bishops were positively heretical. He asked if any of the English bishops held the same views and taught the same doctrine as Palmer: 'I will not ask if there are any among them who are heretics or heretically inclined. I know you must have such: *we* have such, even here.'⁴⁹⁶

As for Anglicanism, the view expressed by Count Nesselrode,⁴⁹⁷ the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was typical: it was 'toujours le Protestantisme ... toujours une hérésie.' He was in a position to know: 'Je suis Anglican moi-même.'⁴⁹⁸ The French Ambassador, M. de Barante, identified the distinguishing feature of the Anglican Church as having 'preserved the hierarchy: in other respects they resemble the other Protestant sects'. Mde Potemkin's comment on this was 'Mais c'est une très grande difference, n'est-ce pas?', but she also categorised the English in St. Petersburg as 'ignorant and heterodox.' Count Pratasoff, comparing Palmer's views with those of the chaplains, would not accept that they were 'perfectly Orthodox.' 'Your English here are many of them quite Protestant, Puritan: and they make the Russians think

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 177.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 206.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 119-120.

⁴⁹⁷ Charles-Robert Nesselrode (1780-1862), born in Lisbon & baptised an Anglican, joined the Guards Regiment of Catherine II, was ADC to Paul I, was attached to the Russian Embassy in Berlin 1802, became Counsellor of the Paris Embassy, and was extravagantly rewarded for influencing the Emperor Alexander I to restore the Bourbons. After Waterloo he saved France from partition and excessive financial reparations. In 1816 was in charge of foreign affairs, together with Count Capo

that they are not only Protestants like the Lutherans, but even like the Reformed (i.e. Dutch or Swiss Calvinists), which is much worse.⁴⁹⁹

This identification of Anglicanism with Lutheranism or Calvinism was not surprising given the attitudes and behaviour of the traders and sailors from England. Some had even taken exception to the cross on top of the English Chapel in Cronstadt, put there at the instance of the Tsar, until Mr. Blackmore had reminded them of a similar cross on top of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

... any internal ornament as a gilt cross in the middle of the Altar Cloth or a cross over the altar or candlesticks on it ... or if the arrangements had been such as to make it look less to the eyes of the Russians like a "preaching-house"... especially if anything should have caused their [the Minister's] back to be turned to the people ... would have caused great offence and scandal both to the English and more especially to the Scotch.⁵⁰⁰

When the Lutherans applied to share the English Chapel while their own church was being repaired, Mr. Blackmore refused them permission to set even unlighted candlesticks and a cross on the altar, 'for fear of offending the prejudices of his congregation.' Seamen arriving in or leaving St. Petersburg were required to take an oath, sworn by Russians 'on the Cross and the Holy Gospels.' Mention of the Cross had to be omitted when the English or Scottish seamen were sworn, 'as it would scandalize the men.'⁵⁰¹ To the magistrate's question 'When did you last receive the Sacrament?' the answer given by nine out of ten of them, according to Mr. Blackmore, was "Never". 'They even wanted Mr. Blackmore to certify for them that it was not their custom.'⁵⁰²

d'Istria. He repressed revolutionary national movements, became Chief of the Russian Chancellery, but was replaced after the Treaty of Paris in 1856. DUC, pp. 771-5.

⁴⁹⁸ LP MS 1901 f.56.

⁴⁹⁹ NV, p. 172.

⁵⁰⁰ WP to W J P from Cronstadt, 15 / 27 August 1840, BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 12.

⁵⁰¹ LP MS 1894, f. 30.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, f. 13, and NV, pp. 54-55.

A story was told of a Russian merchantman trying to speak to an Englishman, who was in church during the sermon. The Russian doorkeeper, asked if the Englishman would be long, replied 'No, I think it will be over soon, as it is a long time since they all sat down to sleep.'⁵⁰³ Anglican priests, like those in France who wore secular clothing, were not considered to be real priests, but Protestant 'Pastors', as Palmer's designation by the police officers on board ship had shown. Mr. Blackmore, invited to dine by a Russian colonel, was addressed by him by his correct civil title, i.e. 'as a *gentleman*, not as a priest.'⁵⁰⁴ Prince Michael Galitsin, speaking of Mr. Law's 'uneclesiastical appearance,' said that he should have taken him 'for a comfortable merchant, not certainly for a priest.'⁵⁰⁵

Mde Potemkin said of Anglican bishops that they lived 'quite like gentlemen and men of the world ... they have not that spiritual character which ours have, nor the veneration attaching to it.'⁵⁰⁶ It was against this unpromising background that Palmer had to put his case for the Church of England's catholicity.

3. Palmer's Protagonists

Four men were to be his interlocutors in discussing theological matters. The first, the 'General of Hussars in his uniform', was Count Pratasoff, the Ober-Prokuror or head of the Synod. Educated by the Jesuits, he was commissioned in the Guards Regiment of Hussars at fifteen,⁵⁰⁷ and in 1834 transferred to the Ministry of Education. In 1836 he became Procurator of the Synod. Zernov describes him as

⁵⁰³ NV, p. 55.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 61.

⁵⁰⁵ LP MS 1901, f. 57.

⁵⁰⁶ NV, p. 258.

⁵⁰⁷ Z, p. 76.

‘thoroughly westernised in outlook’, taking cues from the organisation and discipline of the Roman Church, but locating authority firmly in the Tsar.⁵⁰⁸ A monk of the Sergievsky Monastery told Palmer that ‘if the Synod (through the influence of the Crown) were to do anything bad, why, we would have to submit ... Pratasoff is our Patriarch, though a soldier, as he represents the Emperor.’ The situation was anomalous; here was a *de facto* Patriarch who went ‘to balls and theatres, dances well’ and was “un très galant homme - mais - ...”⁵⁰⁹ His words were echoed by the Princess Eudoxia Galitsin, who declared it a ‘scandal ... when the Church is governed by a layman, Count Pratasoff, who (respectable as he may be) dances the Mazurka, “C’est un très galant homme, il danse très bien.” That is the kind of remark made in the saloons about him.’⁵¹⁰

The second was Pratasoff’s second in command, Unter-Prokuror of the Synod Andrei Mouravieff. Described by Palmer as ‘a tall, indeed gigantic man’, he was ‘a great traveller and prolific author’⁵¹¹, more obviously devout than Pratasoff. The same monk who had spoken disapprovingly of Pratasoff said of Mouravieff that he lived ‘a regular life, different from the rest, and is in a manner nearer to becoming a monk.’⁵¹² Unlike Pratasoff, whose dealings with Palmer were friendly enough but cautious and non-committal, Mouravieff became far closer to Palmer and took a much greater personal interest in him. His letters to Palmer as Palmer prepared to abandon Orthodoxy and enter the Roman Church were full of passionate concern, not for the *amour propre* of Orthodoxy, but for the soul of his friend. In their discussions about Anglicanism he never minced his words but was brutally frank.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 76-77.

⁵⁰⁹ NV, p. 221.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., p. 392.

⁵¹¹ Z, p. 82.

Palmer dealt mainly with two churchmen. One was the Archpriest Vasil Koutnevich, the High Almoner of the Army and Fleet. He was appointed to that post in 1852, joining the Synod a year later. He had taught languages (Latin, German and French) in the Theological Academy, and had held a chair in philosophy. Zernov describes him as 'a accomplished ecclesiastical bureaucrat', who was of particular use because of his grasp of the arcana of Synodical procedure. For this he had been decorated with the Order of Alexander Nevsky, 'a rare honour for a married priest'.⁵¹³ He took a conventional line with Palmer on the need to accept all that Orthodoxy held, without qualification, which led to bad-tempered exchanges over Palmer's insistence on the identification of a specific historical breach between Orthodoxy and Anglicanism.

The other churchman was the Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow⁵¹⁴ - 'probably the greatest theologian of the Russian Church in modern times ... his influence on the life and theological thinking in Russia was enormous.'⁵¹⁵ More broad-minded than Koutnevich, he would 'not presume to call false any church, believing that *Jesus is Christ*',⁵¹⁶ although he certainly believed that the Eastern Orthodox Church had preserved the pure doctrine of the original deposit of faith. So far as the divided Christian bodies were concerned 'You expect now that I should give judgement ... but I just simply look upon them ... in the end the power of God patently will triumph over human weakness, good over evil, unity over division, life over

⁵¹² NV, p. 222. This may simply mean that he lived quietly and respectably; or that he lived according to some religious or even monastic Rule, as Newman indicates in his footnote.

⁵¹³ Z, p. 83.

⁵¹⁴ Secular name Vassili Mikhailovitch Drozdov (1782-1867), became a monk, and Inspector & professor at the St. Petersburg Academy 1808, Archimandrite 1811, Rector of the Academy and Professor of Theology 1812, Bishop of Ravel 1817, Archbishop of Tver 1819, Archbishop of Yaroslavl 1820, Metropolitan of Moscow 1821 to his death. ES, Vol. XXXV (1902), pp. 739-40.

⁵¹⁵ G. Florovsky, 'Aspects of Church History', in G. Florovsky *Collected Works* (Belmont, Mass.: Nordland, 1975), vol. IV, p. 219.

death.’⁵¹⁷ Florovsky describes him as ‘invariably impressed by “warm piety” wherever he might find it’,⁵¹⁸ which may explain why he struck up a warmer relationship with Palmer than Koutnevich.

4. The Debate Commences

Palmer’s approach to the spokesmen for the Russian Church was by no means an apologetic one. He had a very clear idea of the weaknesses of their position, and had no qualms whatever about telling the Russians what they were. His most frequent complaint was of their inconsistency. The Russians received ‘European sects’ by

anointing with the Holy Chrism which was the manner appointed by the Church in old time for the reconciling of Heretics & Schismatics to the true Church: This is now their practise[sic] by all alike: which involves the inference that their communion is the whole of the Catholic Church: but inconsistently enough, they still call themselves the Eastern Catholic Church, and speak of the Western or Latin Church.⁵¹⁹

Palmer said to Mouravieff on 21 September that if the Greeks anathematised the Latins as heretics over the Procession (the *filioque*) then the Russians were entirely inconsistent. They continued to call themselves the Eastern Church, and to talk of the difficulties posed to a General Council by the current divisions, but if the Latins were heretics there was only one Church, and that Catholic, not Eastern; no General Council could be held with heretics.⁵²⁰ He took a similar line with M. Mallof, suggesting that if the Russians really believed themselves to be the true Church, they should at once make efforts to convert the Latins as heretics. Mallof replied evasively

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., p. 217.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid., p. 218.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid., p. 219.

⁵¹⁹ WP to Aunt Mary, 25 Aug. O. S. / 7 Sept. N. S. 1840, BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 18.

⁵²⁰ NV, p. 167.

that the Latins were ‘presque hérétiques’, although when Palmer mocked him for this, he added that some of their errors ‘touched the foundation.’ But Palmer insisted that ‘presque’ meant that they were still part of the Church, and the Eastern not the whole of it.⁵²¹ Similarly, Father Fortunatoff thought the Latins were ‘in one sense’ heretics, ‘though in another they are not.’ Palmer would not accept this - they were either out of the Church, or they were not. Fortunatoff simply stood firm on the historical claim of the Orthodox Church: ‘Our Church has remained the same, and has preserved everything. We certainly answer to the definition of the visible Church; but we have no need to include others in that definition which is fulfilled in the Greco-Russian communion: she stands alone, and self-sufficing.’ However, to define the boundaries of the Church with great precision would be, he felt, destructive of tolerance and the ‘half recognition’ that existed.⁵²²

Although the Orthodox made the *filioque* the great stumbling block to unity, Palmer pointed out that there had been intercommunion even after the West had adopted it. This was ascribed by M. Mouravieff to ‘inattention’ on the part of the East. The monks of the Sergievsky thought the heresy had developed over time, and the Latins had ‘dissembled the question’ whenever temporary reconciliation had taken place. They insisted that ‘Eastern’ did not denote ‘any local circumscription *in space*’, but ‘historical origin’. Sounding almost Gnostic, they declared: ‘Christianity was from the East: Ex Oriente lux; we pray towards the East: we expect Christ from the East; and Christ is Himself the Everlasting East. From the West the catechumen

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 177-8.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, pp. 317-8.

has to turn away when he is to be baptised, and has to renounce the powers of darkness.⁵²³ Palmer was not to meet this particular argument elsewhere in Russia.

Sometimes he was told that the Russians called themselves ‘Capholics’, as opposed to (Roman) ‘Catholics’⁵²⁴, but he would not allow any substance to this peculiar linguistic distinction. Speaking to the Archpriest Sidonsky⁵²⁵ of the Kazan Church or Cathedral on 13 October, he said that there was ‘a real weight in popular language’, which grew when there existed ‘one Communion claiming distinctly to be the whole, and in point of extent and numbers having better claim than any other, which is named the Catholic Church by your own lips, and ... by her enemies. You admit you are a part; she says that she is the whole.’⁵²⁶ Even Mouravieff admitted that it ‘told in favour of the Latins’ that they had carried on the idea and the exercise of ecumenical authority by continuing with a succession of General Councils up to the Council of Trent.⁵²⁷ Princess Eudoxia Galitsin,⁵²⁸ too, admitted ‘a discrepancy’ between the Orthodox claims to be the one true church and ‘the opinion practically held by all of them ... that the life of the Latin Church cannot be denied without flagrant disregard of common sense.’ The discrepancy caused ‘a certain weakness.’⁵²⁹ On this point, then, Palmer can be said to have forced unwilling agreement.

His second most frequently urged argument followed logically from the first. If the Russians believed that Orthodoxy was the true Church, where was their zeal for

⁵²³ Ibid., pp. 195-6.

⁵²⁴ e.g. NV, p. 235.

⁵²⁵ Feodor Feodorovich Sidonsky (1805-73), Doctor 1864, Faculty of Philosophy of St. Petersburg University, later Professor of the Theological Faculty, forced to resign in 1833 because of his liberal views. RBSI, p.266, FT, p. 46.

⁵²⁶ NV, pp. 248-9.

⁵²⁷ Ibid., p. 327.

⁵²⁸ (1780-1850), RBSI, p.160.

⁵²⁹ Ibid., p. 390.

conversion of the 'heretic' West, especially when the West had come within their own boundaries? He reminded the priest Sidonsky that

there are some millions of Lutherans and Calvinists subjects of the Russian Empire, whom you ought to try to convert to the true faith and Church; then, there are the Latins, two-thirds of the Christian world; and not only have you shown no zeal or power to correct them, but you have actually been following and imitating them ...

Take St. Petersburg alone: 'in this one city and diocese you have had a colony of English, 2000 or 3000, since the capital was transferred here. Now what have you done in 130 years for their souls more than if they were a herd of swine? *This* is the zeal and charity of the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church!' Sidonsky replied that the Orthodox Church had 'always shown great moderation and tolerance, and ... been careful not to condemn others,' which Palmer thought 'cruel to others, and suicidal towards herself.' Sidonsky conceded 'there has been a culpable negligence,' but excused this on the basis that 'nothing has forced us hitherto to consider the question of the definition of the Visible Church: whenever circumstances require it, it will no doubt be examined.'⁵³⁰

The Archpriest Koutnevich, however, vigorously defended his Church's record. On 17 October Palmer suggested to him that the Orthodox Church did nothing by way of mission worthy of its claims. Would 'a colony of English heretics have remained one, two, three hundred years in France or in Italy, in Paris or in Rome, as they have here, without any one of them ... having ever been so much as spoken to with a view to his conversion?'⁵³¹ Koutnevich responded that it was well enough known that Orthodox writers called upon other Churches and sects to come to her; that the zeal of the Romans was '*bad*; such zeal is always a sign of error', and

⁵³⁰ Ibid., pp. 249-250.

that Russian history showed that they had converted many peoples. Some eight days after this conversation, Count Pratasoff produced to Palmer records for 1837, 8 and 9, showing the annual conversion of about 10,000 Raskolniks. In 1839 they had converted between one and two thousand proselytes to Roman Catholicism, 'some 100s of Mahometans, about 100 Jews ... and 100 or 200 Protestants ... in all, since 1827 above 180,000, and in the last four years above 85,000, without mentioning the two millions or nearly of Uniats who were reconciled all at once in 1839.'⁵³² Palmer later mentioned the Archimandrite of the Troitsa Lavra, Philaret, who after being made Bishop of Riga received into the Orthodox Church 70,000 or 80,000 Lettish Lutherans.⁵³³

On 23 November, Palmer encountered a living exemplar of Russian mission in the 'missionary to the Aleoutines', Father John Veniamineff,⁵³⁴ later a Metropolitan and in 1977 canonised as Saint Innocent of Alaska, who had converted 10,000 of a population of 60,000 to Christianity.⁵³⁵ Palmer spoke with him about his missionary work, and found him 'friendly, open and cheerful', with 'a rough, weather-beaten look ... that bespoke a simple, practical, decided character.'⁵³⁶ Fr. Veniamineff had been labouring among the Aleuts since 1822, composing a Cyrillic alphabet for the Aleut language, learning six local tribal dialects, writing an Aleutian course of Orthodox dogmatics and theology, and building a church with his own

⁵³¹ Ibid., p.265.

⁵³² Ibid., p. 277. This was not effected, however, without what Newman, quoting Fr. Theiner, calls 'systematic violence,' see NV, pp. 63-4.

⁵³³ Ibid., p. 480.

⁵³⁴ John Veniamineff (1797-1879), born John Popov, he later assumed the surname of Veniamineff. He married Catherine Sharina in 1817, was ordained in 1821, and was missionary to the Aleutian Islands in 1824, after the death of his wife in 1839 became a monk taking the name Innocent, elected first Bishop of Alaska, 1840-58, Metropolitan of Moscow 1868, canonised 6 Oct., 1977. He is addressed liturgically as 'Equal to the Apostles, Enlightener of North America.' *St. Innocent of Alaska*. Excerpt from the Desk Calendar of the Orthodox Church in America, <http://www.roea.org/9703/ho00012.html>, 25 May 2002.

⁵³⁵ NV, p. 344.

hands, as well as a hospital and an orphanage. For his studies of the local flora and fauna, he was made an honorary member of the Russian Geographical Society and Moscow Royal University. He later became Metropolitan of Moscow for eleven years, founding the Orthodox Missionary Society.⁵³⁷ Remarkably, Palmer showed no embarrassment at reproaching the Russians with their lack of energy for mission even after meeting Fr. Veniamineff, who had laboured to win souls in conditions that would make most explorers quail.

Perhaps Palmer saw him as the exception that proved the rule, and thought that more like Fr. Veniamineff should go West as well as to the Aleuts. He more than once suggested that the Russians, if they believed the English to be in error, should send missionaries to England to convert them. Koutnevich was 'much surprised' at Palmer's suggestion,⁵³⁸ and immediately countered with the political obstacles. Count Pratasoff, on the other hand, turned the tables on Palmer, saying 'our best hope is for *you*, that we may convert *you*, and make you a bishop, as we made that Missionary bishop for the Aleoutines when you were present the other day, and send you back.'⁵³⁹ Predictably Palmer reacted to this unexpected and flattering proposal by reverting to the prior question of whether the Anglican Church was or was not in communion with the East. If it was, for him to change would be 'a bad conversion', becoming 'particular instead of universal', and starting fresh schism in England.⁵⁴⁰

Count Pratasoff may have been joking, as Palmer described him as 'laughing' when he made the remark, but less than a month before, on 10 December, M. Mouravieff had hinted strongly that the door to Orthodoxy was open to Palmer,

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

⁵³⁷ Alexy, Patriarch of Moscow, 'St. Innocent', *The Orthodox Messenger*, vol. 8 (11-12), vol. 9 (1-2), 1997-8.

⁵³⁸ NV, p. 268.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 387.

saying of the reconciliation of the Princess of Darmstadt that 'You saw on Thursday how an individual may be received.'⁵⁴¹ Palmer had insisted on distinguishing her reconciliation as being from 'soul-destroying heresy', and persisted in his refusal to acknowledge the Eastern Church as the whole Catholic Church; nonetheless the Church authorities seem to have hoped that he might come to change his views and convert. On his second visit to Russia in 1843 Palmer was even told by the Archpriest Koutnevich that 'if I were to be reconciled, I might probably be received with my Order of Deacon.'⁵⁴² The Russian Church, which after all had no reason to make concessions to the Church of England, must have seen in Palmer, with his extraordinary learning, and increasing knowledge and understanding of Orthodoxy, a unique opportunity for mission in England. The opportunity was never taken for a number of reasons. First, Palmer could not reconcile himself to the Eastern inconsistency on the method of reception of converts, the Greeks insisting on baptism, the Russians requiring only chrismation. Secondly, as his letters to his family and others show, he feared that to embrace Orthodoxy would be to alienate himself from his friends, his family, and his country, and would seem perverse. Thirdly, although intellectually he fully accepted Orthodox doctrine, his natural inclination was towards Roman Catholicism, an inclination that only increased as one friend after another converted.

Palmer himself identified the reason for the lack of effort towards restoring unity in the Church as lack of will: 'we English and you Greeks maintain the doctrine of the universal invisible unity, but in practice we both rest contented with our own

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 387.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., p. 366.

⁵⁴² Conversation of 14 / 26 May 1843, in William Palmer, *An Appeal to the Scottish Church* (hereafter *Appeal*) (Edinburgh: Laurie, 1849), p. 263.

*part.*⁵⁴³ It suited everybody, largely because of laziness, that the status quo should remain. Some, like Sidonsky, saw no 'great scandal or harm in the existing divisions'⁵⁴⁴ in the Church, and thought that they might even be part of divine providence - that the liberties of the Church, and a pure testimony to antiquity, might be preserved for future unity.'⁵⁴⁵ The most exhaustive discussion of the issue was between Palmer, Count Pratasoff, and the Metropolitan Philaret on 27 November 1840. Palmer set out the belief of the Church of England on unity, as contained in the Creed, that the Church is one. The Metropolitan replied in terms identical to Dr. Routh, 'It *ought* to be one, but it is not.' Palmer replied that the division that existed was 'impious and detestable.' The Metropolitan commented blandly that 'Unity, no doubt, is much to be desired.' Pressed, as he so often was in Russia, just as he had been in France, on whether many other English people shared his ideas on intercommunion, Palmer asserted that the Roman Church was a schismatic intruder when in England, or Greece, or Russia.

This was incomprehensible to Philaret, for whom communion depended 'on unity of belief.' It was absurd to say that the Latins could be communicated with abroad, but not at home, or conversely excommunicated at home but not elsewhere. For him it was a simple matter of examining the various divisions of the Church and deciding which was 'right, or most right.' Palmer fell back on another idea crucial to his claims for the Church of England, that there was a 'necessary faith', with an accretion of secondary but non-essential opinions, in any given area of Christendom. This was flatly denied by the Metropolitan, who thought it 'contrary to all the sentiments of the Fathers.' Count Pratasoff remarked that this principle would make

⁵⁴³ Conversation with Koutnevich on 28 August (O. S.), NV, p. 135.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.272.

him a Universalist, changing his religion as he crossed national boundaries, and it begged the question of who decided what was or was not essential.⁵⁴⁶

The same point had become apparent to the French Ambassador, M. de Barante. The difference between essentials and non-essentials, he said to Palmer, would have to be drawn by private judgement. 'Not so', replied Palmer, 'but by the Church.' M. de Barante persisted: 'Still, the principle of unity is necessary, and that principle existed in the first Councils; and it comes to the same thing (now, if you admit a perpetually existing authority) When you assert the Church to be divided, who is the judge?' 'You can only judge by probabilities if the Church is divided, God can only judge absolutely and circumstances, as time goes on, may make his judgement manifest.'⁵⁴⁷ This pious but evasive response gave away the weakness of his position, and left a hostage to fortune in the hands of his opponents. What was the probability of the Anglican Church being 'the Church', or even united with it? And if circumstances may make God's judgement manifest, they equally well may not.

Palmer elaborated at their request on his concept of the Visible Church: that it was 'at this time divided by differences about secondary matters into three local parts, all agreeing in the necessary faith, viz. the Orthodox Eastern Churches and the Western; the latter being subdivided into the Continental and the British.' The Metropolitan expressed doubt that many in England could hold the theory: 'I think it can be anything but general.'⁵⁴⁸ Both he and Count Pratasoff summed up the fundamental obstacle to Palmer's request, which echoed Dr. Routh's prediction to Palmer in July ('It will lead to nothing I fear, sir, for a separation there unhappily is'):

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 208.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 353.

⁵⁴⁷ Conversation on 4 / 16 March 1841, LP MS 1901, ff. 59-60.

⁵⁴⁸ NV, pp. 354-5.

‘These are matters for some future Council or Councils, but they cannot be treated of with individuals.’ The Metropolitan pronounced that Palmer’s language ‘suits well enough for the fourth century, but is out of place in the present state of the world.’ Perhaps one day his laudable quest for unity would come to be shared more widely, but until then ‘individuals cannot be treated with or recognized in the first instance; now at any rate there is division.’⁵⁴⁹

It was at this point that Archbishop Howley’s reluctance to approve Palmer’s mission caused Palmer embarrassment; for if Palmer’s language suited the fourth century, the letters he had brought did not, a fact that had not escaped the notice of Count Pratasoff. Palmer had to concede that a letter from his bishop or archbishop ‘was the strict form’, and his explanation that Archbishop Howley had thought Dr. Routh’s letter enough was met by the Count with laughter: ‘Ils ne voulaient pas se compromettre’ he said to the Metropolitan, and dismissed Dr. Routh’s authority as only that of a Priest. ‘His letter is nothing; you should have brought the same countersigned by the Bishop.’⁵⁵⁰ However, the Count was probably teasing Palmer. His remark about the unwillingness of the Anglican authorities to compromise themselves showed that he knew very well why Palmer could only rely on letters from his College Principal. Despite the frank exchanges, the interview ended on an amicable note, with Philaret telling Palmer that they were glad to see him, and hoped ‘that good might spring from this seed.’⁵⁵¹

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 355.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 357-8.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

5. Russian Scepticism

As this interview shows, the Russians gave Palmer as good as they got. When Palmer expressed to the Princess Meshchersky⁵⁵² his hope that the Church that had been one in visible and outward communion for 1200 years might be so again, she dismissed it as 'a beautiful dream.'⁵⁵³ Some, especially Mouravieff, took an overtly sceptical approach to Palmer's depiction of the Church of England and its doctrine from the start. Palmer was frequently interrogated as to how representative his views were of the English Church. In their first interview, Count Pratasoff asked Palmer if the Anglican chaplains at St. Petersburg or Cronstadt would agree with him - and if he was right, why did the English Church not teach its people what Palmer had described? He asked, according to Palmer, 'over and over again: "If that be true, how can it be that it is so little known? ... why do you not make Catechisms, and teach distinctly your doctrine?"' On 21 September M. Mouravieff made the same points:

There may, no doubt, be individuals who think like you, perhaps even some of the bishops,- (how many bishops have you? and *are* there *any* of them who think like you?) - but *you* are not the Anglican Church ... Do you mean to tell me that your friend the chaplain at Cronstadt, or the other, who is here, would agree with you?⁵⁵⁴

The Sergievsky monks too said 'you are only an individual; the thing necessary is to know what are the sentiments of your Church ... what is the opinion of your *bishops* on these matters?'⁵⁵⁵ When Palmer persisted, the response grew less diplomatic. M. Mouravieff spoke plainly to Palmer on 2 October : 'We know you only as heretics.

⁵⁵² Sofia Sergeevna Mescherskaya (1775-1848), 'especially active in the translation and distribution of English tracts of the Religious Tract Society.' FT, p. 31, & Z, p. 86.

⁵⁵³ NV, p.499.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 161 & 167.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 216.

You separated from the Latin Church 300 years ago ... we think even the Latin Church heretical; but you are an apostasy from an apostasy; a progression from bad to worse.'

His view was that the Pope had been the Patriarch of the English Church before the Reformation; therefore 'any communication must be through the Pope, and the Church of Rome ... reconcile yourself to your Patriarch first, and then come and talk to us, if you think you have anything to say to us.'⁵⁵⁶

Mouravieff reiterated his view of the Reformation when he saw Palmer again in December, after he had been reading Palmer of Worcester's *Treatise on the Church*.⁵⁵⁷ 'You are obliged to apologize, and to cast about in order to defend yourselves, and your Reformation. But you cannot be defended.' Contrasting the Church of England with the Eastern Church ('calm and immovable'), he went on:

It is plain how it [the Reformation] was ... manifestly it was a violent irruption into the Church of laymen, who mangled and altered their religion to suit their own purposes. Union with such a church is impossible. Others may come into the Eastern Church and follow her; but she can yield nothing in any way, least of all to you ... union with a national church, which leaves such latitude for denying or asserting all kinds of opinion, is impossible. With you everything needs explanations and apologies. One of you sees a thing in one light, another in another; no two of you agree.

Becoming more personal, he continued, 'There are your XXXIX Articles, which any one may subscribe, and be a thorough-going Protestant. You, in your Dissertation, allow some things to us, and do not allow others; you amalgamate and reconcile and eclecticise, that Protestants you may not be.'⁵⁵⁸

This was a more than fair point against Palmer, who had been forced, time and again, to field in his support Bishop Lancelot Andrewes' *Preces Privatae*, and

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 229-230.

⁵⁵⁷ Rev. William Palmer, *A Treatise on the Church of Christ* (2 vols.) (London: Rivington, 1838).

⁵⁵⁸ NV, pp. 364-365.

the Canon of 1571. The former contained 'Prayers for the departed, the Intercession of Saints, the Eulogy of the Blessed Virgin, and faith in the Real Presence',⁵⁵⁹ and the latter bound the clergy (according to Palmer) 'to preach nothing as of faith but only what is contained in Holy Scripture, and what the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops have collected from the same.'⁵⁶⁰ But Lord Selborne remarks of the canon that 'it never had legal force;'⁵⁶¹ and although Palmer assured the Archimandrite of the Sergievsky, when asked if Bishop Andrewes was acknowledged in England, that 'all agree to call him one of the best and greatest divines of their Church,'⁵⁶² it is doubtful that the majority of contemporary Anglicans would have agreed with either the doctrines or practices listed above: they were private devotions, after all, not a public form of service. To show that the Church of England held the doctrine of the Real Presence, he was forced to rely on 'the Scotch Liturgy.'⁵⁶³

Mouravieff was not, therefore, attracted by Palmer's idea of using the Russian chaplains in London 'to acquire a better knowledge of the state of Church matters in England.' He remarked contemptuously that they had 'no particular reason for cultivating such studies - English is not a classical language.' When Palmer suggested that nonetheless, English theology might be a fair exchange for the German that they currently read, Mouravieff was curt: 'If we read here German books, we do not adopt the errors of the Germans, but can distinguish between good and bad without help from you.'⁵⁶⁴ He used Palmer's own weapons against him when taxed with the 'superiority in various points' of the Latins to the Easterns. He allowed that 'Rome had the credit of activity'; but 'by that rule, the Dissenters beat

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 545.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 350.

⁵⁶¹ MFP, vol.-1, p.271.

⁵⁶² NV p. 214.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., p. 162.

you out and out, for they are in India, America, the Levant, Syria, and Abyssinia, everywhere, and they convert numbers.' Palmer's reply that they had not done so yet missed the point; it was the zeal of Rome for conversion, not the numbers that resulted, he had prayed in aid against the Orthodox. Mouravieff ended the interview by reverting to what he saw as the simple truth about the Anglican Church: 'You manifestly fell away from them [Rome], and it is of no avail now to try to explain things away, and to change all our convictions as to your past history.'⁵⁶⁵

Princess Eudoxia Galitsin echoed Mouravieff: 'How can you pretend that your religion is the same as ours when you have not the same sacraments or altars in our churches? You came out of the Church at the Reformation.' When Palmer objected to this she replied 'The English themselves speak as I was speaking.' His response - 'That is nothing to me' - was indicative of his wilful blindness to reality. He might treat the opinions of other Englishmen with disdain, but they contradicted and undermined his arguments. Prince Michael Galitsin⁵⁶⁶ had asked his banker ('a Scotchman, an excellent fellow') about Palmer. He replied 'Oh! He is not of *our* religion; he is a member of some new sect.'⁵⁶⁷

Mouravieff returned to the theme of Anglican inconsistency in a subsequent interview on 25 February O. S. / 9 March N. S. 1841.⁵⁶⁸ He again based his objections on the 39 Articles which he declared were 'quite contrary to your principles and opinions which you cannot defend by clear words of your Church herself in any systematic or full confession of faith, but part is only your own

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 366.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 368.

⁵⁶⁶ Mikhail Mikhailovitch Galitsin (1793-1856), Lt-General, writer. RBSI, p.162.

⁵⁶⁷ NV, p. 394.

⁵⁶⁸ This interview appears in abbreviated form at NV pp. 406-7, dated by Newman at 21 March .

opinion, part a passage taken from one book, part a passage taken from another.'⁵⁶⁹ Palmer retorted indignantly that Mouravieff could not have read the Synodal correspondence with the Non-Jurors, whose opinions reflected his own. Mouravieff was unmoved.

Yes I have read it; it is true the British bishops in it speak your language, and seem to hold your principles; but then the 39 Articles are quite different; and while some of you may reject or interpret them away (for you may by interpreting make of any form what you please) there may be others, and a far greater number perhaps, who stick to them in their plain and literal sense ...
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Palmer insisted that there was 'a constant and unbroken tradition for the correct interpretation of the Articles', but Mouravieff returned to his first criticism: 'You have had plenty of writers no doubt; but do they agree together? Does not every one of them hold a different doctrine from every other?' Besides, the Non-Jurors' correspondence clearly undermined Palmer's fundamental assertion that communion between East and West had never been interrupted, for it 'shows that there is a separation - for it was a correspondence to restore unity, and it proceeded on the assumption that there was a separation.'⁵⁷¹ As the separation did exist, they could not take

the word of a Deacon with letters only from a priest or head of a College like an Archimandrite ... and besides that your Rite was so totally unlike ours, if we were to believe your statement which you cannot prove, with all appearances against you, and admitted an individual to Communion it might cause enormous scandal on both sides.

Palmer himself would be regarded as 'a renegade or apostate' by half the Church of England. But, added both Mouravieff and the Metropolitan, putting pressure on

⁵⁶⁹ LP MS 1901, f. 31.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid., f. 32.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid., f. 31.

Palmer to reconsider his position, 'It is impossible to belong to two Churches at once; and to be suspended between two is not a sure road to heaven.'⁵⁷²

Palmer was prepared to concede the truth of some of the Russian charges against the Church of England. He admitted to Koutnevich with regard to confession in the Church of England that 'practically there is no discipline'⁵⁷³; to the monks of the Sergievsky that 'the Anglican Church has by successive violences and other influences been stripped perfectly bare'⁵⁷⁴; and to Pratasoff that the popular liberty that they had in England, far from being favourable to ecclesiastical humility and discipline, was 'the devil's liberty.'⁵⁷⁵ He conceded that 'all the outward surface of things among us is Protestant'⁵⁷⁶, and that his countrymen and popular opinion had both been 'thoroughly Protestantised.'⁵⁷⁷ He admitted that 'others speak contrary to me'⁵⁷⁸, and that few interpreted the 39 Articles as he did⁵⁷⁹; those who did, who thought the Church of England '*deformed rather than reformed*'⁵⁸⁰ were attempting to rebuild 'a Catholic theology out of the ruins of a decomposed Protestantism.'⁵⁸¹ He quoted with approval Lord Clanricarde's comments at dinner at the French Ambassador's, that the Church of England 'a été toujours pour le fond Catholique, mais elle a été terriblement défigurée et mutilée'; and that the churches of England were 'bare and slovenly', and the services and ceremonies so 'lifeless and naked' as to be 'contemptible.'⁵⁸²

⁵⁷² Ibid., f. 30.

⁵⁷³ NV, p. 158.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 213.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 351

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 218

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 261 & 273.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 216.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 334.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 514.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., p. 508.

⁵⁸² Ibid., p. 414.

Some, rather than being sceptical, simply could not understand what Palmer meant by seeking communion. The Archpriest Koutnevich told him that 'You have your own chaplain here; you need not come to us.' Palmer explained again that in Russia he was no member of the Church of England, but of the Church of Russia.⁵⁸³ The Archimandrite of the Sergievsky could not see why the English should not send out a bishop of their own to St. Petersburg.⁵⁸⁴ The Metropolitan Philaret, having agreed that Palmer's application might have been considered had his case been one of necessity, ruled out that possibility for the very reason that 'there is an English church here to which you can go.'⁵⁸⁵

There were any number of reasons why Palmer's application could not be granted. It was a matter of far too great importance to be dealt with between an individual (and a mere deacon at that) and representatives of the Russian Church: 'union should be attempted only by Synods.'⁵⁸⁶ It would cause scandal with a number of parties, such as the Greeks, whom Mouravieff described as 'unlearned, both laity and clergy, and they are blindly attached to all that they have received, even to the minutest details of their rites.' He illustrated this ignorance by recounting how he had asked the Patriarch of Constantinople to explain the heresy of the Armenians, which seemed to him to be 'very subtle.' The Patriarch had replied 'Oh, do not ask me, my son! Only know that all the heresies in the world which are most pernicious and wicked are united in the heresy of the Armenians.'⁵⁸⁷ But however comical they might think the Greeks, the Russians would not run the risk of losing the communion of the Eastern Patriarchs.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., p. 157.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 208.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 356.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 406.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 165-166.

The reaction of ordinary Russians had also to be considered. Koutnevich told Palmer that to give communion to the English despite the existing differences ‘would be extremely dangerous, and it would scandalize the people beyond anything.’ In fact he thought that ‘your people too would be scandalized.’ Mouravieff agreed; they had to ‘keep in view the Raskolniks, not to scandalize our own people’, adding as a more worldly consideration, ‘What would the English and the French Ambassadors here say to it?’⁵⁸⁸ A ‘Russian lady’ likewise thought that ‘if you obtained what you are seeking ... it would be to upset (bouleverser) all Russia. There are here different ambassadors ... what would they say?’⁵⁸⁹ Count Pratasoff’s private secretary felt that ‘unity of good will and sympathy’ was all that could be practically had for the time being. He too was concerned that if the Russian Church granted Palmer’s request, it might cause more Raskolniks, be taken as disrespectful by the Greeks, and inevitably set a precedent. Count Pratasoff himself was concerned about the implications of doing so: it would be ‘the same thing as to offer union to all the West.’⁵⁹⁰

Palmer reported his progress to Dr. Routh,⁵⁹¹ summing up the Russian reaction to his request. His assessment was bleak:

from what I have seen of the Orthodox clergy & of 2 members of the Synod I should suppose that there was no sort of probability of their either admitting me to Communion or even examining my belief with the intention of either admitting or rejecting me according to its correctness or heterodoxy.

This was partly because, as he had found, the Russians were far more aware of Roman Catholicism than they were of ‘the claims & character of our Church,’ which to the Russians was ‘one of the many sects of heretical Protestantism,’ and ‘the external appearance of English manners & worship is not such as to undeceive them

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 230.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 234.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 386.

... we never keep fasts, never make the sign of the Cross - and reject Invocations of Saints & the external reverencing of Pictures wh. they consider to be two essential points of the true Religion.' He thought the Russians were incapable of distinguishing between 'the essential & immutable Faith & Secondary matters of opinion, language or practise [sic]': Metropolitan Philaret had rejected Palmer's definitions of what was essential and secondary. The Russian definition of the Visible Church did not include the separated and therefore heretical West, still less the Sects that had left the Pope's jurisdiction. He enumerated the elements that they feared would be scandalised by any new step, viz. the Uniats and the Greeks.⁵⁹² Palmer recorded drily that after he had finished writing his letter, his host Father Fortunatoff 'criticized it freely, and ended by going to his piano and singing the *Trisagion* (ἅγιος ὁ θεός), the *Cherubicon* (Therefore with Angels, etc.), the *Tersanctus* (Holy, holy, holy); the *Hymn* (φῶς ἴλαρον) the *Nunc dimittis*, and the *Te Deum*.'⁵⁹³

6. Application for Communion

On 21 March 1841 Palmer delivered to Metropolitan Philaret a formal application for communion in the form of a letter. Describing himself as 'a Deacon of the Church which is in the Western dioceses of the English', and with his usual rhetorical overstatement as someone 'unworthy for my sins of the communion of any Church' who 'ought rather to pass all my life in tears and penitence outside the doors of the Church', he recapitulated the circumstances under which he had come to

⁵⁹¹ WP to Routh, 30 Nov O. S. / 12 Dec N. S. 1840, MAG MS 485 No. 2 f. 1.

⁵⁹² Ibid.

Russia, and the credentials he had brought from Dr. Routh. He repeated his adherence to the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, as expounded in the Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and Canon VII of the Council of Ephesus. He considered himself to hold the same faith as the Eastern Church, making again the point that the apparent causes of separation such as the *filioque* and the 'reverencing of Images' were 'controverted exactly as they are controverted now during several centuries without that causing uniformly any rupture of communion.' As to 'the Invocation of ... Saints', he could not find 'any of the Ancients' to say that this was a necessary Article of the Faith. He concluded by offering ecclesiastical obedience to 'particular local churches', and unconditional obedience to 'the oecumenical authority of the whole.'⁵⁹⁴

He had been warned more than once of the likely response to this letter by those with whom he had discussed his aim of being granted communion. Mr. Blackmore had told him in mid-August that 'if you would be admitted to communion you will have to be confirmed with Chrism: you will have to accept all the traditions of the Orthodox Eastern Church, and not only those which you may call ecumenical [correctly anticipating the Metropolitan's rejection of Palmer's would-be distinction between essential and secondary matters of the faith]; you will have to confess before communicating ...'⁵⁹⁵ This the Archpriest Koutnevich had confirmed on 28 August, telling him 'If any one would be admitted to Communion in the Sacraments, he must believe all that the Orthodox *Eastern* Church [Palmer's stress] believes.'⁵⁹⁶ M. Mouravieff on 22 September told him equally plainly, 'Any one who would

⁵⁹³ NV, p. 360.

⁵⁹⁴ LP MS 1901, f. 50.

⁵⁹⁵ NV, p. 74.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

communicate with the Oriental church must take her exactly as she is, for she can do nothing to meet him'⁵⁹⁷, and on 20 January 1841 he repeated, speaking specifically about Palmer's letter to the Metropolitan, 'To an individual the Church can concede nothing; and no one can communicate except with an unconditional acceptance of all that she teaches and practises.'⁵⁹⁸

All of this was reflected in the formal reply from the Metropolitan. Philaret began by speaking of the pleasure that Palmer's request to come into communion had given him; but, he went on, as what charity seeks must be approved by truth, the truth of diocesan right was 'to admit to Communion of the Sacraments those who confessing the dogmas of the Orthodox Church, promise and render to her absolute obedience, without any conditions restrictions or reservations.' But he did not think that this was what Palmer was doing:

You, Sir, propose certain conditions, and make certain restrictions and reservations, and propose to yourself to await, as you say, in silence the result of conferences between the Bishops. This if we are to speak plainly, is not to render obedience to the Eastern Catholic Church, but to make a kind of treaty with her; a thing certainly which it is not for the diocesan authority to admit, but for the synodal authority to decide upon.

Communion between their two Churches was 'not a matter to be attempted by a Deacon or Head of a College on one side nor one Bishop on the other.' Philaret concluded by expressing his own full satisfaction with the Communion of the Orthodox Catholic Church, and wishing Palmer 'like satisfaction and bliss.' He returned with the answer 'Welshman's Latin Edition of the 39 Articles, with the corners of the leaves turned down at Articles XIX, XXI, and XXII.'⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 164.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 396.

⁵⁹⁹ LP MS 1901, f. 52.

7. Local Difficulties and Customs

Although Palmer was to remain in Russia for just over a month longer, this politely expressed refusal had effectively brought his self-imposed mission to an end. The confident tone of the narrative of *Notes of a Visit to the Russian Church* might give the impression that Palmer's time in Russia was entirely happy and easy; this was not so. He faced a number of hardships and difficulties, of which the language was the most obvious. He had never learned Russian, and although he was helped by the fact that the Westernised middle and upper classes spoke French, and the clergy and monks Latin, to his mortification he found Russian much more difficult to learn than he had expected:

I have however made very little progress in picking up those innumerable (but most necessary) phrases, which are required in common life and for want of which I still feel very helpless and wish myself well settled in the Academy or rather home again in England most heartily; but this will no doubt get better in a little time ...⁶⁰⁰

He confided to his mother 'I can assure you that I am heartily homesick & shall return as soon as ever I have made sufficient progress in the language.'⁶⁰¹ Things were little better by the next January, at least as regards his spoken Russian:

In speaking I have made no progress at all or very little - which vexes me a good deal and I am at a loss to account for my having so totally failed. I have it is true been very unfortunately situated for this - for I have little or no opportunity for practising: the Priest's family consisting only of his wife and two infant children - and he having been used to talk Latin to me for nearly three months and I to him - we cannot do anything else - and in other society I never hear anything but French spoken - add to this that my Priest speaks very rapidly and indistinctly.

As to reading,

⁶⁰⁰ WP to AM, 25 Aug. / 7 Sept., BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 17.

my state of proficiency is pretty much as follows: I can read the Church Service books (which are in Slavonic [sic]) without difficulty, and have read three or four volumes through in Russ (Russian) - and with the priest's assistance can read from fifty to seventy pages a day - by myself I get on but very slowly having still many words to look out.⁶⁰²

The cost of living in the Russian capital was another problem, lodging houses or hotels being as expensive as 'the most expensive Hotel in Paris or London.'⁶⁰³

After his initial forays into the cathedrals and churches of St. Petersburg he admired the piety of the Russians, but still wrote to his Aunt Eleanor that 'the people upon the whole are not well looking, neither men nor women ... I cannot say that I very much like what I have seen of the country at present, or of the Capital ...'⁶⁰⁴ He seems to have been more willing to voice his doubts to his aunts than to his parents.

Although he was well looked after there, the expense of his lodgings, together with his desire to learn Russian, led Palmer to pursue the idea of lodging with a priest until at last Count Pratasoff found him a room with Father Fortunatoff, who lived at 'no. 10 in the suburbs in the Offiterskaia, on the Viborg side, across the Neva.'⁶⁰⁵ The move left him 'In point of situation ... no gainer but the contrary - for I am now at the other extremity of the City in the suburbs almost in the country - and not in any very desirable part of the town either.' He was separated from the southern bank of the Neva by two bridges of boats that had to be removed swiftly when the ice came down in 'huge masses' from the Ladoga lake, freezing over a couple of days so as to enable people to cross. Eventually sledges could be driven down the river to Cronstadt: 'the track is marked out with small trees all the way and station houses fixed with men to look out and give notice by ringing a bell in hazy weather or

⁶⁰¹ WP to DP, 12 Oct. 1840, *Ibid.*, f. 52.

⁶⁰² WP to W J P, 19 / 31 Jan. 1841, LP MS 1878, f. 210.

⁶⁰³ BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 17.

⁶⁰⁴ LP MS 1903, f. 143.

⁶⁰⁵ NV, p. 286.

snowstorms.⁶⁰⁶ The house itself was one storey and wooden, with furniture that was 'scanty and poor in the extreme.'⁶⁰⁷ Palmer found that he had

considerable personal discomforts - e.g. - I have a trunk which is not long enough for a bedstead and for bedding a mattress [sic] one sheet & a counterpane he insisting that I will let him stove the room up to such a degree of heat as the Russians live in I shall not want any more bedding which may be true enough - I cannot say I like the heated atmosphere in which they live at all.

This was caused by the 'great earthen stoves' or 'peeches' which were to be found in every room, heated up every day or two, on top of which whole families of peasants would sleep, lying there 'when it is so hot that their shirts or cloths [sic] are all but catching fire.'⁶⁰⁸ Fortunately he had bought a wadded cloak which he could use as bedclothes. In fact he was lucky to have a separate bedroom at all:

In the domestic arrangements of a Russian house of the middle & lower classes - and to a very considerable degree also of the higher - an Englishman is struck by the apparent absence of bedrooms - The fact is they use the same rooms very generally to sleep in at night which they live in during the day - sometimes a bed is concealed by a light moveable screen six feet high - often there is no bed at all but sofas are used instead - a Russian requiring nothing but his cloak and a light coverlet ...

The servants, like the droshky drivers, often slept at their master's door in their sheepskin 'just like a dog.'⁶⁰⁹ These arrangements meant that there was 'little taking off of clothes.' The Russians kept themselves clean by 'vapour baths', taken 'at least once a week', the custom being 'extremely ancient in Russia', and 'described by the chronicler Nestor as exciting the wonder of St. Andrew the Apostle'; 'if you like you may have the advantage of being flogged with light twigs ... and after this you have cold water - the coldest water indeed thrown over you - are rubbed dry by the attendants' or if in the country 'the peasants commonly run out of the bath & take a

⁶⁰⁶ WP to DP, 12 Oct. 1840, BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 48.

⁶⁰⁷ NV, p. 287.

⁶⁰⁸ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 49.

roll on the snow ... the Russians recommend their baths as a preventative or a remedy for many ails & diseases.’⁶¹⁰

Fr. Fortunatoff was married with ‘two little children who cry a good part of the day’, and was ‘Chaplain to a Government Hospital of Marines situated in the quarter - and the duties of this place are not onerous - he having to celebrate the Liturgy only on Sundays & Festivals - He also teaches an hour or two Sacred History & Catechism & Latin Grammar in a School in another Government Establishment.’⁶¹¹ Fortunately the priest turned out to be ‘good-natured - and very well disposed to work with me to teach me Russian.’ The drawbacks were that he had ‘one trick you would not like & that is of pawing every thing about which comes in his way’, and the fact that ‘as we sit & read together his long beard is forever coming into my face.’ Palmer noted that ‘the Priests wear their hair long behind like women flowing down their backs - (a custom said to be taken from the Jewish Nazarists) and at the same time they wear their beards especially long before - I admire the beards - but cannot say as much of the hair.’⁶¹²

Although he wrote to his mother that he was ‘agreeably disappointed ... that I have not yet been seriously molested either by fleas or any other similar animals’, he may have been sparing her feelings; for in *Notes of a Visit* he describes how after a sleepless first night the priest ‘examined the crevices and corners of the room, and found long clusters of ... vermin hanging like bees in a hive. They frizzled and fell into the candle, and almost put it out. This clearance was no doubt much, but still my

⁶⁰⁹ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. IV f. 35.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, ff. 35-6.

⁶¹¹ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 49.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*

nights are bad enough.⁶¹³ He was to be similarly afflicted at the Sergievsky Monastery, as he told his father:

I cannot give you any idea of how much I have suffered from fleas, bugs and mosquitos since I have been here - though I am much interested in all I see and hear, yet I assure you I pay for it with my blood both day and night - a monk said to me I am afraid you are troubled by the fleas - I answered that they might serve at all events to teach me patience - at which they said 'You speak like a monk'.⁶¹⁴

He described the extraordinary tendency of the Russians to go to sleep regardless of time or place, the droshky Drivers in the street in their Kaftans or sheepskins, or the Mujiks flat out on top of tree trunks on timber waggons. A 20 year old servant girl at Miss Dees' disappeared at 10 o' clock in the morning, only to be found stretched out fast asleep on a shelf in a cupboard. 'She would fall asleep over her work not at the end of the day but as soon as she came down in the morning.' The Mujiks had 'little value for their lives & little sense of danger' - one, reproached by his Mistress for risking his neck while working on an outside window, replied calmly, 'Never mind, I am only a Mujik.'⁶¹⁵

A Russian Mujik formed the subject matter of the first of Palmer's many 'significant dreams.' When in Cronstadt on the night of 31 August O. S. / 12 September N. S., he dreamed that he had killed the son or very near relation of 'an ancient, weatherbeaten, hard-featured hardworking Russian countryman of the lowest rank (i.e. of Mujiks)' who was taking it especially hard 'because he had suffered & been wronged in the same way once before either in his own person or by the loss of his own son.' In the dream he offered the old man four squirrel skins, and then sheepskins as 'blood price' for the loss, but the Mujik was implacable, instilling in

⁶¹³ NV, p. 288.

⁶¹⁴ WP to W J P, 8 Oct. 1840, LP MS 1894, f. 38.

⁶¹⁵ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 50.

Palmer 'a deep fear & awe of his vengeance.' The sheepskin was given an overtly religious significance as he heard himself say in the dream 'one of them is the fleece of his own dearly beloved Son.'⁶¹⁶ Palmer analysed the dream at length as a metaphor for how we each of us displease God and kill Christ anew by disobedience, although it might indicate that he saw God as vengeful and implacable.

Palmer was much struck by the way that piety pervaded everyday life in Russia. 'The Russians will not live in a house until it has been blessed ... by the Priest,'

nor sail in a ship in like manner ... every Russian ship has also Pictures of the Saints on board - & a monk for a Chaplain who says prayers for & with the ship's crew also on land every Government establishment & office without any distinction has a Chapel & Chaplain attached to it - & very many of the private houses of the richer people.

He enumerated the endless occasions on which the Russians made the sign of the Cross: 'on rising and going to bed - on entering a room or passing a Church - before & after meals - and above all during the performance of divine service - they also think that this custom is salutary and that people who have it not can scarce be Christian ...'⁶¹⁷ He was charmed by the custom of children seeking their parents' blessing night and morning, as monks did of their abbots and lay people on meeting priests they knew in the street. However, when he told M. de Barante that he had 'never been in so religious a country', the Ambassador responded that this was so 'as far as external observances go, but it is to regretted that they do not influence sufficiently the morals of the people - there is not only much drunkenness, but other vices besides.'⁶¹⁸ Palmer had discovered as much from personal experience:

⁶¹⁶ BO MS v.25 Bk. II, f. 17.

⁶¹⁷ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 51.

⁶¹⁸ LP MS 1901, f. 68.

The bad qualities which generally strike foreigners & of which I have seen enough myself to make me fear that the accusation is well-founded are a disposition to cringing - lying & duplicity - stealing & drunkenness - I have had one or two small things stolen out of the pocket of my cloak by servants in houses where I was visiting: & the servants in the Church of the Hospital here were so drunk on Easter Monday that they could not stand - but I should add that they were punished & lost their places for it.⁶¹⁹

On the other hand:

The good qualities which strike you here as very general whereas in England Society seems to be full of a contrary spirit - are as much humility obedience - a kind of brotherly oneness & goodhumoured familiarity between all classes a reasonable & reverent disposition in all that relates to religion - The entire absence of that aversion to do or say anything in ordinary life which shall mark you to be a Christian which is so common in English Society - and a great development of good & amiable & tender feeling as distinguished from intellect.⁶²⁰

The last remark may refer to himself, for as his French diaries show, he felt himself overly intellectual and lacking in feeling.

Drunk or sober, the 'lower orders' presented a picturesque sight to Western eyes. They usually wore

a very coarse shirt - a wrapper round their legs - a sort of drawers rather trousers which go down into their boots - and a Caftan or long gown with large round sleeves, of thick dark blue Cloth - which is bound round the waist with ... a sash of cotton - generally red - sometimes yellow - they never wear shoes but always boots & long beards - if the weather is cold in spring & autumn the middle classes often wear a very long & close great coat of the same dark blue coat [sic]... in winter the lower people all were [sic] sheepskins generally made as frockcoats with a leather band round the waist & the base skin outside.⁶²¹

Although Palmer describes the unbound 'Caftan' as looking like an Oxford gown, he must have made an impression himself by wearing his cap and gown in Russia, as he did on 23 April to see Metropolitan Philaret, who was apparently 'much pleased,' saying that it was 'the Eastern dress in its origin - and certainly much fitter for

⁶¹⁹ WP to DP, 18/30 April 1841, BO MS 11.1. (2) / Bk. IV f. 36.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ Ibid., f. 34.

Ecclesiastics and more becoming than the modern tight European dresses which are not only unbecoming but scarcely decent.' The Metropolitan asked

whether the clergy always wore it - I said the rule is that they should - but they do not except in Colleges, and there only the Gown. He said 'Besides that the thing is so proper itself - if it is the rule of your Church why do they not obey it - that is what I do not understand' - nor indeed could I explain either that or a hundred other discrepancies between the paper-theoretical Catholicism and the living practical Protestantism of our Church.⁶²²

His sartorial observations extended to Orthodox vestments; his remarks in August to his father about scarves being worn by the Deacons over the left shoulder produced no response, but in October, after a visit to the Sergievsky Lavra, he was trailing his coat - or scarf - again. 'The Deacons ... put on ... on the left shoulder their scarves or stoles ... with crosses upon them: just as I wear mine - which pleased me much to see.'⁶²³ This time his father rose to the bait: 'I do not see why you should have exulted so much when you saw the deacon wear his stole on the left shoulder like yourself - for I must own as you very well know, I should have thought it much more becoming in them than I do in you.' He astutely asked: 'Would they admit an Anglican to communion without rebaptising? And what possibility is there of an English Deacon being recognised as such and ordained priest?'⁶²⁴ The answer to the second question was given by Koutnevich in 1843; but it was the different Russian and Greek responses to the first question that was primarily responsible for keeping Palmer out of the Orthodox Church.

Palmer had noted the droshkies on first arriving in St. Petersburg, but the other 'common vehicles of the country' made a great impression on him. They were

called Teleggas and have no springs - & the sight of which has really something barbarous & surprizing in it. These are cradles on four wheels or

⁶²² LP MS 1894, ff. 74-5.

⁶²³ WP to W J P, 8 Oct. 1840, LP MS 1894, f. 35.

⁶²⁴ W J P to WP, 7 Nov. 1840, *Ibid.*, f. 40.

rather frames, on which is mounted a sort of wooden boat or skeleton of open wooden ribs, the driver sitting outside of it in front it is commonly half full of straw or rubbish to break the jolts and, in it, sits like a great bird in a nest the traveller or passenger - these strange conveyances are to be seen careering about the Capital in every direction usually carrying a Courier in Grey Cloak cap & feathers - or an Officer in uniform - they are drawn ... by one horse in shafts with his head hung up to a great wooden arch which rises from the ends of the shafts - while another runs loose with his head down between his forelegs by his side only attached by cords. The drivers of all manner of vehicles make an inconceivable noise, screaming & shouting to make way in a most barbarous & wild note - the higher orders all drive four horses to their carriages & the Coachman in his blue Caftan, red band, long beard, & not inelegant Cap though often with a most contemptible whip, sits gravely on the Box - the leaders are attached by very long traces to the wheelers - and are directed by a little boy who sits on one of them dressed much as the coachman, & screaming & cracking his whip with all his might.⁶²⁵

He had painful personal experience of one of the 'Teleggas' - although he calls it a '*triska*', perhaps because it had three horses instead of the two he describes above - when he went from Moscow to visit the Troitsa Lavra, on 17 / 29 May 1841. Rather than pay 70 to 80 roubles for a coach and four, he chose to go 'in an open cart of the country', setting off from Howard's Hotel in Moscow at 4 o'clock in the morning: 'this sort of vehicle, having no springs, no one ought to use it, as I then did ignorantly, without providing himself with a mattress or feather-bed, and tying a sash or shawl tightly round his body, else he will run a risk of being jarred and shaken almost to pieces.'⁶²⁶

The result was that 'though the distance is not more than fifty miles we were more than ten hours in accomplishing it, and I must say I never had so good a shaking in my life ... though I had taken the precaution to tie a pocket handkerchief round my waist (or rather stomach)⁶²⁷ I could hardly endure the jolting and for some versts

⁶²⁵ WP to DP, 18 / 30 April 1841, BO MS 11.1. (2) / Bk. IV f. 36-37.

⁶²⁶ NV, pp. 452-453.

⁶²⁷ It is unclear what protection a pocket handkerchief could provide.

there was no road.⁶²⁸ This last stretch he described as ‘a mere cart-rut over a common.’⁶²⁹ He had not learned his lesson when the time came for him to return to Moscow on 3 June (N. S.), for he ‘started about half-past nine, and arrived at Moscow about seven p.m., nearly shaken to pieces, having neglected to provide myself with a mattress.’⁶³⁰

He wrote to his sister Emma that ‘there are always I am told more than 100,000 regular troops in the Capital or in its immediate vicinity.’ He found them

to be “excellent conservatives” and to think with me that it would be more reasonable for the Christian Powers of Europe to take the first legitimate opportunity in concert to putting an end to the Turkish Power & the slavery of the Eastern Christians to unbelievers than to league together as now by a miserable jealousy of one another to “maintain the Integrity of the Ottoman Empire”.⁶³¹

He had had a similar conversation with one of the Sergievsky monks on the way back from the monastery to Petersburg. The monk regretted that ‘nothing is worshipped but what is military’, a ‘mania ... necessarily unfavourable to the strict morality and simplicity of early times.’ Palmer responded that ‘perhaps Russia is preparing for her great mission - the deliverance of the Eastern Churches and the overthrow of the Turkish Empire.’⁶³² Although he had at Dr. Routh’s suggestion omitted the passage about delivering ‘the East from the yoke of the infidels’ from his address to the Tsar, he still cherished the same romantic sentiment.

⁶²⁸ LP MS 1878, f. 224.

⁶²⁹ NV, p.453

⁶³⁰ Ibid., p. 497.

⁶³¹ BO MS 11.1. (2) / Bk. II f. 69.

⁶³² NV, pp. 223-4.

8. On Shifting Sands

By January of 1841, Palmer was coming to feel that his defence of the Church of England was gallantry on behalf of a lady of doubtful ecclesiastical virtue. This feeling was the more uncomfortable because it reflected on his own integrity in making claims on her behalf. M. Mouravieff, although kind to him on a number of occasions,

yet on matters of Divinity talks to me as if I were a kind of well-intentioned impostor, trying to whitewash and explain into an Orthodox and Catholic Church an heretical Protestant Act of Parliament "Establishment" which, by the way, he seemed to understand by the confident way in which he talks much better than I do myself ...⁶³³

He was handicapped by the fact that apart from the merchants and traders who came to St. Petersburg from England and Scotland, such as Prince Michael's banker, 'every Russian family has had an English governess to teach their daughters ... or has known English people or travelled - or read English books.' Count Pratasoff's immediate reaction on hearing Palmer's exposition of his Church's beliefs, after asking if the Anglican chaplains would agree with him, was to say that he would speak to his wife's 'English *bonne* or companion, a good woman enough'⁶³⁴ about the matter.

Palmer described to his father the invariable 'final & conclusive objection' to his claims for the Church of England:

what is there Catholic about your people - if you are Catholics, for what earthly reason do you in all things that we can see follow the heretical novelties of the Protestants and differ from the whole Christian Church in all ages and in all places ... Why they say your people will not even so much as

⁶³³ WP to W J P, 1 / 13 January 1841, LP MS 1894 f. 49.

⁶³⁴ NV, p. 118.

make the sign of the Cross - your Pastor never says the Liturgy but only preaches - You have abolished the sacrifice and retained only as a separate thing the Communion - and to that your people go with full stomachs contrary to the practise [sic] of the whole Church - and communicate whenever they think themselves fit, without any shadow of ecclesiastical discipline, whatever sins a man may have been guilty of - then again you keep no fasts - you pay no honour to the Mother of Our Lord, or to the Saints and you call us Idolaters for kissing and bowing to their Icons ...⁶³⁵

He was hard pressed to counter these accusations - 'which I confess I feel to contain only too much truth.' If he tried 'then they retort but your clergy even your Bishops are just the same - & this makes it necessary to enter into an Historical explanation of the Revolution of 1688 & its mixed religious & political consequences - and this they can seldom well understand.' No amount of Scottish liturgies or private prayers of Caroline divines could make the Russians see the Catholic silk purse that Palmer described to them, rather than the Protestant sow's ear that they and their English governesses already knew. Roundell had written to him on New Year's Day 1841, conveying the interest and accurate predictions of the eminent Dr. Moberly⁶³⁶, who had said 'that from what he knew of Russia ... they never could be brought to think of you as an orthodox Christian; and considered, as the fact has turned out, that you would have great difficulty about the language.'⁶³⁷

Trying to debate ecclesiastical and theological issues with the Russians had its own peculiar difficulties:

the character and appearance of Russian Divinity and of Russian ideas and conventions is very complex and puzzling ... generally they are far less learned than the Latin clergy of the Continent - and less capable of entering into theological questions with any logical accuracy; they do not reason like the people of the West - but go all by feelings and analogies - twisting about

⁶³⁵ BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. II f. 89.

⁶³⁶ George Moberly (1803-1885), the seventh son of Edward Moberly, a Russia merchant, his father-in-law was John Cayley, the British Consul-General in Russia. Educated at Balliol College Oxford, matriculated as a scholar March 1822, Headmaster of Winchester 1835-1866, Canon of Chester Cathedral 1868, Bishop of Salisbury 1869. DNB.

⁶³⁷ LP MS 2836, f. 257.

like eels and flying from and about the point in question with the utmost provoking and baffling irregularity ...⁶³⁸

Nonetheless he had clearly formed by now a profound admiration for the essence of Orthodox spirituality:

at the same time the spirit of their Divinity and their Clergy is far more wholesome than that of the Papists - and is in fact that of the Fathers and of the Early Church - being very pious and practical - negligent of all that is intellectual and formal or ecclesiastical compared with that morality and spirituality for the sake of which alone the others are valuable.⁶³⁹

This had been the proud boast of the Archimandrite of the Sergievsky Monastery to Palmer, who 'talked to me much about the Asketic [sic] Divines - with whom I was obliged to confess myself to be little acquainted. They are however all that he thinks about or values - they said they had conserved in their convents the asceticism of the Early Church.'⁶⁴⁰

Palmer found the fervour and mystery of Orthodox spirituality attractive, suspecting himself as he did of lack of feeling and over-intellectualism. He confessed to Mouravieff that: 'if there is any Church which has preserved antiquity it is the Eastern, & we must look to it if there is to be peace - for it is plain that in the West we had been carried away into many novel abuses & errors by an exaggerated opinion of the Roman authority & infallibility.'⁶⁴¹

Nonetheless he was sufficiently sympathetic to the concept of Roman authority to put to his father the case for submission to the Pope:

When you speak in a way that implies the possibility of the monarchical role of a single Bishop or apostle over the whole Church being so far legitimately established as to require our submission to it, I am ready theoretically to subscribe to it, ... but ... you ought not to forget that Bishop has assumed

⁶³⁸ WP to W J P, 19 / 31 Jan. 1841, LP MS 1878 f.211.

⁶³⁹ Ibid. -

⁶⁴⁰ LP MS 1894, f. 37.

⁶⁴¹ LP MS 2470 [unnumbered].

much more ... a power of quite another nature over all temporal Princes and civil Governors of the world ... this should not be lost sight of.⁶⁴²

It may be that the 'lack of theological accuracy' that he found so trying was due to the fact that the Russians simply could not accept the premises of the theory of the visible Church that he propounded, which he designated simply 'their false definition.' Although he could still write in all seriousness of 'the English Communion which alone holds the true definition', still its 'present appearance ... is by no means calculated to help them to a correction of their error.' His exposure to a Church that had preserved the 'pious and practical' spirit 'of the Fathers and the Early Church' had opened his eyes to what the Church of England lacked, thrown away or destroyed at the Reformation:

it is only too evident that there has been a great and general departure in England and in the members of the English Church from Orthodox belief, opinion and sentiment and from Catholic practise [sic] and that the Church herself instead of being in her 'true and natural position' has been buried for 300 years under a cloud of Heretical Protestantism.⁶⁴³

This made the provincial self-satisfaction and ignorance of the English in Russia hard to bear:

I assure you I have learned a lesson by seeing my countrymen (and in a manner through them our Church and Communion) in contact with the Oriental Church - to talk of Popery as people do in England is a farce - a most wretched farce, and to take a high line about our Church as if all was right in it as people are too apt to do in controversy is equally so and is really dishonest if we were not blinded by self-complacency.⁶⁴⁴

Writing of *Tract 90*, he thought that although the authors of the *Tracts for the Times* 'seem to have a knack of doing everything in such a way as to startle most and have the greatest possible appearance of novelty', it might 'be all the better in the long run, as it will effectively break up that wretched double compromising system

⁶⁴² W J P to WP, 25 March 1841, LP MS 2834, f. 185.

⁶⁴³ WP to W J P, 19 / 31 Jan. 1841, LP MS 1878, f. 211.

which has so long prevailed: when truth was theoretically recognised as ‘Orthodoxy’ and practically denied with few exceptions even by the High Church men.’ He concluded fiercely: ‘My stay in Russia has I suppose greatly increased my sense of the utter rottenness of our ‘Establishment’ and of the necessity of a thorough Reformation.’⁶⁴⁵

He returned to and dilated upon this theme in a letter written within a fortnight of his return to England, on 3 August (New Style) to the Revd. G. P. Badger,⁶⁴⁶ brother-in-law of Christian Rassam, who was to go as a missionary to the Syrian churches of ‘Kurdistan’ and the Chaldeans of Mosul in early 1842.⁶⁴⁷ It was no doubt with Badger’s forthcoming mission in mind that Palmer wrote to him that

... I do not expect to see any thing like efficiency in any Mission undertaken by her members till there has been a complete Reformation of the existing Theology and sentiment among us. No Church and still less a Missionary Church can exist without authoritative teaching not of the dead letter of meagre & ambiguous formularies, but of a living spirit of Orthodoxy, and discipline - the great duties of the Priesthood by the discharge of which the Church is formed -⁶⁴⁸

Having for so long carefully kept himself at one remove from the Tractarians, he here quoted Newman’s introduction to *Tract 90* almost verbatim - ‘the stammering lips of ambiguous formularies’⁶⁴⁹ - but in his wording (‘dead letter’) arguably went even further than Newman.

He had to face, though reluctantly and with horror, the meaning and implication of the wilful dereliction of discipline in the Church of England,

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid., f.220.

⁶⁴⁶ George Percy Badger (1815-88), ordained deacon 1841, priest 1842, delegate to the Eastern Churches, especially the Nestorians of Kurdistan 1842-4, assistant chaplain Bombay 1845, chaplain at Aden 1846-62, staff chaplain & Arabic interpreter on Sir James Outram’s Persian expedition, November 1856 to February 1857. MEB, vol. IV, pp. 220-1.

⁶⁴⁷ J. F. Coakley, *The Church of the East and the Church of England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), p. 35

ff.

⁶⁴⁸ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 f. 17.

particularly in the context of passive communion: ‘... the Church ought not either for the sake of the Penitent or of others to give hastily and upon the mere expression of the feeling of repentance her absolution to persons who have incurred excommunication ... by great or habitual sins ... ’ In allowing this and ostensibly pronouncing ‘the pardon and remission of sins’ such as these, the Church of England was attempting the impossible:

That Church which should say that thieves, drunkards, whoremongers &c are not by her intention ipso facto excommunicated would merely commit an act of apostacy [sic]: ... yet in practise this is, I tremble to write it, very nearly ... the condition of our own communion.⁶⁵⁰

The laxity of the Church’s discipline meant that

People ... do not feel that any sins however great, are sins against the Church or that she has any thing to do with them ... the Clergy in the mean time administer the Sacrament to all indifferently ... as for heresy or Schism few of the Clergy seem to consider them to be causes of refusal at all even if they know what they are ... the neglect of discipline is the great sin & weakness of our Church, one which must be corrected if we are to preserve our existence.⁶⁵¹

To enforce discipline an organisation must know what it believes, but in Palmer’s view as in Newman’s, the Church of England did not. The compromises of the Reformation had left it with ‘ambiguous formularies’ incapable of enforcement, even had the will been there to do so. This lack of discipline made a nonsense of mission: ‘I do not think we can either convert the Heathen or train them & keep them in the right way when they are converted - I do not mean that absolutely nothing can be done but nothing of any great & lasting value ... ’ His French and Russian

⁶⁴⁹ John Henry Newman, ‘Remarks on Certain Passages of the Thirty Nine Articles’, *The Via Media of the Anglican Church* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1891), vol. II, p. 271 .

⁶⁵⁰ BO MS 11.1. (2) / G.37 f.20.

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ff. 21-23.

experiences drove him to the inescapable conclusion that the Roman & Greek Communion were 'in this matter incomparably less corrupt than our own.'⁶⁵²

Palmer was an interested spectator of the ceremonies of the Russian Church's year, such as the Blessing of the Waters on the Vigil of Theophany, in January. This began with the celebration of St. Basil's Liturgy in the Chapel of the Imperial Winter Palace, followed by a procession of 'the singers - the eight members of the Synod, the Emperor and his suite all bare-headed' with flags and the Cross from the Palace to the Quay between three lines of clergy. The Metropolitan then descended the steps to the river and blessed the water, as the choir sang 'anthems concerning the Manifestation of the Blessed Trinity in our Saviour's Baptism.' The ceremony ended with guns firing from the fortress opposite, and the crowd rushing to the river to drink and carry away some of the water. Palmer had to stand 'full two hours with the thermometer some degrees below zero and a wind into the bargain and something like half an hour without hats.'⁶⁵³ When the river broke up on 4 April (New Style), it was formally opened, as was the custom, by the Commandant of the Fortress. He went into the middle of the river with his fleet of boats, guns were fired from the Fortress and some of the river water was taken by him into the Palace to the Emperor - 'when the custom was, I know not whether it is still, that he should be rewarded by a plate full of Ducats.'⁶⁵⁴ Palmer describes the scene as the ice broke up and floated away:

The ice looked very black, spongy porous & rotten as it went away from the river - but some of that from the lake had white snow still remaining upon it - and the river presented a very mottled appearance of black, yellowish, and white with occasional streaks of water between; the ships & boats in great numbers appeared - suddenly in every direction after the river was clear and

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*

⁶⁵³ WP to W J P, 19 / 31 Jan. 1841, LP MS 1878, f. 212.

⁶⁵⁴ WP to RP, 5 April 1841, *Ibid.*, f. 220.

opened - one could not tell from whence - and gulls & other sea birds which we had not seen for some time began to skim & flap over the water.⁶⁵⁵

9. Visit to Moscow

The formal rejection of Palmer's application for communion at least meant that he was free to travel to Moscow, which he did in May. The journey, some 525 miles, took him three days by coach, past the wooden houses of the peasants, with their ornamented balconies, to the city.

after the first view there is nothing particular to be seen in the City itself except the Kremlin - the rest is only remarkable for the quantity of open courts, gardens, & dead walls which fill up the length of the streets on each side ... the roofs of the houses are either green or red - chiefly the former - those of the churches which are exceedingly numerous, almost always green - with bulbous domes either green or blue or gilded - sometimes they are painted with streaks of red or green & sometimes are mottled with brown: every bulb & pinnacle is surmounted by a Cross ornamented at the corners, and attached to the roof by wires from them: and standing upon or surmounting a Crescent.⁶⁵⁶

In Moscow he visited the Kremlin, and within it the Cathedral of the Assumption, which contained the tombs of the Metropolitans and Patriarchs. Seeing a man praying at the tomb of one of the Patriarchs, Palmer imagined him praying that the secular government of his country might 'repent of having withdrawn itself so far from the advice and blessing of the Church ... that it may return from its eager pursuit after the infidel civilization of the West', or perhaps deploring

that sinful jealousy which moved the Russian nobility in former times to urge or force their sovereigns to strip the Church of her worldly property, and to break her power ... thereby destroying that spiritual balance and check which alone secured the Tsar from becoming a mere despot.⁶⁵⁷

⁶⁵⁵ BO MS 11.1.(2)/G.37 Bk. IV f. 70.

⁶⁵⁶ WP to an aunt, probably AM, 30 May 1841, *Ibid.*, f. 83 .

⁶⁵⁷ NV, p.435.

He was shown the Patriarchal, or Synodal, Hall and vestry. In the former the holy chrism was boiled in Passion week, Synods were formerly held, and the Patriarch Nikon stood trial. Nikon came to embody for Palmer the principle of the Church's fearless independence of the secular power, and his last twenty-five years in Rome were largely devoted to writing a seven-volume history of him. In the vestry Palmer was shown the Saccos of St. Peter, the first Metropolitan to die at Moscow, dating from 680, and a vestment from Constantinople embroidered with 70,000 'grains of seed pearl', with the 'likenesses of the Emperor John Paleologus, and his Empress Anna ... the Metropolitan Photius, and the Patriarch Nikon.' The whole Creed, in Greek, was embroidered round the garment in letters of gold.⁶⁵⁸

Palmer also visited the Choudoff Monastery, and endured hours of shaking-up in a 'triska' to visit the Monastery or Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius. On the road he saw thousands of pilgrims, male and female, in a 'peculiar dress of a whitish-brown colour, the head, chin, and face bound and muffled up in a handkerchief, a jacket or smock covering the body and reaching barely to the knees, while the legs were clad in wrappers, with either bare feet, or else shoes of bark, or sandals.' Some had walked 'from very distant provinces ... even from Siberia.'⁶⁵⁹

On arriving, Palmer went into the Church at three o'clock for the Lesser Vespers, after which the Archimandrite gave him a cup of tea. From six to eleven he attended the Vigil Service, after which the Archimandrite gave him 'a good-sized piece of bread' to eat. With British understatement he wrote: 'It was now nearly midnight, and to one who had been standing above five hours, and before that had been jolting in a vehicle without springs under a hot sun over hard ground, part of the

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 439.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 454-5.

way a mere rough track, since four o' clock in the morning, it was no unpleasant thing to be able to lie down.⁶⁶⁰ The next morning 'amid a perfect thunder of bells, so that one could not hear a word said out of doors, and scarcely in'⁶⁶¹, Palmer went to the Liturgy, followed by a substantial dinner in the *trapeza*.⁶⁶² After dinner they visited 'a court where 1500 poor strangers had just dined ...The monastery is bound to give refreshment to the number of 500 daily, if so many present themselves.'⁶⁶³

At 'the dependent convent or seminary of Bethany', founded by the Metropolitan Platon, Palmer saw the original coffin of St. Sergius 'in which his body lay for thirty-five years before it was discovered that it was incorrupt.' This meant that 'whereas the bodies all around in the cemetery have fallen to dust & utter decay so that nothing but bones remains - the body which is called incorrupt on the contrary though dried, and brown in colour - has preserved its whole frame, skin and flesh.'

This was

the only rule apparent in the Oriental Church for canonizing a Saint; and sometimes this discovery takes place in consequence of disturbance of ground for rebuilding or repairing or transferring a Church - sometimes of dreams and healings and testimony of individuals. I have heard some remarkable instances in which the remains of persons who were quite forgotten and the place of whose burial was not known were thus pointed out and found.

He described how the Orthodox compared unfavourably this infallible sign of sanctity, revealed as God pleases, with the Roman Catholic procedure of canonisation.⁶⁶⁴ In the vestry of the main Lavra Palmer saw too the Saint's robes and altar-service: 'a remarkable and instructive contrast to all the surrounding wealth and

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 461.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., p. 461.

⁶⁶² He noted later that 'there was nothing like personal luxury', dinner being the only meal of the day, and only tea being offered once during the course of the afternoon; 'it may have been for that reason that the Archimandrite gave me such a large provision of bread after the vigil on Saturday'. NV, p. 467.

⁶⁶³ Ibid., p. 465.

⁶⁶⁴ LP MS 1878, f. 228.

magnificence,' his *phenolion* [sic] ('not a cope, but the older round cloke') of 'very coarse plain dark cloth, not woollen but more like undressed hemp, darned and patched, and the sacred vessels were of maple wood, made, it is said, by his own hands.'⁶⁶⁵

10. Farewell to Russia

By early July, Palmer began to say goodbye to the several representatives of the Russian Synod. The Archpriest Koutnevich told Palmer that he hoped he would 'retain a friendly recollection of the Russian Church' after his return to England, but that although they desired unity 'most heartily' they could not, to obtain it, 'make little of those doctrines or rules of conduct which we have received from antiquity.'⁶⁶⁶ Palmer suggested the Russian Church should help the Western Churches by giving communion on the basis of essentials held in common, so as to keep the healthy portion of the Church in contact with the rest, and so that its influence might 'expel the disease.' Koutnevich replied that 'your bishops' should write to the Synod, who would be happy to correspond with them, and 'treat of whatever they propose.' Palmer was pessimistic as to anything of the sort happening: 'We have too much to do at home first.' Nor would the Establishment of the Church of England be likely to adopt the Archpriest's allied suggestion, to resume 'the correspondence of the last century', i.e. of the Non-Jurors. It would never admit to having been represented by the Non-Juring bishops, although, Palmer said significantly, the Scottish Church might do so. He himself deprecated the Non-

⁶⁶⁵ NV, p. 476.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 542.

Jurors' assumption of loss of communion. He still preferred that the Eastern Church should state when communion was lost, and the Church of England respond with explanations on essential doctrine, and possible concessions on secondary matters. As his parting gift Palmer gave the Archpriest a copy of Andrewes' *Private Devotions* 'which he seemed much to value.'⁶⁶⁷

The same day Palmer saw Mr. Skreepitsin, and had to disabuse him of the idea that he might return in an official capacity. His demand for communion had been 'a merely personal act', and even 'supposing our Church to be disposed to open communications,' Palmer was not 'at all a likely person to be employed.' Skreepitsin cheerfully replied that 'Surely, having been already here, and knowing the language and our Church, you would be the man', and went on to suggest, as the Archpriest had, that the English bishops should write to the Synod. 'Our Government would like nothing better, if it could be.' The popular antipathy to Rome would, he felt, be a factor in favour of fruitful negotiation. The Metropolitan, he said, was 'just the man of all of us who most desires that your Bishops should write to the Synod'; if he had replied to Palmer as if Palmer had come to open negotiations after an admitted separation, that was because he, as a diocesan bishop, 'would no doubt be afraid of committing himself.' He assured Palmer that the answer was not intended to be cold, as the Metropolitan, like all of them, 'had been much pleased' with his visit to Russia.⁶⁶⁸

Even Fr. Fortunatoff was optimistic about the prospects for unity if the English bishops were to write to the Synod, although he thought that explanations would have to be made beforehand. He paid a handsome tribute to Palmer's

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 545.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 546-548 .

achievement: 'We knew, here, in Russia, very little of your Church; you have done a great thing in opening the way to a better acquaintance; your bishops should write; our Synod would be very glad to answer and confer with them; and I think it would succeed.'⁶⁶⁹ Perhaps Palmer had begun to feel a victim of his own propaganda on behalf of the Church of England, or more pessimistic about it; certainly his reply was uncharacteristically gloomy: 'I explained that, in our present state and circumstances, we can do nothing.' Like Skreepitsin, Fortunatoff was not to be discouraged. He suggested that Anglican 'symbolical books', and 'books of canons and laws of the Church,' could be sent to Russia. 'Now that you have made a beginning others will follow your example, and come from England to study our Church.' He thought that the Russians should have 'a good church in London' and the Anglicans one in St. Petersburg.⁶⁷⁰

The next day Count Pratasoff stated the intention of the Synod to send to London as chaplain a young man who could learn English, study Anglican divinity, and report back on the state of the English Church. He asked Palmer to make himself known to him when he came, and introduce him to some of the clergy. This intention was acted upon, and Fr. Eugene Ivanovich Popov⁶⁷¹ 'a graduate of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy'⁶⁷², was transferred to London from Copenhagen.⁶⁷³ Popov came to be seen as 'the soul of the Russian colony' in England, and developed close ties with Newman and Pusey.⁶⁷⁴ This was 'the first practical, official step taken by

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 550.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁷¹ Evgeny Ivanovich Popov (1813-1875), Master's degree at St. Petersburg Theological Academy, 1835, taught for two years in the Tver Theological Academy, ordained priest to serve in the Copenhagen Embassy 1838, posted to London 1842. RBS vol. XIV, pp. 546-7.

⁶⁷² Florovsky, p.238.

⁶⁷³ Leon Litvack, *J. M. Neale and the Quest for Sobornost* (hereafter Litvack) (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994) p.51 n. 39.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., n.38.

the Russians in the nineteenth century to establish closer ecclesiastical ties with England,⁶⁷⁵ and it is to Palmer's credit that his visit led directly to it.

Pratasoff's parting with Palmer was very cordial - 'he then expressed abundance of good wishes and interest about myself personally' - and even embarrassing - 'and on bidding me good-bye, embraced me after the foreign way.' Palmer reported that when Mouravieff appeared with Skreepitsin, he paid Palmer an even more fulsome tribute than Fortunatoff: '... the impression you have made upon the Metropolitan and upon all of us is most favourable to your Church. We have all had the greatest pleasure in conversing with you, and I must say, though you are only a deacon, yet the cause of your Church could not have been better represented.'⁶⁷⁶ In this he echoed the sentiments of the Metropolitan, who told Palmer that he was 'the excellent defender of a bad cause.'⁶⁷⁷ This was praise indeed from Mouravieff, who had all but accused him of lying about the Church of England. However, Palmer seems to have responded rather coldly to the compliments and affection, interrupting to say that he did not represent his Church, but had come purely to pursue his private studies. When Mouravieff asked, 'You will of course let your superiors and bishops know the result of your journey?' Palmer replied shortly that he 'had nothing to do in this matter with any bishop,' nor did he see any good end in making any report except to Dr. Routh. The authorities of the English Church disagreed among themselves; public feeling in the Church would have to change. He did agree that he would publish translations of some of their books, as that had been his original intention in coming out and learning the language. Mouravieff reassured him that the Metropolitan had not thought him to be presumptuously attempting to open

⁶⁷⁵ Litvack, p.51.

⁶⁷⁶ NV, p.552.

communications between separated churches, and hoped the time would soon come when they could grant Palmer's request to be given communion. In the meantime both sides had to be content with the consciousness of a unity of spirit between them and a desire of a visible union. And with that, 'he took a most friendly leave of me, and made me promise to write to him.'⁶⁷⁸

Dr. Routh had observed to Palmer's father 'I think, sir, after all, the time will not have been misspent and that your son's visit will have done some good.'⁶⁷⁹ Palmer himself wrote rather less confidently to his father from London after 'a very rough and disagreeable passage all the way from both St. Petersburg to Lubeck and from Hamburgh [sic] to London', 'I trust it may be as they assured me - that my visit may have done some good to others besides myself.'⁶⁸⁰ It is clear from the affectionate farewells that 'Mr. Palmer made many friends in Russia, and had no reason to regret his going there'⁶⁸¹, something borne out by the many subsequent visits he made there. Newman wrote of his return: 'Palmer of Magdalen is returning *απρακτος* [unsuccessful]. The Russians will not believe him against the evidence of all the English they ever saw before. They think him a theorist or worse.'⁶⁸²

As Newman said, Palmer 'failed from first to last in the direct object which started him on these expeditions', but Palmer must have anticipated that his request was unlikely to be granted. It was perhaps more frustrating to him that the Russians refused to discuss relations between the Churches in his terms, and specify when they believed the separation to have occurred, and for what specific reasons. But even had

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid., p.396.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 553-554.

⁶⁷⁹ W J P to WP, 27 March 1841, LP MS 2834, f. 189.

⁶⁸⁰ LP MS 1894, f. 86.

⁶⁸¹ NV, p. xi.

⁶⁸² JHN to F. Rogers, 2 January 1841, L & D, vol. VIII, pp. 3-4. Newman was almost certainly quoting Palmer himself, as the tone and content mirror what Palmer was writing to his family at the time.

they wanted to, the gradual process by which East and West had become alien to one another was not easily explained. Some reasons, such as the *filioque*, did not bear close examination; others, such as cultural differences and the legacy of the Crusades, could not easily be overcome by bishops writing to Synods.

Nonetheless for a young academic it was a great achievement to have succeeded in making such a favourable impression on behalf of at least part of the Church of England. Palmer could truthfully say to Mouravieff that he had not come to Russia to represent his Church, but in effect that was exactly what he had come to do; not the Church as she actually was, but as he would have liked her to have been. The Metropolitan had identified this in telling Palmer his language was suited to the fourth century; Palmer was in many ways harking back to a pre-Reformation, or, as he called it, deformation, Church of England. Even if, as Mouravieff pointed out, his witness was highly selective, there was truth in what he said. There was a Catholic element in the Church of England that had been made known to the Russians, and they could now distinguish to some degree between her and the Lutherans and Calvinists.

11. Holding up a Mirror

On his return Palmer wrote, on 6 August 1841, what appears to be an essay⁶⁸³ entitled *On the Popular View Taken by English Protestants of the Russian Church and Religion and vice versa: Also on the Indefinite Use of the Word Popery*.⁶⁸⁴ In it he set out the prevalent criticisms in Russia of the English Church, and how despite its claims it conformed to their worst expectations of a Protestant sect. He mentioned English criticisms of the Russian Church, but in giving the incredulous and contemptuous Russian reaction to them, conveyed his own impatience at English stupidity and narrow-mindedness. The English, he wrote, while taxing the Russians with 'Idolatry' [of Icons] and 'the Introduction of many mediators', 'are charitable enough to speak generally of them as Christians & in the way of Salvation', although they would of course 'think a Protestant Missionary perfectly justified in converting them if he could & in inducing them to renounce their corrupt Church & religion ...' He described the common view of the Russian Church as a national institution 'for the natives only', and of the wider Orthodox Church as having 'a still greater degree of ignorance, barbarism, formality & superstition so that no civilized & educated European would ever think to learn any spiritual wisdom from them.' Showing his loathing for Protestant missionary arrogance, he continued,

Rather he would feel confident that both there & in Russia his cheap Bibles, Tracts, schools, printing-presses, Missionaries & Societies must be looked to as the only means under Providence of eventually bringing about a change &

⁶⁸³ Underneath the text on the last half page is written at an angle 'My Dear Wordsworth'; but this may have been a greeting from another letter accidentally written on the carbon, nor does the title suggest a personal letter.

⁶⁸⁴ BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 Bk. V f. 36.

introducing pure spiritual Religion & clear views of the scheme or system of the Gospel ...⁶⁸⁵

Turning to the Russian view of the English Church, Palmer set the scene more widely than hitherto: first describing the initial Russian (and Greek) indulgence towards the West for its desire to reform Papal abuses, which disappeared when the Protestants introduced their own novelties and went from bad to worse. This, however, they still blamed ultimately on the Pope, in that

the lawlessness of the Pope in setting himself above the Councils & Canons gave his subjects that frame of mind which afterwards for their own fancied expedencies or necessities trampled all authority & all Canons under foot: His one Great Schism produced innumerable petty schisms: his innovations & additions produced the equally novel denials & mutilations of the Reformers, and lastly his building Christianity & the Church upon his own power & responsibility - led to the endangering of the Church & of Christianity itself wherever his power & supremacy should come to be called in question.

The papal concentration of power and responsibility in 'one absolute Head' led to 'a contrary reaction of democratical rebellion'; thus the seeds of Protestantism were contained in Popery. However the Orthodox condemned 'strongly and unequivocally' the Protestant principle of substituting 'a written revelation addressed immediately to the Private Judgement of mankind at large for the traditional faith of a sacramental Church.'⁶⁸⁶

Palmer set out the 'notes of Heresy' in the Protestant sects, that they were named after their founders, as with Lutheranism or Calvinism, and had abandoned the old Orders of 'Bishops, Priests and Deacons' for spurious new titles such as 'Pastors or Preachers'. Although Palmer attributed these remarks to the Russians, they are suspiciously like his observations in France and elsewhere before he travelled to Russia. All the attributes of these new Sects, 'this new Religion & Clergy

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid., f. 37.

the one of which can never have faith nor the other authority - the form & furnishing of their temples or Preaching Houses, their worship, their customs & opinions all apiece,' flowed from the 'one & the same negative principle & aiming after one & the same development of negation.'⁶⁸⁷ He then turned to Russian views of the Anglican Church familiar from his early days in Russia; that the Russians thought all Englishmen Protestants - 'they make no doubt of this because they never find an Englishman but calls himself Protestant, praises the Reformation & the Reformers, and owns at once (unless he be a Papist) that he is of the Protestant Reformed Religion' - and belonged to Calvinism rather than Lutheranism. However they were aware of 'some Catholic peculiarities' of the Anglican Church, 'which are accounted for by the nature of the Reformation which was almost entirely Political.'⁶⁸⁸ They thought that the Anglican Church would be constituted by its preservation, if such was the case, of the Orders of priesthood, and the Apostolic Succession. This in practice was vitiated by the habit of Anglican clergy of changing their title to Minister or Pastor when in Europe, to conform to that of the local Protestant clergy. Never making the sign of the Cross, not celebrating the Liturgy on Sundays or Festivals, the lack of clerical dress among the clergy, taking communion without fasting and without confession; all these made the English Protestants in the eyes of the Russians. The English accusations of idolatry, or introducing more mediators than one, the Russians regarded 'as signs of a perverse misapprehension & pitiable fanaticism.'⁶⁸⁹

The Russians were bemused by the 'great Rooms, in dwelling houses' that served the Anglicans for Churches at St. Petersburg or Moscow, with three wooden

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., f. 38.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid., f. 39.

boxes out of which the Pastor and his Clerk read alternately to the congregation 'without any thing whatever in the outward appearance to give the notion of their leading the congregation or uttering in their name prayers & praises to God.' They were struck, Palmer said, by the nakedness of the altar, without 'Cross, Ciborium, or Lights'; the 'silent Congregation hidden in wooden pews neither standing according to the Oecumenical Canon nor kneeling according to the rule of the Latin & indeed of their own Church for prayer - but sitting or squatting with books before them',⁶⁹⁰ the lack of distinction of the different orders of clergy by dress, the absence of chanting 'and that when there is "singing" the words are indistinguishable & the one or two voices are drowned in the sound of the organ.'⁶⁹¹ The tendency of the English abroad to go to Lutheran or Calvinist worship for preference, rather than to a Roman Catholic service like the Russians, reinforced their suspicions. Palmer added scathingly that the Russians 'are much inclined to think that no religious life or zeal is to be found in the Dominant Church ... they suppose that the rest are cold, dead, and worldly with the habitual prejudices of Protestants without their original fanaticism.' In fact the Russians Palmer spoke to were seldom as blunt as this; he was really using them as a device to voice his own criticisms of the Church of England.

He instanced 'a certain sceptical tone' among the English, 'which not only doubts of but even ridicules many of their religious persuasions', and then rose to almost Swiftian heights in describing the reaction of 'many of the Russian nobility' in London last summer to 'the nudity & meagreness of our Church & services', and

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid., f. 40.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid., f. 41.

the entire absence not only of a splendid but even of a decent ceremonial ... they were constantly expressing their surprize that the English should in any way pretend to the character of a religious nation - when though the richest, the most luxurious & self indulgent people in the world; the proudest & most jealous in keeping up all form & etiquette connected with their own social or personal consideration - they should yet by a most disgusting & transparent hypocrisy make it a point of their religion to banish every thing like ornament, splendour, costliness or ceremony from the Houses & Worship of God: We could listen perhaps with more patience they would say to their Puritanical maxims if they were only consistent with the Quakers in their private life, in the Houses of their Gentry Merchants & Nobles, nay of the Clergy themselves few of whom would think the Altar of their Church with its furniture other than contemptible and mean for a sideboard in their own House. Above all the decency, & respectful ceremony of their Queen's Court, & the splendid magnificence & Luxury of the Royal Residences contrasted strangely with the interior of St. Paul's & Westminster Abbey & the fashion of Divine service which is seen in them.⁶⁹²

Again, any such remarks are notably absent from his journals, diaries or letters, and more likely came from Palmer himself.

The accusation of 'Popery' levelled at the Orthodox by the English was also stupid and unfair; unfair because the Orthodox were 'fierce accusers of the innovations of the Latins or Papists', and 'unconscious of having followed the Pope in any thing: boasting a superior antiquity for the Mother Churches of their Communion, and an inviolable attachment to the doctrine & discipline of the Oecumenical Councils.' Quoting Mouravieff on English prejudice, he said that the Russians would

sometimes laugh most heartily and say Well Well it is perfectly inconceivable how so many people should be so stupid or fanatical - What progress the Latins must make among you if such is the state of your Church - and this among the English of all others - who think themselves the first for civilisation & intelligence and whose commerce & roving disposition brings them into contact with all the world - Surely our Churches - 80 millions of Christians are not so invisible! Who have been witnessing against Latinism & Popery some six hundred years before Protestantism was ever thought of - Really they have said to me your people seem to be so besotted with Puritanism, so completely beside themselves with their hatred of Popery that

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*, f. 42.

it is a wonder they do not hesitate to retain any remnant of Christianity itself.⁶⁹³

This ignorance was such that 'One would think they could not read - or had no books - but on the contrary they have abundance of books can all read & write, & have many learned men.' The clergy, he said, told him they had often wondered why those in West had been so 'engrossed by their own party feelings' as to ignore the East; there was the primitive model to which they could have appealed for reforming abuses. The logical conclusion they reached was that either the West simply did not know about the East, 'which shews great inattention & carelessness, or else to have been so self-confident as not to think it worth their while to consult her which argues an heretical disposition.'⁶⁹⁴ The result was 'a number of new and spurious Religions', and the indiscriminate branding as 'Popery' 'whatever they have taken upon themselves in the course of their quarrel to condemn or abolish.'

⁶⁹³ Ibid., f. 47.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid., f. 48.

CHAPTER 5

The Cursing Deacon

Although his closer acquaintanceship with the Russian Church made him more jaundiced with the Church of England, Palmer did not yet think of leaving it. Roundell, who described his brother's influence upon him at this time as 'greater ... than at any other time, before or afterwards' said of their correspondence about *Tract 90* that whilst he 'showed great dissatisfaction with the actual state of things in the Church of England' he had made 'no change from his former point of view, and no nearer approach to Rome.'⁶⁹⁵ This is shown by Palmer's *Letter to a Waverer* (i. e. someone who was thinking of becoming Roman Catholic), the waverer in question being John Gooch, the Oxford bookseller.⁶⁹⁶ Palmer enjoined the careful examination of one's conscience before quitting the Church of England; but if 'we ... have paid her a constant and dutiful obedience, and by the very practice and cultivation of her precepts and doctrines come to the painful sense that she herself is not that which she has represented herself to us ... then I can say nothing against a change.'⁶⁹⁷ Then we must leave the 'false and erroneous sect, whatever it may be ... and must join the true Church.' This, he said, would be his own case, if he 'felt such a temptation of intellect or feeling to condemn my own Church.' Having expressed the hope that no-one else had committed such faults against the Church of England as he had, Palmer suggested 'a few heads of self-examination', the first of which was

⁶⁹⁵ MFP, vol. 1, p.310, p.314.

⁶⁹⁶ Gooch 'appears to have become a Catholic in late 1841 or early 1842.' L & D, vol. VIII p.623. The letter is dated 'Autumn 1841'. LP MS 1895, f.7.

⁶⁹⁷ LP MS 1895, f.7.

clearly directly relevant to himself: 'Has my pursuit of religious truth been disproportionately intellectual?'

The waverer should pray 'to keep and hold fast all that which has already been given to me', and for the 'family, parish, diocese and bishop to which I belong ... the whole of this Church of England ... the restoration of unity', for a right understanding of the truth and his duty towards his own Church, and to think 'humbly and reasonably and piously and charitably and rightly on those points of difference which divide the Churches.' The waverer should ask: 'How long have I said such prayers? With what degree of fervour and constancy? Have I ever shed tears in saying them?'⁶⁹⁸

If despite satisfactory answers to all these questions the waverer felt an irresistible conviction that it was his duty to renounce the Church of England, then, said Palmer, 'his experience has led him to a different conclusion than mine has hitherto.' To do that would seem 'to be committing Matricide and what ... I would rather die a thousand times than do.' But he was keenly aware of the difficulties presented to him by the discrepancy between Anglican theory as he held it and the reality:

I have hitherto found my conviction ever increasing, at once of the real existence of the English Church, and yet of the unparalleled defects of its members - of the weakness and rottenness of the existing outward system, and the Divine strength of that Spirit which has been kept alive within; of the difficulties which the habits and opinions of her members, and her external circumstances, present beyond those of the Roman or even of the Greek Communion.

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 9.

Nonetheless, he could still write with apparent sincerity at this point of 'the much greater satisfaction which really, and in her theory, she offers, both as to the definition of the Church, and as to particular doctrines, than the Roman.'⁶⁹⁹

Palmer had now staked his credit on the Church of England's living up to her best, Catholic side, and showing herself in what he had represented to the Russians and the French as her true colours. Almost immediately, however, a controversy arose which seemed as if it were designed to prove incontrovertibly her truly Protestant nature, and Palmer much worse than a 'theorist' in the eyes of his Russian friends.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., f. 10.

1. The Jerusalem Bishopric

In June of 1841 the Emperor Frederick William IV of Prussia had sent the 'experienced diplomatist and versatile scholar'⁷⁰⁰ M. Bunsen⁷⁰¹ to England to discuss with Archbishop Howley and Bishop Blomfield⁷⁰² of London the possibility of establishing a bishopric at Jerusalem which would, while retaining the independence of the 'Evangelical Church of Germany', unite it with the Anglican Church in Jerusalem. The clergy and missionaries of the Prussian Church would work under a bishop alternately nominated by the Prussian and British monarchs, and ordinations by the bishop would be valid in Prussia. The aim was largely political, to secure for Protestants in the Holy Land the same influence as the French had as protectors of the Latins and the Russians as protectors of the Orthodox.⁷⁰³

Both Archbishop and Bishop eagerly adopted the suggestion. The approval of a meeting of bishops was obtained in August 1841, and the means to implement the scheme, 'The Foreigners Consecration Act Amendment Bill', introduced into the Lords at the end of the same month, receiving the royal assent in October. A letter

⁷⁰⁰ P. J. Welch, 'Anglican Churchmen and the Establishment of the Jerusalem Bishopric', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 8 (1957) (hereafter Welch), p.193.

⁷⁰¹ Christian Carl Josias Bunsen (1791-1860), educated at the University of Gottingen under Heine, private secretary to Niebuhr in Rome. Became Secretary of Legation in Rome, and later succeeded Niebuhr as Prussian Ambassador to the Vatican. Ambassador to the Swiss Confederacy 1839; Prussian Ambassador to the Court of St. James 1841-54. Author of *Egypt's Place in Universal History* (1848), the *Church of the Future* (1848), and *Hippolytus and his Age* (4 vols., 1851). *Men of The Time* (London: Bogue, 1856), pp. 106-7.

⁷⁰² Charles James Blomfield (1786-1857), educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, MA 1811, BD 1818, DD per *Lit. Reg.* 1820, ordained 1810, Archdeacon of Colchester 1822, Bishop of Chester 1824, Bishop of London 1828-1856 when he resigned his see because of illness. DNB, AO, p. 125.

⁷⁰³ Gilley, p. 207.

commendatory was sent by Howley to the Patriarchs in November, reassuring them that the intention was not to proselytise from the Eastern Churches:

we have sent this Bishop our brother ... we have charged him in no wise and in no matter to invade the jurisdiction of you, the Bishops, or others having rule in the Churches of the East, but rather to show you due honour and reverence, and to be ready, on all occasions and by all means, to cultivate diligently whatever promotes brotherly love, intercourse, and unanimity.⁷⁰⁴

Howley added his expression of 'longing desire to renew that ancient love towards the ancient churches of the East which has been suspended for ages.'⁷⁰⁵ That the scheme had precisely the opposite effect is testified to by the Rev. George Williams,⁷⁰⁶ who went to Jerusalem as Bishop Alexander's⁷⁰⁷ chaplain. 'Deeply interested' himself in the Oriental Churches, he wrote that

instead of contributing to heal the divisions of Eastern Christendom, it has aggravated them rather ... instead of conciliating the Prelates of the Oriental Church, it has incurred their suspicion and contempt, if not their enmity, by petty aggressions on their lawful jurisdiction - feebly emulating the Latin Propaganda, without the same excuse ... besides exhibiting the public scandal of faith broken before the infidels, it has rudely shaken the confidence of learned and pious members of our own Communion, and alienated their attachment from the Church of their baptism ...⁷⁰⁸

Inexplicably, he went on to exempt from blame Howley, Blomfield, and the King of Prussia.

⁷⁰⁴ MFP, vol. 1, p. 337.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Rev. George Williams (1814-1878), educated at Eton, Kings College Cambridge, Fellow 1835-70, MA 1840, Vice-Provost 1854-7, MA (Oxon.) 1847, chaplain to Bp. Alexander 1840-43, chaplain at St. Petersburg 1844-5, Pro-proctor Cambridge University 1858, Vicar of Ringwood, Hants., 1869 to his death. MEB, vol. III, pp. 1363-4. Williams was a High Churchman, and was probably appointed Bishop Alexander's chaplain to placate the Tractarians. FT, p. 228.

⁷⁰⁷ Michael Solomon Alexander (1799-1845), born Jewish in Posen, West Prussia, moved to London in 1820, baptised in 1825 and ordained in 1827, went to Danzig to evangelise the Jews of West Prussia, returned to England in 1830, became Professor of Hebrew and rabbinical studies at King's College, London, in 1832, consecrated as the new Bishop of Jerusalem in November 1841, arrived in the Holy Land on the steamship 'Devastation' in January 1842, and died in 1845 while travelling back to England. DNB.

⁷⁰⁸ Williams, p. xlv.

Some Evangelicals saw the plan as ushering in the restoration of Israel; churchmen like Samuel Wilberforce anticipated the restoration of episcopacy in Prussia.⁷⁰⁹ Gladstone, on the other hand, deplored the scheme as ‘approximating to a union with foreign Protestantism’, arrived at without any theological examination.⁷¹⁰ Lord Selborne thought it ‘extraordinary enough’ that such an innovation could be brought in

without any synodical act of the Church of England, without open consultation with or any concurrence of the English Episcopate generally, - in fact, by no ecclesiastical authority, except that of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London for the time being, fortified by a permissive Act of Parliament, obtained with the assistance of the ministry of the day ...⁷¹¹

‘Acquiescence in it seemed impossible’ he said ‘to those who thought with Newman or my brother’ - particularly the latter, as the scheme ‘appeared to violate at every point’ the principles that he had been recently asserting to the leading authorities of the Russian Church.⁷¹² Palmer had to act, which as ever for him meant furious composition, initially of a ‘Memorial.’ The original draft had several characteristic touches of hyperbole: ‘I therefore, a sinner and the meanest and vilest of all sinners, who am not worthy to communicate in the Church of God, but ought rather to pass my whole life in public Penance ...’ he began, before describing how he had heard that Lutherans were to be received into communion with the new bishop without renouncing the ‘principle of Protestantism’ or being confirmed. He therefore presented his

most humble petition to Your Grace and beg to ask if this thing is really so - And if it is, as I fear, then I roll myself (in thought at least) at your feet, I clasp your knees, I intreat you with tears, I implore you by the Blood of Our

⁷⁰⁹ Welch, p.195.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid., p.199.

⁷¹¹ MFP, vol. 1, p.319.

⁷¹² Ibid., p.320.

Saviour Jesus Christ to interfere and preserve the Church from this great & ruinous Sin ... what is here written with ink I sign with my blood ...⁷¹³

Surprisingly, Dr. Routh approved this draft, although Palmer's father and brother did not. Palmer cheerfully described their reaction to the original: '... others, who also saw it, noticing the strength of certain expressions of feeling, said that the Archbishop would not understand it, but only think the writer out of his senses. So they re-wrote it ...'⁷¹⁴ It was largely re-written by Roundell. Palmer wrote of the new draft: 'I think myself it is so much better than my own, in method of expression, and in avoiding dogmatising (as he calls it) ... I am glad to get rid of the dogmatical tone, but rather regret the loss of the "insanity" which however is incompatible with the decency and reasonableness of conventional form.'⁷¹⁵

The new Memorial also objected to the unqualified admission of Lutherans to the communion of the Bishop. It added that the *right* of private judgement as opposed to the *duty* of ecclesiastical submission was destructive of the substance of all Apostolical Churches, and elaborated on the authority for Confirmation, which the Lutherans had dispensed with for three hundred years. Should the rumours of the scope of the plan be true, Palmer ended, then 'the integrity of our religion is in danger' and he was duty bound to try to prevent the danger of his brethren being driven into separation from their Mother Church.⁷¹⁶

However, neither reasoned pleas nor bloodstained petitions had any effect on the consecration of Michael Solomon Alexander as the first bishop of 'the United Church of England and Ireland in Jerusalem' on 7 November, the same day that Palmer delivered the rewritten Memorial into the Archbishop's hands. Alexander's

⁷¹³ BO MS 11.1.(2) / G.37 ff. 64-6.

⁷¹⁴ ASC, p. cxxiv.

⁷¹⁵ LP MS 2834, f. 213.

Jewish origin made him attractive to those of a Millenarian or Evangelical persuasion, who according to Newman 'boasted' that 'we are sending out a Bishop ... who is of the "the pure blood of Judah," and his wife of "the pure blood of Levi" - as if this was not the very error of the Galatians, as if the Jewish Law had not been abolished once for all.'⁷¹⁷ Although Palmer wrote deploring the appointment of 'a Bishop of Jewish blood upon Mount Sion,' his real objection was to 'the principle of his mission,' which was to offer 'to unite all sects and sectarianized Churches in one communion, upon a footing of the most perfect equality.' Palmer even saw a 'fearful danger' of Alexander 'becoming the Precursor of some great Antichrist.'⁷¹⁸

No answer to the Memorial came from Lambeth Palace. Palmer drew up a Protest. This too was vetted and redrafted by his family and Dr. Routh, with 'much anxious consultation ... we all agreed with him in substance, but by no means with everything that he wished to say.' Palmer was persuaded, with some difficulty, to omit 'certain statements on doctrinal points ... unnecessary for his purpose, and sure to be misunderstood,'⁷¹⁹ namely 'the prayers of the blessed virgin [sic] and all the saints.'⁷²⁰ Dr. Routh, having seen the rewritten Protest, 'praised it much; though he seemed to have some good-natured apprehensions on my account; but said nothing against my doing it. He suggested several prudential amendments; and ended by giving me his blessing.'⁷²¹ In favour of amendment he argued that 'what I said would be all very well if I were at a Council board negotiating with the Russian Bishops - but that with respect to my immediate object it would be causing an unnecessary

⁷¹⁶ Ibid., pp. cxxiv-cxxv.

⁷¹⁷ MID, p.114, n.3.

⁷¹⁸ EA, p.149.

⁷¹⁹ MFP, vol. 1, p.320.

⁷²⁰ LP MS 1878, f. 76.

⁷²¹ MFP, vol. 1, p.320.

diversion ...'⁷²² A proposal by Palmer that Roundell and even the younger members of the family should sign the Protest was dropped, after 'strong objections' from their father, but on 12 November he was still hoping to 'get something or other which all who like can sign', to express their 'concurrence in the adjuration of Heretical Protestantism and profession of Catholicism and desire of communion with all other branches of the Catholic Church.'⁷²³

Palmer showed the Protest to Newman on 8 November. Newman felt the 'protest had given him a very clear view of the case and made him quite resolved to make one himself also.' Newman told John Keble that in making his own protest 'Palmer's intended protest is what determined me,' and that he had sent copies to the Bishop of Oxford - who 'knew nothing whatever of the Jerusalem matter - had never been consulted'⁷²⁴ and to Harrison. Palmer wrote of Newman's protest that it 'is at present only a disclaimer of Lutheranism and Calvinism,' whereas he wanted 'to get something also, if possible, indicating desire of unity with the Eastern Church. He also said that he addressed himself 'to private judgement upon which others as well as I are virtually thrown back,'⁷²⁵ something necessitated by the 'delinquency ... of the authorities who abdicate their own functions and throw them back upon private conscience.'⁷²⁶

The Protest made its several points in a series of paragraphs beginning 'And whereas ...' in the manner of a royal proclamation. Palmer differentiated between the sense in which the English Church called itself Protestant, which was 'against certain accidents, blemishes, and errors, in the Latin Churches of the time,' from the

⁷²² LP MS 1894, f. 89.

⁷²³ LP MS 1878, f. 236.

⁷²⁴ JHN to Keble, 17 Nov. 1841, L & D, vol. VIII p. 336.

⁷²⁵ LP MS 1878, f. 237.

⁷²⁶ LP MS 2834, ff. 219-20.

‘mixed multitudes’ of the Lutherans and Calvinists who made their protest into a ‘principle of anarchy and individualism, destructive of all real and Apostolical Churches.’⁷²⁷ This principle he identified as the ‘principle of Dissent’ that martyred Charles I, and which the secular authorities had attempted to foist onto the Church. It was a ‘pernicious heresy,’ abhorred by all true Churches; the Lutheran and Calvinists who held it were excommunicated by name by the Latins and the Orthodox Churches, unlike the English Church. Again he objected to letting ‘foreign sects’ into communion with the English Church without conversion, reconciliation or Confirmation, and recognising them as ‘professing the Public Worship of Almighty God according to the principles of the Church of England.’ This he said ‘commits our Church in the eyes of all the world, and especially of the Eastern Churches, to their principle of Protestantism.’⁷²⁸

Palmer contrasted Howley’s words in his letters commendatory to the Eastern Patriarchs with his reluctance or refusal to provide Palmer with a certificate to take to Russia, and repeated Count Pratasoff’s statement that a ‘distinct disclaimer’ of the ‘principle of Protestantism’ was necessary before negotiations with the Eastern Churches (something they were willing and even desirous to enter upon) could hope to begin. He later referred with understandable feeling to ‘those dignitaries of the Russian Church and Empire, who honoured me with their confidence, and believed on my representations that our Church had some better thing in her than mere sectarian Protestantism’, which bound him to them as much as to his own countrymen. The complete subversion of those representations, and the clear-eyed betrayal of every catholic principle of the Church of England, were the

⁷²⁷ ASC, p. cxxvi.

⁷²⁸ Ibid., p. cxxxvi.

‘circumstances’ that ‘conspired to make me feel that I am called upon to do this act, which yet, if I know myself, I would rather die than do.’⁷²⁹

Palmer anathematized the principle of Protestantism or Dissent, refusing to recognise any union with Lutherans or Calvinists, or Dissenters, except on their conversion ‘to the obedience of the Apostolic Episcopate both in faith and discipline.’

He then declared his recognition of the Orthodox Eastern and Catholic Churches, and vowed never to proselytise them or allow them to be taught that it was lawful to renounce their own Church. Nor, he said, unable to resist being provocative, would he allow them to be taught that ‘the blessed Eucharist is a mere sign, or that there is no sacrifice in it’; that intercessory prayer to the departed ‘interferes with the unity of Christ’s mediation’; or that veneration of relics, the Cross, the doors of the Church, the priest’s vestments, hands etc., ‘are either wickedness or idolatry in themselves, or in the Church.’⁷³⁰ He concluded by pleading that vital questions be settled ‘by Authority in lawful Synods, as in old time,’⁷³¹ and appealed to any that might be lawfully called and held, before formally protesting against what had been done without Synodal Authority.

A proof of the Protest was sent by Palmer, apparently unprompted, to the Archbishop of Canterbury with a letter explaining that he wished the archbishop to have the opportunity to see it ‘while as yet it is ... within my power to omit or alter any thing, or to suppress it altogether; which last I should desire above all things to do, if I could only be enabled to do so without damage to that cause, which I have felt

⁷²⁹ Ibid., pp. cxxxvi-vii.

⁷³⁰ Ibid., p. cxxxviii.

⁷³¹ Ibid., p. cxxxix.

myself called upon to undertake.'⁷³² In this as in most of his other controversies, Palmer acted very much upon the principle of private judgement, or at least feeling: 'circumstances conspire to make me feel', 'I have felt myself called upon to undertake.' Ironically, he was using the freedom granted by the Protestant principle he so despised to champion the Catholicity of the Church of England.

The opportunity to avoid a damaging attack on the scheme was seized by the Archbishop. He immediately wrote to Dr. Routh, describing Palmer as 'a member of your College, for whom on account of his family, as well as his personal qualities, I have much regard,' but deploring the 'pamphlet which he calls a *Protest*, the most extraordinary perhaps which was ever put forth by a Deacon of our Church.' Howley specified 'the tone of disrespect, to our Church, and its Bishops, which pervades the *Protest*,' anticipated that publication 'would certainly subject him to much censure,' and therefore asked Routh, 'as a friend to Mr. Palmer,'⁷³³ to use his influence to suppress it.

Dr. Routh duly sent for Palmer and dissuaded him from publishing the *Protest*, on the grounds of 'deference to the Archbishop's station and wishes, and considering that the full details of the convention with the King of Prussia were not yet known.'⁷³⁴ Palmer agreed with reluctance, as he 'could not understand upon what principle, agreeing with me as he did, he could advise me to defer to the very Authorities whose acts I was protesting,' and showed him *The Times's* extract from *The Prussian State Gazette*, which clearly stated the principles of the scheme.⁷³⁵ He did ultimately agree, however, on the basis that he knew 'they were really of one

⁷³² ASC, p. cxl, and MFP, vol. 1, p.323 .

⁷³³ MID, pp. 114-115.

⁷³⁴ ASC, cxl.

belief,' and as Routh was his Superior. The pill was sweetened by Routh's suggestion that Palmer could still, in order to make the Protest and assuage his conscience, send a copy (what he had already sent was only a proof) to the Archbishop, and afterwards publish his objections to the scheme 'in some other form.' Routh himself was later to write to the Archbishop expressing his own objections to the scheme in terms that he felt Palmer would have approved.

Palmer received what he described as 'a short note in very kind words' from Howley. His description is odd, as the tone of the letter is terse, and Howley's aim is clearly to avoid defending or justifying his actions. He urged Palmer 'from motives of personal regard, as well as considerations of a higher nature'⁷³⁶ to 'reflect again and again, before you give publicity in any way to the Protest, which you have sent me.' He declined to enter on 'the several points which I deem objectionable' partly because of lack of time, and partly because he knew that Palmer intended 'to ask the advice of the venerable President of your College, and to act under his direction.'⁷³⁷ Howley had suggested to Dr. Routh that the Protest would impede 'the prospects of unity, both with the other Protestant Churches, and also with the Greek Church.'⁷³⁸ Palmer might reasonably have responded that the whole aim of his Protest was to impede union with the Protestant Churches, and that (supposing Howley to have any genuine interest in union with the 'Greek Churches') renunciation of Protestantism was the necessary first step in any negotiations for unity with the Greek Churches, a renunciation made by the Protest in forceful terms. Howley did not seem to understand or acknowledge the fact that union with both Protestant and Orthodox

⁷³⁵ For example, 'To obtain for the *Evangelical* Christians of the German nation the same advantages ... enjoyed by the Christians of the *Latin* and *Greek* Churches ... to increase the connection of German Protestants in the East, and perhaps lead to the foundation of settlements by them ...', ATR, pp. 9-10.

⁷³⁶ LP MS 1895, f. 24.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

Churches was inherently contradictory. Howley attempted to refuse to accept the Protest, 'on the ground that he who made it could have no voice in the matter,' but when informed that the alternative to acceptance was publication, he gave way and received it.⁷³⁹ The Archbishop was later said to have shown the Protest to Bunsen, 'with these words, "See what a letter I have received from a Deacon."' ⁷⁴⁰

Palmer had also received a communication on 25 November from Benjamin Harrison, the Archbishop's domestic chaplain. Although Palmer charitably described this letter too as 'very kindly worded as regards myself', it combined pomposity with a disingenuous refusal to face the implications of the Jerusalem Bishopric, and ended with a thinly-veiled threat. Harrison began with a mild reproach to Palmer for disrespect to the Archbishop, making the fair observation that such disrespect was inconsistent with Palmer's ostensible views of church authority: 'I was glad to find that you did not mean to be disrespectful in your use of the pronouns in your letter; - it certainly sounded less respectful than, on your principles, you would wish it to be, towards those in high places of spiritual authority.' 'I do not find,' he continued, 'the principle of the right of private judgement ... put forth in the Confession of Augsburg' [WP⁷⁴¹ - 'assumed'] ' ... we ought in fairness to deal with them as we do with Romanists ... looking to the principles laid down in their symbolical books [WP - 'But if they notoriously maintain any heresy whether it is in their book, or no?']⁷⁴² Harrison disputed that Palmer had the right to assume that 'our Bishops are unavoidably going to commit " ... the great wickedness" of allowing [the Lutherans] ... to join our Communion and receive our Sacraments' [WP - 'It is commonly

⁷³⁸ MFP, vol. 1, p.323.

⁷³⁹ ASC, p. cxl.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁴¹ The comments in brackets are Palmer's, scribbled almost illegibly on the original.

⁷⁴² LP MS 1895, f. 15.

committed: the King professes that the integrity of their Confession and rite is acknowledged, and so unless a stipulation be made it is clear.’] ‘... why should we not suppose that individuals joining our Communion might be willing and offer of their own accord ... to receive Confirmation?’ [WP - ‘Perhaps they might, perhaps not, what then?’] And if the “Congregations” which desire “to place themselves under the authority” of our Bishop should be allowed to use a Liturgy of their own ... there would strictly speaking be no joining our Communion or receiving our Sacraments. [WP - ‘save as being under our Bishop and Clergy ordained by him!! Ordination no sacrament nor involving communion!’]⁷⁴³

So far as unity with the East was concerned, Harrison would not concede that the Church of England should disclaim heretical principles which the Prayer Book showed were wrongly attributed to her [WP - ‘Yes but a book is not a Church.’]⁷⁴⁴ Harrison then used ‘the Archbishop’s kind and gentle feeling towards you personally’ to try and dissuade Palmer from publishing the Protest; and if that would not sway him, he ‘might feel myself called upon ... to protest, and that strongly.’ [WP - ‘and make no rejection.’] He again attempted to make Palmer feel guilty: ‘I do feel that the exceeding kindness and condescension of the Archbishop ought not to be abused’ [WP - ‘so indeed do I’]⁷⁴⁵ ‘I cannot but hope that ... you will not allow a document to go abroad ... unjustly exhibiting our Church and its chief rulers in so very unfavourable a light - will represent you as so undutifully [WP - ‘painfully rather, that it may not be also the shame and ruin of the Church’] proclaiming what you regard as their shame and reproach.’

⁷⁴³ Ibid., f. 16.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid., f. 17.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid., f. 18.

It is hard to see the logic of Harrison's criticism. If the Jerusalem Bishopric was justified, and in accordance with the principles of the Church of England, then there was nothing for Church or Archbishop to fear from the Protest, which after all was only the opinion of one deacon. Only if the Bishopric were in some way dishonest or wrong would that have been the case. The letter ended with an apparently friendly warning about the implications for Palmer's future prospects in the Church of England: 'I cannot feel as much regard as I do for you ... the deep sorrow with which I should see you take so unhappy a step, and one so injurious to your own character and usefulness.'⁷⁴⁶

Palmer may have genuinely believed these letters to be 'very kind,' or he may have been trying to allay his father's fears that he was alienating the Church hierarchy and damaging his career. Had his father known the true state of affairs and the increasingly steely tone of the communications from Lambeth, he might well have insisted, or tried to insist, that the whole Protest be dropped. His letters reveal ambiguous feelings about his son's actions. He was happy that Palmer intended to consult both himself and Dr. Routh. 'So far', he wrote, 'I entirely approve.' However, he still felt it necessary to say, referring to Sibthorp's conversion to Rome, that he was 'in no fear that you will quit your vessel in the midst of danger, not even if she were to appear to sink.'⁷⁴⁷ Clearly then this possibility had entered his mind. He later wrote that although he well realised that his son had 'profited more' by learning and knowledge, yet 'wisdom and discretion' were 'more immediate gifts,' and that he

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 19.

⁷⁴⁷ W J P to WP, 2 Nov. 1841, MFP, vol. 1, p. 321.

‘had the advantage’ of his son in experience ‘by a few years’, and Dr. Routh by a few more.⁷⁴⁸

He was apprehensive that his son’s initiative in the affair might have repercussions on the whole family: ‘These are very weighty matters, and important and serious subjects to us individually, from the part which William feels himself called to take in them.’⁷⁴⁹ These remarks may have coincided with his objections to other family members signing the Protest. It is clear that he by no means felt that William was necessarily called to take the action he was taking. He went on to refer to ‘“a sort of excitement”, unfavourable to a sound judgement and due caution, in so great an affair.’⁷⁵⁰ He voiced ‘serious misgiving’⁷⁵¹ to Roundell: it was ‘the strangest way in the world ... to vindicate the Catholicity of the English Church’ by doing anything ‘which might drive a weak brother out of it, and send him over to Rome ... it is, as appears to me, a pertinacious adherence to indiscretion of this sort, that gives me any uneasiness.’⁷⁵² The acts of ‘one or more of the bishops of the day’, could not possibly affect the catholicity of the Church of England, therefore ‘to leave it for Rome on account of the offence of others, would be nothing short of spiritual self-destruction.’⁷⁵³ Dr. Routh had made the same point: ‘It is very bad, sir, certainly: but two Prelates cannot overturn our Church.’⁷⁵⁴

Given all these reservations, it was as Lord Selborne said ‘all the more generous’ of him to defend Palmer as vigorously - and justifiably - as he did in December, after receiving a letter from the archbishop via Palmer’s Uncle Horsley.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 322.

⁷⁴⁹ W J P to RP, 6 Nov. 1841, Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ W J P to RP, 9 Nov. 1841, Ibid. p.326.

⁷⁵² LP-MS 1878, f. 76.

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁴ ASC, p. cxl.

This congratulated Palmer's father on Edwin's election to Balliol, but added the hope that Edwin would not 'be perverted by the indiscreet zeal of his elder brother.' The response of Palmer's father was at first icily polite; he thanked 'the friend who offered his congratulations' for his kind wishes, and as to the remark about 'indiscreet zeal', 'I am not offended at it, but thank him for that too.' He continued:

I should like to ask him whether he considers the willingness with which the intention to publish has been laid aside as a mark of intemperate zeal; whether the communication of the intended publication in the first instance to those who might have the power to stop it was indiscreet; whether it was indiscreet to advise, before anything was done, with a person of so much learning as the head of his College, whose suggestions and alterations were in every instance adopted? In a word, whether (in point of fact) in this affair he has been guilty of any indiscretion whatever ...⁷⁵⁵

Palmer could surely not have asked for more; but this was the last time on which he could rely on such unqualified support from his father.

A bizarre twist to the affair was that Bishop Alexander's chaplain, George Williams, with whom Palmer was 'not acquainted', wrote to him to ask if Palmer could 'give him some hints' about his new post, 'saying that "of course he sees immense difficulties; and if I can guard him against any mistakes into which he is likely to fall, I shall do him a great kindness, and may benefit the Church."⁷⁵⁶ Palmer told Roundell he was 'thinking of writing to him to offer to go out with him, if he or his Bishop think my knowledge may be of any service to them; only stipulating that I am not to be considered as recognising "the essential unity of Protestant Christendom".' Lord Selborne speculates drily as to whether 'this singular

⁷⁵⁵ MFP, vol. 1, pp. 325-6.

⁷⁵⁶ WP to RP, 28 Nov. 1841, *Ibid.*, p.324.

offer ... was actually made; probably not; at all events, if it was made, nothing came of it.'⁷⁵⁷

Palmer, who had written in the same letter 'I really cannot endure without doing something or other,' fired off a series of semi-serious queries to be put by Williams to the Bishop, in order that Williams 'come to a distinct understanding, if possible, before he sailed.'⁷⁵⁸ They were designed to point up the inconsistencies of the scheme, and began from basics. Were they 'to profess consistently the *principle* of Catholicism *or* the *principle* of Protestantism in the name of the Church of England, or ... to try to mix the two together, and if so, by what rule?' Were the Lutherans, and later the Calvinists, to be admitted to communion at once, or to be required to renounce the 'principle of Protestantism', embrace the whole Apostolic Faith, and be confirmed? Was the Greek Orthodox Church to be regarded as truly Orthodox and Catholic, and therefore offered communion, or were they as Protestants 'to regard it as heretical, and corrupt, and idolatrous,' to be converted 'by all means to Evangelical Protestantism' - or were they 'to attempt to trim between these two opinions?' If other Protestant 'Ministers' converted Orthodox as heretics, would they 'accept and allow' that? If members of the Orthodox spontaneously came asking to abjure their own Church, would they reject them? Were the Nestorians and Jacobites 'to be viewed as heretics or orthodox brethren'? Would they be admitted to communion at once, or only upon renouncing their heresy?⁷⁵⁹ Williams' reply, if he made one, is not recorded; it is doubtful that he felt the 'immense difficulties' he mentioned had been lessened.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁸ ATR, p.91.

2. Controversial Correspondence

Palmer was now plunged into controversy on a wider stage. The Revd C. P. Golightly of Oriel, Protestant arch-foe of the Oxford Movement, had written in *The Standard* newspaper⁷⁶⁰:

a member of the University, who on his return after a few months' absence, expressed his surprise and concern to find that a great change had taken place in the opinions of certain of his friends; that the *via media* was deserted; that Rome was no longer regarded as a schismatical community; and that there was a strong desire for union with her.⁷⁶¹

Palmer 'thought it necessary to take notice'⁷⁶² of this. He first wrote to Golightly assuring him that he was 'not in the least offended', although he thought it necessary to write at greater length in a public newspaper to explain the sentiments that had been attributed to him, as 'the inaccuracy would seem very slight to common talkers - but it is not in itself slight.'⁷⁶³ That he had some reason for regarding the charge made in the letter as serious emerges from the passage he quoted from it, in the pamphlet that he eventually wrote in rebuttal:

instead of fighting under their proper banner, they have hoisted the flag of Anglicanism, and under those false colours, are taking advantage of their respective positions as ... Clergymen of the Established Church, to propagate Romanism ...⁷⁶⁴

Palmer admitted that he would not be surprised if there were not more defaulters to Rome, when her rulers did not call her Catholic, and the Civil Government regarded her as 'a mere political Establishment of Protestantism'. This

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

⁷⁶⁰ 26 Nov. 1841.

⁷⁶¹ MFP, vol. 1, p. 327.

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*

⁷⁶³ LP MS 1808, f. 204.

⁷⁶⁴ William Palmer, *A Letter to the Rev. C. P. Golightly* (hereafter *Golightly*) (Oxford: Parker, 1841), pp. 5-6.

was regrettable, since he was 'deeply convinced that the Church of England is intrinsically Catholic.'⁷⁶⁵ This was nothing new or controversial from Palmer. But he then went on to deny any expression of regret that any friend of his should desert the *via media*, saying that

truth is sometimes in a mean, I admit, but it seems to me to be a very bad rule to teach it by. It is of its own nature positive, not like Protestantism, negative; it is a beacon set on a hill, not a mixed puddle in a valley.

This contemptuous description of what the Church of England chose to regard as its cardinal virtue, the middle way, might in itself have aroused sufficient hostility; but what followed gave the greatest offence:

Certainly, I am for no middle ways ... for myself, I utterly reject and anathematize the principle of Protestantism as a heresy, with all its forms, sects, or denominations. And if the Church of England should ever unhappily profess herself to be a form of Protestantism ... I would reject and anathematize the Church of England, and would separate myself from her immediately as from a human sect ...⁷⁶⁶

Distinguishing the sense in which he could justifiably be accused of Popery from simple, but presumably covert, allegiance to Rome, he wrote:

if to desire the restoration of unity with those Churches ['the foreign Churches of the Latins'] ... and above all with the Church of Rome itself, be Popery, then I for one am a Papist from the bottom of my soul; but ... my Popery is of a kind which takes in not only the Churches now in actual communion with Rome, but also the Eastern Catholic Churches, and the British, if their Protestant members will allow me still to call them Catholic.

Speaking from his accustomed viewpoint of nostalgia for the pre-Reformation unity of the Middle Ages, this would also have been unremarkable, but it is unlikely that in the theologically overheated atmosphere of the time the sense in which he saw himself as 'a Papist from the bottom of my soul' was understood. He returned to his

⁷⁶⁵ *Golightly*, p. 9.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

solemn rejection of Protestantism, turning his fire on the hierarchy that had apparently embraced it:

In conclusion, I once more publicly profess myself a Catholic and a member of a Catholic Church, and say anathema to the principle of Protestantism, (which I regard as identical with the principle of Dissent,) and to all its forms, sects, and denominations, especially to those of the Lutherans and Calvinists, and British and American Dissenters - Likewise to all persons, who *knowingly and willingly, and understanding what they do*, shall assert either for themselves or for the Church of England *the principle of Protestantism*, or maintain the Church of England to have one and the same common religion with any or all of the various forms of and sects of Protestantism, or ... go about to establish any intercommunion between our Church and them, otherwise than by bringing them ... to renounce their errors ... - to all such I say anathema.⁷⁶⁷

This bombastic⁷⁶⁸ outburst earned Palmer the derisive nickname of 'The Cursing Deacon,'⁷⁶⁹ and 'drew upon his name no small obloquy.'⁷⁷⁰ Both Roundell Palmer and his father 'had advised against the publication of those rash passages in his letter to Mr. Golightly which raised the storm; but we were too late.'⁷⁷¹

Among the responses to the exchange were a letter to Palmer from his cousin William, and a letter in the *Oxford Herald* from 'A Protestant Catholic.' Writing to his cousin, Palmer opposed the principle of Protestantism, which 'bids you make your own Church out of your own Bible' to that of Catholicism, which 'bids you read your Bible in the Church' interpreted by the Church's tradition. Protestantism was not merely 'a protest against certain errors'; for Palmer it had no limits. 'You cannot mention to me any single article of the Christian Faith, however necessary to

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid., p.13.

⁷⁶⁸ Shaw notes that Palmer's writings 'struck even his sympathisers as violent.' Keble was the exception; in a letter to Newman Keble described a visit from Perceval, who mentioned 'another (what he termed) violent pamphlet from Palmer about the Bishop of Jerusalem. I never can understand why people call his writings violent; to me they seem particularly calm.' Shaw, p.153.

⁷⁶⁹ See amongst others Athelstan Riley, *Birkbeck and the Russian Church*, (London: SPCK, 1917) p.

⁷⁷⁰ MFP, vol. 1, p.327.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 334-5.

salvation, which it is absolutely necessary to believe in order to be a Protestant ... any heresy or error, which a man may not believe, and yet be a “Protestant” and of “the Protestant religion.””⁷⁷² ‘He who protests is inferior’, and therefore it was wrong to say that the Church of England protested, when she ‘is at variance with any other Church, and differs from it and is at bottom in the right.’ So far as she was right and Rome wrong on any point, she was Catholic and the guardian of truth.⁷⁷³

Palmer’s response to the ‘Protestant-Catholic’ was an expansion of his letter to his cousin, including some of the same passages. English ‘Protestantism’ was a protest against the Latin Church on certain secondary and accidental points, as against the right to draw one’s own religion out of the Bible.⁷⁷⁴ The latter notion might never enter the mind of someone who nonetheless protested. The Greek Churches strongly opposed and protested against the doctrine of Papal Supremacy, but could never be termed Protestant. The same was true of other Apostolical Churches, such as ‘the Armenian, the Nestorian, Syrian, Abyssinian.’⁷⁷⁵ Palmer identified in them a common ‘Catholic principle of dogmatic and traditional authority in the Hierarchy which is evidently opposed to the spirit and principle of Protestantism.’ Palmer wished the term ‘Protestant’ disused in its English sense, because it had become confused with, and therefore appeared to countenance, the ‘Dissenting or Heretical Protestantism’ found abroad, and alienated the Churches of Apostolical foundation. The Arians of Geneva, for example, spoke of the Church of England as ‘the pillar and bulwark of “our common Protestantism:”’⁷⁷⁶ ‘neither I nor the Church to which I belong have ever made any Protest at all. Our Sovereigns acted

⁷⁷² LP MS 1895, f. 26

⁷⁷³ Ibid., f. 27.

⁷⁷⁴ William Palmer, *A Letter to a Protestant-Catholic* (Oxford: Parker, 1842), p. 12.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

against Rome with a high hand, and the Church submitted or assented to what they required, and was passive rather than active during the whole quarrel⁷⁷⁷; a questionable interpretation of the Church of England's rôle during the Reformation.

Palmer was happy enough to fight against Rome, but not 'with a host of evil spirits and infidels for our allies.' Their Protestantism was 'full of self-assertion, pride, hatred, ignorance, cowardice, inconsistency, and contempt.' He would not be joined 'under a unity of ambiguous words ... with opinions and sects which I abhor.'⁷⁷⁸ Here he no doubt had the Jerusalem Bishopric in mind. The writer of the letter had stated that he was confident that Palmer did not believe in the Supremacy of the Pope, Transubstantiation, or the Council of Trent. Palmer's response was an Orthodox one. The jurisdiction taken away from the Pope was not

of Divine right, nor even according to the spirit of the Oecumenical Canons, nor safe for the Church at large; nor do I believe that the definition of the visible Church is necessarily limited by practical obedience to Rome; nor that the Bishop or Church of Rome, or any given Council of Bishops, are to be viewed in themselves and strictly speaking infallible antecedently to the reception of their decrees by the Church at large.⁷⁷⁹

Transubstantiation he described simply as a 'Mystery ... far too great for words to express ... it were dangerous and irreverent to attempt it, being as it is an object for faith only to apprehend.'⁷⁸⁰ As to the Council of Trent, 'I have nothing at all to do with it.' Let it be examined 'in a Synod of our own and foreign Bishops' to see if it should be received or rejected. As proof that the Church of England should rightly be called Catholic and not Protestant, Palmer cited the manner in which talk of Protestantism 'stops short at the Church-porch, as if paralyzed by some ancient exorcism.' Inside Church we hear only of 'the Catholic faith to be kept whole and

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid., p.24.

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 27-28.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid., p.29.

undefiled,' 'the Catholic Religion,' 'Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church,' 'good Catholic Fathers,'⁷⁸¹ etc. This omission was 'more than a mere chance.' He opined that 'our Orthodox Divines' must have been 'very far indeed from intending to recognise any such principle' as the right of every man to follow his own private interpretation of the Bible, which was a 'pernicious heresy'.⁷⁸² His travels abroad in France and Switzerland had led him to accept the designation of Catholic that the Protestants gave him in accordance with the principles he professed. Although the whole tone of this letter was more moderate than either his letter to Golightly or the Protest, he still ended by 'most sadly and seriously' repeating the anathema of the Golightly letter against those who knowingly professed or recognised the professors of 'the principle of Continental Protestantism.'⁷⁸³

Despite the furore his anathemas had caused, Palmer made public his opposition to the Jerusalem Bishopric by publishing the materials relating to the Protest, as Dr. Routh had suggested, under the title *Aids to Reflection on the Seemingly Double Character of the Established Church*. The Introduction argued that if the Church of England concurred with *The Prussian State Gazette* about the existence of one 'Evangelical' or 'Reformed' Protestant Church, 'upheld by a superior unity, the Head of the Church Himself,' she would 'unchurch herself, and render it impossible for any one ... to justify his allegiance to her on Catholic principles.'⁷⁸⁴ If the authorities of the Church of England agreed with *The Prussian State Gazette*, union with the Eastern Church would become impossible, and the Catholic character of the English Church destroyed. Palmer hoped to show, before it

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 29-30.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid., p.34.

⁷⁸² Ibid., pp. 36-37.

⁷⁸³ Ibid., p.47.

⁷⁸⁴ ATR, p.1.

was too late, that there was still a desire for unity with the Eastern Church, which could be acted upon if it were finally realised that simultaneous recognition of both 'Catholic Churches and Protestant Persuasions' was impossible. Palmer quoted the Prussian documents on the degree to which the identity of the Church of England with the 'Evangelical Church of Prussia' had been taken for granted,⁷⁸⁵ before setting out the history of the rejection of William III's convention by the Lower House of Convocation. He quoted the public declaration of the non-juring bishops in response to Greek accusations of Lutherano-Calvinism: 'no doctrines which used the names of either of the Founders of *those two Sects* can be imputed with any justice to us ...',⁷⁸⁶ Lutheranism and Calvinism, Palmer said, were not founded on any particular heresy, 'though they have several', but on 'Heresy itself made into a principle.' The German Lutherans, dissecting the Bible in reliance on their individual understanding

descended deeper and deeper into enquiries concerning the history, composition nature, and object, of the Bible, and its component parts ... The only limit to their attempts to find a resting-place - to find bottom ... in the waters of "subjectivity," was when they had come either to positive insanity, or to a state of doubt of the existence of God and of their own souls. ... once assert the principle of rebellion, and you must follow your own reason and feeling, one or both, ... and oscillate alternately into worse and worse depths of heresy, fanaticism, and heresy again - and so on, even till all ultimately subsides, if uncorrected, into atheism and suicide ...⁷⁸⁷

Palmer illustrated the Latitudinarian development of Calvinism in Geneva by extracts from his 1836 journals, before outlining the development of Protestantism in England since the 'Revolution of 1688.' He quoted too from his Russian journals to

⁷⁸⁵ For example the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of 20 November : 'the two Churches, by their recent act, have mutually recognised that, in their relations to each other, their constitutional forms are non-essential, the union in spirit the essential ... they have practically manifested the ... the establishment of a daughter Church ... in which the Augsburg Confession and the Thirty-nine Articles are recognised as founded in an intimate community of faith.' ATR, p.16.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.32.

⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

show how the Russians had come to perceive the Church of England as Protestant - for example, M. Mouravieff in October 1840:

There can be no unity between us as long as it is possible to mistake your Church for a sect or confession of Protestantism ... but ... she looks at present so much like Protestantism, and suffers herself so patiently to be confounded with it by all the world, that she must excuse us if we do not take the word of an individual that it is otherwise; she must speak to us herself, and tell us that she is Catholic, and we shall be ready enough to believe her.⁷⁸⁸

Again in January 1841, when Palmer was reading to Count Pratasoff the Archbishop of Canterbury's last Charge, which spoke of a reconciliation of the Churches of the East and West, the Count took it from him and read ' ... I am not without hope that *more cordial union* may, in time, be effected *among all Protestant Churches*. At this he exclaimed - "Ah! so your Primate admits the other Protestants to be Churches, and speaks not of correcting their heresy, but of more cordial union with them. He admits then that you are all one community already."⁷⁸⁹ Pratasoff found it 'inconceivable that any should be so blind and infatuated as to seek to express the substance of their religion, (if they have any,) by a word which really expresses nothing but negation. And yet this is the constant and recognised language of all your English people ...'⁷⁹⁰

In his ending Palmer again cast his gaze back to the days of King Charles I and Archbishop Laud:

We had Bishops once, and Clergy, and a King, who would have taught, and led, and ruled us in the faith and fear of God; who desired the unity of the whole Church, East and West, on Catholic principles ... and we cut off their heads. We made to ourselves such Bishops and Priests, and such a Civil Government, as was after our own hearts, and now we have no business to complain. The same people which sinned must repent, if they would regain the opportunity they once lost, and have their rulers such as they were before. We who demanded license formerly, must demand authority now ... with the definite teaching of the whole Orthodox religion ...⁷⁹¹

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., p.100.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 101-2.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid., p.110.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 114-5.

Able as these last two publications were, they ‘did not counteract the impressions to his disadvantage, which the “anathemas” of the letter to Mr. Golightly had produced.’ ‘William, as you will have seen, has brought everybody upon his back, and I fear will have prejudiced the public against anything he can say ... But I will not be the person to blame him now. He has enough to meet ...’⁷⁹² Undaunted, in 1842 Palmer attacked the Jerusalem Bishopric in *The Examination of an Announcement made in the Prussian State Gazette*, published anonymously, which entertainingly analysed and satirised the proposals for the Bishopric. Prefixed to the pamphlet was an extract from the Sixth Canon of the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople: ‘... We define those also to be heretics who, while they claim to be sound in the Faith, have been rent, or have rent *themselves* off, and gather congregations apart from *Our* Canonical Bishops, etc.’

Palmer began with a plea that King Frederick William ascertain that he was in communion with the Church of England ‘really, canonically, and of right,’ that he apply the same principles to all his subjects, before ascertaining the law of the Church of England regarding ‘the definition and mutual recognition of clergy’; and if he found that law too narrow, that he negotiate for its alteration by Synodical authority. He then quoted Frederick’s letter to his Minister of State, Eichhorn⁷⁹³, about the ‘German congregations of the Evangelical religion in Palestine, which are inclined to place themselves under the jurisdiction’ of the new Bishop; likewise the ‘young divines of the German Protestant Church ... [who] will certainly think it

⁷⁹² W J P to RP, 20 Dec. 1841, MFP, vol. 1, p. 334.

⁷⁹³ John-Albert-Frederick Eichhorn (1779-1856), Prussian statesman, educated at Göttingen University, assessor of the Court of Justice of Berlin 1806, Counsellor 1810, in 1815 assisted the ministry of Altenstein in the administration of the French départements occupied by Prussian troops, contributed to the creation of the administrative code of Prussia and negotiated with other States on the

desirable to avail themselves of the offers contained in the letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury.' These young divines were to be 'thoroughly grounded in the doctrines of the Protestant faith, according to the Augsburg Confession.'⁷⁹⁴ Feigning innocence, Palmer pondered the meaning of the King's orders to his Minister:

The orders ... are "in respect of the relations of the Bishop ... " to certain other parties; it matters not for the present to whom; whoever *they* may be, we have already something here which concerns *ourselves*. ... Here is something to set us thinking, - and in which we are deeply interested.⁷⁹⁵

The relations of 'an Orthodox Christian Bishop' with those in or out of his flock were surely dictated by necessity; but 'perhaps further light will be thrown upon it as we go along.' He picked on the mention of 'the German Congregation.':

But why of Germans? Or why only of Germans? ... seeing that many Germans are not subjects of the King of Prussia ... the words which follow look as if they would in some degree limit this congregation, about which we are enquiring: it is "the German ... congregation of *the Evangelical religion* in Palestine." "The Evangelical religion:" what is that? The religion of the Good Message: but message implies ... a sender.

Was this then part of 'the one true Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church, of which the Church of England is a part, or of some other falsely-called Evangelical religion and Evangelical Church which is not identical with ours'?⁷⁹⁶ The 'young Divines' must be of the same religion, because otherwise like Methodists or Presbyterian Ministers seeking the pastoral care of (e.g.) Bishop Selwyn in New Zealand, they would have to 'become so, and obtain his *Communion*, and ... be ordained and sent by him, before they can be under his pastoral care ... '⁷⁹⁷ If they are in communion with the Church of England, then the requirements of the Canons of

subjects of frontiers, navigation and Customs, Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1831, Minister of Public Instruction 1840. NBG, vol. 15, p. 762.

⁷⁹⁴ EA, p. 8.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid., p.13.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid., p.21.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibid., p.30.

the Church apply, and they will bring with them a certificate signed by their Bishop showing that they are in communion with him; and if on examination they are found to be orthodox, they will be admitted to communion. But immediately another difficulty arises, in that ‘... the language used by the King of Prussia ... seems to make their relations with the new Bishop dependent upon private choice.’ Nothing is said ‘about *communion*, or the terms of obtaining it’; the ‘young Divines’ accept the Bishop’s ‘protection and pastoral care ... as a matter of choice and expediency, to obtain “a greater freedom of action, and a more successful result of their labours”!’

Palmer commented sarcastically

The announcement of such an extent of liberty to Christians in the Evangelical Church will be astonishing, no doubt, to many ... the knowledge of our rights, if rights they be, may have been reserved to be revealed to us by the King of Prussia and those with whom he has negotiated just at the moment that it is most likely to be most wanted.⁷⁹⁸

But there must also follow to Palestine young Divines who will not accept the Bishop’s care. Presumably, Palmer speculated, in Germany some chose to follow, others not to follow, ‘the Evangelical Bishop of the district; while yet both parties are equally of the Evangelical religion, equally Divines, and equally qualified to be ordained, whether for submission or rebellion, by the accommodating charity of the Evangelical Synod.’⁷⁹⁹ Having listed five possible categories of members of the Evangelical religion in Palestine, Palmer concluded that this theory of the Evangelical Church ‘presents to our view a truly wonderful combination of the most opposite principles.’⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid., p.40.

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid., p.41.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid., p.42.

He then asked why it was that the Archbishop chose to communicate through the King - 'a layman, and not in any sense representative of her Apostolic authority?' Surely he should write to the Evangelical Bishops of that country, or their Synod?

'Perhaps he would have preferred to do so; but the King of that country, it may be, is jealous of the spiritual power, and allows no missives to come from foreign Churches without passing through his own hands ...'⁸⁰¹ However, there was no request to pass on the communication to 'the Spirituality and to the Church'. The letter mentioned 'relations in which the German congregations will stand' to the Bishop, which would be a matter of necessity, unless they were 'capable of being made the subject of negotiation, on matters of local detail and arrangement.' But in virtue of what necessity '*will*' the relations be 'of such or such a kind?' And again, ' "The Bishop," we learn, "will consider it as his duty." Will he so consider it indeed? Why will he? In virtue of what law or necessity?'⁸⁰²

The proposals for ordination were unlike any other in the Church of England, in that the congregations of the German Evangelical Church could obtain ordination for their clergy from the English bishop, without pledging themselves to follow the English rite. This seemed to give the German clergy a 'double character' - candidates for the pastoral office in the German Church, who present themselves to the English bishop in Palestine as part of his flock, 'seeking Ordination and Mission from him.' There was mention of "the German Liturgy" to be used by these clergy; but this must mean that 'the Canons have either been altered by competent authority, or else are now arbitrarily relaxed in favour of this class; - unless the same Canons can bind one

⁸⁰¹ Ibid., p.48.

⁸⁰² Ibid., p.57.

set of Clergy to use, and another not to use, the same forms.’⁸⁰³ And how, he asked, can the Archbishop canonically enforce his assertion that the new Liturgy *will* be used by these Clergy?

None of this made any great difference, Palmer said, so long as the initial hypothesis that the ‘German Evangelical Church’ was in communion with ours was true. If, however, that was not the case, and the Church of England had by its actions brought itself into communion

with sects instead of Churches, ... the *Ordination* of members of the ‘German Church’ in its name, by our Bishops, would complete and perpetuate our apostacy [sic] by bringing us also, through the ambiguous character of the new Clergy, into a full *clerical communion* with the Pastors, Preachers, or Ministers of all the sects.

The same proviso applied to ‘the Orthodoxy or validity of the new Ritual.’ Why then had the Archbishop thought it necessary to add that he had ‘carefully examined’ the Liturgy in question? With blistering scorn he observed that

It raises one’s thoughts of the dignity of our Primate’s Chair to see him re-examining with the eye of a Judge a Ritual and Liturgy transmitted to him in the name of the Evangelical or Apostolical Churches of the whole Prussian kingdom, if not of all Germany, and compiled from those Liturgies previously received from those Churches, - Liturgies derived perhaps from the times of St. Boniface, at any rate of such antiquity that their authors and the dates of their introduction seem to be unknown; and their authority is rested only upon prescription, on the fact that they “are received.”⁸⁰⁴

The truth was that it was ‘notorious’ that ‘neither the Prussian Establishment nor its Clergy has any fixed definition or existence, which is capable of being recognised by the Canons of the Apostolic Church.’ There was ‘no such thing in existence as ... the “German Protestant or Evangelical Church.”’⁸⁰⁵ He cited

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*, p.109.

⁸⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p.123.

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.146.

conversations with German pastors at Oxford to show the complete lack of affinity and doctrinal agreement between the Church of England and the Lutherans, although those who saw the German Church or Protestantism as identical with the Church of England, had 'some strong appearances, and very deep historical sympathies, in favour of their views.' He trusted that the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London would 'suffer us ... to Protest against their acts and doctrines' lest 'by a blind submission to their views and policy, however conscientious, we bring the distinct and formal anathemas of the Eastern as well as the rest of the Latin Church upon our heads and the heads of our children.' Equally he trusted, not altogether convincingly, that they would not find 'anything in the tone of our reflections to imply either a spirit of insubordination towards their Office in the abstract, or any personal disrespect or discourtesy towards themselves.'⁸⁰⁶ The submission of Catholics to their bishops was however 'due only so far as the Bishops themselves profess and uphold the spirit, the principle, and the tradition of the Catholic Faith. Every one is bound to expose and accuse heterodoxy ...'⁸⁰⁷

Doffing the mask of courtesy, he described the Primate and the Bishop of London as 'ready on the first suggestion of a foreign King to change the basis and nature of our religion, and to precipitate us into a union with all the sects and heresies of that Babylon which is called the Reformed Church.'⁸⁰⁸ Palmer reviewed what Howley and Blomfield had purported at least to do 'in the name of the Church, and with a high hand', and found that 'the act and treaty of the two Prelates in question cannot *proprio vigore* bind the Church; because they are of themselves illegal and uncanonical, and subject their authors to deprivation, and even to excommunication:

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid., 163

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid., p.64.

for the Bishop, and still more, the Archbishop, is set to keep and enforce the laws of the Church, and not to break them ...⁸⁰⁹

The Canons of the Church of England recognised only Episcopally ordained Clergy; 'bind obedience to the Bishop upon all;' excommunicated any who maintained assemblies separate from the Bishop's to be true churches, as well as those who communicated or prayed with them; demanded confirmation before admission to communion, and enjoined the following of the Liturgy and Ritual of the Church of England, 'and none other.' Therefore 'there can be no doubt of the utter invalidity of any contrary determinations of single Prelates in themselves to bind the Church.'⁸¹⁰

But lest acquiescence in, or acceptance of, the acts of the Archbishop and Bishop bind the Church, it was the duty of those who disagreed to appeal to a Synod or Convocation, or, if that was impossible, to decline to accept the communion of Bishop Alexander or of 'his Senders-and-Consecrators' until they again upheld the Canons of the Church of England. To do otherwise was to become a link in a chain running from the German Lutherans and Calvinists via all the Nonconformists and the Scotch Presbyterians to all the Dissenters of Scotland and America, and from them to the Dissenters of England and Ireland, who were excommunicated by those same Canons. Acquiescence would mean that 'we, by our own act, should have ceased to be even theoretically Catholics.'⁸¹¹

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 165-6.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid., p.170.

⁸¹⁰ Ibid., p.171.

⁸¹¹ Ibid., p.176.

CHAPTER 6

The Galitsin Affair

As the very number and length of these controversial writings indicate, Palmer was at this period at the height of his powers and influence. The highest in the Church of England flinched at his thunderbolts; the highest in the Synod of Russia paid him compliments. True, he was a maverick; but had he moderated the violence of his rhetoric and gathered to himself the followers that Spencer described, he might have rallied the Oxford Movement and been a mighty force for change within the Church of England. Had he knelt before the great Metropolitan Philaret in humility and asked to be received into the Holy Orthodox Church he would have been received with joy, perhaps to be a beacon of Orthodoxy in the West. Instead, he stubbornly followed his own path, which led, so far at least as the world was concerned, into the wilderness, to alienation from his closest family and friends, to humiliation and ridicule. He was ultimately to blame for this, but the cause of his fall was a woman, Maria Arkadieivna, the Princess Galitsin.⁸¹²

To trace the story of his involvement with the Princess it is necessary to return to the night of 30 October (O. S.) 1840, when Palmer was still in St. Petersburg, dining with his new friend Madame Potemkin. She had invited Palmer in order to introduce him to her cousin, Prince Michael Galitsin, a colonel in the Imperial Guard. Palmer found himself seated next to the Prince, who 'without addressing himself to me, began to speak of the Anglican Church as a mere

⁸¹² 1802-1870. Née Suvorova. RBSI, p. 160.

Protestant sect with some asperity and exaggeration.’⁸¹³ Palmer gave his customary exposition of the true position of the Church of England. The Prince then ‘opened a little,’⁸¹⁴ and revealed to him the reason for his antipathy. For some years his wife and their three daughters had been living near Geneva and in France, and in the previous spring he had received a letter from the eldest daughter announcing that she and her mother ‘had been converted from the superstition of the Russian Church to the Anglican religion.’⁸¹⁵ Had this conversion been to Rome he would have felt less pain; he was prepared to accept the claims of Rome, if they could be proved or the Emperor so decreed; but for his family to turn to Protestantism made him very unhappy. Palmer however was unperturbed. The whole affair was nonsense; the conversion was to ‘Calvinistic Methodism’⁸¹⁶, if it was anything. How could he himself have come to Russia in the firm belief that his Church and the Russian were one and the same, if the Church of England could proselytise from the Russian Church? There was no law allowing for this in the Anglican Church, and ‘no Church of England at Geneva, nor any bishop having jurisdiction.’ He then uttered the words that were ultimately to destroy his public career and make him an exile from England: ‘But I will pledge myself to prove that the ladies have not in any way been admitted as members of the Anglican Church, and, if I fail, am ready to be converted myself to that Russian Church which they have renounced and left.’ The grateful Prince told him he had given him a ray of hope, and, fatally, that Palmer’s credit ‘was quite as much implicated in the matter as his [the Prince’s] interest and feelings.’⁸¹⁷

⁸¹³ NV, p. 291.

⁸¹⁴ ASC, p. iv.

⁸¹⁵ NV, p.292. From ASC, p. v, it would appear that the two younger daughters had not yet converted; Newman’s text is ambiguous.

⁸¹⁶ In ASC, p. iv, ‘Evangelical Methodisme.’

⁸¹⁷ NV, p.293.

Palmer saw this as a chance, surely God-given, to vindicate his view of the Church of England as quite distinct from Protestantism. His chivalrous character responded to the appeal to rescue the Princess and her daughters from soul-destroying error, and in addition his credit and honour as an English gentleman had been staked on the successful outcome. Sadly, events were to show that the Prince was merely using Palmer to procure the return of his wife, and avoid the severe civil penalties for apostasy from Orthodoxy.

Four days later Palmer braved the 'floats of ice' that had begun to come down from Lake Ladoga, and dined with the Prince. The Prince told him that he had reminded his wife that her conversion was an offence against Russian law, and that if it were known, 'the Synod ... would anathematize them; and the Government might confiscate their estates.'⁸¹⁸ This only brought defiance and the suggestion that 'more reasonable methods ... might have done something'; but reasoned argument against Anglicanism, backed up by various books, had met only with silence. Consequently he was, as he said to Palmer, 'au bout de mon Latin.' He begged Palmer to write to him a letter to be forwarded to his wife, which Palmer willingly did. It expressed his willingness to help, and his hope that if only the Princess and her daughters would give his arguments 'serious and reasonable attention,' he could convince them that they 'ought to continue dutiful members of that Church in which they were baptised.'⁸¹⁹ The Anglican chaplain at Geneva had no more standing than 'a Chaplain in a ship at sea.' Such chaplains had no authority to convert Russians. 'I make no doubt,' he rashly declared, 'that it would be easy to procure an authoritative declaration to this effect from the spiritual heads of the English Churches, if it were

⁸¹⁸ ASC Introduction, p. v.

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. viii.

required.⁸²⁰ He spoke truer than he knew when he said that ‘Intellectual argument with this class of religionists is generally thrown away; indeed it does harm rather than good.’⁸²¹ The Prince was pleased with the letter, even considering publishing it in Russian, though that would be ‘publishing at the same time the disgrace of his family.’⁸²²

A few days later Palmer wrote again with a copy of Bishop Jolly’s⁸²³ *Treatise on the Church*⁸²⁴ to be passed on to Galitsin’s wife and daughters. It was surely the hand of God that had caused the pamphlet, destined for Malta, to be sent to St. Petersburg instead; and providence again, as much as the gout that had plagued him since Durham, that had caused him to be confined to the English lodging house in the Galernay, where the Prince could more easily visit him than at ‘the Priest’s house ... on the other side of the Neva, and at the extremity of the city.’⁸²⁵ It was there that, in the following February, the Prince called upon Palmer, bearing an extract from a letter from his wife, which he begged Palmer to answer. Palmer took up the pen ‘with a heavy heart,’ as the Princess had not even acknowledged his previous letter. He wrote nonetheless of the dangers of judging ‘great Bishops and whole Churches,’ of the necessity of prayer for the right notions of the Church and her authority, and parental duty towards one’s children, prayer that might be accompanied by the shedding of tears. He spoke of the cause of sin in himself, ‘a certain presumptuous confidence and self-will based upon pride, of which I was often enough told, but

⁸²⁰ Ibid., p. xii.

⁸²¹ Ibid., p. xiii.

⁸²² Ibid., p. xix.

⁸²³ Alexander Jolly (1756-1838), educated at Marischal College, ordained into the Scottish Episcopal Church 1776, incumbent of Turriff 1777, and Fraserburgh 1788, coadjutor to Macfarlane, Bishop of Moray and Ross, 1796, collated to sole charge of Moray 1798, declined the see of Ross and Argyll 1819, DD from Washington College, Connecticut, 1826. DNB.

could never believe the danger before it was too late.’⁸²⁶ To trust ‘to one’s own understanding’ in religious matters was dangerous enough with only one’s own soul at stake; but ‘doubly so’ when children were involved. He expressed alarm at the judgemental and combative tone of the Princess’s letter to her husband (‘*Je defie un Papiste d’y repondre*’) which he saw as stemming directly from the prejudices of the sects, and urged instead prayers for the Pope and action for peace and unity.⁸²⁷

In March a letter arrived from the eldest daughter, Princess Zinaida,⁸²⁸ indicating that her mother was too ill to read Palmer’s letter of November, and asking about the respects in which the Church of England seemed to conform to the Bible, and ‘the Greek Church’ to be contrary to it. She begged Palmer to answer each article of her letter ‘by the authority of the Bible, and not by that of “Councils” and “Bishops,”’ and to remember that she was ‘no theologian, but a poor girl, who often fails in her efforts for her salvation, and who hopes to be saved through her faith in Christ.’⁸²⁹ Palmer’s response was almost a dissertation, being ‘some sixty pages in length.’⁸³⁰ Its tone was affectionate and concerned. He addressed first the fundamental Protestant error of attempting to teach oneself from the Bible, and reproved her for being unwilling to listen to the wisdom of saintly bishops and the Councils of the Church, particularly as she gave such weight to the opinion of the Anglican clergyman who had ‘converted’ herself and her mother. He expounded his theory of the one Catholic Church, considering as a consequence ‘the Greek faith

⁸²⁴ One of ‘four short treatises,’ this, ‘“On the Nature and Constitution of the True Church”, ... the shortest, is designed to win over from Calvinism ... such as may read it with hearts prepared to prefer truth to worldly considerations.’ ASC, p. xxi.

⁸²⁵ ASC, p. xxviii.

⁸²⁶ Ibid., p. xxix.

⁸²⁷ Ibid., p. xxxv.

⁸²⁸ FT, p. 58.

⁸²⁹ ASC, p. xlii.

⁸³⁰ Ibid., p. civ.

quite consistent with the English faith.'⁸³¹ He went in some detail into the question of Transubstantiation, the mode of Sacrifice in the Mass, Icons, and the Invocation of Saints. The existence of one Catholic Church meant that she had the right to intercommunion in an Anglican Church without any necessity for 'conversion.' Again he unwisely anticipated that 'the Spiritual Heads of the Anglican Church' would provide a formal declaration that they 'do not, and cannot ... recognize any conversion of the members of the Greek or Russian Churches to theirs.'⁸³² Separation from the Church in Russia on her return to the country would simply make her a schismatic; even if she frequented the Chapel of the English Embassy at St. Petersburg for the rest of her life, she would never be a member of the Church of England. '... by right a Catholic Christian is a member of the diocese of London when in London, of Rome when at Rome, and of Moscow when at Moscow.'⁸³³ If she were to go to England, she 'would desire to Communicate in the English Churches, and even ought to do so.' As to his own position in Russia, he had to concede that reality had failed to conform to his theory. 'If I go to any separate English Chapel, I do so only because the Bishop here will not or cannot give me the Communion upon Catholic principles.'⁸³⁴ Asking what we can do to remedy the evil of a divided Church that had lost its original brightness and perfection, he answered: '*By striving to live if possible the life of the primitive Saints,*'⁸³⁵ something that he himself doubtless tried to do.

On 11 / 23 March, the Prince came to see Palmer with a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, ostensibly written by himself, seeking clarification of the

⁸³¹ Ibid., p. l.

⁸³² Ibid., p. lxxix.

⁸³³ Ibid., p. lxxx.

⁸³⁴ Ibid., p. lxxxi.

⁸³⁵ Ibid., p. lxxxii.

exact relation of the English Church to the Russian. If the Prince did write it, it is remarkable how closely the style resembled Palmer's, as in the legal precision of the opening questions:

My Lord, I am a Russian, and as such Orthodox. I would ask then:

- I. If the Church of England does or does not excommunicate the Catholic and Apostolic Church of the East?
- II. If an English Bishop, in his own diocese, pretended to make one of my country and faith renounce the Russian Church, and reconcile him, as a heretic or idolater, to the Church of England, could such a Bishop ground himself upon any canon or law of his Church ... ?⁸³⁶

Palmer had already answered these questions in the negative in his letters to the Princess; he was attempting to procure the 'formal declaration' from the Spiritual Head of the Anglican Church that he was right. The letter asked if, in the absence of any canon, the chaplain at Geneva had not acted *ultra vires* in purporting to convert the Princess and her daughter; if any law or canon of the English Church excluded an Orthodox Russian from her Communion; and whether an Orthodox, by taking Communion in an Anglican Church, by so doing impliedly renounced the Orthodox Church.⁸³⁷

On 2 May (N. S.) the Prince dined with the English Ambassador, Lord Clanricarde.⁸³⁸ He told the Ambassador that he had written to the Archbishop, and what he had said. Clanricarde was amused. He said, smiling: 'I can tell you, you will embarrass him extremely: you cannot conceive how such a letter will embarrass him to answer. He is one of the most timid and apprehensive men in existence. But he will probably give the letter to one of his Chaplains, to answer for him.' Clanricarde also indicated that he was glad the Prince had written the letter; and that should no

⁸³⁶ Ibid., p. lxxxix.

⁸³⁷ Ibid.

⁸³⁸ It was at this dinner that Lord Clanricarde made his remarks about the terrible disfigurement of the Church of England, and the slovenliness of its churches, quoted above.

answer have arrived by the time the Prince returned from Geneva, where he was going to speak to his wife and children, then he would 'do his best to induce his Grace to send an answer with as little delay as possible.'⁸³⁹ Palmer had declined to accompany the Prince, as the Princess continued to ignore his letters, and the eldest daughter had yet to receive his reply. The Princess had, however, written to the Emperor - a strange act for one who later constantly enjoined Palmer not to publicise her conversion in any way, for fear of condign punishment - describing her conversion as being 'to the Evangelical Religion,' and declaring 'We are Protestants.'

When Palmer visited the Prince again on 5 / 17 June, on his return from Moscow, there was no reply from the Archbishop. Palmer thought that 'both his personal rank and the very sufficient excuse he had for troubling the Archbishop were such as to make the civility of an answer due to him.'⁸⁴⁰ The Prince took the Archbishop's silence to indicate that he 'was a mere Protestant like the multitude, and was unwilling to send him an answer,' something he repeated when Palmer saw him on 17 / 29 June, the night the Prince was leaving for Geneva.

Palmer's resolution was bolstered by his parting conversation with Count Pratasoff on 2 July (N. S.). The Count, who knew all about the affair, told Palmer he 'should do a very good deed ... who should bring those ladies out of their errors.' The Russian chaplain at Berne had tried and failed to persuade them to return to Orthodoxy; they had softened their stance on Icons, being used to them, but still would not admit the Real Presence, 'so it will be all the more to your credit, and to the credit of your views [n. b. not your Church] if you should be able to do anything

⁸³⁹ ASC, pp. xcv-xcvi.

⁸⁴⁰ WP to W J P, 14 / 26 June, LP MS 1894, f. 81.

with them.’ All possibility of union was out of the question while the English Church assented to, or failed to dissociate itself from, ‘proselytism of our people’.⁸⁴¹

On his return to London, Palmer asked the Archbishop of Canterbury if he had received the Prince’s letter. He had: ‘he well remembered it “from the strange ignorance which it shewed of the present state of the Church of England; attributing to her the exercise of a much greater degree of authority than she in fact possesses.”’ This may well have been a hint that Howley suspected Palmer had ‘directed the pen of the Russian Prince’.⁸⁴² Howley added ‘The Church of England anathematizes nobody.’ Palmer commented sarcastically ‘forgetting, perhaps, one of the XXXIX Articles, which begins with these words, “*Sunt et illi praeterea anathematizandi,*” &c.’⁸⁴³ The Archbishop claimed that he thought he had answered the letter; but his private secretary, ‘sitting at his elbow,’ said that His Grace “*had thought of answering it, but had never done so.*”⁸⁴⁴ Palmer’s embarrassed letter to Prince Galitsin of 31 July quoted the private secretary as saying that the Archbishop ‘had made some note of an answer ... but the letter was laid aside, and I fear now will not be answered at all.’ He could only suggest in extenuation that ‘our Bishops in England & especially the Archbishop who is now quite an old man are altogether overwhelmed with letterwriting ... so that an involuntary neglect or omission will sometimes occur - at the same time I am greatly surprized & vexed that it should have happened in your case ...’⁸⁴⁵ It seems hardly credible that Palmer should have been so naive as to be genuinely surprised at this turn of events, but as with his later

⁸⁴¹ ASC, pp. xcix-c.

⁸⁴² Z, p.96.

⁸⁴³ Article XVIII: ‘They are also to be accursed that presume to say ...’

⁸⁴⁴ ASC, p. c; the italics are Palmer’s.

⁸⁴⁵ BO MS 11.1.(2) / G. 37 Bk. V ff. 13-14.

rebuff by the Scottish bishops, he appears to have convinced himself that events and people would conform to his expectations.

On 7 September Palmer received an excited letter from the Prince, regretting 'exceedingly' that Palmer had not gone with him to Geneva, where he 'would have been of the greatest use,' and asking him for a copy of his 'long letter', which had not been received. The Princess would only say that she was 'of *the unity of the Gospel*,' and would be no more specific about her religion; his daughter was communicating in the English Chapel, whose 'Programmes' were pasted about the walls of Geneva, 'just like the play-bills of a theatre.'⁸⁴⁶ The Prince was satisfied that the chaplain, Mr. Hare⁸⁴⁷, was 'a complete heretic,' who denied the Real Presence. The Prince begged Palmer 'to come to St. Petersburg, and meet us there before the navigation closes,' as he would then 'have the satisfaction of restoring a child to her father, and a daughter to the Church.'⁸⁴⁸ He still wanted to know when he could hope to hear from the Archbishop; in the meantime, did the Bishop of London acknowledge Mr. Hare? Palmer replied regretting that the Prince had not written earlier, so as to enable him to have gone to Geneva. Mr. Hare was obviously '*a regular Protestant*, and just like the "Calvinistes" or "Evangéliques" of Geneva,' probably nominally licensed by the Bishop of London, but more likely just hired by the English expatriates at Geneva, and so 'really responsible only to them.'⁸⁴⁹ Nonetheless, he would write to the Bishop as requested.

This he did on 8 September 1841, setting out the history of his own journey to Russia, and the ostensible conversion of the Galitsin women. He made plain the good

⁸⁴⁶ ASC, p. cii.

⁸⁴⁷ Rev. William Hare, educated at Trinity College Dublin, BA 1826, deacon 1826, priest 1828, chaplain at Geneva 1838-44, Chaplain to the Forces, Woolwich, 1860. CCD, 1860, and information from the Rev. Michael French.

⁸⁴⁸ ASC, p. ciii.

effect a disavowal of proselytism by the Anglican Church of Russian Orthodox would have in Russia, and conversely the bad effect that the 'countenance or allowance of such conversions'⁸⁵⁰ would make. Bishop Blomfield replied that he had 'no real jurisdiction' over clergy not within his diocese, but that it was customary for him to license those chosen by Congregations abroad. He had done so in the case of Mr. Hare, who had not made any attempt to convert either of the ladies concerned, but had admitted the daughter to communion on the recommendation of Lord Edward Chichester⁸⁵¹, and the mother a month later, when she came demanding 'admission to the Communion of the Church of England.' The Bishop was happy to condone his action, but ambivalent as to whether it was by way of conversion from the 'Greek' to the Anglican Church, or simply by way of intercommunion.⁸⁵² Palmer could not let the ambiguity stand, and wrote back to the Bishop by return, asking whether the female Galitisins had been admitted to communion as converts, or on the principle of intercommunion. If the former, then Palmer's representations to the Russians would be shown to be 'mistaken', and the Russian Church to be heretical and idolatrous in the eyes of the English Church. The Bishop replied that

If a person of good life and conversation presents himself to a clergyman of the Church of England, declaring his assent to the doctrines of that Church, and desiring to be admitted as a Communicant, I conceive that it is the duty of that Clergyman to admit him.⁸⁵³

Whether this person was a convert or not was 'a question which concerns the conscience of the party himself, but which the Clergyman ... [was] not called upon to

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. civ.

⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. cix.

⁸⁵¹ Lord Edward Chichester (1799-1889), fourth Marquess (and Earl) of Donegall, also Baron Fisherwick, educated at Trinity College Dublin, BA 1822, BD and DD 1852, Dean of Raphoe 1832-71. CP, vol. IV p. 394.

⁸⁵² ASC, p. cx.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. cxii.

determine.' The Bishop did not 'feel it necessary to decide in the present instance' whether the Greek Church taught doctrines 'which disqualify those who hold them from communicating in our Church.'⁸⁵⁴ Mr. Hare, he felt, had not exceeded his authority in admitting the ladies to Communion; he did not see that he, the Bishop, could 'be required to interfere any further in the matter.'

Palmer promptly tried this principle on the nearest Dissenting Minister ('of the Independent Denomination'). Could a Dissenting Minister give communion to someone without finding out their status, whether proselyte, or brother? Further, was this solely a matter for the conscience of the party communicating, and of indifference to the Minister admitting him to Communion? The Minister 'smiled at what seemed to him to be the absurdity of the question,' and said that

in every religious community ... it must be for the Authority to determine what persons are admissible, and upon what conditions each person is admitted to its privileges: that if these were left to be taken at the discretion of private conscience, the community would no longer be any real community at all.⁸⁵⁵

Palmer made a copy of his long letter, and sent it to St. Petersburg to await the return of the Galitsins; but 'of all this correspondence, and its result', he 'made no report at that time ... being ashamed to write any.'⁸⁵⁶

A fortnight later, however, shame was turned to rejoicing by a letter from the Prince containing momentous news: his eldest daughter had received Palmer's long letter at last, and had returned to the Orthodox Church. She and the Prince's second daughter had returned to Russia, leaving their youngest sister with their mother in

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid., p. cxiii.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid. He did however give a report to the Prince 'after the establishment of the Jerusalem Bishopric.' When Palmer presented his 'Protest' to the Archbishop of Canterbury, he included in it a number of instances of the Church of England's abdication of its responsibilities. These included the Archbishop's refusal to sign Dr. Routh's letter, his failure to indicate whether or not he approved of

Paris. The Prince was quick to congratulate Palmer: 'My daughter has been brought back, under God's grace, by your letters,' but his wife was still lost in the darkness of heresy.

Who, then is to save her? Who shall restore a mother to her children, a wife to her husband, unless it be yourself? I implore you then, in the name of Jesus Christ, to cross the Channel, and go to Paris to see my wife. She will make no difficulty of receiving you ... No one can be more capable ... of convincing her. You are a Deacon of the Church of England; you are acquainted with Russia; you know the Orthodoxy of the Faith which we profess there: and if we join our prayers together, God will bless us, and will bring back peace and happiness to my family.⁸⁵⁷

The logic and the emotional appeal were inexorable. Palmer wrote back expressing his pleasure in a sermonising letter, expressing his resolve to 'spare no trouble' in attempting to bring back the Princess to Orthodoxy, and to travel to Paris as soon as he could. He gave another fateful promise to the Prince that only if the Princess sent him away, or if 'I see that the case is absolutely hopeless,' would he abandon his attempt to reunite her to the Communion of the Russian Church. However, he was not so carried away by the good news as to forget to ask:

I hope that in reconciling herself to the Russian Church your daughter did not renounce or accuse the *Church of England*, but only that heretical Protestantism, Lutheranism, or Calvinism, and those particular heresies or errors which she had been taught ... Pray let me know exactly how this was.⁸⁵⁸

Palmer was well aware that it was 'the settled usage of the Eastern Church ... to reconcile Anglicans, as Lutherans, or Calvinists'; the only response to his question was a guilty silence. This however made 'no change in his resolution to go to Paris.' Palmer's success in reconverting the eldest daughter bewildered his fellow

Palmer's seeking the communion of the Russian Church, his failure to answer Prince Galitsin's letter, and the Bishop of London's answers to Palmer's queries. ASC, p. cxxxi.

⁸⁵⁷ ASC, p. cxiv-cxv.

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid., p. cxvi.

Anglicans. The British Ambassador, Lord Stuart de Rothesay,⁸⁵⁹ mishearing a conversation between Mr. Blackmore and his fellow chaplain Mr. Law, asked: 'What, are you speaking of that man, Mr. P[almer], who turns people away from his own Church?'"⁸⁶⁰ M. Mouravieff, on the other hand, praised Palmer's efforts to Metropolitan Philaret, who answered 'rather drily, "Truly our Church is greatly indebted to that English Deacon!"'"⁸⁶¹ The affair had become the talk of society in St. Petersburg, 'among the higher circles.'

In early January, Palmer left for Paris and his old friend Bishop Luscombe. Luscombe had been consecrated by the Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church on 20 March, 1825, with the full consent of both the English Hierarchy and the Government, to fulfil a need among the English expatriate community for 'Episcopal ministrations, especially for the confirmation of their children.' The Letters of Collation from the Scottish bishops who had consecrated him described him as having been 'sent by us, representing the Scotch Episcopal Church,' not as a diocesan Bishop, but to look after the 'members of the United Church of England and Ireland and the Episcopal Church in Scotland.'⁸⁶² When they met in Paris on 10 January, Luscombe spontaneously mentioned to Palmer a Russian lady who had a seat in the English Chapel, who usually left before the sermon. He did not know her by sight, and had not spoken to her.

On 11 January Palmer called formally at the Princess's house, but was turned away on the ground that she was unwell. Three days later, a letter came from the

⁸⁵⁹ Charles Stuart (1779-1845), educated at Eton & Christ Church Oxford, diplomat, KB 1812, PC 1814, GCB 1815, created Baron Stuart de Rothesay of the Isle of Bute 1828, Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary to St. Petersburg, 1841-44. The peerage became extinct on his death. CP, vol. XII (I), pp. 409-410.

⁸⁶⁰ R W B to WP, 18 Feb. 1842, ASC, p. cxvii.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid.

⁸⁶² Ibid., p. cl.

Princess apologising for not having written before, warning Palmer he would not succeed in bringing her back to the Greek Church: 'I am not *seeking*; I have *found*.' Palmer's religion was 'an *association of souls, a religious discipline*'; hers, the '*cry of one shipwrecked towards the Saviour*.' If he still wished to call on her, he could do so between 4 and 6 o'clock the following Sunday. Palmer replied expressing his gratitude for her suggestion, making it clear that he only overcame his 'very considerable reluctance' in approaching her because of the promise he had made to her husband, and that he 'had no vain idea' of being able to persuade her to change her opinions. The Princess wrote again, putting Palmer off indefinitely on account of her 'continued indisposition.' Palmer wrote to explain that 'the character of the Anglican Church' was implicated in the matter by her purported conversion; either she or he must be mistaking and misrepresenting its principles. He had written 'knowing that she was not altogether confined to the house' ; he had begun to suspect he was being toyed with. He asked her 'not to trifle' with him, and for only quarter or half an hour's conversation. The Princess replied with maddening disingenuousness that whilst she 'had been well enough for some days past to go out', she had been forbidden 'to attend to any business that requires thought'! What followed set the tone for their future exchanges, with herself the victim, and Palmer the villain. 'It is impossible for me to conceive how a poor obscure woman like myself,' she wrote, 'who seeks to keep herself under the Gospel of Salvation, and live the *life which is hidden in God*, can be any thing so important to the existence of the Church of England.' She was puzzled that 'a disciple of Dr. Pusey, i.e. a Dissenter,' should tell her so; besides, Palmer thought 'too much of the *form*, to be *spiritually religious*. All these *formal* dissertations are the things which destroy *peace*.'⁸⁶³ Palmer calmly

⁸⁶³ Ibid., p. clv.

replied that he would eagerly hear the proof of his being a Dissenter, and that no doubt he did think too much of forms. Having said that, her prejudices against Dr. Pusey, 'a good and learned man,' were mistaken, and he had a right to request her assistance when 'the *character* (not the *existence*) of the Anglican Church ... was seriously and publicly compromised'⁸⁶⁴ by her alleged conversion to it.

By now something of the Princess Galitsin's character was becoming apparent. She was a descendant of the famous Fieldmarshal Suvorov, and Zernov suggests had inherited both his 'energy and eccentricity.' She

was intensely egocentric and her sudden conversion to Anglicanism provided her with the means of keeping everybody occupied with her fortunes. She was a restless woman, full of misdirected energy, constantly changing her residence, resolute and ready to use any weapons for defence or attack. Palmer's appearance on the scene provided her with a an inexhaustible supply of dramatic situations ...⁸⁶⁵

Although she was constantly complaining of her poor health, she 'could hit back hard and this Palmer soon discovered to his discomfort.'⁸⁶⁶ It could, however, be said in the Princess' defence that she had the right to use any available means to keep Palmer, who was extraordinarily persistent, at bay. After all, she had done nothing to deserve to be made a test case for Palmer's ecclesiastical theory, and was entitled to become an Anglican if she wished without interference from him; ultimately, it was none of his business.

Despairing of ever meeting her, Palmer had acquainted Bishop Luscombe with the facts of the case. The Bishop, who was sympathetic to Palmer's views, proposed that Palmer write a letter to him setting out the situation. He would reply expressing his approbation, and when both letters were shown to her, 'if she were a

⁸⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. clvi.

⁸⁶⁵ *Z.*, p. 103.

⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

person ... of good sense and feeling, this ought to weigh with her.' Palmer duly wrote, and the Bishop replied that he 'did *not* allow that a member of the Russian Orthodox Church or of the Oriental Orthodox Churches *can* be received into the Church of England as a convert, because those Churches certainly form part of the Catholic Church.' A member of those Churches would be admitted to communion on the basis of intercommunion, if they had been rightly Baptized and Confirmed.⁸⁶⁷

Whether by coincidence or not, the very day that Palmer received the Bishop's reply, a note came from the Princess asking Palmer to see her the next day, Sunday 23 January. A lengthy interview followed, in which the Princess spoke of 'the persecutions and martyrdom she had suffered, and was still suffering,' and of the futility of trying to make her change her mind, accusing Palmer of pride and formalism in trying to do so. She 'roundly declared that she belonged to the Anglican Church ... as a convert from the Russian, which she had left.' Palmer responded that she had never in fact left the Russian Church, except in intention. She moved to familiar ground in taxing Palmer with arguing from an entirely unreal position:

It is a pure theory of yours, and utterly vain and absurd, to suppose that the Russian and Anglican Churches can ever be reconciled, or a mutual Communion exist ... it is very strange indeed, that after seeing Anglican Bishops and Clergymen, and so many English people, and none of them ever questioning my being a member of the Anglican Church ... you should now be the first to tell me I am not!⁸⁶⁸

When she declared that it was 'very admirable' of the Anglican Church to dispense communion without discrimination, Palmer stressed the rubrical injunction in the Book of Common Prayer to give notice before taking communion, and then played his trump card by producing the letters between himself and Bishop Luscombe. The Princess 'seemed at first to take this as a sort of persecution of her,' before

⁸⁶⁷ ASC, p. clxii.

demanding to know what the Bishop would do. Palmer left with the Princess's reluctant permission to see her again the following Tuesday.

The two duly met on Tuesday 25 January. The Princess correctly identified

two Anglican Churches, the one 'Catholic,' the other 'Biblical' or 'Protestant:' ... she saw perfectly well the two had nothing in common: that I belonged to the 'Papistic' or 'Catholic' Anglican Church, she only to the Biblical or Protestant: that she belonged to that which was popularly and really the religion of the English people; and of the Parliament ... You are the first who has attempted to call in question or deny my membership.⁸⁶⁹

Palmer agreed that one or other of them must be right, but it was 'the laws and constitutions of the Society' that decided the issue, not 'popular opinion.' Pressed on her understanding of the Church, the Princess 'flew off to the invisible Church, and the New Jerusalem.'⁸⁷⁰ Palmer was to have some difficulty in dealing with the Princess's approach to theological debate, which mixed logical argument with flights of evangelical rhetoric and emotional conviction impervious to rationality. At other times she would patronise Palmer:

I see clearly that you are a long way off from being truly religious: but you are still young; and by the grace of God that may come; but indeed, indeed, you lack much of that state of the soul: you have not got your passport signed: I am sure of that.⁸⁷¹

This sort of attack must have been unsettling, for Palmer did indeed go very much by theories and 'the laws and constitutions of the Society', making him vulnerable to charges of spiritual deadness and formalism.

The Princess, on the other hand, was determined to claim the title of Anglican, but prepared to ignore Anglican authority (such as there was) when it suited her, perhaps the most convincing proof of her Anglican credentials. She

⁸⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. clxv.

⁸⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. clxxvi-vii.

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. clxxviii.

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. clxxix.

dismissed the idea of seeking a decisive ruling from the Archbishop of Canterbury with the words: 'What need is there, when I have all that I desire already?', and noted the Archbishop's tact in not answering her husband's letter. Although she had read the two letters between Palmer and Bishop Luscombe, she 'still attached no importance to Bp. Luscombe's judgement.'⁸⁷²

Despite this, Palmer determined to bring the Bishop into play again. Having heard of the Princess's response to his letter, the Bishop decided to write to her himself. His polite letter listed the 'necessary qualifications' for the Princess to be admitted to communion: that she believed all the Articles of the Apostles' Creed in the same sense in which they were held in the Church of England, that she should have been validly baptised and confirmed, and not excommunicated by the Russian Church. The Bishop was happy to take the Princess' 'presentation of herself at the Communion' as assurance that she had them.

On 28 January Palmer received a note from the Princess proposing a meeting at which Palmer could 'say all that you still have to say about religion,' as she could no longer receive him thereafter; although she rejoiced 'to think of the spirit of peace, charity and good will which has presided at our two conversations.' Palmer in his reply remarked that 'the tone of your note, though very kind and civil to me, seems to whisper in my ear "Now I hope I shall get rid of you at last"'. He reiterated the 'public importance' he attached to the whole question of her membership of the Church of England, and his rather disingenuous disclaimer of wishing to change her opinions. He enclosed for her a draft of a letter that she might write to the Archbishop of Canterbury, did she wish to question Bishop Luscombe's judgement. Palmer seems to have taken peculiar pleasure in putting himself in the shoes of his

⁸⁷² Ibid., p. clxxx.

opponents, and pleading their case for them in hypothesis, a manifestation perhaps of the legal career that he never had. His imaginary letter on the Princess's behalf was as able as she could have wished, clearly stating her understanding of having joined herself to no other principle 'than that Protestant Anglicanism, which is based upon the great principle of the Reformation,' and of imitating the English in taking the Sacraments as she pleased, 'never having heard any body hitherto, but one "Puseyite"' call in question her right to imitate them.⁸⁷³ So good a case did Palmer make that the Princess, when they met on 30 January, told him that he had given her 'an arm against him,' although in the same breath she complained that Palmer had added 'to her persecutions and difficulties ... she could not tell what she should do.'⁸⁷⁴ Stung by the Bishop's note into being more combative, she told Palmer that 'in our Church [the Anglican] there is life; and there has been *progress* ... while the Greek Church is a dead skeleton.' Again she accused Palmer of being 'a most infatuated and zealous formalist; of not being Christian; nor having hope in me.' Palmer retaliated by telling her that unlike her eldest daughter, she 'did not appear to be at all reasonable,' which she 'seemed surprised' to be told.⁸⁷⁵

Palmer returned to England and to Oxford on 17 February. Unknown to him, he had been under attack in his own College days before. The Bursar, Richard Clarke Sewell,⁸⁷⁶ had written to Dr. Routh to protest against the association of Magdalen with Palmer. This appears from a sort of deposition that Dr. Routh wrote on the letter, to the effect that the letter he sent with Palmer to Russia:

⁸⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. clxxxix.

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. cxci.

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. cxciv.

⁸⁷⁶ Richard Clarke Sewell (1803-1864), educated at Magdalen College Oxford, matriculated July 1821, demy 1821-37, Dean of Arts 1839, Bursar 1840, Vice-President 1843. AO, p.1275, & ROM, vol. vi, p.133.

expressed his private wish, that Mr. Palmer might be admitted to Church Communion in Russia with the provision, that he affirmed ... nothing contrary to the Faith and Doctrine of the C of E ... the recommendation I gave Mr. Palmer ... was given in my own name & merely points out who I was, by the mention of my being the head of a College in Oxford.⁸⁷⁷

Bishop Bagot of Oxford, to whom Sewell also appealed, reassured Dr. Routh on 3 February 1842 that he was 'resolved not to take any steps, or make myself a party to anything wh. may tend to renew agitation from whatever side or quarter it may come.'⁸⁷⁸ Three days later he politely squashed Sewell:

I trust you will not think me wanting in courtesy if I decline answering the several questions contained in your letter, to an individual member [of yr. College] with whom I have not had the honour of any acquaintance, and when the questions do not appear to come officially under the general authority of the College.⁸⁷⁹

The Vice-President, Francis Faber, took a similar line when Sewell requested that his letter, and Dr. Routh's reply, be sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Bishop of Oxford: 'I declined having anything to do, in my official capacity, with his intended communication to the Bishops, reminding him that he had acted throughout as an individual, disjoined from his College, and that he must proceed & terminate in the same character.'⁸⁸⁰ Sewell was not pacified by Dr. Routh's reply. He, and allegedly 'many others', still thought that

the form in which Mr. Palmer published your letter, was such as to induce a belief ... that the letter ... was the act of the President representing the Body in his own person - and not of yourself as an individual - And if the College ... had given any such letters, it would ... have been exposed to the charge of Impertinence and Arrogance in meddling with matters Ecclesiastical, & of disrespect to the Episcopal authority rather of our Diocesan, or the Primate, in treading upon the privilege belonging canonically & ex officio to them or one of them only. I wish indeed the College could be altogether relieved from the effect of Mr. Palmer's late publications. I cannot but fear the notoriety he has achieved for himself will be anything but beneficial to the interests of the

⁸⁷⁷ MAG MS 485, no. 5.

⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 6.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 7.

⁸⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 9.

Society. And there are but two ways in which this ... can be accomplished, either by his retiring from the tutorship, or by some public disavowal on the part of the Body of a participation in the sentiments & opinions he has lately given to the world.⁸⁸¹

However, neither took place. Once more Palmer had reason to be grateful to Dr. Routh.

On 21 February Palmer wrote to Prince Galitsin, describing the three options open to the Princess. First, she could accept communion from Bishop Luscombe as a member of the Russian Church. Secondly, she could take communion incognito, ignoring the Bishop's requirements of her. Thirdly, she could appeal to a higher Anglican authority, perhaps the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Scottish bishops. In the first instance, if she sincerely held the beliefs of the Church of England, she should be given communion; in the second, she should be repelled, if discovered; in the third, it would be for the higher authority to judge as to whose view of the Anglican Church was correct. It was also possible that she would 'put off a few civil words upon Bishop Luscombe, without ever really accepting his terms.' That would necessitate an appeal by Palmer to Bishop Luscombe, and perhaps further to his consecrators the Scottish bishops. Such a course would, Palmer feared, destroy any hope of changing her opinions, something he evidently hoped to do, despite his constant denials to the Princess.⁸⁸²

In mid-March Palmer received a note from Bishop Luscombe, to the effect that the Princess had been among the previous Sunday's communicants, thereby ostensibly conforming to his wish that she came as a member of the Russian Church, and not a convert. Just over a week later, however, a letter arrived from a Mr.

⁸⁸¹ Sewell to Routh, 14 Feb. 1842, *Ibid.*, no. 10.

⁸⁸² ASC, p. ccx.

Bosanquet,⁸⁸³ who with his wife lived in Paris. They were friends of the Princess. Palmer had made their acquaintance shortly before leaving Paris, and asked them to speak to the Princess in the hope that as friends, they might make more headway with her than he had. Mr. Bosanquet was 'something of a Puseyite'; but as the Princess depended so much upon his wife for advice and help, the couple were careful to be impartial, and had told the Princess of their acquaintance with Palmer. Mr. Bosanquet wrote that the Princess was unconcerned about unity, but wanted 'to glide calmly into a community *whose tenets coincide with her own*, without enquiring how far they may differ from those she quits ... to quit the Greek, and to take the Anglican [Church] *only on her own terms and conditions*.'⁸⁸⁴ Alarmed, Palmer sought clarification, following that letter with one to the Princess asking her to confirm the basis on which she had taken communion. This he enclosed with a letter to Bishop Luscombe, indicating that from what the Bosanquets had told him, the Princess's opinions were the same as ever. He requested the Bishop to send it to the Princess with a covering note written by Luscombe, as that was more likely to evoke an answer. If the Bishop thought that inappropriate, Palmer's letter alone could be sent on.

Palmer had gone too far. Luscombe sent the letter on without any note from himself, and reminded Palmer that he had told the Princess that her attendance at communion would be taken by him as assurance of her possession of the necessary qualifications: she had gone further in giving written notice of her intention to take communion.

⁸⁸³ B/O MS 11.1. (2) / G.37, Bk. VI. Referred to in the *Appeal* as 'Mr. O.', he may be George Jacob Bosanquet (1791-1866), educated at Christ Church Oxford, matriculated October 1809, BA 1813, JP, DL, high sheriff 1833, attaché at Berlin 1815, Paris 1817, and Madrid 1822-29. AO, p. 134.

⁸⁸⁴ ASC, p. ccx.

I have already informed you that Mde. A [the Princess] *did* present herself on that day. It is not for me to question her sincerity: therefore *I wish to avoid any discussion of your last communication. I have done all that I think it becomes me to do ...*

The postscript drew the sting a little: 'I duly appreciate *your* motives, and I beg you to do justice to mine, and to my regard for you.'⁸⁸⁵ However the Princess' notice was highly ambiguous, stating that in coming to take communion 'she was perfectly at peace with her conscience before God'.⁸⁸⁶ She was indicating, for those who had eyes to read, that she was both a Russian Princess and a true Protestant, and it would be she, and not the Bishop, who would decide whether she should take communion or not.

Palmer wrote back that he certainly would not have understood the Princess's notice as the Bishop appeared to have done; the situation was now 'far worse', as she had 'obtained the Communion *of a Bishop* by apparently professing to believe the faith of the Anglican Church,' whereas he knew that she disbelieved a number of fundamental doctrines. It would be almost impossible in the circumstances to defend the Anglican Church in Russia, to which the Princess was set to return, as Palmer had tried to do; he 'must be content to be regarded there at present as a sort of impostor.'⁸⁸⁷ He thanked Luscombe gloomily for his personal kindness 'in this distressing affair.'

The letter passed on by the Bishop produced an hysterical and angry response from the Princess, which, although intended for Palmer's eyes, was written to Mr. Bosanquet, who warned Palmer that 'any chance of further communication' had been lost. Palmer was eventually given a copy by the Princess in 1848. In it the Princess

⁸⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. ccxxv.

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. ccxxv: 'en agissant ainsi je suis parfaitement en paix avec ma conscience devant Dieu.'

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. ccxxvi.

denied, with reason, that Palmer had any right to question her, or that she had any obligation to answer him. She would not answer him, nor ever speak with him again. She accused him of falsely interpreting their three conversations, held only to please her husband, suggesting that Palmer had 'laid aside that tone of false gentleness and charity' by which he hoped to change her mind; but God's grace had armed her against his 'egotistical and cruel agitation.' Palmer manifestly had not 'the Spirit of God,' indeed 'is for the present abandoned of God. The end of his letter is an open declaration of hatred and of war. I accept his defiance with boldness ...' The Princess 'a woman, without strength and without support ... and suffering from an aneurism of the heart, which alone may kill her at any time,' whilst claiming to be 'not at all the person to relish the strife of war,' was plainly enjoying the rôle of Protestant martyr.

Mr. Bosanquet added that 'further interference for the present would be productive of no good,' and that if the Princess's welfare was Palmer's motive, that would be 'only endangered by any immediate interference or persecution on the subject.' It was natural, he said, for a woman to shrink from being the battlefield for a controversy over the reunion of the Churches, and 'hardly fair to make use of her as an instrument, or a test: more especially, as no one can have any right to interfere with her.' The Princess was shortly to start for Russia: 'When there, kindness and good management may do much with her; harshness and persecution nothing.' It should have been abundantly clear by now to Palmer that the Princess had entirely brought the Bosanquets round to her point of view, as indicated by the frequent use of the word 'persecution'; he had lost two more allies in his cause.

In replying to Bosanquet to explain his motives, Palmer significantly shifted his ground. He was no longer simply responding to the Prince's appeals to bring his

wife back to Orthodoxy. The Princess was 'most cruelly and publicly wronging that spiritual family of which I am a member,' and Palmer found 'her representation of the Anglican Church opposed and confronted with my own.'⁸⁸⁸ Palmer 'had a right to take legal and public measures to vindicate the character of our Church and Religion,' when heresy was being professed as her doctrine. His tone was markedly more combative. If the Princess refused

to study the questions between us ... such conduct on her part leaves me no choice. If we were both reasonably-minded, we should be willing to examine the matter together. But if that cannot be, the only thing that remains is, to seek out the competent tribunal, and to go to law together, either amicably or otherwise, and to work out the question by legal and public methods.⁸⁸⁹

A more 'reasonably-minded' man might indeed have stopped to consider why it was that so far he had 'totally failed' in his self-appointed rôle as champion of the Church of England, and taken stock before expending himself further in a lost cause; Palmer was not that man.

A month later Mr. Bosanquet wrote from Paris that the Princess's 'opinions ... were not to be shaken.' To pursue her further would only 'drive her to Calvinism.'⁸⁹⁰ Palmer wrote to the Prince in April, suggesting canvassing the Church authorities to see if they objected to the Princess's opinions. If not, then, said Palmer: 'I for one will lose no time in looking out for some other religion, wherever it may be found.' However, this proposal was not adopted. Palmer himself was told by 'a barrister who had given much attention to the Ecclesiastical branch of his profession,' almost certainly Roundell Palmer, that 'nothing could be done to any

⁸⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. ccxxxix.

⁸⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. ccxxxv.

purpose'⁸⁹¹; and the Prince, when he eventually replied, made no reference to Palmer's suggestions. He quoted his wife as saying that Palmer had had

no success either in pleasing her, or in persuading her. She represents that in her discussions with you she had always the best of it, and you always the worst: that you knew not what to say against her arguments; but were ready to cry: and that even on one occasion you were taken unwell ... she regards me as her persecutor, and you as her accomplice ... she says that 'you have written to her from England a letter which is perfectly frightful' ['une lettre affreuse']; and that 'even a mutual acquaintance' of you both [namely Mr. O] 'could not refrain from expressing his indignation at it.'⁸⁹²

She had received communion from Bishop Luscombe despite Palmer's best efforts, which meant 'the triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism.' Holding the opinions that he did, Palmer himself 'ran some risk of being turned out of the Anglican Church.' It appeared, then, that Palmer would have to accept defeat, and find another arena in which to vindicate the Catholic view of the Church of England; but as with the reconversion of the eldest Galitsin daughter, events were to ensure that Palmer's destiny continued to be linked with that of the Princess.

The Princess proposed to return to St. Petersburg, 'to bear her testimony to the truth,' and asked Bishop Luscombe for a written certificate of Communion. This she might have had, if she had not specifically asked him, when he called on her, 'to say nothing in his certificate about intercommunion.'⁸⁹³ The Bishop realised that he had been fooled, and refused the certificate until she could satisfy him that she believed the doctrines of the Church of England, and came to communion not as a convert, but as a member of the Russian Church. This clarification was requested in a letter, which, in Palmer's dry phrase, 'the lady did not think it necessary to answer.'

⁸⁹¹ Ibid., p. ccxxxviii-ix.

⁸⁹² Ibid., p. ccxl.

⁸⁹³ Ibid., p. 4.

Unaware of this development, Palmer had decided to arm himself for a visit to the Episcopal Lutherans of Sweden with Canonical Letters from the Bishop of Oxford. He therefore wrote a formal letter to his father, in whose parish of Mixbury he served as Deacon, requesting him to provide evidence of his eligibility for a certificate from the Bishop. This was duly obtained⁸⁹⁴, the bemused Bishop observing to Palmer's father that 'although he had no objection to give the certificate asked for, he could not help asking, "Cui bono?,"'⁸⁹⁵ 'which question my Father ... could not answer.'⁸⁹⁶ The day that Palmer received the certificate, a letter arrived from Prince Galitsin telling him that the Princess was no longer admitted to communion by Bishop Luscombe, and asking Palmer to come to St. Petersburg so that they 'might together work upon the heart and understanding' of his wife, to avoid her falling into worse heresy, or causing a public scandal.⁸⁹⁷ Palmer immediately travelled to Paris, to be briefed by Bishop Luscombe on what had occurred. The Bishop felt that as the Princess was now 'setting him ... at defiance, it was his ... duty to disavow her,' and was now prepared to give Palmer his full support. Palmer proposed that he become the Bishop's clerk,⁸⁹⁸ which the Bishop accepted.⁸⁹⁹

Determined to pursue his theory of the Catholic Church with rigid consistency, Palmer then called upon the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Paris and

⁸⁹⁴ It stated that Palmer: 'communicated in my parish church at the feasts of Easter and Pentecost last preceding, as the canons require; and that he is free, so far as I know ... from all bond of excommunication or other canonical hindrance to his rightly communicating either in this diocese of the Lord Bishop of Oxford or in any other diocese of other bishops.' ASC, p. 9.

⁸⁹⁵ 'To what good end?' WP to W J P, 3 /15 May 1843, LP MS 1894, f.107.

⁸⁹⁶ MFP, vol. I, p.404.

⁸⁹⁷ ASC, p. 9.

⁸⁹⁸ Palmer nowhere explains what precisely he understood by the post of clerk to a bishop, nor gives any historical precedent for it, as he does for e.g., Canonical Letters. He seems to take it as an amorphous combination of factotum and client, although he also describes himself as Bp. Luscombe's 'spiritual son' (ASC, p. 39). His aim was no doubt to regularise the previous anomaly of accreditation from his College Principal alone.

presented his Bishop's certificate with a request to be admitted to communion. The Grand-Vicaire brought back a predictable refusal, on the grounds that despite the absence of any formal synodical judgement, or excommunication of the Anglican Church by the Gallican, nonetheless 'the Anglican Church had separated herself *in fact* ... it was self-evident that there must be a Head; and ... Henry VIII was not that Head which God had appointed, nor Queen Victoria.' Palmer explained to the Grand-Vicaire that he had felt it necessary to make the application in order to bear witness against the unjustified practice of Anglicans of establishing themselves in Roman dioceses, 'without any sort of recognition of their jurisdiction.'⁹⁰⁰

Palmer then drafted an emollient letter to the Princess, asking her 'most sincerely and humbly ... to forgive' him, if he had 'in any way hurt, or wronged, or offended' her personally, and assuring her of his 'regard and respect.'⁹⁰¹ He tried to present it at her Paris address, but found that she had left, he presumed for St. Petersburg. Privately, his opinions remained unchanged. The Princess was 'terribly prejudiced against everybody whom she thinks desirous of changing her opinions, and has no idea of viewing the Ecclesiastical question in a practical light ... [she] told me I was lost in formalities - which are inconsistent with spiritual religion.'⁹⁰²

Palmer next obtained Letters Commendatory from Bishop Luscombe, agreeing with the Bishop that to disarm the criticism that they came from one bishop alone, and were unsupported by a Synod, Palmer should seek the approval of the Scottish bishops. Palmer saw his attachment to Bishop Luscombe as separating

⁸⁹⁹ ASC, p. 11.

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁹⁰² LP MS 2834, f. 233-4.

himself entirely from the diocese of Oxford for the time being,⁹⁰³ which was to be a contentious issue between himself and his father.

Palmer advised Prince Galitsin to treat his wife 'with the utmost kindness and forbearance; seek no discussion with her upon religious subjects; but rather leave her to herself and to her own opinions ... ', and to distance himself from Palmer's zeal in defending his 'view or theory about the English Church.' To obtain the approval of the Scottish bishops, Palmer travelled via London and Dundee to Aberdeen, where he met the Primus, the Bishop of Aberdeen, and the Bishops of Brechin and Edinburgh. The three bishops were not enthusiastic:

Bishop Luscombe might be doing very right; it would be time enough to seek for further support to his declarations, when their sufficiency should have been actually called in question in Russia; and that then it would be rather matter for a Synod; whereas they ... answered me only as individual and Diocesan Bishops.⁹⁰⁴

Palmer's relative Dean Horsley⁹⁰⁵, the Dean of Brechin, told him that the Bishop of Edinburgh had called upon him to talk about the meeting at Aberdeen, anxious to impress on him that

the reluctance of the Scotch Bishops to take any decisive steps in the matter, on which you had consulted them, did not arise from any improper fear of, or deference to the English Hierarchy, but from want of sufficient time to deliberate on the momentous points submitted to their consideration.

The Bishops feared the reaction of the laity to any declaration of intercommunion with the Greek Church, 'the more likely from the evil communications with which the Church in this quarter of the island is beset, and the horrible low Genevan

⁹⁰³ ASC, p.39.

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid., p.44.

⁹⁰⁵ Heneage Horsley (1776-1847), s. of Rt. Rev. Samuel Horsley, Bp. of St. Asaph. educ. Christ Church Oxford, MA 1802, DD & ordained 1799. Rector Woolwich, Kent, 1800-03; Vicar Gresford, Denbighshire, 1803-5. Prebendary St. Asaph Cathedral, 1804. Vicar Castle Caereinion, Montgomeryshire, 180-7, Curate St. Paul's, Dundee 1807-10, Incumbent 1810-47. Dean of Brechin 1812-47. SEC, p. 303.

atmosphere by which she is oppressed, and in which she can scarcely do more than vegetate.⁹⁰⁶

A Synod of both Chambers should assemble to investigate the question.

Palmer responded that he was ‘the last person to be impatient,’ if ‘time and full information’ were all that were required to ‘lead to a good result.’ Casting himself, with a breathtaking disregard of his own stubbornness in pursuit of principle, as the helpless pawn of fate, he told Dean Horsley: ‘The whole matter has come to me, and upon me, of itself; without my anticipating or seeking it.’ He was nearer the truth when he continued: ‘... and it is, properly speaking, none of mine: my only desire is to do what seems right for me to do in it myself according to my own views.’⁹⁰⁷ He disagreed that synodical acceptance of Bishop Luscombe’s letters would entail declaring intercommunion with the East, although he thought that disavowing heretical propositions and acknowledging ‘the seven points of Faith to be orthodox’ would pave the way for the restoration of intercommunion, if lost. He pointed out, as when he later appealed to the Episcopal Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, that whereas he had ‘an ordinary and canonical right to address the diocesan bishop, wherever I may be, in order to obtain from him the Communion,’ he had no such right so far as a Synod was concerned.

He rightly anticipated the dilemma he would find himself in Russia. If he presented Luscombe’s Letters to the Synod, they would direct him, as an individual, to the diocesan bishop. The bishop on the other hand would object to Letters signed by only ‘a Chaplain-Bishop at Paris’ as not sufficiently representing ‘the real doctrine and religion’ of Palmer’s Church, and say that they should have been signed by a

⁹⁰⁶ ASC, p.45.

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid., p.46.

Synod. The lack of support from the Scottish bishops was the more regrettable, because 'the Scottish Church is the only Church in our Islands which *could* treat with the Russian or any other Synodically.'⁹⁰⁸ J. M. Neale felt that when Palmer's application was 'passed over in silence', the three bishops 'missed one of the noblest opportunities of promoting union ... since Archbishop Wake's negotiation with the Gallican Church.'⁹⁰⁹ As for the laity, Palmer felt that if intercommunion were publicly declared forthwith, only 'the most fanatical Evangelicals' would be shocked.

In mid-August Dean Horsley replied that whatever the Bishop of Edinburgh had said, conversations with his own diocesan had confirmed his suspicions that the Scottish bishops would never 'act synodically or authoritatively in the matter referred to them unless they first ascertain that their doing so will be *perfectly agreeable* to the English Hierarchy.' Moreover, 'from the present anything-arian character of that Hierarchy' assent to a declaration of intercommunion by 'the Scotch Bishops' was most improbable. Nonetheless, he thought that Palmer should submit the matter to a Synod of the Church, not merely an Episcopal Synod, in order to take the opinion 'of the Presbyters as well as of the Bishops.'⁹¹⁰ Events were to show that Palmer would have done better to have learned the lessons of this first rebuff in Scotland, and abandon any attempt to find support there as hopeless from the start.

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.51.

⁹⁰⁹ J. M. Neale, *The Life and Times of Patrick Torry, D. D.* (London: Masters, 1856), p.237.

⁹¹⁰ ASC, p. 56.

CHAPTER 7

Return to Russia

On 1 September Palmer sailed for St. Petersburg via Copenhagen on the 'Jupiter' steamer, arriving on 9 September, his departure for Russia giving his family at home 'two or three years of comparative rest.'⁹¹¹ Calling immediately on Prince Galitsin, he found an extraordinary change. Far from being penalised, the Princess had been received at Court, and when she came in, she received Palmer 'so graciously and good-humouredly, that I was ... astonished.' The Prince cheerfully remarked 'Now I hope you will be good friends.' Palmer, the wiser for his previous encounters with the Princess, replied steadily 'It is impossible we should be otherwise, so long as [the Princess] does not pretend any right to the communion of Bishop Luscombe, from whom I come; and I trust and suppose that she no longer does ...' Grace and good humour vanished at once, as did the Princess, not to reappear until Palmer had left. He was informed that when the Princess had left Paris she had gone to London, not St. Petersburg, to seek a ruling from a higher authority than Bishop Luscombe. There she had seen the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and M. Bunsen, returning 'quite triumphant,' vindicated in her conviction that Palmer was 'a maintainer of paradoxes,' and the Church of England Protestant. Letters had been given her, allegedly instructing the English chaplain to give her communion, which she had already taken in the chapel of the British factory.⁹¹² ' "So that," continued [the Prince], "things seem settled in a worse state

⁹¹¹ MFP, p.345.

⁹¹² i.e., Mr. Blackmore's chapel.

for you than ever.” The Prince had recovered his wife; any remaining problem was Palmer’s alone. His eldest daughter asked innocently how Palmer could still be a member of the Anglican Church. She

urged strongly, that it was of no use for me to try to oppose her mother in her proceedings here ... for she had “obtained all requisite authorizations from the Archbishop: that he was the first Prelate of our Communion; and that Mr. L[aw] the Chaplain, was bound to obey him: that it was evident the question was settled: that there was nothing left for me to do but open my eyes to the real nature of the Anglican Church, and to submit: that the best thing I could do would be to quit it, and turn either *Catholic* or *Capholic*, (Roman or Russian); and they hoped I would do so.”⁹¹³

This might be thought to be both right and sensible; but Palmer maintained that since the power of the Archbishop and the Bishop of London was not absolute, the more their acts involved the Church in heresy, ‘the more every one of its members was bound to protest against and resist them.’ Palmer himself ‘would never rest’ until he had done ‘all he could.’ This was not what the Prince wanted to hear:

It was a very serious matter for his wife, and for them all, to cause no open scandal; nor give occasion for the matter to be noticed by the civil or ecclesiastical authorities: that at present she acted with the greatest circumspection; went to the English Chapel only in a hackney coach ... that she was unobserved; acted privately, without any publicity; scandalized nobody: and that in short, there was no reason to interfere with her; and I had no business or occasion to do so.⁹¹⁴

So much for passionate appeals to Palmer to bring his wife back to the true religion. Now Palmer’s obduracy threatened to destroy an accommodation with the Russian authorities at the highest level, for the Emperor himself had given permission for the Princess to return to Russia, letting it be known that ‘no notice would be taken of her illegal acts, so long as she was ‘quiet, and caused no public scandal.’⁹¹⁵

⁹¹³ ASC, p.58.

⁹¹⁴ Ibid., pp . 58-59.

⁹¹⁵ Ibid., p.61.

When Palmer retorted that the Anglican Church was 'outraged and scandalized' by the Princess' behaviour, the Prince and his daughter smiled, saying 'There is no scandal; nobody is scandalized but you.' The daughter fairly pointed out that as 'any one might communicate, even a heathen' in Anglican Chapels, Palmer could 'prosecute everybody who communicated at all,' as much as her mother. He was of 'the sect of the Puseyites,' not the Anglican Church. Palmer replied that the Princess, by communicating when she held the beliefs she did, imputed heresy to the Church. The Prince countered that not only the Archbishop's Letters, but the whole affair of the Jerusalem Bishopric, gave the lie to that. Palmer's quarrel lay with the Archbishop of Canterbury and M. Bunsen. Palmer 'was the party beaten, and ... ought to acquiesce: ... it was not for a deacon to contend against the Archbishop.' If Palmer wanted to be a Catholic, let him quit the Anglican Church, and 'join the Church of Dr. Wiseman.' If the Princess was let alone to act discreetly, 'she might at any time, if she came round, be reconciled ... without any publicity.'⁹¹⁶ Palmer objected that if she were, she would renounce the Anglican Church as heretical. The Prince 'did not seem to care a straw about this, plainly, because he had made up his mind that such is indeed the case.'⁹¹⁷ Palmer must not to come to their house any more, although the Prince would come to Palmer's lodgings 'as often as might be desirable or necessary.'

Now, if ever, was the time for Palmer to quit the field with whatever dignity he could muster. Lord Selborne, balancing fraternal loyalty with judicial objectivity, describes him as proceeding:

with a bravery, patience, and perseverance which would have been admirable if the cause had been more adequate; constructing out of the materials which

⁹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.60.

⁹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

that case furnished an ecclesiastical problem, on the solution of which he staked his future life; blending with great tenderness and consideration for the persons concerned an inflexible determination to work out that problem to some practical result, and an absolute insensibility to all reasons against the claim of one like himself to force such public issues, arising out of private matters, upon his Church; sustained, however, in that attempt by the sense of a vocation, which he collected from signs intelligible to himself alone.⁹¹⁸

Palmer's resolution to continue was fortified, first by the chaplain, Mr. Law, who stated that if he discovered that a person such as the Princess had actually taken communion from him, he would 'do what he could to prevent it, from fear of the civil penalties, which might cause the most serious embarrassments to all the English residents.'⁹¹⁹ Moreover, the Prince's daughter had, as Palmer feared, been reconciled to the Russian Church as from Lutheranism and Calvinism. 'Having contributed materially ... to bring back his daughter to orthodoxy,' Palmer had 'every right to expect that some regard should be shewn' to the honour of the Anglican Church. He could not 'remain silent or careless' when he had been characterised as someone 'who turns people away from his own Church'. The Prince dismissively remarked that: 'Your Church is only known as a heresy to ours: all the circumstances of this particular case fully bore out our views of it ... do you mean to pretend that your opinion is that of the Anglican Church?' When Palmer replied that of course he did, the Prince said that 'with your Bishops and Archbishop and all your own people against you, ' Palmer must 'have very different ideas of submission from what I have.' This was a shrewd point, identifying Palmer's reliance on Catholic principles when it suited him, but readiness to ignore authority when it did not; ironically, in much the same way as the Princess. The Prince quoted William Hare, the chaplain at Geneva, who, taxed with Palmer's interpretation of Anglican doctrine, 'asked

⁹¹⁸ MFP, vol. I, pp . 403-4.

contemptuously 'What authority there was *in your opinion?*' Palmer said that if the Prince was so convinced of the Protestantism of the English Church, let him or his wife 'carry out our controversy,' and no doubt the Galitsins would be right. The Prince replied loftily 'Oh that is your affair; we have nothing to do with that.'⁹²⁰

Despite his fighting talk, Palmer's feelings were anything but confident. He wrote to his father:

My prospect is anything but satisfactory - and I do not as yet see my way at all clearly before me ... I wish myself back in England many many times every day - this indeed I am much in the habit of doing whenever I find myself at a distance - and especially at first - but I have never felt it more than I do now - which I take to proceed from the fact that I am occupied with a disagreeable business which has to do with, and depends in some measure upon other people, instead of having some study or book which I was interested in prosecuting by myself.⁹²¹

His father's response was worried: 'I really think the way you propose to act is like taking upon yourself more than is well becoming in a private person, and that is not likely to lead to any good result.'⁹²²

A week later Palmer wrote in similar terms to Dr. Routh:

I am sorry to say that I have hitherto met with nothing agreeable but only with what is mortifying & painful with respect to my own business here & I shall either return now completely failed in my attempt to make good my own representations of the Character & principles of our Church - or else I shall have to defer my return for some time & pursue the controversy between myself & the Lady under very painful & difficult circumstances ... I ... propose that you should accept my resignation of the Tutorship & appoint some other Tutor ...⁹²³

However, on this occasion his resignation was not accepted.

Palmer now moved onto the offensive. Since the Prince had 'such dispositions and views, as he had evinced, I feared we must thenceforth consider

⁹¹⁹ ASC, p.62.

⁹²⁰ Ibid., p. 66

⁹²¹ WP to W J P, 4 / 16 Sept. 1842, LP MS 2834, f.248.

⁹²² W J P to WP, 30 Sept. 1842, Ibid., f. 252.

⁹²³ WP to Routh, 11 / 23 Sept. 1842, MAG MS 485, no. 18.

ourselves in some measure as antagonists.’⁹²⁴ Assuring the Prince that ‘he could not desire my speedy departure from St. Petersburg more ardently than I desired it myself,’ Palmer laid down three conditions for his departure ‘by the next steamer.’ First, the Princess should ‘give up her pretensions to be a member of the British or Anglican Communion.’ She should acknowledge that she ‘had no right or claim to the Communion of Bishop Luscombe, and was sorry for having unintentionally deceived him.’ She must promise Palmer not to take communion again in the English Chapel at St. Petersburg without giving notice to the chaplain, and showing him whatever certificate she had obtained in England, or at least obtaining the chaplain’s permission. This amounted to an abandonment of taking communion in the English Chapel; Palmer knew Mr. Law would prevent any such attempt. As for the certificate, Palmer may have been calling the Princess’s bluff, suspecting that it was not the blanket permission to take communion she described.

The Galitsins declined to comply. Palmer told the Prince that he would consequently ‘be obliged’ to present Luscombe’s Letters to the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, or the Synod, and seek communion on the basis of ‘a profession of faith drawn up against his wife’s profession of heresy.’ This might ‘lead to results ... disagreeable to them.’ To the Prince it was tantamount to a denunciation of his wife; he ‘tried to work upon my feelings of honour, charity, &c.: speaking of her weak state of health; and saying, that I ought not to persecute a woman.’⁹²⁵ Palmer was unmoved.

The Prince refused to exchange letters explaining and qualifying the acts of his wife and daughter: ‘he could not know, or appear to know, any thing about his

⁹²⁴ ASC, p. 67.

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

wife's illegal acts ... of his daughter's reconciliation, that the business was none of his: that he was a soldier, not a divine.' Palmer pointed out that the reconciliation was public, and a matter of record. The Prince asked Palmer to alter Luscombe's Letters so as to be general, rather than particular. Luscombe had, by coincidence, recently written to offer Palmer support and give permission to make alterations or omissions to the Letters as he saw fit.

Palmer duly left a copy of Luscombe's Letters Commendatory at the house of the Archpriest Koutnevich, asking whether their presentation to the Synod would involve any public scandal to the individuals involved. On 4 October Palmer received a reply from the Archpriest which clearly showed that the Prince had been putting across his side of the story, and trying to spike Palmer's guns. The Synod 'knew very well what the Anglican Church was,' and the Latin pamphlet Palmer had presented 'could do nothing whatever to make its character either better or worse.' Moral pressure was exerted, and this time it was Palmer who was threatened:

after the confidence which the Prince had placed in me, it would neither be honourable nor Christian to divulge, or draw into public notoriety his family matters & private correspondence; that he had a regard for me, & gave me credit for good intentions; & therefore should be sorry that by showing about that Latin Document, I should give people a bad opinion of me, and get myself perhaps shut out altogether from St. Petersburg, if not from Russia.⁹²⁶

Palmer wrote angrily to the Prince:

I do not understand exactly what you have been about; and fear that you have been seeking to do harm rather than good both to your own interest and to mine. ... it is exceedingly bad policy to pre-occupy the mind of [a] third person with your own view of the case ... pray do not diplomatize with me, for that will do no sort of good; unless, indeed ... you could manage to procure an order from the High Police to make me leave the country. This ... would indeed be something positive: and it would be equally agreeable, so far as personal wishes and convenience are concerned, to both of us.⁹²⁷

⁹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.73, and BO MS v.25 Bk. II, f.61.

⁹²⁷ ASC, p.77.

He genuinely wished to be able to leave. Complaining of having 'had the Jerusalem Bishopric thrown in my teeth from all sides,' he wrote to his Aunt Mary:

How I wish I was back again, sitting and talking with you in your drawing room at Finmere! - but I have two tendencies in my mind one of which drives me away from home in spite of myself and the other makes me most earnestly long to be at home again, as soon as I find that I am actually separated by any considerable distance from it.⁹²⁸

When he met the Prince on 11 October, they 'parted apparently very good friends,' the Prince even thanking him for the omissions and alterations he had made to the Letters.

A further message from the Archpriest confirmed what he had predicted to Dean Horsley: the Synod 'could not engage in communications with an individual Clerk, nor even with one Bishop: nothing short of a Synodal communication could be attended to.' Palmer should address himself to a particular bishop. He replied that the Synod effectively was a particular bishop, since it was in place of the Patriarch. Angered by the Archpriest's argument that the reconciliation service made no mention of the Anglican Church, he suggested that the Archpriest put in writing his opinion that the Prince's daughter had not been reconciled from the Anglican Church; no mention then need be made of it in his petition to the Synod. When Palmer met the Archpriest on 7 / 19 October, the question was largely resolved by the Prince's apparent happiness with Palmer's alterations, so that after discussion of the 'theological bearing' of Bishop Luscombe's Letters, they 'parted very amicably.'⁹²⁹ The Archpriest told Palmer he had no doubt of his sincere acceptance of all the dogmas of the Greek Church, and rejection of all heresies; understood that he could

⁹²⁸ WP to AM, 5 / 17 Oct. 1842, LP MS 2836, f. 141.

⁹²⁹ ASC, p. 78.

not be reconciled from Lutheranism, etc., but ‘they had no form to suit my case.’

However the problem caused by the caution of the Scottish bishops remained:

He said to me that it would not be safe to accept the Letters of one Bishop, however orthodox their contents, or the profession of one individual: other individuals & Bishops might write different Letters from the same Church, or claim Communion in virtue of their being of the same, by mere formal letters, while they held all manner of heresies.⁹³⁰

Count Pratasoff told him that if he made application to the Synod, ‘it was a weighty matter, and they moved very slowly in Russia in such things: that they might very likely keep me a year at St. Petersburg: I must make up my mind to that; and consider how I liked that prospect.’⁹³¹ Pratasoff could not receive anything from Palmer himself; the papers would have to be transmitted via the Ambassador, to the Foreign Office, and thence ‘to the proper Department.’ He would then pass them to the Synod, but ‘all that cannot be done in a hurry.’ The implication was obvious; Palmer should drop the matter, and go home. Rumours had begun to circulate among both the Russians and the expatriate community of St. Petersburg, that Palmer ‘had come out to insult and persecute, on account of her religion, a Russian lady of rank; whose husband had turned me out of doors, and forbidden me the house.’⁹³² As Palmer had gone out of his way to be discreet, the rumours could only have come from ‘some persons or other of that family.’ Palmer later heard that the High Procurator had been forced to take Prince Galitsin aside and caution him, ‘saying, “Your wife must be careful and hold her tongue: you know we may be forced to put her into a convent.”’⁹³³ Whilst this could mean that Pratasoff merely suspected the Princess of spreading the rumours, something she vehemently denied in 1847, they

⁹³⁰ BO MS v.25, f.139.

⁹³¹ ASC, p. 80.

⁹³² Ibid., p. 82.

⁹³³ Ibid.

certainly reflected the Princess's viewpoint: Palmer almost certainly thought her responsible.

After some debate, Mr. Law indicated his willingness to receive Palmer on the basis of Bishop Luscombe's Letters. This gave Palmer the lever he needed. He immediately required the Princess, as was consistent with his duty as deacon, to leave the English Chapel immediately after the sermon, and not to present herself for communion, 'inasmuch as you are a stranger; and have never been validly admitted to be a member of our Church.'⁹³⁴ Although the Princess complied with the request, and did not come to the English Chapel again while Palmer was at St. Petersburg, she had by no means admitted defeat.

On 12 / 24 October, Palmer presented his petition to the Synod by way of the British Ambassador. He asked that the Russian Church cease to require that Anglicans seeking communion abjure Lutheranism and Calvinism *qua* heresies held by the Church of England. That anathema might be said, but as precursor to the acceptance of 'all the articles of faith, as held in the Eastern Church,' and a promise of conformity in matters of discipline to the Russian or Eastern Church, while living in its dioceses. Alternatively, Palmer asked that the specific Lutheran or Calvinistic heresy that he was supposed to hold as an Anglican be objected to him; or finally, what prevented 'your giving credit to those Letters Commendatory, which I now present ... from a Scottish Bishop.'⁹³⁵ Palmer realised that

the answer which I shall probably receive, if I receive any will be that the testimony of the Bishop is insufficient to prove the nature or principles of his Church - his Church being the Scottish and not the English Church.⁹³⁶

M. Mouravieff, no longer Unter-Prokurator⁹³⁷, agreed:

⁹³⁴ Ibid., p.86.

⁹³⁵ Ibid., p.92.

he expected the Synod would not give me any answer or else one still more evasive than what I had received before that I came referring to Canons &c., but that things here and in Greece too are not really administered by the Canons, but Policy & Intrigue & custom & ignorance influence everything ... that the Greek Patriarchs would be only puzzled - still more than the Synod &c.

Palmer's 'exertions were not likely to have any success,' because

they had here only a Political or National idea of religion, & connected their notions of the Protestant Bprie at Jerusalem & English Policy with the English Religion: that so they would suspect me in spite of all they could do or say of being in league with the same system.⁹³⁸

The strains upon him may account for a dream he had recorded in his diary, that:

Roundell was amusing himself with fighting a lion in a room like the Dining Room - and I was both angry and horribly afraid for him, seeing that the sport was a serious battle and wondering that it had lasted at all - and feeling quite sure how it must end; - I went away at length out of fear for my own safety ... & soon feeling ashamed for having left him.⁹³⁹

As with the dream about the Mujik, anxiety and guilt are the dominant themes; perhaps Roundell symbolised himself, engaged in 'a serious battle,' and all too aware of 'how it must end.' He wrote again to Dr. Routh to resign his Tutorship, acknowledging the pressure on him to go:

there are as you know a considerable number of members of the Society who wish that that place should be filled by some other than myself ... the circumstances of my present absence together with the length of time that has elapsed since the expression of their wish - offer a good opportunity for the individual who has outraged their feelings to withdraw himself, without giving any triumph to those opinions upon which their feelings are based.⁹⁴⁰

⁹³⁶ WP to W J P, 23 Oct. 1842, LP MS 2834, f.258.

⁹³⁷ Per Lord Selborne, MFP, vol. I, p. 407.

⁹³⁸ Entry for 18 / 30 Oct. 1842, BO MS v.25, f.156.

⁹³⁹ Entry for 16 Nov. 1842, LP MS 2471.

⁹⁴⁰ WP to Routh, 2 / 14 Jan. 1843, MAG MS 485 no. 17.

The answer from the Synod came on 11 / 23 January 1843⁹⁴¹, and was much as Palmer had anticipated. Palmer could not be admitted to Communion 'otherwise than by the Rite prescribed for converts from heterodoxy,' since

the British Church has never yet ... expressed her purpose of restoring that union with our orthodox Catholic Church which she has lost, by disavowing all dogmas contrary to our orthodox Confession

and secondly,

the present Letters of a single Bishop with the Petition of a single Deacon, as expressing no more than the opinions of individuals, are in nowise matter for Synodical deliberation.⁹⁴²

Pratasoff hastened to tell Palmer that 'the Bishops and Prelates' had spoken in the Synod 'with tears of emotion in their eyes ... if there were only a few in Britain, nay if there were only twenty, who thought with the Bishop from whom I came, unity must sooner or later be restored.' The Synod would have gone further in the form of its Answer, but they were 'obliged to be very cautious.' Bishop Luscombe had not addressed the Synod directly, but even if he had, was 'unsupported by his brethren,' and only implicitly agreed in Palmer's acknowledgement of the Russian Church as orthodox. They should persevere in their efforts for unity; 'God is manifestly drawing us all together.'⁹⁴³

To Pratasoff's dismay, Palmer responded by saying that as he could only be reconciled by the form for 'converts from heresy,' he would present another Petition requesting a Confessor who could specify the heresy held by himself or his Church, enabling him, if appropriate, to abjure it and be reconciled. Pratasoff warned him, as before, of the inevitable delay : 'I should have to begin all over again ... and that

⁹⁴¹ Although Palmer had been given the chance to look it over beforehand by its author, the Rector of the Spiritual Academy, the Bishop of Vinnitza, on 15 / 27 Dec. 1842. MFP, vol. I, p. 135.

⁹⁴² ASC, p. 136.

⁹⁴³ Ibid., p.137.

would keep me another six months.' However, he agreed that the request was reasonable. Palmer reported to his father that while 'they seem ... to be very full of good will, and hope for ultimate reunion,'⁹⁴⁴ he did not think that Pratasoff 'understands much' about his further petition, 'nor desires that anything more should be done in the matter.'⁹⁴⁵ This was confirmed to him by way of 'friendly advice from one individual,' which included a warning:

... Count [Pratasoff] did not see his way very much in the matter ... they were afraid or rather desirous of evading than forwarding it, that at the same time they thought well of me personally - and would by no means deal unhandsomely with me - but that I must be cautious how I left off having once began, as there was no telling but that their own fear or caution or backwardness might be put off upon me, if I gave them the opportunity.⁹⁴⁶

Palmer therefore faced the added difficulty that if he threw up the matter and returned home, as both those in St. Petersburg and his family at home wished him to do, any failure to resolve it would be blamed on him.

The Rector of the Academy felt it would be an important and desirable step to clarify the true character of the British Church, as the Synod wanted above all to provoke 'some Synodal act in Britain.' The Synod already recognised the British Church itself, and its orders of bishop and deacon, as the precedent had been set by the Eastern Patriarchs' correspondence in the time of Peter the Great. The Archpriest told Palmer that they would be 'most happy' to admit Palmer himself to their Communion 'with affection, for my good feeling towards them; but only on condition I renounced the errors of my Church.'⁹⁴⁷ These the Archpriest said were contained in the XXXIX Articles, which were 'plainly Luther-Calvinistic, and must

⁹⁴⁴ WP to W J P, 20 Jan. 1843, LP MS 1894, f.96.

⁹⁴⁵ WP to W J P, 26 Jan. / 7 Feb. 1843, LP MS 2834, f.274.

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, f.279. A very similar warning is given Palmer by an unnamed Russian, possibly M. Mouravieff, that 'if I left the whole thing would certainly drop, and I would run a risk if I did not take care of having it given out that I had given in a petition for a Confessor and then run off without waiting for the result.' BO MS G. 20, Bk. I, f.39. It may refer to the same conversation.

necessarily be rejected ... we cannot but understand the ... Articles in their plain and natural sense.⁹⁴⁸ Mouravieff's response to Palmer's draft petition was forthright:

He dissuaded me from presenting it saying it would detain me an indefinite time & it was of no use attempting to force a question which on the other side it was desired to evade: that I talked as if I was in the Fourth Century: that if there had been any real disposition to give me the advantage of those admissions which I found in the answer they would have found a better & clear way of expressing their good will: that now it was not at all a satisfactory answer ... if the application was renewed or repeated they might easily set it aside and return to the old accusation of Lutheranism & Calvinism.⁹⁴⁹

The Archbishop of Volhynia,⁹⁵⁰ who had presided in the Synod when Palmer's first petition came before it, was more positive. He 'had read what had been sent in to the Synod with the most lively joy ... there was nothing in what I and the Bishop from whom I came had written, that offered any difficulty.' He hoped that the Scottish bishops in particular would 'Synodically express their desire of union; so that the Russian Synod may be able to treat with them directly.'⁹⁵¹

Palmer's second petition, presented to the English Ambassador on 10 / 22 February, asked that 'the ... M. H. Synod appoint me a Confessor, who may tell me at what point of time we lost our right to union, and enlighten my conscience as to the cause.'⁹⁵² Palmer then wrote to Bishop Luscombe to inform him of what had passed, and to seek his approval of guidelines drafted by Palmer for his appearance before any Confessor appointed by the Synod. Luscombe returned the guidelines in Latin, transformed into formal Instructions; he thought Palmer had 'a just cause to

⁹⁴⁷ ASC, p.141.

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁹ BO MS G.20, Bk. I, f. 24.

⁹⁵⁰ Nikolai Stepanovich Clementievski Nicanor (1787-1856), Abbot of the Holy Trinity St. Sergius Lavra 1814, Rector of the Bethany Seminary 1818-19, Bishop of Ravel 1826-31, Bp. of Kaluga 1831-4, Bp. of Minsk 1834-40, Archbishop of Volkhynia 1840-43, of Warsaw 1843-48, Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and Novgorod 1848. RBSI, p.72.

⁹⁵¹ ASC, p.143.

⁹⁵² Ibid., pp. 146-7.

ascertain why' he had been refused communion, but feared that his claim would 'not be regarded.' He had also begun to feel the futility of one bishop and one deacon attempting to force reunion between churches: 'I fear that I and you are not of sufficient weight and importance for this object ... I hope that you will not again call on me individually; but, if occasion shall require, I hope you will apply to the Episcopal College in Scotland.'⁹⁵³ Palmer reassured Luscombe that no further act or declaration could be called for from him individually, and that they had both done their duty by the Church. Remarkably, Palmer was quite confident that both he and the bishop had 'been acting strictly, and clearly, within the sphere of our personal duty':

for me, ... who was neither Priest nor Bishop, any attempt to busy myself with the general interests of the Church would have been as presumptuous, as it would have been impracticable and absurd.⁹⁵⁴

His father and brother were not the only ones to think that this was precisely the case.

Palmer then turned to 'a circumstance ... which has given me considerable annoyance.' A month earlier, Palmer had met 'an acquaintance Mr. R.,'⁹⁵⁵ who had accosted Palmer 'open-mouthed,' asking him if he knew 'what an ill turn' Bishop Luscombe had done him, by publishing a volume of sermons 'attacking everything that is Orthodox. And have you seen the refutation? It is so triumphant! I suppose it is still to be had in the shops here.'⁹⁵⁶ The shops, however, had sold out, and the results could not have been worse for Palmer. His Russian friends later told him that this was

the only thing against him: up to this point all had been going on very well: that nothing could be more favourable than the impression which the Letters

⁹⁵³ Ibid., p. 149.

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 255.

⁹⁵⁵ Most likely M. Rhumine, mentioned regularly in NV.

⁹⁵⁶ ASC, p. 252.

and Petition had made upon their Synod; and that a very friendly expectation had been excited as to the possible result of the second Petition: but now people were perplexed, and knew not what to think of me or of the Bishop.⁹⁵⁷

The Galitsins were to blame. The Bishop had unwittingly given the Princess a weapon when he had given her a volume of his sermons to study, after refusing her the certificate she had sought. The Prince had found 'a Popish refutation' of the sermons in a French bookshop, and had taken both volumes to their confessor, none other than the Archpriest Koutnevich, 'upon whose mind they produced the most unfavourable impression.'⁹⁵⁸ This action effectively put them before the Synod. Friends of the Galitsins had bought up the only copies available. Palmer dismissed the misunderstandings caused by the book as 'merely technical and verbal differences,' but without a copy he had no idea of precisely what it said, and was powerless to defend himself or Bishop Luscombe. He was now paying the price for his success in excluding the Princess from communion at the English Chapel.

Days before, Palmer's father, unaware of Palmer's self-created status as Bishop Luscombe's clerk, had:

ventured to put your name down as a candidate for Priest's Orders on Trinity Sunday. I could see no reason for putting it off longer and could have no doubt you contemplated priest's orders at some time or other

Although he knew 'so little of the nature of your communications with the Russian Synod as to be unable to form a judgement of the results,' he was neither approving nor optimistic: 'I know you are a private unaccredited person - and that whatever you do will be scanned with no favourable eye by many. I trust you will be discreet at all times ...'⁹⁵⁹ Dr. Routh, who regarded Palmer 'with something of the same feeling that I do myself,' also regretted 'the sacrifice you appear to be making of your own

⁹⁵⁷ Ibid., p.253.

⁹⁵⁸ Ibid., p.256.

fortunes, and of some place or station for which he thinks you may be fitted, and which might enable you to act with more effect.’⁹⁶⁰ Palmer replied that his father had been ‘too precipitate.’⁹⁶¹ He ‘neither did contemplate, nor do contemplate, seeking Priest’s Orders without some sufficient reason,’⁹⁶² and ‘wished he had explained more fully ... my present connection with Bishop Luscombe.’ To attempt any act involving formal communion with an English bishop now would involve ‘the necessity of throwing up the whole affair,’ which depended on his letters from Luscombe.

He affected not to understand what his father meant by ‘sacrificing my “fortunes,”’ etc., adding that he felt it was essential to have found the truth before attempting to teach it to anyone else, as for example a deacon to a layman and so on.

If a man feels that the Faith and Church, of which a layman ought to have full assurance, is a matter of great doubt and strife and contention, he certainly will not seek ... to influence others, till he is quite sure himself, of his own standing and action being right and legitimate.⁹⁶³

Nor would he take on additional responsibility ‘without a very clear call to do so.’

Far from feeling such a call,

my thoughts run more and more in such a channel as would make me wish to be a layman in the Church of England rather than a deacon, a woman rather than a man, a child rather than a woman: and, in like manner, not only not to seek other fortunes or places or stations in order to act with more effect, but rather to be poorer and lower in worldly rank and station ...⁹⁶⁴

He remarked to his Aunt Mary on the same day that the expressions his father used such as ‘more effect’ and ‘private fortunes’ seemed to him to ‘have reference to that sort of life which is according to the spirit of society as it exists,’ adding ‘If I had

⁹⁵⁹ W J P to WP, 13 March 1843, LP MS 2834, ff. 281-2.

⁹⁶⁰ ASC, p. 409.

⁹⁶¹ Ibid.

⁹⁶² WP to W J P, 4 April 1843, LP MSS 1894, f. 100, and 2834, f.285.

⁹⁶³ MFP, vol. I, p. 411.

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid.

been told when I left England last Autumn how long I should be detained in Russia I should have gone with a very heavy heart indeed ...⁹⁶⁵

His father's reply began resignedly: 'I was by no means confident that you would view it in the light I wished,' before becoming heavily ironical:

I am sorry that you do not understand my meaning, when I say you seem to make a sacrifice of your private fortunes ... however, I must not complain of your not understanding me, because it is owing perhaps to the fact that I do not understand you. ... what your relations may be to Bishop Luscombe, and through him to the Scottish Church, superseding those which may lie for the present dormant with our own, I cannot divine. Being where you are, your relations with the Bishop of Oxford may be for a time suspended; but the moment you return, especially as my deacon to Mixbury, no one can doubt that you will be subject to him ...⁹⁶⁶

He also expressed alarm at the mention of 'Faith' and 'Church' being matters of 'doubt,' and 'strife,' and 'contention.'

Palmer responded at length, first thanking his father politely for 'taking care, so far as you could, that it should be in my power, if I returned, to do that which seemed to you fit for me to do.' As to Orders, they had been mentioned only once, by the Vice-President; Palmer had told him that he 'was ready to seek them as soon as I should receive an official and authoritative notice to do so.' As for sacrificing his private fortunes, unless it was by his daily faults, he could not see how he was doing so, 'nor do I know any other private fortune which is to be desired, than the opportunity of doing the work of one's present station and circumstances, and grace to enable one to do it.' This made the large assumption that what he was about in Russia was rightly the work of his present station and circumstances, as against the normal duties of an Anglican deacon, or an academic. He anticipated this criticism: 'what may appear to me ... to be properly and naturally my duty under circumstances,

⁹⁶⁵ WP to AM, 4 April 1843, LP MS 2836, f.148.

⁹⁶⁶ W J P to WP, 22 April 1843, MFP, vol. I, pp. 412-3.

may not appear to be so to others or even to you. All I can say with respect to this is, I am sorry for it' - scarcely an adequate justification. He expressed his readiness to give up his own judgement in favour of his father's, or Dr. Routh's, 'in anything in which you or he can rightly claim the power ... but, so long as you and he only give counsel, or express wishes, I must necessarily judge as well as I can of the justness of my own principles and views, and the degree in which I can or cannot, rightly conform to yours.'⁹⁶⁷

He was aware that

You regard perhaps what I am about as useless or improper or at least think that I have gone out of my way to seek it for myself and that I ought to throw it up at once ... I am not at all disposed, to defend my own judgement against yours - I had rather indeed have the satisfaction of your approbation ... and not having it the tone of your recent letters and Roundell's too ... adds to rather than diminishes other difficulties which I feel ...⁹⁶⁸

This lofty response ignored the fact that his 'difficulties' were entirely self-created, and his awareness of this probably explains his refusal to defend his own judgement. He knew that his relatives thought of him 'as a member of the Established Church of England, going from that Church, as 'an unauthorised individual,' to busy myself about you do not clearly see what in other countries or Churches,' who ought to come home to carry on as his father's deacon; but

I suppose myself on the other hand, not to come from the Church of England at all; but yet to come from a Bishop, with whom I had a strictly canonical relation, and having also all the authorization which the canons of the Church require, and that I myself could in the first instance even wish to have.⁹⁶⁹

- not to be wondered at, when the relations had been brought about and arranged entirely by himself.

⁹⁶⁷ WP to W J P, 3 / 15 May 1843, LP MS 1894, f.106.

⁹⁶⁸ Ibid., LP MS 2834, f. 296.

⁹⁶⁹ LP MS 1894, f.107.

Roundell Palmer, who entirely concurred in his father's views, gave vent to the misgiving he had had all along

as to the propriety of an individual, so situated as he is, acting as he has done in a matter which ... is of public, not private, concernment. I fear, both in this matter and in that of the 'anathema,' he has taken upon himself without warrant to speak for his Church; and, when led to doubt how far his Church would adopt his statements, began to distrust his Church instead of himself.

He put his finger on the fallacy at the heart of his brother's arguments:

That he should talk about relations established between himself and Bishop Luscombe as if they were not a mere creation of his own, - much more, as if they could supersede or modify his previous relations to the whole English Church, - does certainly look like a very painful delusion.⁹⁷⁰

He was at least as frank with Palmer himself, as Palmer's self-consciously humble reply to his letter shows:

I thank you for the earnestness of your remonstrances. The things which you blame, and the appearances of which in me give you uneasiness, are all very bad; namely, "inventing new and fictitious relations"⁹⁷¹ for ourselves, and then claiming a right to supersede and throw aside, for their sake, those under which God's Providence has placed us"; and, "running into the very excesses of private judgement," ... "placing scandals in the way of others," etc. etc.⁹⁷²

Palmer claimed that 'nothing could please me better' than to live with their father 'and serve him in his parish, so far as he could or would order me, whether as deacon or priest,' although his careful qualification effectively left him free to ignore any such 'order'. 'As a member of Magdalen College,' he desired 'nothing better than to have my work and duty pointed out to me by my superior; and I am ready to do it, whatever it may be.' This was a difficult assertion to sustain, when he had only recently resigned those duties to which the College had appointed him, because they conflicted with his self-imposed mission. He was after all a member of an Oxford college, not a private soldier, and his performance of his college duties depended at

⁹⁷⁰ RP to W J P, 24 April 1843, ASC, p. 414.

⁹⁷¹ i.e. with Bishop Luscombe.

least as much on his willingness to do them, as on direct orders from Dr. Routh. After an involved exposition of the difficulties created by his becoming Bishop Luscombe's clerk, he ended : 'I fear I shall have only puzzled you still more, by entering into a subject on which we do not understand one another's views.'⁹⁷³

On 12 / 24 May, Palmer heard from Pratasoff that the priest appointed to confer with him was the Archpriest Koutnevich, confessor to the Galitsins. Pratasoff had also seen Bishop Luscombe's sermons, which had made such a bad impression on Koutnevich. Although some pages seemed to him to be heretical, he charitably remarked that 'the Bishop might have changed his mind since.' Palmer bluntly contradicted this, but said that it was mere language, which left room for agreement 'in the basis of the true faith underneath it.' To Pratasoff's question, 'How many of the Bishops are orthodox?' he was equally frank: 'Probably not one single Bishop of our Church would seem to be exactly orthodox.' The Count was shocked: 'that surely must be going too far.' Palmer agreed that perhaps they were not deliberately heretical, but orthodox 'in intention and submission to the Church'; but 'from the body at large, ... nothing can be looked for for a long time, say for fifty or sixty years to come, or even more.'⁹⁷⁴

Although the Archpriest was not yet officially appointed, Palmer had an informal interview with him on 14 / 26 May. It was clear from the start that his credit had been badly damaged by the sermons and the refutation. The Archpriest began by telling Palmer that when officially appointed, he would object to him 'the heresies of which the Eastern Church accuses the British; than which (taking up from his table the volume of *Bishop Luscombe's Sermons*, and the *Romish Refutation of Them*)

⁹⁷² WP to RP, 18 May 1843, MFP, vol. I, p.415.

⁹⁷³ Ibid., p.417.

“nothing can be easier.”” The Archpriest later told the chaplain at Cronstadt that the books had ‘fallen ... out of the clouds into his hands, just at the right moment, before he wanted them’; otherwise, going only on the papers Palmer had put before the Synod, ‘he should have been rather at a loss how to accuse me as a heretic.’⁹⁷⁵

Beginning in the manner of a cross-examining barrister, Koutnevich opened the *Sermons*, and asked Palmer if he knew his own bishop’s signature and handwriting. When after some attempted explanation Palmer asked the Archpriest what he thought the motives had been for the books being given to him, ‘and so virtually to the Synod,’ Koutnevich first laughed, but then

said more seriously, “I do not wish to say anything harsh, or painful to you, nor to think of you as if you had been trying to impose upon us; but really when I consider the divergence, not to say contrareity, which there is between those documents which you have sent in to the Synod and these ‘Sermons’ of your own Bishop, and the XXXIX Articles of his Church, I do not know what to think of you, or of that Bishop.”⁹⁷⁶

All he would have to do, said Koutnevich, was to copy out passages from the 39 Articles and the *Sermons*, and ask Palmer to reject and anathematise them. Palmer pointed out that the Bishop’s later *Letters* had as much force as the earlier sermons, and might even be taken as a explanation or retraction of them; the Articles Palmer took in a very different sense. Koutnevich however had lost patience with Palmer’s attempts to make black equal white:

it is not, as you say, a question of *interpretation*. We must not trifle or quibble dishonestly in matters of faith: and after that fashion, by interpreting and explaining away, the most blasphemous book might be made into a book of devotion.⁹⁷⁷

⁹⁷⁴ ASC, pp. 257-8.

⁹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.259.

⁹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.260.

⁹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.261.

Palmer nonetheless handed over to the Archpriest some Dissertations written by himself for Mouravieff and translated into Latin, which set out Palmer's view of the true sense of the 39 Articles, in which they might be received by the Easterns. These Koutnevich very reluctantly promised to read. Palmer now stated that if the Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church disallowed the interpretation which he put on the 39 Articles, then he was 'ready to renounce the Articles, and them, and their Church' at the Archpriest's bidding.

A series of interviews followed, summarised by Palmer in a Report to Bishop Luscombe of 9 June. It was made clear from the start that the discussions would be on the terms laid down by the Synod, and not by Palmer. Koutnevich's instructions were solely 'to declare ... all that is necessary to ... being admitted to the Communion of our Church.' This effectively relegated Palmer to the standing of a catechumen or enquirer like any other. The Archpriest confirmed that

he had received no order either to answer, as in the name of the Synod, any questions from me respecting our loss of union, or to examine my conscience, after the manner of a Confessor, on the Faith which I might hold ... only to declare to me, all that was necessary, if I pleased to go over to the Communion of the Russian Church on the usual terms.⁹⁷⁸

Palmer 'observed, that while I had asked for one thing, the Synod had ... answered by granting me another,' and objected that he had to be convinced of the reality of a separation before he could seek reconciliation. Koutnevich replied 'of his own common sense, and speaking of a matter generally notorious,' that the British Church had lost communion at the same time as the Roman and other Western Churches, at the time of the Patriarch Photius. The 'appearances of union,' and 'feigned reconciliations' between the Churches thereafter were due only to 'the policy or force

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid., p.264.

of the Greek Emperors, not to any real agreement between the Bishops.'⁹⁷⁹ 'My attempting to reopen a doubt of the legitimacy of the separation when both sides Latin Roman & Greek agreed in assuming it was captious & argued some insincerity.'⁹⁸⁰ The original Photian anathema had been reiterated in subsequent Synods, and was finally confirmed by Michael Cerularius. The union was lost 'most deservedly, on account of real and damnable heresies,' chief of which was the *filioque*.⁹⁸¹ Palmer relied as before on those 'Orthodox Latin Fathers' who had used this expression without condemnation from the East, and, after giving his interpretation of the *filioque* clause, expressed his willingness to listen to whatever the Synod wished to state.

The Declaration that followed clearly drew on previous experience of dealing with Palmer. He must

honestly and simply admit this principle, that the Eastern is the Oecumenical Church; and then not question curiously or captiously, or rather deceitfully, at what point of time, or by what Synodal act, or by the Synodical admission of what heresy, the British Church has lost her original union with the Eastern ... for that this is not the way to begin: nor do such cunning questionings merit attention or favour, but rather anger or indignation ... Nor, again, was I to make too careful or curious distinctions as to the importance of particular differences; nor to question whether some things may not be secondary ...⁹⁸²

Koutnevich was equally determined to have no endless qualification of the meaning of the 39 Articles. 'He had read my Treatises & knew that I interpreted them differently - but ... they needed no interpretation ... my statements did not come out naturally from the Articles themselves.'⁹⁸³ Showing them to Palmer in an appendix in Bishop Luscombe's *Sermons*, he warned him that to be admitted to the Communion of the Russian Church, he must

⁹⁷⁹ Ibid., p.265.

⁹⁸⁰ BO MS G.20 Bk. II, f.64.

⁹⁸¹ ASC, p.265.

acknowledge those Articles to be a full and perfect Confession of the Faith both of the Scottish and of the Anglican Churches, a Confession not to be interpreted, filled up, or corrected by any other Documents, Homilies, Liturgies, or writings of Divines, but to be understood and taken in the plain literal sense and spirit.⁹⁸⁴

He then enumerated a series of 'false and heretical propositions, ... expressly contained in the XXXIX Articles,' that Palmer must confess to be so contained, and renounce and anathematise them, together with the Articles themselves, and the British Church. Asked if he would comply with these requirements, Palmer distinguished 44 'real heresies ... which destroyed the integrity of the Catholic Faith,' but which could not in his view be imputed to the British Church. He therefore said anathema to these 44 propositions in his own name and that of Bishop Luscombe. Palmer declined to say anathema also to the 39 Articles and the Church which maintained them as her Confession of Faith, on the basis that they were not a full Confession of Faith, having been framed 'not as a general exposition of truth, but only with a view to certain specific controversies.'⁹⁸⁵ He must appeal to the Bishop from whom he had come, and the Synod of Scottish bishops who had consecrated him, to see if they agreed with the sense in which he understood the 39 Articles, or allowed the heresies to which he had said anathema. If they did the latter, or 'attempted by an evasive silence to yoke faith and heresy together,' he 'would return to Russia, and seek to be reconciled by the prescribed Form from the Scottish Church, as from heresy.'⁹⁸⁶ He was later to regret this, his second rash pledge in Russia.

⁹⁸² Ibid., pp. 267-8.

⁹⁸³ BO MS G.20 Bk. II, ff. 64-5.

⁹⁸⁴ ASC .p. 269.

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid., p.281.

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid., p.282.

The flummoxed Archpriest asked Palmer what report he should make to the Synod. Palmer reverted to the need to know ‘some reasonable proof’ that the British and Roman Churches had lost their original union with the Eastern ‘by some real and apostatical heresy.’ The Archpriest, ‘somewhat provoked,’ told Palmer ‘with some air of asperity’ that he had already identified the *filioque* clause as the reason for the loss of union. Palmer reminded him that he had spoken in his own name only, not on behalf of the Synod, and that he had approved as orthodox the statement of belief on the *filioque* that Palmer had given him. In his journals Palmer wrote more frankly that the Archpriest was ‘quite angry that I insisted at beginning from the beginning ... the Synod he said will ... only be angry as I am at such captious and subtle questions which only show insincerity: the Roman Church and all the world admit the separation - why should you doubt it?’⁹⁸⁷ Fortunately their parting on 5 June was amicable. Palmer assured the Archpriest that he ‘had no intention of dealing deceitfully, nor of trifling with the Synod in the matter’ and Koutnevich in turn apologised ‘for any asperity of manner he might have used in taxing me or Bishop Luscombe with dishonesty.’⁹⁸⁸ However, the impression caused by the sermons was clearly ineradicable: ‘he would *try* to think well of me; though he did not see, in the face of such clear evidence of heresy, how any good could result from my appealing to Bishop Luscombe, and to the Synod of his brethren in Scotland.’⁹⁸⁹

There was nothing more that Palmer could do in Russia, particularly as he was suddenly afflicted by ‘a weakness of the eyes,’ perhaps psychosomatic, which

⁹⁸⁷ BO MS G.20 Bk. II, f.70. No doubt there were a number of these irate exchanges, as the report to Bp. Luscombe conflated three official interviews, on 18/30 May, 2 June, and 4 June. ASC, p. 262.

⁹⁸⁸ ASC, pp. 262-3.

⁹⁸⁹ Ibid.

left him 'unable to write or read more than a few lines together.'⁹⁹⁰ He therefore left St. Petersburg on 4 / 16 June, returning home by way of Sweden.

Six years later, in June of 1849, the young James Barmby⁹⁹¹ travelled to St. Petersburg armed with introductions from Palmer to 'several Russian families, & really their kindness & hospitality is amazing.' He wrote to a friend - 'I promised to write from the city of the Czars, & having for a wonder a bit of loose time on hand, I commence my despatch ...' - about the impression Palmer had made there. Those to whom Barmby had introductions 'speak of [him] in the most affectionate terms'; but 'Among the English with only two exceptions, one of whom is of course Dr. L[aw], he is mentioned as "a fool", "a Madman", "an extraordinary fellow" "a strange enthusiast", "an ass" "a Papist" etc. etc.' Not that the expatriate English knew much about church matters: they were

generally in Church notions where England was 50 years ago; besides they are all commercial parties, and cognizant of few ideas beyond their counting houses; - also singularly ignorant of the Russians, & of their religion, which they generally regard as a cross between Popery & heathenism. Well: fancy the effect likely to be produced by turning old P - in his cassock - loose among those gentry; his head crammed full of the Greek Church; & without the least tact or discretion spouting [?] his startling notions right & left, & even talking beyond his theory for want of sympathy; going to Russian Churches, bowing & crossing himself, & kissing pictures as well as Priests: you may conceive that the effect of all this would be what it was: that they neither understood what he meant, nor sympathised with him in any thing; were set against him ab initio, and in fact never came to know the least of his character at all. I stick up for him everywhere, to the surprize of people, who begin to suspect me of insanity in consequence.⁹⁹²

Nonetheless Barmby thought that Palmer had 'done good work among them ... in making the position of the Anglican Church known to them, as different from that of

⁹⁹⁰ Ibid., p.291. He notes that this condition continued for four years, and had not 'even yet entirely ceased,' i.e. by April 1849.

⁹⁹¹ James Barmby (1823-1897), Scholar of University College Oxford, BA 1845, BD 1855, Fellow & Maths Lecturer Magdalen College Oxford 1846-60, Principal Hatfield Hall, Durham, 1859-76, Vicar of Pitlington 1875-94, Rural Dean of Easington, 1890-94. MEB, pp. 270-1.

⁹⁹² LP MS 2823, ff. 124-6.

mere Lutherans.⁹⁹³ His first impressions of Russian services were as mixed as

Palmer's had been:

The music in the Churches is delicious; but the solemnity of the Service not half what I expected: the reader... generally a snob⁹⁹⁴ in his own dirty plain clothes... does nearly all the psalms, Lessons & Prayers in a most abominably irreverent way, as fast as he can go, & strangely troubled with fits of spitting.⁹⁹⁵

⁹⁹³ Ibid., f.125.

⁹⁹⁴ 'Snob' was originally an abbreviation of *sine nobilitate*, indicating, as here, someone of low class.

⁹⁹⁵ Ibid., f. 126.

CHAPTER 8

Struggle for a Soul

Back in England, Palmer managed to overcome his illness sufficiently to edit *The Doctrine of the Russian Church* with his friend Mr. Blackmore, who had come over to England from Russia. This was done 'living some time at Donhead with or near him, & he coming to Oxford to me. This volume was finished shortly after he returned in the Spring & published at Xmas 1844.'⁹⁹⁵ Palmer also occupied himself 'in preparing an Appendix to the same under the title of "A Harmony of Anglican & Eastern Doctrine",' which was not published until June 1846. He was, however, scrupulous in avoiding any clerical duties in the diocese of Oxford that would have been inconsistent with his association with Bishop Luscombe.⁹⁹⁶

In early 1844 he noted from newspaper stories in French and German newspapers that the Princess had left Russia, and was living, now in Berlin, now in Switzerland, and now in Paris; describing herself as having 'suffered much for having embraced Protestantism,' and 'suffering from ill-health, and other afflictions; but ... *firm in her faith*.'⁹⁹⁷ Her gypsy life was explained when Palmer 'learned from Private Letters that she had had a purse of 8000 ? Roubles a year made up by her relatives to enable her to travel again, as she & her husband were tired of each other.'⁹⁹⁸ Perhaps the bond created by a common opposition to Palmer had broken down in his absence.

⁹⁹⁵ BO MS Bk. 3, f.60.

⁹⁹⁶ ASC, p.292.

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁸ BO MS Bk. 3, f.59.

Palmer's eye problems delayed the completion of his Report to Bishop Luscombe by almost a year. It was not until March 1844 that he travelled to Paris and delivered the Report, and was authorised by Luscombe to appeal to the Synod of the Scottish bishops on the 44 propositions he had anathematised, as well as 48 additional disciplinary propositions added by the Bishop. He had now, at the Archpriest's request, to re-write and correct the Latin Dissertations originally written for M. Mouravieff, and prepare other necessary documents in Latin for his Scottish appeal. Again he was delayed by his bad eyesight, so that by the spring of 1846 'certain of the Authorities at St. Petersburg were enquiring "whether anything had yet been done in Scotland?"',⁹⁹⁹

By 1846 he had 'come to give up the Latin language & theology on the point of the Procession in consequence of reading carefully Zoernikav's Treatise,'¹⁰⁰⁰ and was therefore in full doctrinal agreement with the Eastern Church. Despite this, and despite his promise to Koutnevich to be reconciled to Orthodoxy if the Synod of Scottish bishops allowed the heresies he had anathematised, his correspondence at this time showed an increasing drift towards Roman Catholicism. Newman had been received as a Roman Catholic in October 1845; Lord Selborne thought that his brother was 'profoundly affected by the secession ... of Mr. Newman, and the friends who accompanied or followed him.'¹⁰⁰¹ Previously, Palmer had been ready to discuss with his father the claims of Roman authority in hypothesis, and without heat; he now became more belligerent in advocating the claims of Rome, and dismissing the pretensions of Anglicanism: 'I can safely follow the interpretation of

⁹⁹⁹ ASC, p. 302.

¹⁰⁰⁰ BO MS Bk. 3, f.61. *De Processione Spiritus Sancti a Solo Patri*, by Adam Zoernikav, born in Koenigsberg in 1562, a Lutheran, studied in Oxford and London, then went to Germany, France, Italy and finally Russia, where he became Orthodox and a priest in Kiev. The Treatise was not published until 1774-76 in Koenigsberg, in 2 volumes. FT, p. 105, n. 21.

the Church of the 4th Century ... but I cannot safely follow the rebellion of the 16th Century.’¹⁰⁰² His refusal to listen to the arguments or the emotional appeals of his father put their relationship under an increasing strain.

For it was not, for Palmer, ultimately a matter of ‘setting up one private opinion against another,’ but ‘what seems to me’¹⁰⁰³ a paramount and anterior authority,’ against which

not even a whole National Church, nor a particular synod nor bishops, - much less any individual king or reformer, or individual thinker, whether older in age, or father by relation, - can rightfully maintain their particular view of religious truth ...¹⁰⁰⁴

Moreover, his father’s opinion was ‘without feeling as to that traditionary and national rebellion against far higher claims in which it unconsciously takes part,’ although ‘blameless’ because ‘its bias is *received*, rather than self-originated.’ Palmer had ‘naturally inherited the same system and opinions, but had had ‘the knowledge and recognition of an outward authority ... forced upon my own unwilling, reluctant, and prejudiced mind.’¹⁰⁰⁵ Although his father ‘in things really belonging to private opinion stands to me, I may say it, in the place of God ... he cannot be right, in any matter ... to think contrary to the Catholic Church.’ William Palmer senior wrote on the letter that the question was what was

the true and correct notion of that authority, its nature and extent; a matter ... not of dogmatism, but of understanding and argument. ... It is not enough to say, I have gradually arrived at such and such conclusions, and that very unwillingly, and contrary to the notions in which I was brought up.¹⁰⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰¹ MFP, p. 419. Newman was received on 8 October 1845.

¹⁰⁰² WP to W J P, 2 March 1846, LP MS 2835, f.23.

¹⁰⁰³ ‘What seems to me’ is underlined by Palmer’s father, and ‘surely they may’ [maintain their particular view etc.] written above. By ‘setting up one private opinion against another’ he wrote ‘unquestionably.’ LP MS 1894, f. 110.

¹⁰⁰⁴ WP to W J P, 10 March 1846, MFP, vol. I, p. 421.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid., p.422.

When in January 1846 Palmer mentioned in conversation 'a consciousness of uncertainty as to the issue in his own case,' his father relied on 'the first and last clauses of the famous Bull of Pius V against Elizabeth I.'¹⁰⁰⁷ as exemplifying the errors of the Roman Church - 'No one can desire to be united to her *as she is* without great danger and imputation of blame.' He entreated Palmer to 'be on his guard,' and

abstain from recommending, by any overt act, a kind of devotion unknown to the Primitive Church, in particular ... in respect of them for whom I shall one day have to answer. I allude to Mary's asking me, whether she might accept a crucifix, and Dorothea and Emily your book of poems. The "overt acts" I had in mind were of this kind.¹⁰⁰⁸

He decried the ways 'simple-hearted souls' were led off to Rome: 'either commending her practice, and thence deducing her authority, or insisting on her authority, and thereby silencing all objection to her practice.' He might be 'poor and weak and blind and prejudiced,' but believed 'from my soul that God has given me the means of Grace in the Church of my baptism; and that, if I use them faithfully, I shall be saved, and you with me.' He prayed God to 'protect and defend you from the evil.'¹⁰⁰⁹

He pleaded with Palmer not to commit himself in any way before 'hearing and considering everything I may have to say on every point relating to it ... endeavouring to divest yourself of all prejudice; for ... you are no more free from it than others.'¹⁰¹⁰ Palmer's reply, 'the only occasion in which he gave way to irritation,'¹⁰¹¹ pointed out that it was his father who had

desired my sisters to speak to you whenever I put anything into their hands, which they might suppose you would dislike ... and therefore I told them

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid., p.424. The Bull *Regnans in Excelsis* of 25 February 1570, which excommunicated and purported to depose Elizabeth I, 'was an ineffective anachronism and made matters worse for her Catholic subjects.' J. N. D. Kelly, *The Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (Oxford: OUP, 1986), p. 269.

¹⁰⁰⁸ W J P to WP, 23 Jan. 1846, MFP, vol. I, p.425, also LP MS 1894, ff. 114-5.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Ibid., MFP, vol. I, p. 425.

¹⁰¹⁰ W J P to WP, 16 February 1846, MFP, vol. I, p. 427.

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid.

when they asked me for copies of my printed verses, that there were things in them that you would probably dislike, so they had better speak to you of it - the same of the Cross or Crucifix which I gave Emma.¹⁰¹²

He could no longer hide his feeling that

Our heads are turned then two directly contrary ways: I am very sorry for it, but I cannot help it. I respect your conscientious conviction that you ought to do all you can to keep all your children steadfast in that tradition or opinion in which you find yourself; - but my own conviction being against this, and in favour of the older traditions and superior authority, I shall necessarily be bound to do all I can to recommend obedience and conformity to authority and truth (as I now view it) rather than to rebellion and error.¹⁰¹³

This expression of a reluctant necessity to act on his convictions hardened into something like a declaration of war in what followed:

... whenever and wherever I have the unhappiness to find that you are firmly bent on following yourself and recommending others to follow either your own sense or that of a particular and inferior authority against the general and superior authority of the Church in matters of religion ... your opinion or feeling is to me simply as though it were not ...¹⁰¹⁴

He was not to be dissuaded that St. Basil was wrong to address the Saints, nor St. John Damascene to defend Icons; nor would he conceal his belief that 'the doctrine of the Church is the truth, and the contrary doctrine, though you maintain it, is an error and a rebellion to be avoided by piety.'¹⁰¹⁵

His father declined to defend himself 'from the imputation of setting up my own opinion against the great saints and Fathers of the Church,' relying instead on the 'best authorities,' SS. Peter, Paul, James, John and Jude. He professed his ignorance that 'the invocation of Saints and the use of pictures and images ... were ever ... accounted necessary and essential parts of Christian faith and practice,' or that 'they are so accounted either in the Greek or Latin Churches to this day. If I

¹⁰¹² WP to W J P, 20 Feb. 1846, LP MS 2835, f.17.

¹⁰¹³ Ibid., f.18.

¹⁰¹⁴ Ibid., f.20.

¹⁰¹⁵ Ibid.

ought to know this, shew me where I am to learn it.' Having traded blow for blow, he reverted to:

the object of my fear and dread in the movement towards Rome ... in which the conduct of persons eminent for their learning and piety, who have already gone over, suggests the idea that it is possible for the best Christians and most learned men, in any period, (not gifted as were the Apostles), not always to have seen to what their studies, will and opinions really tended, and of what development they were capable.¹⁰¹⁶

He 'required' an opinion from his son on his 'critical test of the Papal pretensions,'¹⁰¹⁷

the Pope's assertion that he hath been constituted by our Lord "super omnes gentes et omnia regia Principem" etc.; and of his assuming on our Lord's authority to depose a reigning sovereign from her throne, to absolve her People from their oaths and allegiance and excite them to rebel against her power.¹⁰¹⁸

As to what Palmer had said of their relations, 'upon reflection you might want to qualify it a little, and not speak so confidently on those points on which you think we differ.' If their heads were really turned two different ways, 'are our hearts also?'

Were they

so opposed ... that all common attentions must be thrown aside as useless? I cannot believe that we are so opposed, that you are justified in separating yourself from me. I request further of you to consider and answer the question, how far sons and daughters are 'sui juris', in matters of religion, in their father's house?¹⁰¹⁹

Palmer's response on the necessity of Icons and addresses to saints was magisterially evasive:

those Churches (Greek and Latin) expressly teach, that these things are not essential in themselves. But the duty of obedience to the Church is not bounded by that which is in itself necessary for the Individual to believe or

¹⁰¹⁶ W J P to WP, 26 Feb. 1846, LP MS 1894, f.116. The reference to 'development' almost certainly refers to Newman, who had converted only four months before (see n. 966, supra).

¹⁰¹⁷ MFP, vol. I, p.425.

¹⁰¹⁸ W J P to WP, 26 Feb. 1846, LP MS 2835, f.21.

¹⁰¹⁹ LP MS 1894, f.117.

do, but extends to all lesser things which have more or less direct relation to the same.

How direct or otherwise this relation might be Palmer did not say. He was unmoved by his father's appeal to emotion, remarking of their heads being turned two different ways: 'Your kindness and affection for me makes [sic] you feel pain at the expression. But I think nothing is to be gained by blinking what is true.' He elaborated on his meaning:

... you have made me feel, on the whole, that the whole energy of my life and the employment of all my faculties has been deliberately directed for the last thirteen years (and is still so directed) upon an end which, the more I advance towards it, the more it shows itself reprehensible to your feelings and opinions. I feel that there must be some cause for this ... ¹⁰²⁰

Everybody - 'the worst and most Protestant ... the very best ... in my own Church ... the Roman Catholics themselves' - joined in telling him that he deceived himself in thinking that 'a certain kind of pursuit after truth was consistent with my position, or that the Church of England could consist with those principles which I assumed as true.' This testimony, together with that of others,

hitherto ... in the same path as myself, and who have come to allow that their ground was untenable; - and feeling, moreover, that I have actually myself in many things come nearer to Rome, and got rid of feelings and opinions against her; - I cannot help contemplating, intellectually at least, the possibility of a further change ... Either I ought to find some means to conform myself to the sense and wishes and opinions of the Anglican Church and its heads ... or I ought to see that my place, whatever it is, is not by rights in their Church ... such a person as I ought to be naturally and sensibly in and under the Church, whatever the Church is, not over it. ¹⁰²¹

Even if I might once think that there were signs of a revival or improvement such as agreed with my own opinions, yet even then the very leaders of that movement (as they were called) were equally in my own illegitimate position, and have now felt that they were so, and yielded to circumstances. ¹⁰²²

¹⁰²⁰ WP to W J P, 2 March 1846, MFP, vol. I, p. 429.

¹⁰²¹ Ibid.

¹⁰²² Ibid., LP MS 2835, f.26.

Conforming himself to the Anglican Church seemed to him '*impossible*'; he left open only the slimmest of possibilities that he might 'in due time find the way' to give up the conviction that he was doing his duty as a member of the Church of England in 'following out those indiscreet, prejudiced, imaginative, unpractical, questionable, or Romanising studies,' as they seemed to all who did not follow them. But to do so seemed to Palmer 'extremely disagreeable and shocking, and what I am as yet by no means prepared for.'¹⁰²³ Determined to show how far apart he and his father now were, he cast back in his father's teeth epithets that had perhaps been angrily flung at him:

I would take any trouble to progress, even in the least degree, in the knowledge of the sense and doctrine and law of the Church. I would willingly walk over Europe to get the smallest particle of that knowledge, which would only move your mistrust or aversion - would make you think me, more and more, a 'self-willed and wrong-headed young man', or (at best) 'a good lawyer spoiled' ... Is this to be united in heart?¹⁰²⁴

The response to his father's 'interrogatory about the Pope,' was an ominously qualified one:

my present opinion is sufficiently strong, not only against his temporal pretensions, as represented by the Jesuits and the Ultramontane party. At the same time ... I feel my opinion has become more favourable to the Papal Supremacy, and less favourable to the pretended rights of the so-called National Churches ... than it was in 1834.¹⁰²⁵

A heartfelt cry followed:

I most heartily wish, that I could reasonably and with a good conscience submit to Rome, or to any other authority which should relieve me from the pain and difficulty which I now experience in having to ask for truth by my own study, and that with an increasing sense that the results of my studies make it more and more hopeless to look for any such authority to govern me where I am.¹⁰²⁶ ... the cases in which you talk of your opinion and mine, are

¹⁰²³ MFP, vol. I, p. 429.

¹⁰²⁴ *Ibid.*, LP MS 1894, f.122.

¹⁰²⁵ *Ibid.*, f.123. He had written in his diary on 8 Jan., 'thought of the question of Indulgences for 10,0,000, [sic] 10,000 or 1000 years & reconciled myself more to them than ever I could before.' LP MS 2472.

¹⁰²⁶ *Ibid.*

really cases of Church Authority - and in such wherever I am convinced that the Church has spoken ... I have no intention to pay your opinion, no, nor the opinion of a whole English Convocation or Parliament, the slightest respect whatever.¹⁰²⁷

It was a declaration of which any Elizabethan martyr would have been proud, but Palmer's father ignored the rhetoric, and fixed on the fundamental question, the 'end' towards which Palmer's life had been directed for so long:

Can you at length tell me, at the end of those thirteen years, what that end hath been, what it now is? Have you yourself known? Did Mr. Faber know? Did Mr. Newman? Have they not both been taken in the meshes of their own net? Are you not yourself now like a poor bird, ever and anon fluttering about the jaws of a hydra till she drop into them?¹⁰²⁸

He recalled how his loyalty to his son had turned to dismay:

I always took a most earnest and affectionate interest in your pursuits and objects. I lent myself to them, when I did not always clearly apprehend them. I defended you, I took your part, I assisted you by all the means in my power ... On one occasion, when I asked the Bishop for a document ... the Bishop, in granting it, somewhat prophetically asked, "cui bono?" And, somehow or other, from that day to this, you have been separated from us. Could that be the fulfilment?

I went on confidently till I began to feel you had taken on more than you had authority to do, and till I heard from your own lips that the pursuit, whatever it might be, in which you were engaged, was leading you to desire a reconciliation with the Church of Rome on her terms, or on any terms, without being aware of what (as it appeared to me) made any such desire very sinful and dangerous.¹⁰²⁹

He was resigned to the fact that his son would not step into his shoes at Mixbury and Finmere; but what he had never expected was to find himself

contending, as it were, for life and death, on a point the success of which involves our separation before the time, and whether you are to look upon me as a heathen man and a publican, or whether we are to walk in the house of God as friends.¹⁰³⁰

Before these questions were answered, he wrote again in more sympathetic and persuasive vein:

¹⁰²⁷ LP MS 2835, f.23-28.

¹⁰²⁸ W J P to WP, 3 March 1846, MFP, vol. I, p.430, also LP MSS 1894 f.124, & 2835 f.32.

¹⁰²⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰³⁰ W J P to WP, 3 March 1846, MFP, vol. I, p.431.

I see the difficulty, not to say distress of your present circumstances and situation; and I see nothing satisfactory before you - no profession - no calling ... visit Egypt - Syria - Arabia - Mesopotamia - Asia. Learn the state of the Christians in all these - their civil, moral and religious state; and let us profit by what you learn.. This is a branch of theology you have not yet studied, to which I look with intense interest.¹⁰³¹

This was sound psychology, but ahead of its time; only in the last twenty-four years of his life would Palmer travel regularly to Egypt, albeit as an amateur archaeologist.

For now Palmer had

something to do here, which has come to me of itself in which I am actually engaged ... you may be assured that I shall be delighted ... to travel in the East, whenever, and as soon as ever, I can find or make any opportunity of doing so, without deserting work, which I like much less, but which is already in hand.¹⁰³²

Besides, he was physically unable to work: 'I cannot make my own eyes to be strong or weak.' Writing the previous day to answer his father's query about the end toward which he had been advancing, he maintained that he could:

very easily tell you what end I have always proposed to myself ; viz. to learn accurately the truth of that religion which the Church of England had professed to deliver to me, and ... whatever errors or imperfections might attach either to my own personal or generally to the Anglican, belief or practice.¹⁰³³

This seems a disingenuously broad aim, in that its achievement hardly required two forays into Russia, still less the pursuit of Princess Galitsin. So far as his possible conversion to Roman Catholicism was concerned:

Far from having your horror of the hydra, I feel that it would be the happiest day of my life that should enable me, with a full conviction and a clear conscience, to cast myself at the feet of so great an authority as the Roman Church, against which I now find myself at war ... most gladly would I, if I could, submit to the Roman obedience, even if it cost me all that is most dear to me on earth.¹⁰³⁴

¹⁰³¹ W J P to WP, 6 April 1846, LP MS 2835, f. 41.

¹⁰³² WP to W J P, 15 April 1846, Ibid., ff. 53-4.

¹⁰³³ WP to W J P, 15 April, 1846, LP MS 1894, f. 128.

¹⁰³⁴ WP to W J P, 15 April 1846, Ibid., ff. 128-9, & MFP, vol. 1, p. 432.

To his father, Roman authority was ‘indeed vast, *immense*, awful; awful, if it be well founded, awful, if it have no just foundation at all.’ He worried to Roundell that Palmer’s ‘state of mind and feelings’ were much the same as Newman’s and Ward’s had been, and although neither of them was

satisfied with everything the Roman Church holds, nor is William, yet they are gone; and when I hear him say he wishes he could be reconciled, and that he is sensible of progressing in opinion in the same direction, that, surely, is enough to alarm one who does not wish it.¹⁰³⁵

Equally disturbing was his professional position:

I see him in the maturity of strength and age without a profession and without the opportunity of adopting one. I see him also without means, excepting only an enhancement of his fellowship, which if he goes on he will soon be incapable of retaining. I see no way of extricating him from the atmosphere in which he lives,¹⁰³⁶ and introducing him to something, if not new, yet different, which may possibly break the spell by which he seems to be surrounded.¹⁰³⁷

He recounted how Palmer had, with massive but unconscious irony, accused him of ‘tilting at windmills’ in opposing

Romish views, rites, and doctrines. ... he rather quickly withdrew the allusion, when he saw that I was ready to retort it upon himself. But, seriously speaking, I do really apprehend that, like the knight of La Mancha, he has been absorbed too much with one idea, and that almost detached ... from the realities of life, and (in a manner) not quite consistent with his age and station.¹⁰³⁸

Both parties still strove to be conciliatory. Palmer described the differences between them ‘as only straws on the surface,’ not regarding ‘first principles in

¹⁰³⁵ W J P to RP, 28 March 1846, MFP, vol. I, p. 433.

¹⁰³⁶ Palmer’s father later told his daughter Emily that ‘It is my belief, that he [Palmer] fell into the hands, many years ago, of some men of ability much older than himself, who perhaps may have been the beginning of his present opinions.’ (W J P to Em P, 28 Jan. 1852, LP MS 1903, f. 49). His stress on the difference in age may indicate a reference to Newman, amongst others.

¹⁰³⁷ W J P to RP, 28 March 1846, MFP, vol. I, p. 433, & LP MS 1878, f.98.

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.*, MFP, vol. I, p. 433.

themselves, but ... the channels through which we are to seek and receive truth.'¹⁰³⁹

Nonetheless, for him that channel was increasingly

an Ecclesiastical Unity and Authority, above and beyond that of the Anglican Established Church ... I totally and confidently refuse to obey her, so soon and so far as I perceive her to commend or counsel anything contrary to the law of the whole. I was not baptised into "Anglicanism," nor did I promise to believe in "The Anglican Church", but in "The Church", of which the Anglican must be a homogeneous member, if she would be a member at all.¹⁰⁴⁰

Palmer wrote to a M. de Mestral¹⁰⁴¹ in July of 'the impossibility of explaining the phenomenon of the Anglican Church, unless you allow that her Reformation (or Deformation) was only superficial and that she has preserved underneath it the contrary principle of Catholicism.' To him it had become a matter of simple logic:

notwithstanding the peculiarities of the Anglican Church, the prima facie presumption is decidedly against her, if we allow that the Reformation generally was essentially heretical and the first impulse of a generous mind would naturally be to return to that authority and to that state of things against which we ... unjustifiably rebelled.¹⁰⁴²

Still more was this the case abroad, where the choice was 'the Roman Communion on the one hand and simple sectarianism on the other.' Into the scales had to be put the example of 'the most eminent and religious men among the so-called Puseyites in England,' who had come to find 'that their position was untenable.' Logically, 'to be a member of the Church of England is a self-committed absurdity.'¹⁰⁴³ As for Palmer himself, if he could acquire a conviction of the full truth of Roman doctrine, he

would ... gladly, Anglican as I am, turn RC tomorrow ... I would look forward to it with joy as the probable haven of my labours and enquiries - for I do not conceal from myself the greatness of the Roman authority and the many marks of superiority which Rome has over any other rival community pretending to be the whole Church.

¹⁰³⁹ WP to W J P, 26 May 1846, LP MS 2835, f. 63.

¹⁰⁴⁰ WP to W J P, 26 May 1846, LP MS 1894, f. 136-7.

¹⁰⁴¹ Armand de Mestral, a Vaudois Minister, who found himself increasingly attracted to 'les idées d'unité, d'autorité, de stabilité' represented by the Church of Rome. LP MS 2837, f. 96.

¹⁰⁴² WP to de Mestral, 3 July 1846, LP MS 1895, f.32 ff.

¹⁰⁴³ *Ibid.*, f. 33.

His misgivings about the intellectual convictions that forestalled his submission to Catholicism were amply borne out by the qualified nature of his eventual conversion:

... I should shrink very much from following a mere feeling or impulse which might leave me afterwards, or from getting up an unreal conviction, by impatiently smothering or setting aside intellectual convictions which might return upon me afterwards. I would be very careful to make sure that I could not only accept the base letter of the Roman formularies, but also the practical spirit of the zealous and religious among her clergy and people ... my own convictions are by no means altogether Roman.¹⁰⁴⁴

Some of his friends were impatient with this cerebral approach to spiritual matters. Frederick William Faber wrote

you seem to regard conversion as merely a subjective process of intellectual adjustment of difficulties: this seems very odd to us who seem to have heard God's call so plainly ... I hope by God's mercy that the time is not far distant when your long search will come to an end, and both your "reason" and your "feelings" be satisfied, where alone they will be, in doctrines and practises of which no amount of erudition can give an extern the true idea.¹⁰⁴⁵

Perhaps Palmer was trying to convince himself when he wrote to another correspondent that same July that the reception of Newman and his followers might 'damp and discourage,' yet could not

destroy either the essential character of the Anglican Church or that spirit and effort after improvement which has been gaining ground during some years past among her members ... the less we think about it as individuals and the more heartily we do our own particular duties the better it will be.¹⁰⁴⁶

He was dismissive too of Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian*

Doctrine. The 'easy way' in which Newman 'disposed of the Eastern Church "in two

¹⁰⁴⁴ Ibid., f. 34.

¹⁰⁴⁵ F W F to WP, 29 May 1846, LP MS 2837, f.62. Frederick William Faber (1814-1863), admirer and friend of Newman, Anglican deacon 1837, priest 1839, received as a Roman Catholic in 1845, formed the 'Wilfridian' community, became a RC priest 1847, joined the Oratory of St. Philip Neri 1848, established a branch of the Oratory in London in 1849, which became independent in 1850 and moved to Brompton in 1854. DNB.

¹⁰⁴⁶ WP to Rev. J. M. Forbes (see n. 1188), 4 July 1846, LP MS 1895, ff. 54-55.

or three lines”, noted by ‘a Russian of high rank’ Palmer had spoken to at Paris, showed ‘a very great prejudice.’¹⁰⁴⁷

¹⁰⁴⁷ Ibid., ff. 55-56.

CHAPTER 9

Pearls before Swine

Section XLV of the 'Appeal to the Scottish Church'¹⁰⁴⁸ enigmatically describes 'the manner in which the Appeal will be received on first being brought into Scotland' being 'foreshewn,' and the reasons, namely 'that the outer Scottish Church is now taken up with "*much company*," and that if Palmer returns the next year 'on a certain *Friday*,' he might not find '*the same* Bishops. ... the details ... are for the present omitted.' These elliptical references were to Palmer's dream of Monday, April 1 1844, the night before he delivered his report to Bishop Luscombe in Paris, that he 'was going in a carriage or chaise under some trees in the West of Scotland to see the Bishops,' before stopping at a house where he was met by

a very wrinkled bustling fidgety peevish old woman who asked me sharply What do ye want? I said I wanted to see the Bishops - What do ye want with the Bishops? You can't see the Bishops" she replied. I said, I must see the Bishops, for I have important business with them. You can't see the Bishops she repeated, We have a great deal to do; we have a great deal of company in the house: you can't see the Bishops.¹⁰⁴⁹

Nonetheless, in the dream Palmer managed to enter the house and see three bishops.

He kissed the hand of one, whom he recognised from engravings as Bishop Jolly.

Leaving the room, he was accosted again by the old woman, 'more fidgety & peevish than ever,' who asked him if he had done with the bishops:

'No', I said, 'I have not even begun with them; for my business is long & difficult, & it is not easy to enter upon such a business all at once on a first interview.' 'But ye must have done with them' she replied, 'You can't see any more of them.'

¹⁰⁴⁸ ASC, p. 293.

¹⁰⁴⁹ BO MS v.49, 10.6.(3), ff. 4-5.

In the dream Palmer pressed her:

And at last as if to get rid of me, and being tired at my obstinacy in keeping her so long she said very peevishly - Well, perhaps if ye come on Friday, I can't say. And so I went out.¹⁰⁵⁰

Palmer saw this dream as highly significant, even recounting it to the Scottish bishops that he spoke with; events were to show that it was indeed prophetic.

His journey to Scotland began on 10 August 1846, 'by the Steamer City of London,' which took 39 ½ hours to carry its cargo of 'men dogs sportsmen, horses & carriages & 140 passengers' to Aberdeen, arriving at '3 ½ pm.'¹⁰⁵¹ The next day he saw the Primus, Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen,¹⁰⁵² in order to be 'put into the right course of proceeding.' The Bishop was far from encouraging:

He seemed much alarmed at the magnitude of the questions raised: said he saw no end to the difficulties ... wished my papers were all on the back of the fire, as the best thing: asked whether I was not casting pearls before swine in taking so much trouble though with the best intentions about that Lady: and whether it would not be much better for me to 'take a charge'.¹⁰⁵³

Palmer responded that 'was doing the work of a Deacon in this very thing,' and told him about his dream. The Bishop confirmed its tenor by clearly implying 'that he thought that would all agree to get rid of the business if they could,' but advised Palmer to see each of the bishops in person. Palmer left with him a printed copy of the Letters to be presented to the Synod, as the Bishop 'declined to take charge' of the originals.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵¹ BO MS G.20 part III, f.63.

¹⁰⁵² William Skinner (1778-1857), educated at Wadham College Oxford, matriculated March 1798, ordained 1802, consecrated Bishop of Aberdeen September 1816, elected Primus June 1841. DNB.

¹⁰⁵³ Ibid.

Palmer first visited Bishop Torry, the Bishop of St. Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane.¹⁰⁵⁴ Bishop Torry was to be Palmer's only real ally and sympathiser among the Scottish bishops, but his support was apt to wax and wane, perhaps because of his great age, eighty-three. Palmer instantly liked him: 'The Bp on my entering gave us both his blessing most solemnly, & let me kiss his hand. His manner was most simple, open, & free from all tinge of worldly fear or policy.' Palmer felt 'from the moment I saw him to the time that I took my leave, that it was impossible to have any fear of differing from such a man.'¹⁰⁵⁵ Torry was more optimistic: 'He entered heartily into my affair - on my observing on the difficulties, & that they would get rid of it if they could, he said with energy "I do not see how they can avoid entering into it".' However, he later remarked that the Bishop of Edinburgh¹⁰⁵⁶ 'might perhaps be unfavourable,' and that 'though he wished with all his heart [the other bishops] would enter upon it & thought they might, he doubted or feared they would not.'¹⁰⁵⁷ Although he himself would not attend the Synod, he told Palmer he would write to him and to the Primus. Palmer 'put into his hands' an authenticated copy of Bishop Luscombe's Letters, leaving with him, as with the other bishops, an unauthenticated printed copy.

Torry saw Palmer's Appeal as an historic chance for the episcopal church to try to finish what the Nonjurors had started:

... a Negotiation which was deem'd worthy to be entered upon by such distinguished men as Bishop Campbell, Bp Gaddener, Bp Rattray, Bp Hickee is still worthy of renewal, if it can be entered upon with any prospect of

¹⁰⁵⁴ Patrick Torry (1763-1852), Torry was brought from presbyterianism to episcopalianism by the views of an uncle, ordained deacon and priest 1783, Bishop of Dunkeld 1808, and of St. Andrews when the title was revived in 1844, Pro-Primus of the episcopal church of Scotland 1841. DNB.

¹⁰⁵⁵ BO MS G.20 part III, f.66.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Charles Hughes Terrot (1790-1872), matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge 1808, deacon 1818, Dean of Edinburgh and Fife 1836, Bishop of Edinburgh and Pantonian professor 1841, succeeded Bp. Skinner as Primus 1857, 14 years fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. DNB.

¹⁰⁵⁷ BO MS G.20 part III, f.66.

ultimate success ... What they deemed desirable & worth of attainment then, has lost none of its value to our Church since ...¹⁰⁵⁸

Not only was it a worthy aim, but, as Bishop Torry told the Primus, Bishop Skinner

the Disavowal of this Church in its Synodal capacity, of its having adopted the 39 Articles of the Church of England in a Calvinistical sense, is a Duty, which the Synod owes to itself ...

This was exactly what Palmer wanted to hear, as in Torry's words 'it will strengthen your Testimony given to the same effect in Russia ... which it would appear the Holy Synod of Muscovy received with incredulity.' Torry had also told the Primus that in his judgement, Palmer's 'desire of intercommunion with us ought to be freely conceded.'¹⁰⁵⁹

Torry's brother bishops did not share his sympathy for Palmer's enterprise.

Palmer had been told so bluntly by Dean Horsley at Dundee on 19 August: 'The Bishops will not meddle with the matter if they can help it: they will find some way or other to get rid of it, if they can; you may be quite sure of that.' However, he thought they could scarcely avoid sanctioning the XLVIII Propositions on Discipline; to do otherwise would be 'completely cutting away the ground from under their own feet.'

Bishop Moir¹⁰⁶⁰ of Brechin was simply bemused:

... he had much to think of relating to his own diocese - wondered, as did the Primus, what should make me so desirous of Communion with the Russian Church - seemed to understand nothing of my business when I had gone over the whole, but treated it as some undertaking of my own caprice or zeal ...¹⁰⁶¹

¹⁰⁵⁸ Torry to WP, 31 Aug. 1846, BO MS G.20 part III, f.74.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶⁰ David Moir (1777-1847), educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, 1792-6, AM 1812, deacon & priest 1797, coadjutor of Brechin 1837, Bishop of Brechin 1840-47. SEC, p. 372.

¹⁰⁶¹ Ibid., f.67.

Bishop Russell of Glasgow¹⁰⁶² ‘shewed the same disposition as the rest,’ but gave a strong hint that the bishops would all follow the lead of Bishop Terrot of Edinburgh, who was ‘their great man ... all would depend on him.’

When Palmer saw Bishop Skinner on 1 September to enquire about the ‘time and manner’ of his appearing before the Synod, to be held two days hence, the Primus was unhelpfully vague. He told Palmer that the Synod was opened with ‘one or two short Collects ... & the Lord’s Prayer’; but when Palmer evinced his intention to be present at the constitution of the Synod, as representing Bishop Luscombe, the Primus agreed only ‘hesitatingly, & with an attempt to evade it, on the ground of the shortness of the prayers, & the trouble I should be putting myself to, if I came on purpose.’¹⁰⁶³

A friendly clergyman, ‘Mr. Jones’, had shown Palmer the room in Edinburgh where the Synod was to be held, which was Bishop Jolly’s Library, on the first floor of a house in Hill Street belonging to the Pantonian Trust.¹⁰⁶⁴ There, at 10 am on 3 September, Palmer faced the Bishops of Aberdeen, Glasgow, Brechin, and Edinburgh. They began by addressing the preliminary question, ‘how far they should allow me to sit & represent Bp Luscombe & subscribe eventually to the Acts.’ The tone was set by Bishop Terrot of Edinburgh, who ‘spoke in such a manner as to make one feel (the others being silent) that my whole business was with him, and him alone,’ saying ‘sharply, that I could pretend to nothing more than to deliver a Letter: that I could not be received as Bp Luscombe’s representative, nor indeed had any right to be present at their deliberations on the Letter I should present.’ Palmer was

¹⁰⁶² Michael Russell (1781-1848), educated at Glasgow University, matriculated November 1800, MA 1806, LLD 1820, deacon 1808, Dean of the diocese of Edinburgh 1831, Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway 1837, DCL Oxon., 1842. DNB.

¹⁰⁶³ BO MS v.49, f.11.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, f.10, and ASC, pp. 328-9.

not cowed by the bombastic approach of 'their great man,' but retorted 'that whatever directions on those points I was to receive, it was for the Synod to give them after being constituted but what passed at present was only private conversation: that probably it might judge as he said.'¹⁰⁶⁵ Palmer remarked to his journal that he was aware that Bishop Luscombe himself could have had no right to sit with the Synod on Scottish business, but that 'I had no notion of being turned out while they deliberated.' But turned out he was, and told to return at 1 pm. Seeing the way the wind was blowing, he separated from 'the longer document' his credentials from Bishop Luscombe, which he handed to the Primus, before retiring to the room below.

On returning, he was informed by the Primus

with great blandness, & a certain air of self-complacency, that the Synod had taken into its consideration & had settled the whole of my business: & that as Bp Luscombe had sent them a Letter by me, they had determined, as the more becoming course, to deal with him directly, & send him another Letter in return. So that you will not have, he concluded, to put yourself to any further trouble in the matter.¹⁰⁶⁶

Although his initial account appears dispassionate enough, later in the same journal

Palmer gave full rein to his bitter anger and contempt:

... as we see no necessity for the employment of special messengers, we shall send our letter by the ordinary Post, which now costs only a penny. ... Answ. The Synod, it seems, is pleased to be merry; but it might remember the fable of the boys & the frogs. Your Missionary Bishop would no doubt have appreciated such courteous & becoming behaviour ...¹⁰⁶⁷

Anticipating the response of the bishops, Palmer had determined to wrong-foot them, hoping perhaps to postpone the final dismissal of his application. He therefore

begged to be informed, as if surprised, what business the Synod could have considered or settled: saying that I certainly had business to communicate in Bp Luscombe's name, but at present I had actually communicated nothing whatever, beyond my own Credentials.

¹⁰⁶⁵ BO MS G.20 part III, f.79.

¹⁰⁶⁶ BO MS v.49, f. 13.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Ibid., f.16.

The puzzled bishops produced the copy papers Palmer had given each of them, asking if this was not his business. Palmer replied blandly

that it might or it might not be; but that at any rate I had never presented it to the Synod: that it was wholly unauthenticated by any seal or signature: that if I had in fact as they said given those papers away to the Bishops, yet I had done so for their individual information, to prepare them for my mission to the Synod, not to supersede it or to assist them to set it aside.¹⁰⁶⁸

Having confirmed that he wished for a decision ‘on this preliminary question only,’ but that if he were then able to be received he would ‘no doubt ... have a matter to bring before you both by word & written documents on important questions of faith & discipline,’ Palmer again retired. No doubt unimpressed by this legal quibbling, the bishops recalled Palmer and told him that

... they could not receive me as Bp Luscombe’s representative ... that their Synod meets by Canon; & none but Bishops of dioceses in Scotland can sit in it: nor any of them by their representatives: that Bp Luscombe even if he were present himself, could not sit or be present still less by proxy.

Bishop Torry later confirmed that this was correct, saying that Bishop Luscombe ‘could not as our Missionary claim a right to a seat in our Synod, having no *portio gregis*¹⁰⁶⁹ committed to him in Scotland.; and far less could appear there by a representative, a privilege not accorded to any of ourselves.’¹⁰⁷⁰ Palmer attempted to persuade the bishops that, while this ‘might be so,’

it was for them being the Bishops, all met and able if they pleased, & having besides private knowledge of the whole matter ... to signify some other way in which they would & could consider the Appeal (e.g. ...hold another Synod of a different kind or procure a new Canon for a new case &c.)¹⁰⁷¹

The bishops, as Palmer must have anticipated, were not interested in taking the bait. ‘Perceiving that they were quite as fidgety as the old woman in my dream,

¹⁰⁶⁸ BO MS G.20 part III, f.80.

¹⁰⁶⁹ ‘portion of the flock.’

¹⁰⁷⁰ ASC, p.341.

& quite as desirous to get rid of me,' Palmer tried to read out what he had been frantically writing while waiting downstairs, a Report to the Russian Synod of the response, or lack of it, of its Scottish equivalent. He would have read that the Scottish Synod

... declined to receive me, meets only for national affairs, & that they, the Bishops, are incapable or unwilling to act in concert with any other bishops or Bishops out of Scotland in any cause whether of faith or of discipline, or to constitute any other Synod in which other Bishops may be admitted to act in concert with them either personally or through their representatives ... ¹⁰⁷²

but at the words 'only for national affairs,' was brusquely interrupted by Bishop Terrot: 'No we say nothing of the kind. I do not say what we could & could not [do]: [he] utterly disallowed any comment or explanation to be sent to Russia ...' He and the other bishops were equally quick to quash the idea of an alternative Synod or enabling Canon, and to leave no possible loophole for Palmer's ingenuity to exploit:

There is no other way. This is the only Synod: at least this is the only way that we know of [Bp of Edinburgh] No I won't say that either. I won't say what we could do, or what we could do in some other way; what might or might not be: only, you have your answer: Here it is from the Minutes. Take it word for word as it stands: put no interpretations upon it: draw no inferences of our own from it : [but (aside) be gone]. ... Bps. "You have your answer. Cannot you see that any attempt to enter further into conversation is considered by the Synod impertinent & intrusive?"¹⁰⁷³

Seeing the door about to close in his face, Palmer's remonstrations to the bishops became more urgent, as he was now faced with the prospect of being left, as he wrote later, 'in the hands of the Easterns Synodically cut off or abandoned,' with 'the acts & pretensions of the Lady my antagonist, ... thus synodically countenanced or tolerated.'¹⁰⁷⁴ The only alternative would be to withdraw his 'disclaimer of heresy

¹⁰⁷¹ BO MS G.20 part III, f.83.

¹⁰⁷² Ibid., f.81.

¹⁰⁷³ BO MS v.49, ff. 19-20.

¹⁰⁷⁴ BO MS v.49, f.19.

& share together with “swine” that passive communion which it seems you wish to continue to all comers.’ The possible consequences were appalling: ‘the next case perhaps may be that of a Universalist or an enlightened Jew, of a liberalizing Hindoo, Turk, or Pantheist.’¹⁰⁷⁵ The bishops, however, ‘did not seem to attach the slightest importance to the tendency of their refusal and further silence and animus to leave me without any ground to refuse to be reconciled,’ except that Bishop Terrot said he would be concerned on Palmer’s own account, and another ‘that it would be wrong & a great sin.’¹⁰⁷⁶ Despite the sharp exchanges that had taken place, as Palmer was shown out the Bishop of Glasgow reiterated an invitation to dinner at his house that night. Palmer was in no mood to accept: ‘“To be left cut off from your Communion is too serious a matter to be dined upon.” Bp. “Indeed we did not mean any thing of the kind; but you see we are incompetent.”’¹⁰⁷⁷

The next day Palmer called upon each of the bishops in turn. Bishop Terrot was unrepentant: ‘they could do nothing else than they did, & I must take their answer as it stood.’ When Palmer said that he had wanted to say more about the consequences of the bishops’ refusal, but thought they were becoming impatient, the bishop agreed; ‘He confessed that he had been himself very desirous that nothing more should pass, & thought it very inconvenient to have more conversation (in the Synod).’¹⁰⁷⁸ Bishop Skinner, upbraided by Palmer for causing him to ‘run my head against a point of form’, likewise said that

there was no other way of proceeding that he knew of: and besides he confessed that they desired to avoid entering into the matter; & thought that they were quite powerless to deal with such questions as it involved; & that it would be inexpedient in the highest degree to raise them.¹⁰⁷⁹

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷⁶ BO MS G.20 part III, f.84.

¹⁰⁷⁷ BO MS v.49, f.20.

¹⁰⁷⁸ BO MS G.20 part III, f.86.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ibid., f.89.

Palmer retorted that while he sympathised with them, 'the first question is what is duty; the next what will be the results of doing our duty, & how it may be best done.' The bishop was unable to say how Palmer might counter any Eastern demand that he should take the bishops' silence 'for an allowance of or indifference to the charge,' and attempted to laugh the matter off, saying Palmer 'was too conscientious ... if all others were like me perhaps I might do something. ... he saw I was in a difficulty now & felt for me; & respected me ... "My good friend, ... you take it too much to heart & make too much of it." ' They argued for a while about how Palmer might have done things differently, until the bishop, perhaps out of exhaustion, 'at last gave up his objection.' Palmer remarked that 'for the inaction of the Anglican Church there is the excuse of a civil bond; for the silence of the Scottish there is no excuse, at least none that can be pleaded or sound reasonable to the Easterns'; the bishop that he saw Palmer's difficulty, but should be sorry to see him reconciled to the Eastern Church. Palmer 'reminded him of my dream & made him remark how it was coming true & that I had some grounds for hope in it - He said " perhaps others may some day stand in our places, & you may succeed with them"' .¹⁰⁸⁰

The dream was also 'talked over' with Bishop Russell of Glasgow, who

said I must have recognized something of the old woman's sharpness in Bp Terrot. He said he confessed the result of the day's business so far as I was concerned was painful to his feelings (without implying that he would have done otherwise) ... that I did not owe the Bps many thanks.

Returning to Palmer a glove he had dropped in his house, and 'asking if I had thrown that down as a gauntlet?', the Bishop said that though they had been sorry not to see him, Palmer had after all done the right thing in refusing the invitation to dinner. Like

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ibid., f. 91.

the others 'He could not suggest any excuse for my not reconciling myself to the Easterns,' saying with ponderous Victorian humour, 'We shall be very happy to see you even if you *do* come back [in quality of an Eastern Priest or Deacon] with a beard, though then you'll be a *barb-arian*.'¹⁰⁸¹

A further blow was struck to Palmer's hopes by the announcement in the London papers of the sudden death of Bishop Luscombe.¹⁰⁸² It was not a complete surprise, as Luscombe had told him that he thought his death was 'probably very near' when they had spoken two months before, in Paris¹⁰⁸³; but it removed at once a pillar of a support, a sympathiser with his views and aims, and his connection to the Scottish Church. Bishop Russell remarked tactlessly, but no doubt with feeling, that he was 'sorry to see Bishop Luscombe's death in the papers ... but not at all sorry that that *link* should be broken.'¹⁰⁸⁴ Palmer consoled himself with the knowledge that the Appeal 'had been brought into Scotland before Bishop Luscombe's death, and ... accepted and sustained by the Senior of the Scottish Bishops,' and that legally speaking it had not been formally presented to the bishops either singly, or collectively in Synod.¹⁰⁸⁵ However, even Palmer recognised the realities of the situation:

It seemed that the Controversy was pretty well decided: that the Scottish Bishops had Synodically avowed themselves either to hold, or deliberately to tolerate those heresies, and that passivity of Communion which was imputed to them equally by [Princess Galitsin] on the one side, and the Russian Church on the other; and that nothing remained but to return to the Russian Arch-Priest, and to confess that there was no longer any thing to be pleaded against his imputations.¹⁰⁸⁶

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid., f. 106, and ASC, p.334.

¹⁰⁸² Luscombe had died of a heart attack at Lausanne on 24 August.

¹⁰⁸³ ASC, p. 335.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Ibid., p.337.

Or, as he put it more bluntly in his journal, 'Having been thus summarily rejected or rather jested with by the Scottish Bishops & their Synod, ... I ought to redeem my pledge by coming back to Russia, & renouncing the Scottish Church & Communion, in whatever words may be put into my mouth, as being really, as the Easterns object, heretical.'¹⁰⁸⁷ Being unwilling to take this course, he cast around frantically for reasons not to. Since 'the Apostle' had decreed that a heretic should not be rejected

till after the first & second admonition ... surely must it be allowed to be reasonable & proper that an individual under authority should shew at least a like patience towards that which he has hitherto regarded as the authority of a true & orthodox though particular Church, before he submits to the voice of another similar particular authority ... I trust therefore I shall not be thought to be merely trifling, or shrinking from the performance of my pledge, when I say that before I definitively submit to the sentence of the Eastern Church, I will once & again ... renew that application, which has now been so summarily dismissed.¹⁰⁸⁸

This was specious nonsense. No 'sentence' had been passed by the Eastern Church; he had given an undertaking which he had not expected to have to fulfil. The answer of the Scottish Church through its bishops had revealed its true character, on his own principles: to go on describing it as one 'particular Church' compared to 'another similar particular authority' was dishonest.

The immediate consequence was that Palmer refused to worship in the dioceses of the Scottish bishops. This was inconsistent if he genuinely thought the matter was still undecided, and had the effect of being 'noticed with ... expressions of surprise and annoyance; and was attributed to some sort of pettishness or irritation.'¹⁰⁸⁹ Bishop Skinner wrote in exasperation to Dr. Routh:

...I am induced to trouble you with a letter.. to import to you the nature & circumstances of your talented friend Mr. Wm Palmer's recent visit, and interview with the Bishops of our Scotch Episcopal Church.

¹⁰⁸⁷ BO MS v.49, f.23.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Ibid., f.24.

¹⁰⁸⁹ ASC, p.337.

He related the progress of Palmer's application, and how his 'singular request' to be admitted to the Synod as Bishop Luscombe's representative had been declined. He concluded

... we have all been grieved to find that Mr. Palmer feels, I fear, most indignant at his uncurteous [sic] reception, and hesitates not to talk of it and characterise it, as in fact an act of excommunication thrusting him out of our communion - insomuch that he would not even go to Church with us last Sunday, and talks very foolishly of becoming a Convert at once to the Greek Church.

I have troubled you so much at length with this absurd affair, with the view of your having it in your power to mollify the wrath of your poor friend, who possesses many estimable qualities, altho' upon this unfortunate subject he really acts the part of a crazy person.¹⁰⁹⁰

Crazy or not, Palmer needed some connection with the Scottish Church in order to take matters further. He therefore wrote to Bishop Torry, expressing himself 'most desirous of finding any good ground for keeping the matter still open,' and suggesting that Torry judge the case 'as an individual Bishop, and afterwards with your Diocesan Synod.' Palmer offered to reside for this purpose in Peterhead, and become Torry's 'Deacon and servant.' Bishop Torry, however, failed to understand why Palmer should be obliged to reconcile himself to the East, or withdraw from public worship in other Scottish dioceses. If Palmer were in communion with Torry's diocese alone, it would make him (Torry) 'leader of a Sect.'¹⁰⁹¹ Palmer on the other hand thought that to continue in Communion with the other Scottish dioceses would be to condone the bishops' indifference to passive communion. After a discussion with 'two or three Presbyters of friendly disposition towards the Appeal' from another diocese, Palmer cut the Gordian knot by casting the matter in terms of obedience to his bishop. Bishop Torry had surely made it a condition of sustaining

¹⁰⁹⁰ Skinner to Routh, 12 Sept. 1846, MAG MS 490, f.33.

¹⁰⁹¹ ASC, p. 341.

the Appeal that he resume communion with the other dioceses; it was therefore his duty to submit to his Bishop.¹⁰⁹²

The way was now open for Torry to give Palmer official accreditation, which he did on 7 October. It took the form of a Certificate that Palmer was now his clerk, and a document declaring that Palmer had not, in the Bishop's judgement, cut himself off from the communion of the Scottish Church, and that his Appeal had a just claim to be 'examined into', and if found legitimate, to be heard and judged by the bishops of the Scottish Church. It also officially received him into Communion, and authorised him to assist the clergy, and in particular to preach, while resident in the diocese. This would be so while the bishop considered the Appeal to be still pending, and Palmer did not withdraw from the Communion of any other Scottish bishop or diocese. A visit to all the clergy of the St. Andrew's diocese met with a favourable response; all agreed with Bishop Torry that the Appeal deserved examination, and a fair hearing. Palmer now prepared to return into England to write up the Appeal, preparatory to its being put before the various Diocesan Synods, in the hope that a majority of them would demand a hearing by the bishops.

¹⁰⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 342.

CHAPTER 10

The Struggle Continues

In November 1846 Palmer wrote to his father from Edinburgh to take stock of his position:

I am received by one Bishop in Scotland, and do not yet despair of being ultimately received by the rest. I have no intention of returning to reside in England, still less of returning to any formal and regular ecclesiastical duty in England, so long as my *Appeal* may be pending in Scotland.¹⁰⁹³

In the event of a final decision against him, Palmer supposed he would give up his Oxford fellowship, and be reconciled to the Eastern Church, after 'as long a delay as possible,' spent perhaps travelling in the East as his father had suggested.

Significantly, his first stop would be Rome, to make himself acquainted with 'all that they can say against the Greeks, on the great point of the Procession especially.' He was quite frank as to why: 'if my convictions could be altered on that point so as to bring them into agreement with the Roman doctrine ... I should greatly prefer submitting myself to the Roman Communion here in the West, to submitting myself to the Eastern Church.'¹⁰⁹⁴ In the meantime, the work he had to do would be as well done at Mixbury as anywhere, and that being so, 'though I certainly do not mean to do any act to bring myself into ecclesiastical connection with the Bishop of Oxford, nor even with any parochial clergyman in his diocese,' he put himself at his father's service, 'because I suppose that I might, very likely, be occasionally of use to you ... provided only that there be no reference to the Bishop of the diocese.'

¹⁰⁹³ WP to W J P, 3 Nov. 1846, MFP, vol. I, p. 436.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Ibid.

His father declined this 'offer of assistance affectionately though singularly made':¹⁰⁹⁵

Much as I stand in need of assistance ... I think you will honour me for saying that I must decline it, as it would clearly be inconsistent with his duty for any priest ... to use the services of a clergyman ... who is unwilling to be found in ecclesiastical connection with the Bishop.

Lord Selborne does not quote that part of the reply that betrayed his father's hurt at Palmer's breach of Communion with his family:

However in appearance it might remove the offence of your not communicating in the Church, where I officiate, and your Mother and Brethren are partakers, and though you might be willing to take passive communion at the hands of any other servant of the Church of England and of America, who would be strange in a manner to you and you to him ... yet I feel it a thing quite impossible for me to receive my own son and my deacon, upon that footing.¹⁰⁹⁶

Nonetheless, and to his credit, he welcomed his son home, and was content to let the future take care of itself:

You may be assured that we shall ever rejoice to have you here, comfort you, nurse you, work with you, and share with you in every good thing wherewith God has blessed us. What is still in the womb of Time may never come to its birth.¹⁰⁹⁷

He could not approve, however, of the prospect either of reconciliation to the Greek Church, which, 'while she persists in anathematising the Roman, would be to make oneself a partaker in her sins,' nor of travelling to Rome to go into the question of the *filioque*: 'it would be to no purpose, so long as the Bull *Regnans in Excelsis* remains upon the record.'¹⁰⁹⁸

Palmer must have made substantial progress with *An Appeal to the Scottish Church* by the following February, as his father was able to write to Roundell that:

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid., p.437.

¹⁰⁹⁶ W J P to WP, 5 Nov. 1846, LP MS 1894, f.135.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Ibid., MFP, vol. I, p. 437.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Ibid., LP MS 1894, f.135.

I consider the introductory narrative which runs through 3 or 4 books extremely interesting and creditable, and productive of so strong a case with respect to the true character of the English Church ... and the unworthy inconsistent conduct of its professed members, that I think nothing but indiscretion and want of judgement in the management of it can prevent its having a considerable effect and being much read and considered.¹⁰⁹⁹

He was 'less satisfied' as the book went on:

my impression is that it would be better to go far less into the detail of what past [sic] in his last visit to St. Petersburg than he has done - it is in this part that I fear he will both tire and be thought to have taken more upon him than he need have done, and not known when he might have retired without discredit from the field.

He rightly commented that 'the results of ... his last journey to St. Petersburg must have been personally mortifying,' because of the behaviour of the parties 'for whose sake he appears to have done so much, or rather whose private affairs and feelings he somewhat incautiously makes the occasion of a great and important public controversy.' He accurately forecasted the results of his son's stubbornness and inconsistency:

A fear is awakened in my breast that he will by persisting drive himself from our communion, from which assuredly he cannot be driven (where if he stays, and knows how to use his weapons, he is so strong that he may by God's helping be an instrument of much good), and that quite at variance with principles he himself lays down.¹¹⁰⁰

In June Palmer was moved to write to his father regretting that 'instead of answering your reasonable and natural hopes or expectations,' he had been 'as a duckling to the poor hen which has hatched it, and which it cruelly and ungratefully (as it must seem to her) torments by constantly running into a foreign element.'¹¹⁰¹ He admitted that he had been guilty of the 'faults of wilfulness, self-confidence, eccentricity, undutifulness towards authority, rashness etc.,' imputed to him by his

¹⁰⁹⁹ W J P to RP, 27 Feb. 1847, LP MS 1878, f. 109.

¹¹⁰⁰ Ibid., f. 110.

¹¹⁰¹ WP to W J P, 27 June 1847, LP MS 1894, f. 145.

father 'as the causes which are leading me so far astray,' and speculated that 'if I had been better, and more like the rest of your children, I might have repelled you less from that progress in religious belief which has resulted from my studies during the last 14 years.' He ended by professing his unworthiness of 'the great kindness and affection' his father had always shown him, and expressing his gratitude for having learned from his father 'the better and higher form of the belief, spirit and practice of the Anglican Church.'¹¹⁰³

His father, seemingly unimpressed, replied in schoolmasterly vein that
Palmer's letter

suggests (by the recurrence of the words 'feeling' and 'belief', or 'I believe'), the following questions:-

(1) How far feeling may be safely admitted, and not rather rejected, as a religious principle, or the term used to denote a rational conviction of the truth?

(2) Does not the term 'belief', 'ἡ πίστις', and 'I believe' (πιστεύω - convey a certain definite sense, in the language of the Church? And ought not a man to be afraid to say, "my belief is different from yours", as justifying or even accounting for a growing alienation of mind and 'feeling' towards a spiritual parent [?]¹¹⁰⁴

He returned to his old theme:

God has given to no Bishop, or Pope, or Patriarch, on earth ... power to pull down and destroy States and kingdoms, and depose princes, and absolve people from their oaths ... if any Person at any time hath assumed such power in the name of God, he is, pro tanto, both a liar and an Antichrist.¹¹⁰⁵

1. The Princess Reappears

At this same time an unexpected letter arrived at Mixbury from Paris, where a female cousin, Mrs. George Palmer, had met Princess Galitsin. The Princess seemed 'very much excited on matters of religion, but ... an interesting and cultivated

¹¹⁰³ From the same letter, LP MS 2835, f.36.

¹¹⁰⁴ W J P to WP, 6 July 1847, LP MS 1894, f. 145.

woman.’ The Princess had heard a report from Russia that Palmer ‘was going into the Greek Church,’ and feared that the Russian clergy would urge him to attack her. ‘She thinks he has great power to harm her, and knowing the intensity of his religious beliefs, she fears he may consider himself obliged to do so.’¹¹⁰⁵ She therefore sought an assurance that he would ‘promise not to interfere further in her affairs, nor attack her in Russia.’¹¹⁰⁶ Palmer replied at length, enclosing copies of all the documents relevant to his appearance before the Scottish Synod. Whilst being unwilling to do anything unnecessarily to ‘annoy or disoblige’ the Princess, he would still do his duty towards the Church, regardless of personal considerations. He could not see any grounds for apprehension on the Princess’ part, and denied any personal ill-feeling towards her. He undertook to keep her informed, and in a postscript agreed not to attack her in Russia, on the bizarre understanding that she would ‘interfere in his affairs’ by writing to the Scottish Synod to put her point of view. Typically, he enclosed a draft of the sort of letter she might send.

Mrs. George Palmer wrote again in August, hoping that Palmer ‘would ... embrace any opportunity ... of ceasing further proceedings,’ as any further denunciation or publicity would lose the Princess the protection of the Emperor, and leave her liable to the legal penalties of ‘*death*, or ...perpetual imprisonment with flagellations, or banishment to Siberia...’¹¹⁰⁷ Enclosed was a note from the Princess, which said that if Palmer thought she might take his salutations

as an impertinence ... he knows me very little. My rule is *charity, peace, concord*. Nothing of what he has done ... will ever prevent my holding out the hand of brotherhood; and I forgive him, as I desire to be myself forgiven by God.

¹¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁵ Mrs. G. P to W J P, 3 July 1847, BO MS 10.6.(3) C, f.70.

¹¹⁰⁶ ASC, pp. 363-4.

¹¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 366. Zernov believes these punishments were fictitious. Z, p.103.

She accepted the idea of an interview, 'on condition that he sets aside all irritation and ill-will.'¹¹⁰⁸

Palmer replied to his cousin that there were certainly many motives that might persuade him to give up further proceedings, but not if the alternative were

renouncing ... and despairing of the Anglican Church and Communion, separating from all my family, and becoming to my own kindred and people nearly as unintelligible a fanatic, as if I were to turn Chinaman, and wear a Mandarin's dress and tail¹¹⁰⁹

graphically illustrating how culturally alienated Palmer feared he would become if he embraced Orthodoxy. To the Princess herself he wrote that appearances 'are certainly much in favour of your pretensions, and much against mine,' and assured her that he would not be putting himself to the heavy expense of publishing the *Appeal* 'from a desire to persecute a Lady, whom I had no expectation of ever coming across again.' As the Princess had left Paris for Germany and Geneva, her response had to await her arrival in England in October.

In the meantime, Mrs. George Palmer was anxious to persuade Palmer 'of the reality of her [the Princess'] sufferings':

her letters are really opened; her servants are really bought and converted into spies, by the Russians, she has twice been poisoned - (acetate of Morphia) & now she is fed from the public Table of Tivoli, not daring to have food dressed in her own house.¹¹¹⁰

Palmer's reply spoke of the Princess in surprisingly warm and generous terms

It is quite unnecessary ... to seek to engage sympathy & pity on her side. I well know that she is a lady of very agreeable manners & of cultivated mind & good talents; & that she has many amiable qualities; & further, I believe her to be quite sincere in her religious opinions, [which] are much freer in her

¹¹⁰⁸ ASC, p. 366.

¹¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.367.

¹¹¹⁰ Mrs. G. Palmer to WP, 15 Aug. 1847, BO MS 10.6. (3) C, f.70.

from the mixture of mere sectarian prejudices than is commonly the case with native Anglicans ...¹¹¹¹

Knowing that she must be unhappy, he said, he pitied her, describing his feelings towards her in intriguing terms:

The collision into which I have been accidentally brought with her... has inspired me with a sort of interest in her which I cannot easily explain, & which is certainly the very contrary of anything like personal enmity.¹¹¹²

September found Palmer back in Edinburgh for the Episcopal Synod, for no other reason, since he was not yet ready to make application to the Diocesan Synods, than his dream of the old lady. His reliance on the dream appeared to be vindicated when the Bishop of Glasgow invited him to dine with the Bishops 'on *Friday next*'; and Palmer was struck by the significance of Bishop Skinner's parting words of the year before when he discovered only three out of the five bishops of the previous year present. It is entirely characteristic of Palmer that in the *Appeal* he went on from these observations, which were eccentric enough, to a digression about 'a vision caused by ether,' and popular belief in supernatural punishment for blasphemy.¹¹¹³ Other, practical, reasons for returning to Scotland were to show his face in the diocese of St. Andrews, and to ensure the communication to the Synod of a letter he had written to Bishop Torry. This year he accepted the invitation to dinner with the bishops, and found that the letter had not been read to the Synod. Bishop Russell's daughter appears to have taken Palmer's side, saying 'that certainly the Bishops could not have given the matter much attention, and her father, on her asking, could not remember even who the lady was.'¹¹¹⁴ When Palmer suggested to a Mr. Ranken the next day that 'the Bishops could not see anything but a whim or extravagance of

¹¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, f.72.

¹¹¹² *Ibid.*, f.73.

¹¹¹³ See ASC, pp. 401-2.

my own in the affair,' he agreed, saying that 'the Bishops had used the expression "a sort of well-intentioned monomania".'¹¹¹⁵ Palmer noted that they thought 'the whole business at an end ... I had probably made it up, and am now good friends with the lady, and so it would no doubt drop.'¹¹¹⁶

While he was in Edinburgh, Palmer was visited by Count Alexander Tolstoy.¹¹¹⁷ He, together with the Russian chaplain M. Popov and 'a Scottish clergyman,' Mr. Gordon,¹¹¹⁸ visited churches there, or, in Palmer's phrase, 'lionized.'¹¹¹⁹ At St. Columba's the visitors were gratified to see a Rood-screen being erected, as well as by the 'images' in the stained glass, and the 'Scottish Communion-Office', with its variations from, and corrections to, the English Office. One of the visitors remarked to Palmer that here was something to justify his pretensions: 'One might well suppose that people who hold this belief, and who so furnish their Churches, would easily unite with us. But we saw nothing of this yesterday in York Minster. All there was thoroughly Protestant, and made one shudder.'¹¹²⁰ Palmer dissuaded them from going into other, larger churches nearby:

¹¹¹⁴ Entry for 3 Sept. 1847, BO MS 10.6. (3) C, f. 88.

¹¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹¹⁶ LP MS 1895, f. 170.

¹¹¹⁷ Referred to as 'Count N. N.' in *Appeal*, p. 404 ff. Count Alexander Petrovich Tolstoy (1801-1873), educ. at home, became a military cadet 1817, adjutant to HQ 1st Army staff, 1821. 1824-6 expedition to Caspian & Ural seas to fight pirates. Order of St. Vladimir (4th cl.) 1826 Joined Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff, posted to Paris embassy. 1827 Sent on spying missions to Constantinople and Serbia & Austria. 1828 Joined the Cavalry Guard Regiment, 1828-9 Fought against the Turks. Order of St. Anne (3rd & 2nd cl.) Given an inscribed golden sword for bravery. 1829 ADC to Emperor Nicholas I. 1830 Retired from military service with the rank of Chamberlain; First Secretary of mission to Greece. 1831 Chamberlain & director of the Dept. of Economics. 1834 Privy Counsellor, app'ted civil Governor of Tver. 1837 Military Governor of Odessa as Maj-Gen., with civil duties, until 1840. 1855 Head of the Territorial Army. Sept. 1856 Ober-Prokuror of the Holy Synod. Involved in the reforms of Emperor Alexander II, which influenced Church affairs. Took an interest in synodal & diocesan affairs. Also Secretary of the secret committee on schismatics. 1862 Retired as Ober-Prokuror; member of the State Council. 1873 Travelled to Jerusalem, died on way back in Florence. RBS, pp. 33-4.

¹¹¹⁸ Most likely James Frederick Skinner Gordon (1821-1904) of St. Andrews University, MA 1842, Hobart College New York USA, DD 1860, Edinburgh Theological College 1842-3, ordained priest 1844, incumbent of St. Andrews Glasgow 1844-91, author. SEC, p. 273.

¹¹¹⁹ BO MS v.49, f.89.

¹¹²⁰ ASC, pp. 404-5.

You will find in them nothing but an area covered with boxes, and perhaps surrounded with galleries. There are, as [Princess Galitsin] rightly says, “two contrary Anglicanisms”, joined together within one external organisation. “It is inconceivable,” the Count said, “perfectly inconceivable, how you can go on thus holding two different religions at once, which are directly contrary one to the other.”¹¹²¹

Having ‘attended personally upon the Bishop [of St. Andrews] “as his Deacon”,’ Palmer went to London to meet Princess Galitsin. Just before he saw her¹¹²² Mrs. George Palmer told him ‘She seems to have a great horror of your going into the Greek Church she thinks she is driving you to perdition.’¹¹²³ Palmer replied:

She seemed inclined to know all I was going to print. She insisted, that they were [?] seriously desirous of finding occasion against her: that ... a new Oukasy has come out making the first and least punishment perpetual cloistering with daily penance, i.e. flagellations.¹¹²⁴

If the account in the *Appeal* is taken at face value, the encounters between Palmer and the Princess were, if frank, entirely harmonious. The Princess had been heartened by a ‘conference of five hours’ with an Anglican clergyman, Mr. Hood¹¹²⁵, the Vicar of the parish in Essex where she had been staying with Palmer’s Aunt Mary. At its conclusion the clergyman ‘declared her views on Baptism were undoubtedly orthodox, that she is certainly no Calvinist, & that in most respects she holds opinions quite consonant to Church principles.’ Aunt Mary was not convinced: ‘this ... if correct surely shews a duplicity that has some further object in view.’¹¹²⁶

The Princess, having confirmed that Palmer had anathematised the 44 Propositions at

¹¹²¹ Ibid., p.405.

¹¹²² In ASC pp. 412-3, Palmer states that he ‘saw her at various times from the 16th of October to the 28th, when she returned to Paris.’

¹¹²³ Mrs. G. Palmer to WP, 15 Oct. 1847, BO MS 10.6.(3) C, ff. 92-3.

¹¹²⁴ Ibid., f.96.

¹¹²⁵ Elisha William Hood (1804-1869), of Wadham College, Oxford, matriculated June 1820, MA 1827, Vicar of Nazeing, Essex, 1834-64, rector of Ilston, Co. Glamorgan, 1865-1869. AO, p. 685.

the bidding of the Russian Synod, told him, ‘Then there is not a shadow of Anglicanism remaining in you: no, not a shadow! And I am quite astonished, that you should have found a Bishop in Scotland, though it *is* only one, to give you any countenance.’¹¹²⁷ Although at a friend’s insistence she listened as Palmer read over to her the letter he had drafted for her to send to the Scottish bishops, she declined to adopt it or petition them. She was happy enough that Palmer had ‘failed in his efforts against her,’ but despised the bishops for lacking the courage to say something instead of avoiding the issue. She maintained the truth of the Gospel by professing and acting upon it as an individual, not by addressing ‘Authorities or Synods.’ Besides, ‘the Scottish Bishops would no more attend to the Appeal as coming from her, than they had attended to it as coming from their own Missionary Bishop. ... it would be all the more ill-judged in her to make the experiment, as she could gain nothing by it.’ Even Palmer ‘could not but recognise that there was force in some at least of these reasons.’¹¹²⁸ The *Appeal* suggests that she added that ‘it would be displeasing to her husband’; Palmer’s journal, however, records that it was he who ‘suggested adding to the other reasons ... that it would annoy her husband, who before called me and her by the name of two characters from *Notre Dame de Paris*.’¹¹²⁹

The parties agreed to disagree amicably, the Princess reflecting that ‘all had been brought about by higher powers, for evil on my side, and for good on hers.’ She confessed to having sent Bishop Luscombe’s *Sermons*, and their refutation, to the Archpriest, and when Palmer told her that far from being displeased by this, he had

¹¹²⁶ Entry for 25 Oct. 1847, BO MS v.49, f.112.

¹¹²⁷ ASC, p. 414.

¹¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.417-8.

¹¹²⁹ Quasimodo and Esmerelda perhaps? BO MS 10.6.(3) C, ff. 97-8.

‘admired her tact and boldness,’ she said if so he must be ‘very generous; as her sending those documents had certainly done me much harm; and had made a very unfavourable impression against me, and against Bishop Luscombe.’¹¹³⁰

These remarks were made in the course of Palmer’s reading over to the Princess, at her request, the entire manuscript of *An Appeal to the Scottish Church*. The harmony described in the book¹¹³¹ is not reflected in Palmer’s journal, which on 25 October recorded that:

After dinner at Lowndes St. I read to her all that related to my first visit to Paris ... She said that I had placed her in a bad & ridiculous light - as a vain, dissipated, egotistical, talkative vapourish woman, when illness at the time was problematical - that now I knew her in her true character, I ought to rewrite all that part, which I had written before from my own pride & pique calumniously for her: that her husband & friends would be excessively annoyed to read such misrepresentation: that some of her friends at Paris had been afraid for her lest I should print calumnies - but they had never dreamed of my setting her in a ridiculous light ... she warned me - I should suffer for it, as God punished all those who illtreated her & most severely too ... I must remember that she also had written her memoirs in full: that now we were good friends, she had resolved to retouch & alter all that she had written of our relations from a false point of view with any illfeeling or dislike & I ought to do the same ... I should open my eyes & give up my pride & spite ...¹¹³²

No trace of this outburst, which verges on the hysterical, appeared in the published book. Peace seems to have been restored by 1 November, when Palmer wrote to his Aunt Mary that : ‘our communications have had one result; that is, that she seems satisfied that I have no personal pique or animosity against her; and we have parted very good friends, though still essentially antagonists as before.’ He ‘gave her credit for sincerity, and for many amiable qualities,’ but had learned ‘that her flightiness and excitement in religious matters is even greater than I had supposed - and, if it went only a little further than it does, would lead me to the idea that she

¹¹³⁰ Ibid., p.419 ff.

¹¹³¹ Although the Princess does complain of ‘some unfairness’ ASC, p.421.

¹¹³² BO MS v.49, f.112 ff.

was not altogether a sane person.' He reflected, apparently without irony, that 'I know how very difficult it is to say, at what point sanity becomes insanity. Most people, perhaps, are more or less insane, or have the seeds of insanity or a tendency towards it, on some point or other.'¹¹³³

The Princess continued to correspond with Palmer and those of his family with whom she had become acquainted. In December the same year Palmer even sent her a 'Chatelaine'¹¹³⁴ as a present. Mrs. George Palmer was 'much amused with a story she heard from a dear friend of hers the other day, viz. that you had converted the Princess who consequently driven from her own country had come to find shelter & live with you in England.'¹¹³⁵ Palmer's journal records the Princess' fierce denials of having spread the rumours at St. Petersburg that Palmer was a fanatic come to persecute her for her religion, who had been turned out of their house¹¹³⁶:

to whom would you have had me speak? ... all those to whom I should have said a word of what I was suffering, would have hit me a slap directly in the middle of my face. As for my excellent Prince I cannot answer for it that he may not have spoken of the ill blood you caused him: He could speak to all the world, and the openness of his character makes him often let out.

According to the Princess, the Russian authorities had punished her by taking her children from her:

I will not notice what you say of my children being torn from me & placed at the Smolnoy - I can never speak with coolness of the most horrible of my tortures, of the wound which gapes in my heart. Only I would have you to know that there are no Vacations at the Smolnoy - & that girls of the rank of my daughter have not been educated there for 20 years past, unless orphans.¹¹³⁷

¹¹³³ WP to AM, 1 Nov. 1847, LP MS 1895, f.150.

¹¹³⁴ BO MS 10.6.(3) C, f. 119. 'Chatelaine: an ornamental appendage worn by ladies at their waist, having short chains attached for keys, scissors, penknife, thimble-case, etc.' *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd Ed'n (OUP, 1968), p.296.

¹¹³⁵ AM to W J P, 12 Dec. 1847, BO MS 10.6.(3) C, f. 119.

¹¹³⁶ ASC, p.82.

¹¹³⁷ BO MS 10.6.(3) C, ff. 144-146.

In the Autumn of 1848 Mrs. George Palmer¹¹³⁸ died suddenly 'of a premature confinement'. The Princess wrote to Palmer to ask for details, and 'in what belief she died.' Palmer was only able to say that whilst 'she certainly died in the Anglican Church,' she had 'shewn some disposition to join the RC Communion,' and 'even went so far as to place herself in communication with Dr. Wiseman a RC Bishop,' although this produced 'no immediate result.' Among her reasons for this step was Palmer's admission, which he thought he had made to the Princess herself, or in her presence, that he 'saw no prospect of my being able to remain in the Anglican Communion ... it being evident that hitherto that Anglicanism which I have defended has been on the losing, while that which I have been fighting against has been on the winning side.'¹¹³⁹

After congratulating the Princess on becoming a grandmother, Palmer set out with extraordinary frankness to his 'antagonist' his 'religious convictions & occupations':

I become more & more a fool or a monomaniac to the apprehension of all around me, even of those I love best & most respect: Certainly this is not pleasant: also as I find myself more & more disowned by the Anglican Communion to which I naturally belonged, & more & more obliged by my convictions to fight against all around me; I cannot help sighing to be free from so odious & egotistical a position.¹¹⁴⁰

He could not submit to Rome, because to abandon Anglicanism he had to be sufficiently convinced 'of its "Evangelical" character i.e. ... of its nullity,' which as yet he was not, and because he could not believe Roman doctrines. He revealed to the Princess precisely why, on the other hand, the prospect of being reconciled to the Eastern Church was 'not inviting' to his feelings:

¹¹³⁸ Mrs. George Palmer - see LP MS 2835, f. 133.

¹¹³⁹ WP to PG, 15 Oct. 1848, BO MS v.49, f.166.

¹¹⁴⁰ Ibid., f.168.

To say nothing of the utter isolation among my own people which such a change would involve, the Eastern Church itself, in practise, has its faults, & faults for which I have no sort of liking. I see the narrow bigotry of its members the ritual formalities, the gross ignorance of the people, the unquestionable superstition which is popularly mixed up with their Icon & Saint Worship, & which is practically shared & defended or winked at, from a feeling of necessity by the Clergy.¹¹⁴¹

Although he added that he disapproved of 'Civil Rulers' assuming the position of Heads of the Church, this confession shows that Palmer was, despite his wide knowledge of Orthodoxy and his many Russian friends, still very much an Anglican in his approach to the Eastern Church. There was also the cultural divide to consider:

if I barely joined the Eastern Church, without dissembling my utter aversion for such abuses, should I do you think, be "received with open arms by the Orthodox"? And if not, can you conceive a less enviable position (so far as worldly comfort is concerned, which we ought not indeed to think about, but still cannot help more or less feeling) than that of causing distress & astonishment & misconception to all those with whom I naturally had most sympathy, & being utterly separated from them, without even being acceptable to these new brethren by whom you were received!¹¹⁴²

The impasse left him with a crisis of confidence: 'I feel more & more that the person who is maintaining what I believe to be the truth is [in] every way unworthy to maintain, & incapable of maintaining it.' This unworthiness was symbolised by a dream involving the Princess, in which he saw 'a very beautiful falcon with bright blue & partycoloured feathers: And you were the falcon: And you said in a tone of annoyance & aversion "What does the Man mean? He has been twice offering me baked pork.' He interpreted this to mean that the 'food' he had been offering, in the form of his belief or opinions, was 'the flesh of an unclean animal, filthy and forbidden food,' and therefore the Princess refused to listen to him

not because her opinions or desertion of the Russian Church are good, (for she is represented as a Falcon) but because he who offers her better opinions,

¹¹⁴¹ Ibid., ff. 169-170.

¹¹⁴² Ibid.

is sinful & unworthy & turns that which ought then appear [sic] as the flesh of a lamb into unclean food.¹¹⁴³

The Princess' reaction to this unusual letter must remain a mystery, as from this point on she disappears from Palmer's journals and correspondence. As Palmer wrote to Bishop Torry, 'What the final issue of the controversy shall be, depends no longer on us, but on others; and in the first instance upon the Clergy and Bishops of the Scottish part of *'our'* Communion.'¹¹⁴⁴ When the failure of the Scottish Episcopal Church to support him became clear, Palmer had to concede that she had been right in her view of the Church of England, and he had been wrong. There were no grounds on which to oppose her any longer: the field was hers.

¹¹⁴³ Ibid., f.171.

¹¹⁴⁴ ASC, p. 423.

CHAPTER 11

Passing into Oblivion

In February of 1848 Palmer had received what in other circumstances might have been a heartening tribute to his achievement in Russia, in the form of a book published by M. Mouravieff dealing in part with English ecclesiastical history. Palmer's influence is apparent in Mouravieff's description of the Oxford colleges, 'which are rather Ecclesiastical than secular bodies, semi-monastic Foundations.'

Mouravieff went on to say that

Though the Orthodox Church could not take a single Deacon who came as an individual into Russia, to represent a whole Church, or accept his explanations as sufficient, still the visit of Mr. Palmer has done much good for his Church, in making it known to the Orthodox Church. He has established a distinction in our ideas for the Anglican Church from the Protestant, with which we frequently before confounded it ...¹¹⁴⁵

This was Dead Sea fruit; Palmer could take little pleasure in having recommended to the Russians a Church that regarded him as a maverick and a nuisance, that refused to conform to his interpretation of its character and doctrines, and that he feared he would inevitably have to leave. He regretted taking the course that had brought him to this point:

The conclusion often forced upon my mind is, that those are not only happiest, but best, who are mercifully left in comparative ignorance, or even positive error, while they have upon the whole dispositions and grace to act up to the light that they have ... if it is good and right in one sense to pursue truth yet in another sense it is a painful and terrible responsibility ... Certainly for myself, when I began the study of Divinity I very little dreamed what it would lead to.¹¹⁴⁶

¹¹⁴⁵ BO MS v.49, f. 159.

¹¹⁴⁶ WP to AM, 21 Nov. 1848, LP MS 1895, f. 171.

Palmer had been afflicted by gout from November 1847 to March 1848, which had delayed progress with the Appeal. It was not until the summer of 1848 that Palmer was able to send to the Archpriest Koutnevich a letter written in 1846 on the subject of the Procession. Writing ‘for the discharge of my conscience,’ Palmer admitted that having read Zoernikaff, ‘I feel obliged to give up the Latin opinion and phraseology as untenable, and to confess that, as far as I can see, Orthodoxy is with the Eastern Church.’¹¹⁴⁷ He later added, ‘the Latin doctrine now appears to me to be *in itself* not only an error, but a real heresy subversive of the Faith ...’¹¹⁴⁸ As the letter to the Princess was to show, however, this was of little comfort to him so far as the prospect of reconciliation to the Orthodox Church was concerned.

By November 1848 Palmer was back in Edinburgh, ‘lodging with a Landlady of a singular name.’¹¹⁴⁹ Although he had the benefit of ‘the most charming look out from my windows possible upon Princes St Gardens and the Castle and Old Town opposite,’ it was a dangerously unhealthy place to be:

We too have the Cholera now in London, Hull, Newcastle and Edinburgh from whence I now write - here in Edinburgh it has shown itself about a week, and has killed about 35 persons, nearly all the cases that have occurred. Certainly, if filth and stench have any thing to do with it, the Scotch ought to have it in its worst form.¹¹⁵⁰

The *Appeal* was now printed, all but the Preface and Conclusion, and Palmer now sought the approval and sanction of his bishop, feeling that ‘a cause involving important public questions of Discipline and Doctrine’ could not otherwise be conducted by an individual Deacon. Bishop Torry, however, seemed anxious to distance himself from Palmer. He granted Palmer’s request - ‘although I do not see

¹¹⁴⁷ ASC, p. 429.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 432.

¹¹⁴⁹ ‘Mrs. Gentleman’s Lodgings, 93 Princes St.’ WP to GHP, undated, LP MS 1903, f.79.

¹¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

how it can be useful to you' - to have his name inserted 'in Oliver & Boyd's Almanack, after the *instituted* Clergy [Palmer's stress] of the Diocese,' but begged 'that there may be no reference to my Name, in regard to any - whether Clergy, or Laity who are not within the precincts of my Diocesan Authority,' adding that he felt 'quite incompetent to take any concern in the circulation of your book, or the destination of the Money that may arise from the sale of it. All must be solely determined by yourself, without the smallest allusion to my name or authority.'

Palmer commented laconically that 'the Bishop ... did not seem to feel that he had undertaken to exert himself personally in the matter.' His reluctance to be involved was understandable. As he wrote to Palmer:

Twelve days (if granted me) will carry me into my eighty-sixth year. It is therefore, time for you to get another Scottish Bishop to take you by the hand - a comparatively young & active person.¹¹⁵¹

Palmer's immediate response carefully prefaced his concern with an expression of 'gratitude & affectionate reverence ... for that support & sympathy which you have given me hitherto,' but wondered whether Torry 'had either forgotten much of what passed before; or else wished to have nothing more to do with the matter, & so to retract that support which I have conceived extended to me hitherto ... at any rate there must be some misunderstanding somewhere.'¹¹⁵² Torry reassured Palmer that he still supported the Appeal, and gave Palmer an 'Advertisement' to be prefixed to it, indicating his permission for its publication and consideration of 'its intrinsic importance,' which entitled it to 'an attentive consideration by the Synod', although he dissociated himself from its contents.¹¹⁵³

¹¹⁵¹ Torry to WP, 15 Dec. 1848, BO MS v. 49, f. 193, and ASC, pp. 447-8.

¹¹⁵² WP to Torry, 17 Dec. 1848, BO MS v. 49, f. 194.

¹¹⁵³ ASC, p. 448.

Shortly after this exchange, William Palmer senior returned to the offensive, asking, given that Torry had only received Palmer on the basis that he had no intention of either leaving the Church of England or joining 'the Graeco-Russian Church,' 'how far the Bishop, to whom you have attached yourself, is or is not acquainted with the state of his Deacon's mind?'¹¹⁵⁴ The question was prompted by a letter to one of Palmer's aunts, in which Palmer indicated that the issue of the Appeal seemed 'hopeless,' and raising doubts over his ability to continue in the Church of England.

Palmer replied that the Bishop had indeed 'declared ... he would in no way countenance my hankering after the Greek Church,' and as to Rome 'would approve such a leaning as little as yourself.' As to 'his Deacon's state of mind,' that had 'nothing to do with it.' It would have to follow 'the issue of the affair, which seems hopeless.' He had told Bishop Torry 'two years and a half ago ... that I would turn Papist, if I could.' If it became impossible to remain satisfied with 'that tradition and position which ... is my own original inheritance,' then he would wish to 'submit to that rival claimant upon my allegiance, which seems to have the greatest apparent authority ... unquestionably the Roman Church, rather than the Greek.'¹¹⁵⁵

Nonetheless 'I should inevitably, upon the issue of this Appeal in Scotland proving unfavourably, be reconciled, as from heresy, to the Eastern Church.' This was 'perfectly well known, or ought to be ... to Bishop Torry; because it is involved and very distinctly avowed in all those documents which he has seen, relating to the Appeal.'¹¹⁵⁶

¹¹⁵⁴ W J P to W J P, 31 Jan. 1849, LP MS 1894, f. 146.

¹¹⁵⁵ WP to W J P, 1 Feb. 1849, *Ibid.*, ff. 146-8.

¹¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 148.

His father pounced on the crossing-out of the word 'might,' and the substitution of 'ought', which he took as 'equivalent to an acknowledgement, that you do not certainly know that he is aware of it: and this I think that you ought to know certainly.' Seeing that his son's mind was made up, he urged him to be sure when he came to say anathema 'to the ... Churches of this Realm, and therein to all their members, ... that the Lord hath bid thee say it.' He recalled an occasion after a service when Palmer had asked him 'where I got the orthodox doctrine you heard me preach.' Lost for words at the time, he now declared that

If I know or have learned anything that is true, I must have learned it in and through the Church; the Church to which I belong; the only Church of which I ever had the benefit; that Church, which you have now come to think so rotten and heretical. I love you, William, and I believe you love me; and I am indeed, though not without the fear of God, Your ever affectionate Father ...
1157

When however he wrote to his son to complain of the treatment of the Church of England by the Roman and Eastern Churches, Palmer was unsympathetic:

... your expressions, of our "unhappy Church", the East and the West concurring to anathematise "an unfortunate, that lies between them at their feet", - are good, and touching to any one who views the Church of England through your feelings. But to me, I confess, they have no truth or reality in themselves.

The Church of England had been the author of its own misfortunes, in following Luther and Calvin in asserting her right to judge and act for herself, and thereby incurring 'the anathemas of the Councils of the whole Christian world of former centuries.' The Reformation Churches had

found out that, mighty as their movement had been, it had failed to subvert or reform the older Churches: and so they began to come down from their original tone, and to talk of mutual recognition; and now they think it sometimes very hard upon them to be still anathematised. The waters of the

¹¹⁵⁷ W J P to WP, 4 Feb. 1849, *Ibid.*, f. 149.

Reformation reached their height; and then came the ebb; and the ebb has left us stranded ...¹¹⁵⁸

Penitence or willingness to reform might meet with 'gentleness and charity ... but alas! ... this is not the attitude of our Church, towards either the East or the West.'

As 1849 drew on, Palmer's tone 'became more gentle.'¹¹⁵⁹ In May he wrote to his father that 'a prudent man should be very slow and cautious in making any change for himself, and ... distrust himself if he feels any disposition to be carried away by the example or influence of other men, whether individuals or multitudes or societies, beyond his depth.' He even added that he would not think hardly of a man who from a feeling of duty tried to steer a course between extremes, even if he 'seemed ... to turn away from plain and glaring truth, which might lead him ... to see the error of his sect.'¹¹⁶⁰

His birthday, 12 July, brought gloomy reflections:

This day I am 38 years old; and wish that I had spent them better: but I feel painfully that I am like (in more than age) the paralytic in the Gospel. My faults have grown up with me; and, as I grow older, I am less and less able to do anything energetically against them, and all my good intentions or resolutions seem to have been abortive, and to have died in the bud.¹¹⁶¹

To his father, however, he was more cheerful, expressing his gratitude to God for the example of his relatives (his Aunt Elizabeth had died not long before) 'most unworthy though I am, and have been from my earliest childhood, of all the blessings that have been lavished upon me.' He distinguished between his admiration for the virtues of his relatives and 'their inherited ecclesiastical state or opinions' as 'I have long felt the ground on which I stand in the Anglican Communion narrowing under

¹¹⁵⁸ WP to W J P, 2 May 1849, *Ibid.*, f.154.

¹¹⁵⁹ MFP, vol. II, p.55.

¹¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹¹⁶¹ WP to AM, 12 July 1849, LP MS 1895, f.173.

me year by year, and promising to the merely intellectual eye to become, before many more years pass, ... untenable.' He foresaw that the Appeal 'may come to an unfavourable termination sooner than I had before contemplated', but if that happened, so as to leave him intellectually without any reason to continue as he was, 'I should be inclined not to take any step immediately, but simply to announce to you the fact; and then do whatever you advised and wished.'¹¹⁶² He explained that this was not because it would be right to act against his convictions, but 'on the ground of the junior members of the family being one with the head.' This was indeed a change from the angry exchanges over Palmer's gifts to his sisters.

His father answered in the same spirit, that he was 'well pleased' that his son was likely to 'keep his position for a year or two,' and hoped that 'the standing place will not give way ... even so soon.' His advice was 'to pray for a right understanding in all things, without leaning too much upon one's own; and to do nothing against conscience.' He paid generous tribute to his son's qualities:

When a grave question has been raised, it ought to be settled ... You have raised the question; and, if you do not desert it, you may live to see it settled, pursuing it with the judgement, temper, and ability you have shown, - qualities all of which will improve as you advance in the exercise of them.¹¹⁶³

Nonetheless he had to warn Palmer that he could not 'knowingly admit to her Communion any one, though it were my own son, who judges her communion heretical and vain.'¹¹⁶⁴ Palmer replied that the consequences of the failure or disavowal of the Appeal would be that he would no longer have 'sufficient grounds for defending her ... against the accusations brought against her; nor any reason for declining to submit to the call made upon me to leave her in consequence of those

¹¹⁶² MFP, vol. II, p. 57.

¹¹⁶³ Ibid., p. 58.

¹¹⁶⁴ W J P to WP, 23 July 1849, LP MS 1894, f.157.

accusations. I shall never think of continuing to communicate in a Church which I had a full conviction that [sic] its communion was heretical and vain.’¹¹⁶⁵

Palmer acknowledged that ‘the Clergy of a Scotch diocese are very little likely to read with much attention a book of 700 pages,’¹¹⁶⁶ and his letters to his father show that he was not optimistic about the outcome of the Appeal. However, his hopes must have been raised by the decision of the St. Andrew’s diocese to apply to the Bishop to hold a special Synod in March before the annual Synod in June, to enable the other Diocesan Synods to consider the matter that year. The special Synod met on 27 March, presided over by the Dean, Bishop Torry’s son John,¹¹⁶⁷ and recommended the Appeal to the consideration of the other Synods. The idea of passive communion was solemnly disavowed and repudiated, and Palmer formally thanked ‘for the stand he has made in defence of our Communion.’¹¹⁶⁸

Palmer wrote to W. E. Gladstone¹¹⁶⁹ to inform him of the result, urging a clear distinction between the objects of the Appeal, and the subsequent approach to be taken (if appropriate) to the Eastern Church. He responded to Gladstone’s earlier criticism of an ‘exclusive principle ... naturally connected with somewhat of an exacting & domineering spirit’¹¹⁷⁰ by observing that

the “exclusive principle” is, I suppose, inseparable from Truth - and so long as there is a division must produce (in the absence either of latitudinarianism or warm charity and hope of reconciliation) ... very much of an exacting and domineering spirit ... but in the Russian religion, as such, there is nothing like an exacting or domineering spirit, otherwise than as to insist upon law

¹¹⁶⁵ WP to W J P, 31 Aug. 1849, *Ibid.*, ff. 158-9.

¹¹⁶⁶ WP to W J P, 1 March 1849, *Ibid.*, f. 150.

¹¹⁶⁷ John Torry (1800-1879), educated at Aberdeen University, MA 1818, Minister of St. Ann’s Coupar Angus 1821 to death, dean of united diocese of St. Andrew’s, Dunkeld & Dunblane, 1824 to death. MEB, vol. III, p. 993.

¹¹⁶⁸ ASC, p. 491.

¹¹⁶⁹ William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898), educated at Eton, Christ Church Oxford, MA 1834, DCL 1848, PC 1841, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1852-5, 1859-66, 1873-74, 1880-82, Prime Minister December 1868-February 1874, April 1880-June 1885, February-July 1886, August 1892-March 1894. MEB, vol. v, pp. 418-9.

¹¹⁷⁰ W E G to WP, 1 April 1849, LP MS 2823, f.53.

may seem domineering to those who are resolved to claim the right of breaking law.¹¹⁷¹

It is highly likely that Gladstone was the ‘layman of eminence connected with the Scottish Church’ quoted in the *Appeal* as saying that he ‘should feel sorely grieved and wounded for the honour of our Communion in Scotland, were [Palmer’s] Appeal to be passed by.’¹¹⁷² Gladstone would have been able to confirm Palmer’s fears about the attitude of the Scottish bishops towards the *Appeal*, as Bishop Skinner had written to him on 4 April to say that as he suspected

that we Scottish bishops are not in good odour with Deacon Palmer, if we do not lie under his anathema, I have never seen nor do much care for seeing, his strange book. The poor man I fear labours sadly under a Monomania on the subject of the Church.¹¹⁷³

Although his diocese had responded favourably to the Appeal, when Palmer called on Bishop Torry on 12 June he found him ‘fidgeting ever since he heard of my coming for fear of trouble.’ The trouble he feared was the opposition of his colleagues: ‘the Bishop of Edinburgh and the Primus were sure to be against him, and he had no reason to expect that Bp. Forbes¹¹⁷⁴ & Bp. Trower¹¹⁷⁵ would differ from them; and he thought Bp. Low¹¹⁷⁶ would also be against.’ He felt that he himself ‘had done enough, having already done ... all that was asked for, in the

¹¹⁷¹ W P to W E G, 7 April 1849, BL MS 44368 f.138.

¹¹⁷² ASC, pp. 503-4.

¹¹⁷³ Skinner to W E G, 4 April 1849, BL Gladstone Papers, MS Add. 44300, f. 174.

¹¹⁷⁴ Alexander Forbes (1817-1875), of the Hon. East India Company, 1836-40, Brasenose College Oxford 1840-44, MA 1846, DCL 1848, ordained 1844, Bishop of Brechin 1847-75, supporter of the Scottish Liturgy and the only episcopal representative of the Oxford Movement in Scotland, prolific author. SEC, pp. 258-9, and Rowan Strong, *Alexander Forbes of Brechin* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995).

¹¹⁷⁵ Walter John Trower (1804-1877), of Christ Church Oxford, matriculated 1823, MA 1829, BD & DD 1849, deacon 1829, priest 1832, Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway 1848-59, Sub-Dean of Exeter Cathedral 1859, Bishop of Gibraltar 1863. SEC, p.466.

¹¹⁷⁶ David Low (1768-1855), educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, 1783-6, LLD 1820, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut USA, DD 1848, Geneva College, New York DD 1848, deacon 1787, priest 1789, Bishop of Ross and Argyll 1819-38, of Moray, Ross and Argyll, 1838-46, Moray and Ross, 1846-50. SEC, pp. 337-8.

document which he had given me before ... he felt sure his Colleagues would wish to get rid of the matter.'¹¹⁷⁷

The St. Andrews Synod met on 20 June, and voted to reject the motions before it, and await the views of the other Synods. The diocese of Ross and Moray, held the same day, decided that the Appeal had legitimately arisen, and recommended its submission to a General Synod. The diocese of Glasgow and Galloway postponed the formal presentation of the Appeal to the following year. Resolutions were prepared beforehand irrespective of the postponement, and adopted; one asserted that the question of *bona fide* membership of the Church should be decided by the Ecclesiastical Authority, and not by private judgement. The Synod of the diocese of Brechin was held on 1 August, and postponed the matter for a year. The Bishop had refused to discuss the matter with Palmer 'except in the Synod itself, saying that he so highly disapproved of my having printed papers of private conversation etc.'¹¹⁷⁸ Palmer had his revenge on 10 July, when he called on him again, to make his application to the Episcopal Synod, of which the Bishop was Clerk.

He asked respecting the Latin on the loose paper "What object can you have?" & ... again with the air of a man in severe pain - "Where can you find in the primitive Church a precedent for a Deacon doing such things?" I professed myself quite ready to make any explanations but reminded him that he had shortly before absolutely declined holding any communications on the subject except officially in his Synod. So we parted.¹¹⁷⁹

Palmer called on the Primus, Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen, on 2 August.

Knowing that the Bishop had 'always from the first thought it not legitimate,' Palmer 'suggested that if he would say that he would not allow his Synod to take the matter up it might save trouble. He seemed to feel this would be going too far but added that

¹¹⁷⁷ LP MS 2823, f.8

¹¹⁷⁸ Ibid., f. 77.

¹¹⁷⁹ Ibid., f. 87.

certainly he should wish it to be put off & got rid of, when received.’ Asked how he would like Palmer to present it, the Bishop replied ‘that certainly he should not wish me to appear in person [I should talk them all dumb].’¹¹⁸⁰ The Aberdeen Synod approved all legitimate endeavours ‘to defend our Communion from the intrusion of strangers and the imputation of heresy,’ but declined to go into the Doctrinal or Disciplinary Propositions before it in detail. Palmer’s application to the Bishop for a copy of these resolutions was refused, and he was forced to obtain a copy from the Synod Clerk of the Synod of St. Andrews.

The same gentleman was able to assist Palmer again, when they met by chance as Palmer travelled west, as he thought to the Synod of the diocese of Argyll and the Isles. The Clerk told him that the Synod had already been held on 8 August, despite promises from both the Bishop and the Dean¹¹⁸¹ in person to Palmer that he would be informed of the date as soon as it was fixed. The Synodal Resolutions were blunt, that the Appeal did not legitimately lie to the Synod, that no General Synod was required, and that the existing laws of the Church with regard to Holy Communion were sufficient. A copy was sent to Palmer, accompanied by ‘an expression of regret from the Dean, (dated on the Sunday, two days before the Synod) that his promised notice had not been given earlier, owing to some mistake, as he expressed it, between himself and the Bishop.’¹¹⁸² Palmer wrote to the Synod Clerk with icy politeness, remarking on how much more ‘to the point, more decided, and more consistent’ the Resolutions were than those of the other Synods, but pointing out ‘a slight informality about them,’ namely that they had been passed

¹¹⁸⁰ Ibid., ff. 83-4.

¹¹⁸¹ Samuel Hood (1782-1872), ordained 1826, incumbent of St. John’s Chapel, Dundee, 1827-37, of Rothesay 1838-72, Dean of Argyll and the Isles 1848-72, Canon of Cumbrae 1853-72, DD 1870. SEC, p. 301.

¹¹⁸² ASC, p. 527.

before the Appeal had in fact been communicated to the Synod. ‘When people have made up their minds what to do,’ he remarked suavely, ‘they will often anticipate the due course of proceedings, and will leap to results.’ He asked for the Appeal to be communicated ‘to the Bishop and Clergy at their *next* Annual Synod.’¹¹⁸³

A furious letter, which does not appear in the *Appeal*, came in reply from the Dean of Argyll and the Isles:

You must permit me to recall to your recollection the fourth resolution passed at the ‘Special Synod of the United Diocese of St. Andrews Dunkeld and Dunblane on Tuesday March 27 1849’ in which it was resolved that the present Synod recommends this Appeal to the consideration of the other Synods of the Church ... the official communication was consequently made by the Dean of St. Andrews to me, and to the Bishop of Argyll & the Isles ... and you will allow me to add will not require to be repeated next year under any circumstances.¹¹⁸⁴

Palmer in reply distinguished between the Address relating to the Appeal, and the official communication of the Appeal itself, and ended dismissively

Whether there will be any need for them [the Bp. & the majority of the Synod of Argyll & the Isles] ... to make any excuse to the Synod of St. Andrews for the precipitancy with which they forwarded this year the result of their “consideration of the Appeal” (not of the Warden’s Address) before the Appeal had been officially communicated to them to be considered, it will of course be for the Bishops & the Synod to determine for themselves, when the time comes.¹¹⁸⁵

This may have been satisfying, but it did not affect the eventual outcome.

Palmer had already failed to obtain from each of the Bishops, with the exception of Torry, signatures concurring in the resolutions of the special Synod of St. Andrews in March, to be shown to the Eastern Patriarchs¹¹⁸⁶; on 7 September the Episcopal Synod decreed that ‘the Appeal has not legitimately arisen.’ The idea of a General Synod was dismissed, and it was complacently announced that ‘the existing

¹¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 527-8.

¹¹⁸⁴ LP MS 2823, f.93.

¹¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

documents of the Church sufficiently shew the care of the Church to guard the sanctity of Holy Communion from the intrusion of unworthy applicants.’ The Bishops’ third Resolution, which appears to cast Palmer as a dangerous disturber of the ecclesiastical peace, defended their inaction in terms that might be thought both unctuous and hypocritical:

... the Bishops, remembering their solemn commission to ‘*watch as those who must give an account*’ over the peace and prosperity of the Church, entreat the Clergy to discourage all attempts to disturb the confidence which the members of the Church so generally repose in her authorized Declarations and Liturgical Offices; and to remember that any measures affecting that full Communion which exists between this Church and the Churches in England, Ireland and America, and which is of the most unspeakable importance to the cause of true religion at home and abroad, must issue in results most fatal to the great object for which our prayers are offered, namely, that all who confess God’s holy Name may agree in the truth of his holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.¹¹⁸⁷

In the summer Palmer had written to Dr. Routh reminding him of an intention expressed ‘some time back’ to seek admission to Priest’s Orders in Scotland. Bishop Torry was willing to ordain Palmer on provision of Testimonials and written proof that a Fellowship at Oxford was held in England to be a sufficient title. This last Dr. Routh was to provide.¹¹⁸⁸ Palmer also asked Bishop Torry if his name could be added to the list of Clergy attached

to the Episcopal Church or Cathedral at Perth ... at any rate it cannot be improper, I would hope for a Bishop to have at least one Deacon attached as such to his own person & to the central Church & Cathedral of his Diocese.¹¹⁸⁹

Palmer had approached John Torry, the Dean of St. Andrew’s, and the Warden of Trinity College¹¹⁹⁰, to sign the Testimonials for Orders,

¹¹⁸⁶ See ASC, pp. 531-2.

¹¹⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 529-30.

¹¹⁸⁸ WP to Routh, 14 July 1849, MAG MS 485, no. / f. 21.

¹¹⁸⁹ WP to Torry, 8 Sept. 1849, LP MS 2823, f. 108.

¹¹⁹⁰ Palmer’s Oxford contemporary, Charles Wordsworth.

& they both said they would. But the next day the Dean having called the Warden's attention to the words in the form "Nor has he at any time (so far as we know or have heard) maintained or written any thing contrary to the Doctrine or discipline of the Episcopal Church in Scotland", the Warden withdrew his promise, the Dean still continuing his. So I requested the Dean to send the Testimonials to the Clergy of the Diocese in order of seniority, and he sent them to the two seniors who both declined, upon which he himself also declined.¹¹⁹¹

The Dean also handed to Palmer a letter from his father, which summarily delivered the *coup de grâce* to Palmer's connection with the Scottish Church:

it would appear, if I understand it rightly, that all your efforts hitherto, in regard to "passive Communion etc." have been completely palsied, & that you are even refused a hearing; as in their [the Episcopal Synod's] judgement your Appeal has not "legitimately arisen".

I infer, therefore, that I am entirely precluded from taking any further concern in the matter; and I think your wisest course will be to let the whole pass into Oblivion, - as if your Appeal had never been raised.

As to the "list of the Clergy" to be in future connected with the Cathedral, or central Church of the Diocese, no such list has yet been formed; and therefore, I can give no direct answer to your application; but I always remain your affectionate Brother & Friend.

Pat'k Torry.¹¹⁹²

Palmer's last resort was now the Episcopal Church of America; he asked if he rightly understood that he was not to use Bishop Torry's name in sending the Appeal there.

The Bishop's reply was affectionate but firm. The decision of the Episcopal Synod

completely ties up my hands respecting the said Appeal, if I wish to remain in Communion with my Colleagues; - any departure from which, you may believe, has always been, & still is, quite foreign to the feelings of my heart, and the convictions of my understanding ... so far as personal regard & friendly wishes towards you are concerned, I continue unchanged; but I conceive myself inhibited from any further connection with you, in relation to your Appeal, which by the decision of a great majority of the Episcopal College, seems finally dismissed.¹¹⁹³

¹¹⁹¹ LP MS 2823, f. 114.

¹¹⁹² Torry to WP, 14 Sept. 1849, *Ibid.*, ff. 115-6.

¹¹⁹³ Torry to WP, 22 Sept. 1849, *Ibid.*, f.121. This was confirmed in September 1850, when Palmer heard that the Glasgow Synod also rejected the Appeal; the other Synods were silent, so 'it sufficiently appeared that these had all taken the Resolutions of the Episcopal Synod as a final Settlement of the Appeal.' *Ibid.*, f. 238.

The Appeal was sent to America in the Autumn of 1849, initially to Palmer's correspondent Mr. Forbes¹¹⁹⁴ of St. Luke's Church, New York. Ironically he had become a Roman Catholic just before the letter arrived, and it was therefore passed on to a Mr. Parks. He in turn submitted it to the Reverend Dr. Samuel Seabury,¹¹⁹⁵ the grandson of the first Anglican bishop in America consecrated by the bishops of the Scottish Church at Dr. Routh's suggestion. Mr. Parks felt that the 'Reply & Opinion' given by Dr. Seabury was 'so full and ... so satisfactory' that he sent it on as he had received it. In it Dr. Seabury displayed more courtesy than the Scottish bishops in his assessment of Palmer and the Appeal, beginning with a glowing tribute:

If there are any persons who can read Mr. Palmer's book without loving & admiring the man, I am not of the number. His ardent love of the Church, & his noble devotion of his powers & faculties to the achievement of the great design which he had conceived are worthy of all commendation ... Acuteness, learning, & a liberal sense of mind are impressed on the volume.¹¹⁹⁶

He felt that Palmer had erred in undertaking to leave the Communion of the Scottish and Anglican Churches, if the Appeal failed. Such a promise was 'null & void, because it is a violation of prior & higher obligations.' He fairly suggested that Palmer

could not in reason hope to do more than call attention to the subject and make men feel its importance; and he ought, I think, to have been content to

¹¹⁹⁴ The Rev. John Murray Forbes, for 14 years Rector of St. Luke's Church, New York, became Roman Catholic 1849, pastor of St. Ann's Church, awarded an honorary doctorate, returned to the Episcopal Church in 1859, became Dean of the General Theological Seminary and 'virulently anti-Roman.' J. T. Addison, *The Episcopal Church in the United States* (New York: Scribner, 1951), p. 161., and information from The Rev. Dr. Roger Ferlo, Rector of St. Luke's.

¹¹⁹⁵ The Rev. Dr. Samuel Seabury (1801-1872), self-educated, hon. MA Columbia College, 1826, deacon 1826, priest 1828, Editor of *The Churchman* 1833, leading advocate of the High Church understanding of the Episcopal Church, Rector of the Church of the Annunciation, New York City, Professor of evidences at the General Theological Seminary N. Y. C. 1835-8, and of biblical learning 1862 to his death. Robert Bruce Mullin, in J. A. Garraty and M. C. Carnes (eds.) *American National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 1999), vol. 19 pp. 549-50.

¹¹⁹⁶ LP MS 2823, f. 224.

have wrought in with & under his own Church, during his natural life & let his Church, after he had gone to his reward, avail herself of his labours.

As he wisely put it, 'The problem of the Reformation will not, I think, have been wrought out ... by the case of Mde A,' and until it was wrought out, 'every clergyman in the Anglican Church or Churches derived from her, is bound to remain at his post. So it seems to me.'¹¹⁹⁷ As for the American Church, it could not consider the Appeal because it was of a judicial nature, and the American Synods had only legislative powers.

Mr. Parks thought the most beneficial effect of the Appeal would be its effect on the minds of its readers:

the good to be effected by your book depends not upon the Appeal being sustained, but upon its being read, by the most influential minds in the Church, its clear & discriminating statements of doctrine & its enuntiations of the principles of Catholic unity, intercommunion & discipline being pondered
...

He added a prescient warning:

The only thing that can prevent the most wholesome & lasting effects following upon the dissemination of your book will be the fact ... of your separation from the Anglican Communion.¹¹⁹⁸

¹¹⁹⁷ Ibid., f. 228.

¹¹⁹⁸ Parks to WP, 16 July 1850, Ibid., ff. 223-4.

CHAPTER 12

Conclusion

So ended, with the ‘various Resolutions more or less favourable, evasive or dilatory’¹¹⁹⁹ of the Scottish Synods, and the compliments of Dr. Seabury, Palmer’s active connection with the Church of England. Only when more than four years had passed, and both his father and Dr. Routh had died, did Palmer allow himself to be persuaded to take the step he had so long contemplated, and become Roman Catholic. In the meantime his intellectual pursuit of truth had left him, in his own words, ‘in a bad plight.’¹²⁰⁰ After the Appeal failed he travelled with his brother Edwin to Greece, and in the summer of 1850 met a friend, Canon Meyrick, at Constantinople. Palmer explained his predicament to Meyrick:

He was dissatisfied with the English Church, the Greek Church would not accept him except on a condition to which he could not assent [rebaptism], and he could not believe the Roman doctrines. Newman had built a bridge for himself, and had crossed by it; but ‘as soon as I try to do the same, I find myself in the position of an elephant under whose feet the planks give way at the first step.’¹²⁰¹

Even when he finally crossed the bridge, he was not out of difficulty. Meeting him after his conversion, Meyrick asked him if he was now satisfied of the truth of Roman doctrine. ‘“No”, he replied. “Intellectually I am in exactly the same position as before; but I am more comfortable in my present communion.”’¹²⁰²

For Meyrick the reason why this ‘man of noble soul, honest, true, lovable’, was ‘lost to his friends, to his Church, to the name and fame that might have been

¹¹⁹⁹ ASC, p. 537.

¹²⁰⁰ Meyrick, p. 78.

¹²⁰¹ Ibid.

his' was simple; it was 'his inability to reconcile himself to the conditions of imperfect humanity and human institutions, untaught by the wisdom of Butler.'¹²⁰⁴

Francis Faber said the same in the context of the Appeal. He had 'urged upon'

Palmer

the injustice of leading the Russian theologians to suppose that the Scottish Church is not orthodox, merely because the Bishops refuse to hold a Synod at the wish of an English deacon. ... But *nihil valui*.¹²⁰⁵ William never thinks of practicability; and in that consists, *me judice*, his great superiority of character. Whatever, in his opinion, ought to be, in his opinion *can* be: and he rejects all οἰκονομίᾳ, all management, entirely.¹²⁰⁶

It is the great irony of Palmer's life that he, a man who set such store by intellectual probity, was forced to compromise his convictions by becoming Roman Catholic while still fully convinced of the truth of Eastern doctrine.

His dealings with the churches highlight both Palmer's strengths and weaknesses. He showed extraordinary determination and willpower, but with a solipsism that blinded him to reality:

He appears to have supposed, that every one in the world would enter into his designs and plans with an ardour and interest equal to his own; and he was not prepared for the difficulties, delays and caution of elder men, who either did not see so far as he did, or perhaps saw somewhat further, and were unwilling to embark in negotiations for the union of churches under his guidance. It seems not to have occurred to his sanguine mind, that the Bishops of Scotland might refuse to examine or act on his appeal.¹²⁰⁷

The danger for the man who refuses to compromise, and is convinced that he is right and everyone else wrong, is that in a world of pragmatism and accommodation he will end as a party of one.¹²⁰⁸ Such was Palmer's fate. A self-appointed champion of

¹²⁰³ Ibid., pp. 78-9.

¹²⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁰⁵ 'I could do nothing.'

¹²⁰⁶ F F to RP, 21 Aug. 1849, MFP, vol. II, p.59.

¹²⁰⁷ Review of the *Appeal* in the *British Review*, quoted by RP to WP, 3 March 1850, LP MS 2836, f.268.

¹²⁰⁸ Something acknowledged by his own family - see n. 275, supra.

the catholicity of the Church of England, he swiftly found himself alienated from its mainstream, and in direct opposition to the head of its hierarchy, seeking support from its obscurer offspring in Scotland and America. The ‘peculiar genius of the Church of England’ was after all precisely ‘those elements of compromise and comprehension that characterise’¹²⁰⁸ it, and for that reason the inflexible Palmer was a highly unsuitable spokesman for Anglicanism. His inflexibility also led him to unwise extremes in his pursuit of the Princess Galitsin, ‘in which he showed himself more Russian than the Russians’¹²⁰⁹. What began as a mission of mercy turned by degrees into harassment in the cause of ecclesiastical theory, giving the impression of instability and fanaticism, the ‘monomania’ described by the Scottish bishops.

He did succeed, however, in making known to the Russians a part at least of the Church of England that they could recognise as containing orthodoxy, and that ‘the action of the Anglican establishment was not the measure of ... Catholic religious feeling’¹²¹⁰ in England. At a time when the two countries were suspicious of each other, Palmer created a favourable personal impression which survived his excesses in the Galitsin affair. The appointment of the popular Fr. Evgeny Popov as the Russian chaplain in London made the Russian Church better known in England, and kept open channels of communication during the Crimean War. He was a gadfly to both the Russian and the English Churches, stinging them by words and writings out of their lethargy on the question of unity, reassessing with acuity and thoroughness the obstacles and objections to unity, and what weight was to be given to each. He was even-handed in his criticism. He upbraided the Church of England for its pusillanimity and double-mindedness, and the Russian Church for its

¹²⁰⁸ Shaw, p.175.

¹²⁰⁹ Ibid.

inconsistency over the standing of the Roman Catholic Church, its inward-looking ethos, and its subservience to the state. Although ultimately he submitted to its authority, he never really accepted without question what the Roman Catholic Church said, just because she said it, and despite his conversion remained convinced of the truth of Eastern doctrine to the end of his life.

But this is to continue to assess Palmer in utilitarian and worldly terms. Cardinal Newman wrote of Palmer's Russian visit that 'labours such as his, so Christian in their aim, so disinterested and self-sacrificing in their circumstances, are, in a religious point of view, never wasted, never lost.'¹²¹¹ Bishop Wordsworth of St. Andrews, quoting Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury's assessment of Palmer as 'the ablest of all our contemporaries at Oxford,' added

No less good than able. Surely there was also something mysterious, of which we shall know more in another world, that so much ability and so much goodness does not seem to have made its full mark, or found its worthy and proper place in this present life.¹²¹²

Another Oxford contemporary, Bishop Claughton of St. Albans, thought that 'the world was 'not worthy of him, nor fitted for him, nor he for it.'¹²¹³ Palmer 'deliberately renounced what the world calls success, and never sought human praise,'¹²¹⁴ and for that the explanation may lie in his own words:

... in spiritual matters that which seems expedient to a worldly eye is often precisely the reverse; and that which seems most expedient and desperate to flesh and blood, is really the most expedient. They who love or seek their life shall lose it, and they who risk even their life for the truth's sake shall find it.¹²¹⁵

¹²¹⁰ L & D, vol. XXX, p. 6.

¹²¹¹ *Notes*, p. xi.

¹²¹² MID, p.124.

¹²¹³ MFP, vol. 2, p. 441.

¹²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.443.

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- h. **MS 2821** Notebook about the Nestorian Church, and correspondence with Christian Rassam. [Note: the letters at pp. 57-102 are not to Rassam as the catalogue indicates, but to a Russian who has written to Palmer asking for information about becoming 'a member of Oxford University.']
- i. **MS 2823** Journal by Palmer of visits to the Scottish Episcopal Church and to the Greek Orthodox Church in connection with his *Appeal to the Scottish Episcopal Church*, 4 June 1849-June 1852.
- j. **MSS 2824-7** Journal of a visit to Greece, Smyrna, Beirut, the Holy Land, Alexandria, Constantinople and Mount Athos, 20 November 1849-11 August 1850.

- k. **MS 2828** Copy by Palmer of his brother Edwin's journal of a visit with him to Greece, 19 July-8 August 1850 [Note: not 1851, as stated in the catalogue] and copies of official documents relating to the independence of the Greek Orthodox Church, 1850. Also a journal of a visit to Greece and the monastery of Megaspelion near Athens [Note: not to Mount Athos as stated in the catalogue], 4 April-3 July 1851.
- l. **MS 2829** Journal of a visit to Constantinople, southern Russia, and the Crimea, 20 July-4 October 1851.
- m. **MS 2830** Journal of a visit to Greece, 18 October 1851-1 June 1852. At pp. 1-87 are notes of the Russian 'Account of the Holy Places of Kieff.'
- n. **MSS 2831-33** Journal of a visit to Egypt and the Holy Land, 10 November 1853-8 December 1854. **MS 2833** concerns his final attempt to be admitted to the Orthodox Church, in Philadelphia.
- o. **MSS 2834-5** Correspondence between Palmer and his father.
- p. **MS 2836** Family correspondence; also an 'answer to queries on devotional reference to the BVM', 26 February 1851 (ff. 310-315 (v)), and a paper on Palmer's proposed admission to the Orthodox Church [1851], ff. 316-320 (v).
- q. **MS 2837** Miscellaneous correspondence.
- r. **MS 2838** 32 colour illustrations for the Paris edition of *Early Christian Symbolism* (1861).

4. Palmer Papers, MSS 4302- 4321 .

Miscellaneous family papers, incl. at ff. 33-37 of **MS 4321** 'Personal Memoires' [sic] of William Palmer by his nephew, The Rt. Rev. Edwin James Palmer, Bishop of Bombay.

5. Wordsworth Papers, MSS 2140-2151.

Papers of Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885), Bishop of Lincoln, son of Christopher Wordsworth (1774-1846) Master of Trinity College, and of other members of the family.

6. Whately Papers, MS 2164.

Papers of Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, 1810-62.

7. Miscellaneous Letters & Papers.

MSS 1812 Letter from Newman, ff. 72-2.

MSS 1804-11 Correspondence of the Rev. C. P. Golightly, f. 204.

8. Eeles Collection (The Russian Church in the Nineteenth Century), MS 1550.

Incl. letter from Rev. R. W. Blackmore to William Palmer from Kronstadt, 1843, f. 241.

9. Wordsworth Correspondence MS 1822.

Papers of Christopher Wordsworth, Master of Trinity 1803-45.

10. Letters and Papers of William Hodge Mill MS 1491.

Papers of William Hodge Mill (1792-1853), Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge and Rector of Brasted, Kent, 1846-53.

11. Wordsworth Correspondence, MS 1824.

Papers of Charles Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews 1831-91.

B. The Birmingham Oratory

Note: The journals and diaries held at the Oratory are those sent back directly to Cardinal Newman from Palmer's apartment in Rome, according to the terms of Palmer's will. They do not follow any particular order, numerical or schematic, and frequently contain notes from one period of Palmer's life at the front, and from another at the back of the book. The researcher must rely on his or her persistence, and on the knowledge of the Librarian. The note 'A 47.4' on the books refers to an outmoded shelving system, and was not written on the books by Palmer. These journals include:

1. v 49 / 10.6.(3). C

Miscellaneous correspondence, with, amongst others, the Scottish bishops, the Archpriest Koutnevich, the Editor of *The Churchman*, Mrs. George Palmer and the Princess Galitsin, M. Mouravieff, the Bishop of St. Andrews, Mr. Lygon, Admiral Poutiatine and Archdeacon Manning. Also accounts of dreams, Palmer's journal in Scotland, a list of events in Oct. 1847, a description of problems with the 'non-united congregation at Perth,' and Palmer's 'imaginary project' for dealing with them, correspondence about Nestoria and Chaldea, draft pieces for the *Appeal*, the minutes of the Scottish Episcopal Synod.

2. G 20

This contains: the Answer of the Russian Synod in 1842, 'reflections on the above' and observations, a draft Latin request for a Confessor, Palmer's Russian journal, correspondence with Bishop Luscombe, Roundell Palmer, and Palmer's Aunt Mary, Russian Liturgical Offices, a discussion of the Swedish Church, accounts of Swedish services, a Latin document concerning the Swedish Church, Palmer's meetings with the Danish Lutheran theologian and hymn-writer Dr. Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872), and with the Rev. Nicholas Wade, the continuation of Palmer's Scottish journal, and writings on the Lutheran (?) Church.

3. v 25 ('vol. 2')

This contains: A conversation with Mr. Blackmore at Cronstadt about 'Invocation of Saints', and 'Images,' a dream about an angry 'mujik,' correspondence with Mr. Blackmore, an extract from the Office 'In Exitu Anima', notes about the Swedish Church.

4. Book II

This contains: Russian journal (1842), corresponding to pp. 79-136 approx. of the *Appeal*, but in greater detail.

5. v 48

This contains, (i) at the back, notes from Durham in 1834, about arrangements for lectures, regulations, a 'Circulating Library', and the bad behaviour of undergraduates, (ii) 3 sections concerning visits to France between 1834 and 1836, largely consisting of ecclesiological discussion, but also including passages of self-recrimination (in French).

6. v 17 / 11.2.(3)

Correspondence between Palmer and the Rev. George Spencer, 1839-40.

7. G 37 / 11.1.(2)

Six books of carbon-copy letters (approx. 64) by Palmer; also Palmer's draft Petition to the Archbishop of Canterbury about the Jerusalem bishopric, Palmer's Protest about the same, and Roundell Palmer's redrafted Petition.

8. v 52

This black oilcloth-bound notebook contains notes made at Durham in 1834, about possible livings, local to Durham and elsewhere, character sketches of friends and acquaintances, and remarks about the low quality of the Durham students and their social impact on Durham.

9. v 2

This contains correspondence with Dr. Routh, with Rev. Benjamin Harrison (domestic chaplain to Archbishop Howley), Canon XXXIII of the Apostolic Canons, Palmer's Letters of Orders as Deacon, his Leave of Absence from the College in 1840, writing on Zoernikaff ('abridged by Theophanes Procopovich'), writing on 'Cyril Lucar', accounts of interviews with the Metropolitan of Moscow, the OberProkuror Count Pratasoff, with M. Mouravieff, an interview at which Palmer presented a Letter to the Metropolitan, the Letter itself in Latin, and the Metropolitan's Answer.

10. 'Short Poems and Hymns' dedicated to Khomiakoff, Oxford 1845.

These are loose in a box with a proof copy of *Notes of a Visit to the Russian Church*, and Newman's annotation thereon.

11. Miscellaneous letters

From Palmer's time in Rome, largely with the Poutiatine family about visits and illnesses, but also from Mother Henrietta Kerr, and Sophia Mary Leeves (including a picture of herself as a cow), A. Bitchkoff, J. M. Latham, Emma Palmer, Roundell Palmer, Edwin Palmer (addressing his brother more than once as 'Dear General'), also notes by Palmer on monuments and churches.

12. Letters from Edwin Palmer

Mostly to Newman after Palmer's death, about Palmer's papers left to Newman, the disposal of left-over copies of Palmer's books, and providing information to assist Newman in writing *Notes of a Visit*. There are also assessments in some of the letters by Edwin Palmer of Palmer's life, his approach to dealings with the Eastern Church, his relationship with his publishers (quarrelsome) and the information that 'he was never painted,' and that the engraving in *Notes of a Visit* was taken from a photograph taken at Rome two years before Palmer's death. There is also a letter from the Rev. R. W. Blackmore paying tribute to Palmer.

13. v 16 '1849-50 Athens'

Written in illegible modern Greek.

14. v 19 Italian travel diary

Beginning Dec. 17 1854, travels to Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Rome. Includes a very laconic note of Palmer's discovery of Dr. Routh's death in *The Times* in Jan. 1855, an account of his irritation with Fr. Passaglia over a disputed text of Gregory of Nyssa, and an account of a Pontifical Mass at St. Leo's in Rome.

15. v 61 (?) Notes for 'The Patriarch and the Tsar.'**16. Account books for 1838 and 1842**

These contain notes of charitable donations in 1838; the 1842 book is more taken up with travel expenses.

17. Journal entries and letters forming the material for Palmer's *Appeal to the Scottish Church*.**18. Sermons, 1840-42.****19. Philosophy lectures, 1836-41.**

Approx. 8 lectures, or drafts for lectures, on 'Moral Philosophy' and 'Socrates.'

C. Magdalen College, Oxford.

1. Palmer's *Introduction to the 39 Articles*, transcribed by J. M. Neale from a copy belonging to Cardinal Newman.
2. J. R. Bloxham's *Magdalen College Register*. This includes a number of Palmer's obituary notices.
3. W. D. Macray's companion volume, *Register of the Members of St. Mary Magdalen College, Oxford*.
4. MS 490 Bp. Skinner to Dr. Routh, 12 Sept. 1846, about Palmer's acting the part of a 'crazy person.'

5. MS 827 Macray's scrapbook.

Includes

- (i) a letter from E. Coffin to J. Rigaud asking if Palmer's conversion is likely to influence him, and Rigaud's reply.
 - (ii) *The Rock*, dated 18 April 1897, with a letter from a contemporary of Palmer's at Magdalen describing his memories of Palmer, both as an undergraduate and later when the writer returned to take his MA degree and was 'presented' by Palmer.
6. MS 485 Miscellaneous letters, including:
- (i) Palmer to Routh in Sept. 1840 just before leaving for Russia, and from Russia in Dec. 1840.
 - (ii) Correspondence between Sewell, Routh, and the Bishop of Oxford.
 - (iii) Notes from Palmer (and in Jan. 1843, his father) to Routh in late 1842 about his delayed return to England from Russia.
 - (iv) Palmer to Routh in Sept. 1842 reporting on his lack of progress in Russia.
 - (v) Palmer to Routh in Jan. 1843 resigning his tutorship.
 - (vi) Palmer to Routh in May 1845 reporting a dispute with the Dean of Divinity about not wearing his surplice to 'surplice prayers' in College Chapel on the eve of St. Mark's Day.
 - (vii) Palmer to Routh in July 1849 about the possibility of becoming ordained by Bp. Torry.
 - (viii) Palmer to Routh in Jan. 1854 from Athens, conspicuously failing to mention his petition to the Patriarch of Constantinople about conditional (re)baptism.

D. The Bodleian Library, Oxford

1. **Papers of Archdeacon Edwin Palmer, Bodleian Special Collections & Western MSS** [Refs: MSS Selborne add; Eng. hist. a 23-4, b 231-6, c 97-1031, d 442-80, f 27-9, g 25-27; Eng. lett. c 454-56, d 422-33, e 152; Eng. misc. c 685-91, d 997-98. NRA 22802 Palmer.]

2. **Papers of Edwin Palmer as executor of William Palmer: Bodleian Special Collections & Western MSS.** Ref: MSS Selborne NRA 17810 Palmer

The MSS include in MS Selborne 225 Palmer's will; in MS Eng. lett. d 432, ff. 60-65, a letter to his mother explaining his conversion to Roman Catholicism. At ff. 96-7 is an account of Palmer's difficulties in returning to Rome during Garibaldi's Nationalist revolution of 1870. At ff. 166-7 are letters to his brother Edwin about the effects of his illness, written towards the end of 1878, and at ff. 171 and 176 letters to Edwin about his doctor's diagnosis of his symptoms, written Dec. 1878 - Jan. 1879.

3. *The Oxford Magazine* for 11 Nov. 1885, with a letter by Goldwin Smith about Magdalen, with facetious comments about Palmer; and for 2 Dec. 1885, with a reply defending Palmer's memory by 'N. D.'
4. **Prize verses and essay: Bodleian, Special Collections & Western MSS.** Ref. MSS Don d 73, 75.

E. The British Library

1. **Gladstone Papers, Add. MSS 44359-527.**
 - a. MS 44366 Palmer to Gladstone, about the unexpected visit of Count Alexander Tolstoy, asking if Gladstone will meet him.
 - b. MS 44368 Palmer to Gladstone, about the St. Andrews Diocesan Synod, the attitude of the Russian Church towards possible reunion, and the advisability of any overtures from the Scottish Church.
 - c. MS 44300 Bishop Skinner to Gladstone, about Palmer's 'strange book' and his 'Monomania.'

F. Review Articles

1. Wiseman, Nicholas, 'The Anglican System', *The Dublin Review* vol. XXII (1842), 233-249.
2. Anon, 'Palmer's Dissertations', *The Christian Remembrancer*, vol. XXVI (1853), 64-98.

3. Anon, 'The Eastern Churches,' *The Christian Observer*, January 1854, 42-69.

G. Books and pamphlets by William Palmer

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