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EDITORIAL

Alan Sell is Professor of Christian Thought at the University of Calgary. Brian Dickey lectures in the School of Social Sciences at The Flinders University of South Australia. Their papers are long (indeed Professor Sell's is in two parts) because they deal with the Reformed wrestling of ideas. If the place in this *Journal* of Bourn, Taylor or Towgood should be queried (not least by Unitarians) the answer must be that they were Presbyterians clinging to a scriptural faith. To study them is to study the movement of ideas and the human mind of the churches. It sets revival in perspective and it sheds light and life on what we still persist in seeing as "arid".

None will query Thomas Binney's place; his foray to South Australia provoked a controversy which echoed some at least of the issues addressed by the three eighteenth-century Presbyterians, the unity of Christians foremost among them. Some of those issues were as inappropriate to their fresh setting, and yet as flourishing, as the carefully tended English gardens which thrive in Australian suburbs; and some of the issues remain alive.

We welcome as a reviewer Anthony Earl, who is a master at Eltham College. We congratulate our Past President, Dr. Nuttall, on his election as a Fellow of the British Academy.

NOTES

Alan Argent adds an endnote to "The Passing Show of A.G. Matthews" (Vol. 4, no. 7, October 1990). Matthews is buried in Beckenham Cemetery at Elmers End. On the headstone his name follows that of his brother Oswald, but whereas the years of Oswald's birth and death were given, only that of AGM's birth (1881) was inscribed. Had none survived to complete the record? Fortunately the cemetery's shareholders include Dr. J.W. Ashley Smith, who is a Congregationalist, and in September 1991 he ensured that the year of AGM's death (1962) should be added. Dr. Ashley Smith has since been asked to write a booklet about the cemetery.

A Workshop on Missionary Archives is to be held at the School of Oriental and African Studies on 8-9 July 1992. Further details may be obtained from Mrs. R.E. Seton, Archivist, School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London, WC1H 0XG.

**A LITTLE FRIENDLY LIGHT:
THE CANDOUR OF BOURN, TAYLOR AND TOWGOOD:
PART I**

At the very least, the theological controversies of eighteenth-century England illustrate the truth that between what we intend to do, and what we are perceived as doing, a great gulf is sometimes fixed. Thus, of one of Samuel Bourn's pamphlets the redoubtable high Calvinist Baptist John Gill wrote, "Never was such a medley of things, such a parcel of rambling stuff collected together."¹ For his part, Bourn stated his objective, and expressed his surprise and regret at adverse reactions to his efforts thus: "I stand amazed to see rational Creatures, and still more, to see PROTESTANT DISSENTERS, those peacable, harmless, inoffensive People, grow Angry, and some of them even Outragious against their own Brethren, for no other Crime in the World, but offering them a little friendly Light."² He elsewhere amplified his point:

Calling a Man *Arian* or *Arminian* has sometimes produced the same Effects amongst the Dissenters, as calling him *Presbyterian* has amongst our Church Bigots; or as calling him *Heretick* has done amongst the Papists. He becomes the Object of vulgar Hatred, and every Zealot has a Stone to throw at him, as if he was a *mad Dog*.

But a little Reflection will enable you to see, that as in the Mouth of a Papist, *Heretick* is usually the Mark or Denomination of an upright, conscientious Christian; and as in the Mouth of a Church Bigot, *Presbyterian* means an honest Protestant; so, in the Mouth of a Dissenting Zealot, *Arian* and *Arminian* are almost certain Marks of a sincere, inquisitive, learned Man.³

The eighteenth was indeed a nick-naming century (remember "methodist"); but beneath the polemics serious issues were at stake. My purpose here is to isolate and weigh some of those issues; to show that, *pace* the polemicists, no party held the monopoly of truth; and to reveal the differences of viewpoint between selected opponents of Calvinism. It may be thought *prima facie* likely that no party would hold the monopoly of truth, and that there would be differences of opinion among the anti-Calvinists, and that this labour of demonstration is,

1. J. Gill, *An Answer to the Birmingham Dialogue Writer's Second Part*, 1739, p. 3. For Gill (1679-1771) see DNB; A.P.F. Sell, *The Great Debate: Calvinism, Arminianism and Salvation*, Worthing 1982, Grand Rapids 1983, pp. 76-83.
2. [S. Bourn], *An Address to Protestant Dissenters: or an Inquiry into the Ground of their attachment to the Assemblies Catechism; Whether they Act upon Bigotry or Reason*, 1736, p. 17.
3. [S. Bourn], *A Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman, Occasioned by the Baptists opening a New Meeting-House in Birmingham, Warwickshire... By a Consistent Christian*, 1739, p. 116.

accordingly, redundant. But so many myths linger concerning the "Socinian blight", and so many have been content to lump indiscriminately together Taylors, Priestleys, Lindseys and Martineaus, that some unravelling is called for. Moreover, such a recent writer as G.M. Tuttle can assert, without evidence, the universal proposition, "The cold rationalism of the eighteenth century had starved the human emotions"⁴ (even of *anger*, one is tempted to enquire); and the normally judicious J.M. Turner has fallen into the stereotyping trap of writing that "if reason is over-stressed, the dry arid Arminianism of the head results against which Wesley was in full attack!"⁵ It cannot be denied that in the Augustan age a high premium was placed upon reason - not least because of the sectarian excesses of the preceding century, which some were at pains to ensure should not be repeated in their own. Furthermore, honesty prompts the admission that *some* who over-stressed reason were dry and arid; others, however, were not. Dryness and aridity do not necessarily accompany "Arminianism of the head." (I shall not dwell upon the turgidity of a Calvinistic Owen, or upon the godly vacuity of some who have championed the "heart".)

I select for consideration Samuel Bourn (1689-1754), John Taylor (1694-1761), and Micaiah Towgood (1700-1792). Between them these three were intellectually active for most of the eighteenth century; their combined ministries encompass the east, north-west, south-west, and midlands of England; taken together their writings cover most of the major Christian doctrines, and illuminate the most important religious controversies of their time.

A brief introduction of the three divines is followed by a review of their objectives, methods and styles. A consideration of their moral interests will then lead to their position *vis à vis* subscription, toleration and establishment of religion. A discussion of their views on Christian doctrine and nurture will lead to a conclusion.

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4. G.M. Tuttle, *So Rich a Soil. John McLeod Campbell on Christian Atonement*, Edinburgh 1986, p. 14. I refer here to a slight blemish upon a generally useful book. See my article review, "God, grace and the Bible in Scottish Reformed theology", *The Irish Theological Quarterly*, forthcoming.
 5. J.M. Turner, *Conflict and Reconciliation. Studies in Methodism and Ecumenism in England 1740-1982*, 1985, p. 57. For my review of this generally admirable book see *Mid-Stream* XXVII, no. 1, 1988, pp. 82-85.

I

Bourn, Taylor and Towgood

Samuel Bourn was a son of the manse. Of his father (also Samuel, 1648-1719) it was said that

He faithfully continued in the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, not merely because it was theirs, but because upon long and intimate Acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and with his own Soul, he found it to be the Doctrine of the Gospel, and a Gospel according to Godliness. I have heard him lament some Deviations he had observed, from what he believed to be the Truth as it is in Jesus; but his Humility, and Candour, and affectionate Temper, would never suffer him to be censorious, or uneasy towards any of his Brethren.⁶

Not, indeed, that Bourn was a trimmer: he left Emmanuel College, Cambridge in 1672 without taking a degree, "not being satisfied with the oaths and declarations then required."⁷ He taught in Derby, his native place, served as a chaplain to Lady Hatton and, while living with an aunt in London, was ordained. Assisted by Samuel Annesley, he secured the Presbyterian charge at Calne, Wiltshire, in 1679. After sixteen years he removed to Bolton to succeed his uncle, Robert Seddon, in the pastorate there. He founded and conducted a charity school for twenty poor children, becoming known, from his efforts on behalf of the less fortunate, as "the best beggar in Bolton". "Ah Bolton!" expostulated his second son, Samuel, when giving his father's funeral oration: "how would thy Men gather together and weep, were they sensible of their Loss, and did they know what a Man was dead!"⁸

Our Samuel Bourn was born at Calne in 1689.⁹ After schooling in Bolton he proceeded to the Manchester dissenting academy of James Coningham and John Chorlton.¹⁰ His subsequent pastorates were as follows: Crook, near Kendal (1711-20); Tunley (1720-27); Chorley (1727-32); and Coseley and New Meeting, Birmingham (1732-54).

Whilst at Crook Bourn married (c. 1712) Hannah Harrison (d. 1768) of

6. W. Tong, Preface to *Several Sermons Preach'd by the late Reverend Mr. Samuel Bourn, of Bolton, Lancashire*, 1722. For this Bourn see DNB; J. Murch, *A History of the Presbyterian and General Baptist Churches in the West of England*, 1835, pp. 56-57, 60-62. For Tong (1662-1727) see DNB.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Bourn's oration on II Kings 2: 3 is in his father's *Several Sermons*, p. 30.
9. For the three Bourns see DNB; Joshua Toulmin, *Memoirs of The Revd. Samuel Bourn*, 1808.
10. For Coningham (1670-1716) see DNB; for Chorlton (1666-1705) see DNB; A. Gordon, *Freedom After Ejection*, Manchester 1917 (hereinafter FAE). For academies and tutors see H. McLachlan, *English Education Under the Test Acts*, Manchester 1931.

Kendal, who bore him nine children. At first Bourn was theologically orthodox, though he incurred the displeasure of some local ministers who boycotted the ordination of one who would not subscribe to the *Catechism* of the Westminster Assembly - "A sad Proof of their Uncharitableness!" declared Samuel Blyth in the funeral oration he delivered at Bourn's passing.¹¹ At the time, subscription was the issue, not doctrine; but, as we shall see, Bourn was later to publish catechisms in which he "improved upon" the Assembly's *Catechism*. Prompted by the events surrounding the Salters' Hall controversy of 1719, Bourn delved deeply into the doctrinal issues. As Blyth has it:

About the Time that I am speaking of, the Trinitarian Controversy was carried on with much unjustifiable Heat in the *West of England*, which put our deceased Friend upon thoroughly studying the Points in Debate. With that View he carefully read Dr. *Clark* [*sic*] on one Hand; and, on the other, he read Dr. *Waterland*, with the rest of the *Athanasian* Writers of the most Repute at that Day: but, above all, he carefully read his Bible, upon the Points in Question: And such was the Honesty, and the Openness of his Mind, to receive and embrace Truth, wherever he thought he had found it, that, tho' before this impartial Enquiry, he was a professed *Athanasian*, yet after it he altered his sentiments, and never saw Reason to retract the Change he had made; but the more he read and thought, the more he was confirmed in it. How great his Love of Truth, and his Discernment of it were, may be gathered from what I have heard him declare, that 'Next to his Bible, nothing did more towards fixing him in Dr. *Clark's* Scheme than the Replies to it... They did more than even what the Doctor himself had said to support it.¹²

On 7 May 1731, whilst continuing at Chorley, Bourn was appointed a Monday Lecturer at Bolton, and on 19 April 1732 he preached at the opening of the New Meeting, Birmingham, assuming pastoral charge there on 25 June.¹³ Here Bourn the controversialist, rather small of stature, very bright of eye, and

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11. S. Blyth, *The Good Soldier of Jesus Christ characterized. In a Sermon Preached at Birmingham, March 31, and at Coseley, April 7. Occasioned by the Sudden and Much-Lamented Death of the Reverend Mr. S. Bourn, Who died March 22, 1754, in the 66th Year of his Age*, 1754, pp. 12-13. The text was II Tim. 4: 7,8. See also A.P.F. Sell, *Church Planting: A Study of Westmorland Nonconformity*, Worthing 1986, pp. 43, 46. For Blyth (1718/19-1796) see Toulmin, *op.cit.*, pp. 273-5; G.E. Evans, *Midland Churches: A History of the Congregations on the roll of the Midland Christian Union*, Dudley, 1899, p. 59. He studied under Ebenezer Latham at Findern academy, and served at Shrewsbury (April-October 1741), Frome (1741?3-1747), and as assistant to Bourn and as colleague of his successors at Coseley (1747-61) and Birmingham (1747-91). For Latham (1688-1754) see H. McLachlan, *Essays and Addresses*, Manchester University Press, 1950, pp. 147-164.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14. Cf. [S. Bourn], *A Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman*, 1739, pp. 48-9. For Clarke (1675-1729) and Waterland (1683-1740) see DNB.
13. See G.E. Evans, *op.cit.*, p. 53.

somewhat dishevelled in appearance, came into his own, as we shall see. For the present we need note only that Bourn twice successfully appealed to Quarter Sessions against the pressure of John Ward J.P. to make the pastor engage and maintain a parish apprentice; and that in 1738¹⁴ the Staffordshire Justices of the Peace failed to remove him from the district on the ground that "you have intruded yourself into the said parish of Sedgley without complying with the laws in such cases made". In a spirited reply Bourn protested that he had entered the said parish upon the signed invitation of more than one hundred persons, "many of them substantial yeomen, farmers and tradesmen, and most of them inhabitants of the parish". Despite Bourn's indiscreet admission (ignorance of the law being no defence) and "if I did not comply with any laws in that case made, it was because I was a stranger to them", all attempts to banish him proved unsuccessful.

On 18 September 1745 Bourn delivered the charge at the ordination of Job Orton at High Chapel, Shrewsbury;¹⁵ on 12 September 1750 he "prayed over" Noah Jones at his ordination at Pensnett Meeting-house, Cradley;¹⁶ and in 1751 he declined an invitation to his father's old church at Bolton. In this latter connection Orton wrote to Bourn on 13 July 1751, urging him to think very seriously before leaving Birmingham: "God has made you the instrument of spreading a spirit of candour and moderation through your neighbouring churches, and propagating rational and becoming sentiments in religion. Will they not decline if you go? Will not the Philistines triumph; especially if your flock should be divided and scattered?"¹⁷ Bourn remained at Birmingham until his death. With hindsight, Joseph Priestley, himself minister at the New Meeting (1780-91), described his congregation as "the most liberal, I believe of any in England; and to this freedom the unwearied labours of Mr. Bourn eminently contributed."¹⁸

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14. Evans wrongly gives 1728, *ibid.*, pp. 82-3. Toulmin preserves both the letter of Justices J. Ward and R. Sedgwick, dated 15 December 1738, and Bourn's reply from Coseley, dated 27 December 1738. *Op.cit.*, pp. 243-9.
 15. The *Charge* on I Thess. 2: 10 was published in 1745, together with Joseph Mottershead's sermon preached on the same occasion from John 3: 2. For Orton (1717-83) see DNB; S. Palmer (ed.), *Job Orton's Letters to Dissenting Ministers and to Students for the Ministry*, 2 vols. with a memoir, 1806. For Mottershead (1688-1771) see DNB; J. Toulmin, *op.cit.*, pp. 251-7.
 16. See Noah Jones's letter of 8 October 1750 to Thomas Morgan, Thomas Morgan MSS, National Library of Wales 5457/A; cf. A.P.F. Sell, "Retirement denied: the life and ministry of Noah Jones (1725-1785)," *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society* XVIII, no. 2, April 1984, p. 96.
 17. J. Toulmin, *op.cit.*, p. 46.
 18. J. Priestley (for whom see DNB), *Memoirs*, I, p. 98.

John Taylor, the son of a timber merchant, was born at Scotforth, Lancaster, in 1694.¹⁹ His father was an established churchman, his mother a dissenter. Taylor, destined for the ministry, entered Thomas Dixon's Whitehaven academy in 1709,²⁰ where he was a contemporary of Caleb Rotheram, afterwards of Kendal.²¹ Taylor went on to study under Thomas Hill at Findern,²² leaving that academy on 25 March 1716. On 7 April he took charge of the extra-parochial chapel at Kirkstead, Lincolnshire, which was used for dissenting worship under the patronage of the Disney family. He was ordained by Derbyshire ministers on 11 April 1716. In answer to the question, "Do you promise you will be faithful in the defence of the truth and unity against error and schism?" he replied, "I do promise, through God's assistance, that I will in a manner consistent with Christian love and charity, maintain the truths of the Gospel, especially such as are beyond controversy determined in the Holy Scriptures, and will strive to inculcate them upon the minds of all with whom I have to do. I will heartily endeavour to propagate Christian charity, and shall see them with real pleasure when I see believers maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."²³

On 13 August 1717 Taylor married a widow, Elizabeth Jenkinson (d. 1761), of Boston. Of their children, a son and a daughter survived. He eked out a meagre living at Kirkstead by conducting a boarding school, but even so he was often unable to finance the heating of his study - to which cause he later attributed the pain in his knees; neither could he afford to complete the abridgment of Matthew Henry's commentaries upon which he had embarked. Invited to Pudsey in 1726, Taylor continued at Kirkstead until 1733, when he removed to Norwich to become Peter Finch's colleague.²⁴ Finch lived to a ripe old age, sustaining a ministry of over sixty-two years at Norwich, and managed to remain orthodox throughout. This, at least, is the implication of John Barker's letter of 26 March 1745 to Philip Doddridge, which was written in the wake of the publication of Taylor's *Paraphrase with Notes on... Romans* (1745): "What an

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19. For Taylor see DNB; John Taylor [second son; hymnwriter; see DNB] and Edward Taylor [grandson; Gresham Professor of Music], *History of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich*, 1848, pp. 19-43; William Turner, *The Warrington Academy*, reprinted *Monthly Repository* articles, 1813-15, with an Introduction by G.A. Carter, Warrington 1957, pp. 4-12.
 20. For Dixon (1680?-1729) see DNB; H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*
 21. For Rotheram (1694-1752) See DNB; A.P.F. Sell, *Church Planting: A Study of Westmorland Nonconformity*, Worthing 1986, pp. 39-41, 45, 48, 132; H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*
 22. For Hill (d. 1719/20) see DNB under Hill, Thomas, 1628?-1677? And H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*
 23. T.S. James, *The History of the Litigation and Legislation respecting Presbyterian Chapels and Charities in England and Ireland between 1816 and 1849*, 1867, p. 804.
 24. For Finch (1661-1754) see DNB under Finch, Henry, 1633-1704; FAE. Finch began his Norwich ministry in 1691.

Audacious theologian is that Taylor! Unhappy Norwich! Poor Mr. Finch!"²⁵ It appears that Finch used the Westminster Assembly's *Catechism*.²⁶

Concerning the *Key to the Apostolic Writings* which Taylor prefixed to his *Paraphrase*, Doddridge wrote to Samuel Wood on 19 April 1745: "The pure uncorrupted Scriptural Gospel - without the Aid or Incumbrance of humane Schemes - is become dearer than ever to my Soul. Nor the less so for a certain *Key* which *inter nos*... seems broke in the Lock."²⁷ Doddridge's pun is a reference to Taylor's acknowledged debt to Locke in the matter of biblical interpretation.²⁸ On 2 June 1747 Doddridge urged Wood to write against Taylor's *Paraphrase*,²⁹ though as far as we know his pupil did not oblige.

The *Paraphrase* and *Key* were not, however, Taylor's first publications. In 1735 he completed *The Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin* which, on its publication in 1740, drew the following choice warning from an Irish Calvinist minister to his flock: "I desire that none of you will read it; for it is a bad book, and a dangerous book, and a heretical book; and, what is worse than all, the book is unanswerable."³⁰ *Original Sin* was written under the influence of Samuel Clarke's *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity* (1712), which Taylor used as the text for a study group on his arrival in Norwich - something which did not commend him to local conservatives in theology. His action in 1737 in defending Joseph Rawson who, as we shall see, was removed from the roll at Castle Gate, Nottingham, at the instigation of the minister, James Sloss,³¹ reinforced his status as a marked man in those circles.

In 1750 Taylor published *A Collection of Tunes in Various Airs*,³² which grew out

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25. See G.F. Nuttall, *Calendar of the Correspondence of Philip Doddridge DD (1702-1751)*, 1979, no. 1048. For Barker (1682-1762) see DNB. W.D. Jeremy, *The Presbyterian Fund and Dr. Daniel Williams's Trust*, 1885, pp. 127-8, wrongly dates Barker's letter as of 1744 (before the *Paraphrase* appeared). For Doddridge see DNB.
 26. See J. Crompton's Introduction to J. and E. Taylor, *Octagon Chapel*, pp. ii-iii.
 27. See G.F. Nuttall, *op.cit.*, no. 1055. Wood (d. 1767), had attended Doddridge's academy at Northampton, and ministered at Rendham and at Norwich.
 28. For Locke's position, and for the criticisms of it by Doddridge, Guyse and James Fraser of Alness, see A.P.F. Sell, "John Locke's Highland critic", *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, XXIII pt.i, 1987, pp. 65-76.
 29. See G.F. Nuttall, *op.cit.*, no. 1243.
 30. Reported *inter alia* by V.D. Davis, *A History of Manchester College*, 1932, p. 36 n. Davis and others also note Burns's couplet in his "Epistle to John Goudie of Kilmarnock":
 'Tis you and Taylor are the chief
 Wha are to blame for this mischief
 Taylor's *Original Sin* and *Atonement* were advertised in the catalogue of the sale of Schleiermacher's library, Berlin, April 1836. See J. and E. Taylor, *Octagon Chapel*, p. 28 n.
 31. For Sloss (1698-1772) see *Derby Mercury*, 7 May 1772; A.R. Henderson, *History of Castle Gate Congregational Church*, 1905, pp. 140-50; B. Carpenter, *Some Account of the Original Introduction of Presbyterianism in Nottingham and the Neighbourhood; with a Brief History of the Society of Protestant Dissenters assembling on the High Pavement in that town*, [1862], p. 152; J. and E. Taylor, *Octagon Chapel*, p. 26; Walter Wilson MSS., DWL A.10.17.
 32. See J. Julian, *A Dictionary of Hymnology*, 2nd edn. rep. 1925, p. 1118.

of his efforts in teaching psalmody to the younger members of his congregation. It includes an introduction on the art of singing. Taylor trained his choir one evening per week, using his tune book. He also devised catechetical instruction for the young.³³ *The Scripture-Doctrine of the Atonement* came out in 1751, and in 1754 and 1757 the two volumes of his *The Hebrew Concordance adapted to the English Bible* appeared. The first volume, dedicated to the Archbishops and Bishops of England and Ireland, contains a subscription list including twenty-two English and fifteen Irish Bishops. Among nonconformist subscribers were Job Orton, Joseph Priestley and Caleb Rotheram. Taylor's was "the first serious attempt to fix the primitive meaning of Hebrew roots and deduce thence the various uses of terms."³⁴ In recognition of his work, and on the recommendation of William Leechman, Professor of Divinity, Adam Smith,³⁵ and others, the Senate of the University of Glasgow awarded Taylor the Degree of Doctor of Divinity on 20 January 1756.³⁶

Meanwhile, on 25 February 1754, Taylor had laid the foundation stone of Octagon Chapel, Norwich, the first of England's octagonal meeting-houses,³⁷ and on 12 May 1756 he preached at its opening. John Wesley, who visited the chapel on 23 December 1757, recorded the occasion thus:

I was shewn Dr. Taylor's new meeting-house, perhaps the most elegant one in all Europe. It is eight square, built of the finest brick, with sixteen sash-windows below, as many above, and eight skylights in the dome, which indeed are purely ornamental. The inside is finished in the highest taste, and is as clean as any nobleman's saloon. The communion-table is fine mahogany; the very latches of the pew-doors are polished brass. How can it be thought that the old coarse gospel should find admission here?³⁸

On 27 October 1757 Warrington academy was opened, and before the end of the year, and in response to insistent appeals, Taylor was installed there as tutor in divinity and moral philosophy. In this latter connection he published *An Examination of the Scheme of Morality advanced by Dr. Hutcheson* (1759), and *A Sketch of Moral Philosophy* (1760). In the former he opposed Hutcheson's moral sense theory with an account of morality in which reason reigned supreme; the latter was intended as an introduction to William Wollaston's *The Religion of Nature Delineated* (privately printed 1722; published 1724).³⁹ *The Scripture Account of Prayer*, "by far the most impressive of his writings,"⁴⁰ was published

33. See J. and E. Taylor, *Octagon Chapel*, pp. 29-30.

34. So A. Gordon, DNB, Taylor, John (1694-1761).

35. For Leechman (1706-85) and Smith (1723-90) see DNB.

36. See J. and E. Taylor, *op.cit.*, pp. 30-31.

37. See *The Unitarian Heritage*, Sheffield 1986, pp. 62-3; J. and E. Taylor, *op.cit.*, pp. 32-3.

38. J. Wesley, *Works*, 1872, II, p. 431.

39. For Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) and Wollaston (1660-1724) see DNB.

40. So A. Gordon, DNB.

posthumously (1761), as was *A Scheme of Scripture Divinity* (1763) - his class notes, which were first printed (?1760) by the Trustees of Warrington academy for the use of students.

Taylor was not happy at Warrington, and many speculations and some respectfully-drawn "veils" await any who would seek to understand why. Certainly Taylor's health gave cause for concern - he was reduced by rheumatism to walking on crutches - as did that of his wife, who died on 2 June 1761. There are suggestions that he fell foul of the Trustees of the academy, though in what way is not at all clear.⁴¹ It has been said that he was upset to find the Hutchesonian system of morality preferred to his own; though there is no evidence of friction on this score between Taylor and Samuel Bourn the Younger's son Samuel suggested - he who had studied under Hutcheson, supported his position in ethics, and yet served as Taylor's colleague at Norwich from the death of Peter Finch in 1754 until Taylor's departure to Warrington in 1757.⁴² After Taylor's death the "other side" weighed in with "an orthodox fable, to the effect that Dr. Taylor admitted, but wondered at, the fact, that most of his pupils turned Deists. Dr. Taylor, as has been justly remarked by Mr. Edward Taylor, did not live to see any of his pupils even complete their course of education."⁴³ It may be that friction with students was a factor in the situation. Priestley recalls that some students moved from Caleb Ashworth's academy at Daventry to Warrington at an advanced stage in their education. At Daventry they had been exposed to orthodox views from Ashworth himself, and to the heterodox opinions of Samuel Clark; and they had been encouraged to make up their own minds.⁴⁴ At Warrington they came upon Taylor who, though no bigot, expected deference to his views and reputation, and commitment to his intensely textual approach to study.

Whatever the precise combination of circumstances, they drew from Taylor the letter of a sad and disappointed man: "My condition ever since I came to Warrington has been very uneasy, and I may say, wretched... Consider, Sir, my

41. See *Warrington Academy*, pp. 12, 28, 30; R. Halley, *Lancashire: Its Puritanism and Nonconformity*, 1869, II, pp. 398-401; B. Nightingale, *Lancashire Nonconformity*, II, 1892, pp. 273-8. John Seddon, the Secretary to the Warrington Trustees was a Hutchesonian in ethics. He also supported those Liverpool ministers who desired set forms of prayer (something anathema to Taylor, as we shall see), though it is said that Seddon himself never used written notes in prayer. For Seddon (1725-70) see DNB; H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*
42. For this Samuel Bourn (1714-96) see DNB.
43. J. and E. Taylor, *op.cit.*, p. 36. They regret that Walter Wilson recounted this tale in his *The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches and Meeting Houses in London, Westminster and Southwark*, I, 1808, p. 105 n.
44. J. Priestley, *Memoirs*, 1806, pp. 17-23. For Ashworth (1722-75) see DNB. Samuel Clark (1727-69), is correctly said to have been an assistant tutor at Doddridge's academy in Northampton, where he was trained, but his period at Daventry (1752-6) is omitted by G.E. Evans, *Midland Churches*, p. 50. He ministered at the Old Meeting, Birmingham and at Oldbury from 1756 (though Evans sometimes gives 1757) until his death.

Years - consider my long and close Studies - consider the Character and Reputation I have established, especially in the learned World - consider the generous and disinterested Manner in which I came to these Parts - consider the ardent Desire I have to be useful in my present Station."⁴⁵

Taylor died in his sleep on 5 March 1761. In his funeral oration Harwood referred to the "few silly differences about the formal punctilio of precedency and authority, and the vague and uncertain principles of morals" which were the occasion of the disruption at Warrington in these terms:

the friends of Christianity and virtue cannot but drop a tear, a tear of tenderness and pity, to see a man of true greatness, goodness, and wisdom, by the hands of rude violence and cruelty degraded and sunk, abused and despised, friendless and forlorn, his abilities questioned, his merit disputed, and one of the most amiable characters, that ever virtue assumed and appeared in, aspersed and vilified, and unable with all its friendly influence and native charms to soften envy and malice into veneration and love. The bad usage he met with, where he naturally expected the kindest, he would often tell me, 'would certainly shorten his days.' And so it proved... [He] always spoke to me with the greatest respect of his *Fellow-Tutors*, amongst whom there always subsisted the greatest harmony.⁴⁶

Taylor and his wife were buried at Chowbent, Atherton, where a tablet in the meeting-house reads:

Expect no eulogium from this stone;
Inquire among the friends of
Learning, Liberty and Truth;
These will do him justice.⁴⁷

* * * * *

Micajah Towgood⁴⁸ was born, the son of a doctor, at Axminster, Devonshire, on 17 December 1700. His grandfather, Matthew Towgood, was ejected from his

45. E. Harwood, *A Sermon Occasioned by the Death of the Rev. John Taylor, D.D., late of Norwich, Professor of Divinity and Morality in the Academy at Warrington, Lancashire: with Some Account of his Character and Writings*, 1761, pp. 48-9 n. For Harwood (1729-94) see DNB.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-8.

47. J. and E. Taylor, *op.cit.*, p. 38. This tablet is not mentioned in *The Unitarian Heritage*.

48. For Towgood see DNB; J. Manning, *A Sketch of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Micajah Towgood*, 1792 (abbreviated in *The Protestant Dissenter's Magazine*, Oct. 1794, pp. 385-93 and *ibid.*, Nov. 1794, pp. 425-432); Anon., *Observations on the Rev. James Manning's Sketch of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Micajah Towgood*, 1792; J. Murch, *op.cit.*, pp. 432-7.

living at Semley, Wiltshire, under the Act of Uniformity of 1662. At the conclusion of a contribution on his grandfather towards Samuel Palmer's *The Nonconformist's Memorial* (1803), Micajah wrote, "I esteem it a greater honour to descend from one of these noble confessors, than to have had a coronet or garter in the line of my ancestry; I look forward with joy to the approaching day, when that glorious list of heroes will shine with distinguished honours, and mount up to thrones of power, while their titled and enribboned persecutors will sink into shame, and be glad to hide their faces in the deepest obscurity." The one who made such a powerful case for dissent was no hypocrite!

After a period of instruction at home, Towgood attended the school of Joseph Chadwick, where his contemporary was Thomas Amory.⁴⁹ On 25 March 1717 he and Amory proceeded to the dissenting academy at Taunton conducted by Stephen James⁵⁰ and Henry Grove.⁵¹ On 22 August 1722 Towgood was ordained at the Presbyterian church, Moretonhampstead, Devonshire, where he remained for the next fourteen years. He was an assiduous pastor; he divided the town into districts, and catechised the children of each district in rotation. About 1730 he married a daughter of James Hawker of Luppitt, Devonshire, by whom he had four children.

In January 1737 Towgood assumed the pastorate at Crediton, despite the appeals of the Moretonhampstead congregation that he remain with them; despite, too, their promise to equal the larger stipend offered by Crediton. Whilst at Crediton Towgood began a series of anti-establishment tracts, to which I refer below; but his dissenting convictions notwithstanding, he co-operated with the incumbent of Crediton in 1743, Mr. Stacey, when four hundred families lost their homes in a fire which swept through the town.

Meanwhile, in 1741 Towgood had written in support of the war with Spain - a just war, he deemed it; and in 1742, following a local epidemic, he published a tract on *Recovery from Sickness*, which ran to three editions in England, and a substantial one in America.

In 1750 Towgood accepted a call to become co-pastor with his cousin, Stephen Towgood, at James's Meeting, Exeter. This was one of the united congregations of Protestant Dissenters, of which the other was the Bow Meeting, served by

49. For Amory (1701-74) see DNB; H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*, for Joseph Chadwick (d. 1690/1) see FAE.

50. James died in 1725. See FAE; H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*

51. For Grove (1684-1738) see DNB; A.P.F. Sell, "Henry Grove: A dissenter at the parting of the ways," *Enlightenment and Dissent* IV, 1985, pp. 53-63; H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*

John Lavington and John Walrond.⁵² Towgood appears to have had the ideal temperament for holding a congregation together at a time when, on all sides, doctrinal antennae were highly sensitive. This is not to say that he was a waverer; for example, he disapproved of the communion discipline current at Exeter on his arrival, and took action. At Exeter the custom had been to examine candidates for church membership more closely than Towgood thought the scriptures warranted,

which tended to discourage the meek, humble and modest persons, whilst it rendered it easily accessible to men of bold and forward dispositions, who were tempted to declare more than they really experienced lest the church should reject them. He esteemed a christian life a very sufficient and much better rule, because he did not find the scriptures required any other... from this time, therefore, it was left to the ministers to converse privately with the candidate...⁵³

Similarly, Towgood is reported as always having been grateful that he belonged to a church which did not fence the Lord's table, but opened it to all sincere Christians, no matter how awry they might be on doubtful or disputed points of doctrine.

Towgood entered the lists on behalf of infant baptism - indeed, his ordination thesis had been on this subject, continued his pamphleteering crusade for dissent and, in 1753, joined others in overturning the 1719 rule of the Exeter Assembly of ministers which required that candidates for ordination explicitly declare for the Trinity. As we shall see, Towgood believed in the Trinity after the Arian fashion; we might call him a high Arian in that he regarded Christ as a proper object of worship.⁵⁴

In 1760 Towgood and his cousin transferred with their congregation to the new George's Meeting, and there he remained until his retirement in 1782. At about the same time the dissenters of Devonshire established an academy in succession to that at Taunton, which had closed in 1759 on the departure of its

52. Stephen Towgood's life is not easy to piece together. He was ordained on 4 July 1716 (so *Exeter Assembly* ed. A. Brockett, Devon and Cornwall RU. Soc., n.s.6, 1963, p. 108), may have been at Topsham in 1716, continuing there as successor to Mr. Cooper (d. 1727) until 1745, when he removed to Exeter (so Murch, *op.cit.*, p. 367). But Murch also says (p. 412) that Towgood was at James's Meeting from 1743 until 1760, when he and Micaiah Towgood transferred with their congregation to George's Meeting. Stephen Towgood remained there until his death in 1777. For Lavington (1690?-1759) see DNB. For Walrond (ordained 16 June 1698; d. 1755) see J. Murch, *op.cit.*, pp. 405, 412. He was at Ottery St. Mary, possibly from 1729, when he removed to Bow Meeting, serving there until his death. See also A. Brockett, *Nonconformity in Exeter 1650-1875*, 1962.

53. J. Manning, *Sketch*, p. 46.

54. A. Gordon says that he allowed this at communion, and was possibly the last Arian dissenter to do so. See his *Heads of English Unitarian History*, 1895, p. 44. Towgood was in the line of Samuel Clarke on this point.

tutor, Thomas Amory (Henry Grove's nephew), to London. The Taunton library was removed to Exeter, and the academy was housed in a building specially given by William Mackworth Praed. Towgood became responsible for biblical exegesis, continuing in that role until the academy ceased in 1771 on the death of the divinity tutor, Samuel Merivale.⁵⁵ As a tutor, Towgood encouraged free enquiry. He wished his students "to think freely and impartially on every subject of natural and revealed religion, which the study of the scriptures would necessarily bring under their consideration... His lectures were rather the open informations of a friend, than the dictates of a master."⁵⁶

James Manning (1754-1831), author of the *Sketch* of Towgood's life (1792), joined Towgood at George's Meeting in 1776, and continued there until his own death.⁵⁷ Micajah Towgood died on 1 February 1792. His "person was above the middle size, and extremely slender; his eye lively and penetrating... Loud exclamation, outrageous action, violence of look or gesture were not the characters of his delivery. It was solemn, yet animated. The tone of his voice was soft and clear."⁵⁸ Something of Towgood's sense of balance emerges in the following words from his reply to the Bishop of Oxford's Charge to his clergy: "The *Freedom of Thinking* in which the *present* Age glories, is, indeed, dissipating apace the Charm of spiritual *Sorcery*, by which the Understandings and Consciences of the former were enthralled: But it is too natural to the human Mind to run into Extremes; and having broken from the Chains of gloomy Superstition, to rush headlong into the Wilds of disconsolate *Infidelity*."⁵⁹

No matter how much they might feel compelled to engage in controversy, the underlying objective of Bourn, Taylor and Towgood was practical. Towgood heard the following words from John Withers at his ordination at Moretonhampstead, but our three divines all set their sights in the direction indicated:

Christianity never suffer'd more than when the Subtleties of *Scotus* and *Aquinas* were study'd more than the writings of the Apostles; and when the Simplicity of the Gospel was confounded by the Disputes and Sophistry of the Schools... As for the *Matter* of your Sermons, I conceive the weighty Matters of the Gospel Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, ought principally to be insisted on. Your Business is not to fill Mens heads with nice and useless Speculations, but to inflame their Hearts with the love of Piety and Vertue, and to enamour them of these divine and

55. For Merivale (1715-1771) see DNB under Merivale, John Herman (1779-1844); and H. McLachlan, *op.cit.*

56. J. Manning, *Sketch*, p. 65.

57. For Manning see J. Murch, *op.cit.*, pp. 413, 448-52. A. Gordon in DNB says that Manning came "on the death of Stephen Towgood" - i.e. 1777; but Murch has him coming in 1776 as assistant to S. Towgood.

58. J. Manning in *The Protestant Dissenter's Magazine*, No. 1794, p. 425.

59. M. Towgood, *Sermons and Free Thoughts on... Church... and Religion*, 1755, p. 40.

Godlike Graces by which they may resemble the glorious Author of their Beings. Not to make Men subtil Disputants, but exact and holy Walkers... To entertain your Auditory with puzzling and perplexing Controversies, without great Occasion, is the Way to render them censorious and uncharitable, rather than useful and humble... What little Advantage hath the Protestant Interest gain'd by those eager first Disputes which have been set on Foot, concerning the Divine Counsels and Decrees, which some have marshall'd up with as much Exactness as if they had been Privy-Counsellors to the Almighty... We should insist upon the great and weighty *Matters of the Law, Faith, Judgment and Mercy*; not on the *Annisè, Mint and Cummin*, that grow in our own Gardens.⁶⁰

That Towgood heeded the injunction is the testimony of his biographer: "The main scope and tenor of his preaching was practical. He led not his flock for nourishment, to the dry and barren hills of cold and unedifying speculation."⁶¹

II

Objectives, methods and styles

Thirty-three years after Towgood's ordination we find Taylor giving the Charge to Isaac Smithson at his. In the line of Withers, Taylor declared that "any Knowledge, or Persuasion, merely speculative, how exact or excellent soever in itself, will be of little Significancy to any of us, especially to a Minister, if it is not worked upon the Heart; and reduced to Practice."⁶² But although the ultimate objective was practical, Taylor, like Towgood and Bourn, felt that much intellectual ground-clearing was required before the goal could be reached. We shall not begin to understand their apparent zeal in controversy until we realise that they saw themselves as men who had emerged only recently - since the Toleration of 1689 - from a long, dark tunnel.

As Taylor explained, there never was anything wrong with the gospel as such: it is "a most noble Scheme of Truth and Salvation;"⁶³ but it is "too plain and simple for Men of worldly Ambition, false learning, and superstitious Heads."⁶⁴ Such people have been found in every age, with the result that

60. J. Withers, *A Charge given to Mr. Micajah Towgood, at his Ordination in Moreton Hampstead, Devon, August 21. 1722, 1723*, pp. 11, 19, 20. For Withers (1669-1729), who was at Bow Meeting, Exeter, 1705-29, see J. Murch, *op.cit.*, pp. 386-97; 405; 412; FAE.

61. J. Manning, *Sketch*, pp. 92-3.

62. J. Taylor, *Charge at Isaac Smithson's ordination*, 11 November 1755, 1755, p. 34. For Smithson (d. 1769), see B. Carpenter, *Presbyterianism in Nottingham*, pp. 156, 159; F. Nicholson and E. Axon, *The Older Nonconformity in Kendal*, 1915, p. 631; J. Browne, *History of Congregationalism... in Norfolk and Suffolk*, 1877, p. 348.

63. J. Taylor, *A Narrative of Mr. Joseph Rawson's Case*, 2nd edn. 1742, p. 4.

64. *Ibid.*

the Doctrine of Christianity was changed into dark and intricate Schemes above the Capacity of the Vulgar, and fitted to serve all the Purposes of Error and spiritual Usurpation... *Mystery* was made a convenient Name and Cover for Absurdity; and People were taught it was their Duty to believe what they could not understand... [The papal authority forbade enquiry; the power of the magistrate was brought in; then 'Protestant popery' took over, and ministers were trained to preach not from the scriptures, but from schemes of divinity]... Worldly Emoluments were annexed to a supposed right Belief, and heavy Penalties inflicted upon Recusants... Thus things went on till within about forty years; when LIBERTY at the *Revolution*, O bright, auspicious Day! reared up her heavenly Form, and smiled upon our happy Land. Delivered from the fears of Tyranny and Persecution, Men began freely to use their Understandings; the Scriptures were examined with more Attention and Care, and their *true* Sense, setting aside human Comments, and especially the Jargon and Sophistry of School-Divinity, was sought after.⁶⁵

In similar vein, and concerning that "Protestant popery" which had grown up alongside the older sort, Bourn wrote to George Benson on 2 December 1743 that "in almost every town" in the midlands, "there is a struggle between Light and Darkness."⁶⁶ As far as Bourn was concerned,

SINCERITY in searching after, and in professing religious Truth, or christian Honesty is, as to God, the only acceptable *Orthodoxy*; in any other Sense, it is either precarious or impossible. In any other Sense, it signifies our Agreement to *Human Schemes*; which is only a topical and a chronical Character, suited only to certain Places and Times; so that what is orthodox in one Church, or in one Age, is not so in another. But an upright Mind, a pure Conscience, a good and honest Heart is the same in all Ages, in all Places, in both Worlds.⁶⁷

For our three divines (though Towgood wrote little on methodology) the source of Christian truth is the Bible: not for nothing did Taylor use the phrase *The Scripture-Doctrine of...* in book and pamphlet titles. To his Norwich congregation he wrote,

We may not indulge our own Conceits in Matters of Revelation.
Every Point, advanced as Christian Doctrine, ought to be found in

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 8, 9.

66. Benson MSS, John Rylands University Library of Manchester. For Benson (1699-1762) see DNB.

67. S. Bourn, *A Charge delivered at the Ordination of the Reverend Mr. Job Orton; at Shrewsbury, September 18. 1745*, 1745, p. 41.

Scripture, and explained by Scripture... You know, your Congregation stands upon no other Ground, but that Catholic one... Faith in Jesus Christ... I hope I need not warn you against Popery, that monstrous, and most audacious Corruption of the purest and brightest Dispensation of Religion. *Romish* Agents are busy amongst us... Value the Word of God as your richest Treasure, and the only Fund of true and perfect religious Knowledge, Comfort, and Joy.⁶⁸

What is found in the Bible is, however, discerned by reason, and must be commendable to reason. At the beginning of his lecture courses at Warrington, Taylor charged his students thus:

I. I DO solemnly charge you, in the Name of the God of Truth, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and before whose Judgment-Seat you must in no long time appear, that in all your Studies and Inquiries of a religious Nature, present or future, you do constantly, carefully, impartially, and conscientiously attend to Evidence, as it lies in the holy Scriptures, or in the Nature of things, and the Dictates of Reason; cautiously guarding against the Sallies of Imagination, and the Fallacy of ill-grounded Conjecture.

II. - THAT you admit, embrace, or attend to no Principle, or Sentiment, by me taught or advanced, but only so far as it shall appear to you to be supported and justified by proper Evidence from Revelation, or the Reason of things.

III - THAT, if at any time hereafter, any Principle or Sentiment, by me taught or advanced, or by you admitted and embraced, shall, upon impartial and faithful Examination, appear to you, to be dubious or false, you either suspect, or totally reject such Principle or Sentiment.

IV - THAT you keep your Mind always open to Evidence. - That you labour to banish from your Breast all Prejudice, Prepossession, and Party-zeal. - That you study to live in Peace and Love with all your Fellow-Christians; and that you steddily assert yourself, and freely allow to others, the unalienable Rights of Judgment and Conscience.⁶⁹

Taylor was not slow to disavow personal infallibility, drawing a distinction between the apostles and everyone else: "The Apostles were inspired or infallible writers, but we are none of us either inspired or infallible interpreters.

68. J. Taylor in the Dedication of *A Paraphrase, with Notes on the Epistle to the Romans*, 1745.

69. J. Taylor, *A Scheme of Scripture Divinity*, 1762, Preface pp. vi-vii. So impressed was Robert Wallace by this charge that he quoted it in full in his own inaugural lecture (see Manchester New College. Introductory Lectures, 1841). For Wallace (1791-1850) see DNB.

None of us have dominion over the faith of our fellow-Christians and Servants; nor must anyone pretend to set up for Master in Christ's school, Christ alone is our Master and Lord; and we ought not, as indeed, justly, we cannot, substitute any supposed infallible Guide in his place." Bourn spoke for them all when he described his quest as being that for "The religion of Christ in its original simplicity and native beauty, free from adulteration and mixture."⁷⁰

On the question of method, Taylor writes most, but is somewhat obscure at times:

CHRISTIAN Theology, or Divinity, is the Science, which, from Revelation, teacheth the Knowledge of God, namely his Nature and Perfections, his Relations to us, his Ways and Dispensations, his Will with respect to our Actions, and his Purposes with respect to our Being; in order to form in our Minds right Principles, for our Direction and Comfort, and in our Conversation right Practice for restoring his Favour and Blessing.

In natural Religion we take our Proofs from the Natures of things as perceived, considered, and compared by the human Mind; but now we advance upon the Authority and Sense of Writings and Books; I mean, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, acknowledged by the whole Christian World as a true Revelation from God, and as the standard of Faith and Doctrine.

...however Nature and Reason, in their pure and most perfect State, may be sufficient to direct in the Way of Duty, yet when Nature is corrupted, and Reason obscured, or almost quite extinguished, they are by no means sufficient to restore and recover themselves to Knowledge and Obedience of the Truth; because they themselves, who should be the Physician to heal themselves, are sick and disabled. But it was the primary Intention of Revelation to restore and preserve the Knowledge of God and of his Will in a corrupt and degenerate World.

So far therefore I see no Objection against Revelation, but it may be both very needful, and a very great Blessing to Mankind.⁷¹

Revelation, then, is by no means repudiated: indeed, it comes to our aid in removing the scales from our "natural" eyes, it restores our warped reason. However, "We should always interpret Scripture in a Sense consistent with the Laws of natural Religion; or with the known Perfections of God, and the Notions of Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, which are discoverable in the Works of Creation, and in the present Constitution of Things."⁷² What now of the inadequacies of reason clearly to determine what the natural laws are? Taylor is somehow between the times. On the one hand, as a biblical Christian,

70. J. Taylor, Dedication of *A Paraphrase... on... Romans*; S. Bourn, *Charge to Orton*.

71. *Ibid.*, *Scripture Divinity*, pp. 1-2, 405.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

he is aware of what some have called the noetic effects of sin; but as an eighteenth-century Augustan he cannot readily harmonise such a conviction with his certainty that the universe and morality alike are governed by laws discernible by reason. If he were to forsake the former conviction his argument for revelation would fall; if he were to forsake the latter, he would be replacing blind allegiance to the Pope with equally blind allegiance to the letter of scripture, and he would have no check upon the "enthusiasm" of which he was so highly suspicious.

Again - and unlike Priestley, for example - Taylor does not wish to cast doubt upon the supernatural, or to assert that "the Law or Religion of Nature is commensurate to Revelation; or, that nothing is to be admitted in Revelation, but what is discoverable by the light of Nature, or by human Reason. So far from that, that the whole of Revelation... could never have been discovered by human Reason. And therefore in matters of pure Revelation, it is a very false and fallacious way to begin first with what our Reason may dictate and discover. Because our Reason unassisted by Revelation... can discover nothing at all."⁷³ All of which seems to amount to this: revelation restores and supplements warped reason, but the deliverance of revelation must be commendable to reason which, however, is incompetent to weigh them apart from revelation. Such is the circularity into which the eighteenth-century thinker tumbled because he will neither forgo revelation, nor minimise reason's function of discerning the natural law. The influence of traditional scholasticism (which is seen at the beginning of the Westminster Confession) will not permit him to contemplate the possibility that all knowledge of *God* is so far revealed. Of course, the rarity of atheism in the eighteenth century permitted assumptions to be made then which could not be made now concerning God's governance of the natural order.

The epistemological problem we have just encountered does not emerge so clearly in Bourn's writings, because he does not, to the same degree as Taylor, take cognisance of reason's *spoiled* condition; nor is he so clear that revelation delivers *content* which is inaccessible to reason. Thus, he can exhort Orton: "MAKE it appear to the whole Auditory, that the Religion of the Son of God is, in all its Doctrines and Precepts, and in all Respects *conformable to the clear Dictates of Reason*; that, in all material Points, it is level to the Capacities of Men..."⁷⁴ Again, "no Text of Scripture is so to be expounded as to overthrow the great Principles of natural Religion, or so as to contradict the whole Stream of the Gospel, or so as to be inconsistent with the Context, and with other plain and undisputed Texts."⁷⁵ In scriptural interpretation reason is of paramount importance: "Can we prove the Scriptures to be from God, find out the Meaning

73. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

74. S. Bourn, *Charge to Orton*, p. 46.

75. [S. Bourn], *An Address to Protestant Dissenters*, p. 14.

of them, or pay a wise and acceptable Obedience to them without the Exercise of Reason?"⁷⁶

Consistently with this, Bourn can, in *The Christian Child's First Catechism*, invoke the watch which Paley was later to make famous (albeit the teleological argument had by that time been demolished by Hume):

Q. Has not every Watch and Clock an ingenious Maker?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it not as plain that he who built this World is God, a Builder infinitely Wise?

A. Yes.⁷⁷

At the same time, Bourn is willing to declare that "we never defend Reason in Opposition to *Revelation*; we always own its Insufficiency - but we justify the Use of Reason, in distinguishing a Revelation of God from the Doctrines of Men, and in finding out the true sense of that Revelation."⁷⁸

Neither Bourn nor Taylor will go beyond scripture to such concepts as "consubstantiality," "hypostatical union," and the like.⁷⁹ The scriptures, declares Taylor, are given "to make us wise unto salvation," and from them "any Man of common Sense may not only with Ease learn his Duty in the fullest Extent, but at the same time by the numerous examples of pious Men in all Ages, he may see that it is practicable, and may see how to engage in it..."⁸⁰ Indeed, such recourse to the Bible "is the only possible Mean of reducing the Christian World to Unity both of hearts and Sentiments."⁸¹ By neglect of the Bible people have been waylaid into deism on the one hand and popery on the other, and both of these are human schemes exalted above God's Word.⁸²

Of our three authors, Bourn was the wittiest in controversy - and never more so than when dealing with Baptists and other "enthusiasts." In one of his dialogues, "Baptist" asks, "Well, Friend, what think you now of our Preachers?" "Consistent Christian" replies,

They seem to have a deal of Fervour, and what you call Zeal; and I hope are honest Men and mean well; but truly I think 'em a little touch'd in their Heads, and all going into a Distemper call'd by Physicians *Religious Madness*... Tho' I approve of neither, yet I had rather see a *Statue* in the Pulpit than a *Jack-pudding* or a *Merry-Andrew*... Your Preachers may have common Sense upon other

76. [S. Bourn], *A Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman*, 1739, p. 36.

77. S. Bourn, *Religious Education Begun and carried on in Three Catechisms*, 1748, p. 33.

78. [S. Bourn], *A Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman*, 1739, p. 35.

79. See J. Taylor, *A Narrative of Mr. Joseph Rawson's Case*, p. 47.

80. *Id.*, *Scripture Divinity*, pp. 9, 382.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 470; cf. *id.*, *A Supplement to the Scripture-Doctrine of Original Sin*, 1741, p. 171.

Subjects and in other Places, but they seem to leave it all behind them when they get into the Pulpit, and begin to talk Divinity.⁸³

Bourn, we are informed, "would sometimes indulge a Vein of satirical Humour, ridiculing with great Pleasantry, the Foibles of his Acquaintance; but would carry it no further than what they might perceive it was designed for their Good."⁸⁴ In a letter of December 1743 to Isaac Watts, Bourn himself admitted that in some of his dialogues there is "some pleasantry and humour; but, I think, not much anger."⁸⁵ Elsewhere, he exhorted his hearers that they "must use none of *Satan's Weapons* in defending the Truths and Cause of Christ... This hating and hurting of Men, under the pretence of Religion, is the very *Spirit of Anti-Christ*."⁸⁶ Nor need we doubt the sincerity of the postscript to the published version of the sermon just quoted, where he deems it a "just Ground both of Wonder and Lamentation" that a sermon designed to promote peace between Christians should have caused the commotion it did.⁸⁷

III

Morality

Taylor was the only one of our three divines to write systematically on morality as such: systematically, but not originally. He informs us that he has built upon Philips Glover's *An Enquiry concerning Virtue and Happiness* (1751) and Price's *A Review of the Principal Questions of Morals* (1757); and, as we saw, his *Sketch* was intended to introduce students to Wollaston's *The Religion of Nature Delineated*.⁸⁸ If in religion Taylor asserts the rational as over against the enthusiastic, in ethics he pits reason against Hutcheson's moral sense.

Those who stood in the line of Samuel Clarke - Price and Taylor among them - held that moral judgments are made by reason on the basis of our knowledge of the orders of creation and the fitness of things. Hutcheson, prompted by Shaftesbury,⁸⁹ attributed our moral judgments to the operations of the moral sense. To the extent that both sides agreed that there must be a faculty which

83. S. Bourn, *A Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman*, 1737, pp. 3, 6. In a letter to Benson of 9 March 1744, Bourn wrote that despite their better principles, the Presbyterians were less numerous than the Independents - something which had been attributed to the fact that the latter "laboured the pathetic art more."

84. S. Bourn, *Twenty Sermons On the most Serious and Practical Subjects of the Christian Religion. Fitted for the Use of Private Families*, 1757, Preface, p. vii.

85. Cited by Toulmin, *Memoirs*, p.56.

86. S. Bourn, *The True Christian Way of Striving for the Faith of the Gospel*, 1738, pp. 25, 27.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

88. For Glover see W. Wilson, *History and Antiquities*, I, 1808, p. 124. For Price (1723-91) see DNB. See S. Tweyman, "Truth, happiness and obligation the moral philosophy of William Wollaston" *Philosophy* LI, Jan. 1976, pp. 35-46.

89. For Shaftesbury (1671-1713) see DNB at Cooper, Anthony Ashley, third Earl.

delivers our moral judgments, and in so far as they both maintained the independence of morality from divine revelation, they were alike disciples of Locke.

According to Hutcheson, we have external senses which perceive colours and sounds, and internal senses which perceive moral excellence and depravity. In the latter category is the moral sense. This sense does not intuit innate ideas (for, in the wake of Locke as then understood, such ideas are abandoned). Rather, it perceives virtue and vice; and any judgments concerning the fittingness or otherwise of actions are inferences drawn from those perceptions. For Hutcheson right actions are those which are motivated by benevolence and are conducive to the greatest happiness of the greatest number (the familiar utilitarian phrase which, it would appear, Hutcheson was the first to coin).⁹⁰

From the other side, Price contended that the divine intellect is above the divine will; that the authority of moral values lies in their being deliverances of the divine intellect; and that these deliverances are appropriated by our reason.⁹¹ He could not countenance the possibility that moral judgments might vary with the variable feelings prompted by the moral sense (for if perceptions vary, so will the judgments inferred from them). Price insists that our ideas of right and wrong are intimately bound up with the nature of things, and are not inferences drawn from our sensations.

In the light of the brief and bald sketch just presented, we may set down Taylor's convictions *contra* Hutcheson (the question whether or not he properly understands the details of Hutcheson's case need not detain us here). Taylor deplores Hutcheson's attempt to reduce all virtue and religion to benevolence: there are other virtues than benevolence, and proper self love is among them. As to Hutcheson's moral sense: it is redundant; if reason shows us, as it does, the nature and difference of actions, we have no need of this faculty. Both benevolence and the moral sense are shaky foundations upon which to build ethics, for the former can be overpowered, and the latter depends upon independent judgments which we make. Taylor ends with a resounding *tu quoque*: "Therefore, the very act of [Hutcheson's] reasoning and arguing about virtue, and about his own hypothesis, proveth, that his own hypothesis is false, and that his instincts are neither the only, nor the principal percipients or judges of virtue. Thus the very writing of his books confutes the principles therein advanced."⁹² But this conclusion rests upon a confusion: as we have said, Hutcheson intends his moral sense only as a means of *perception*; reason has

90. F. Hutcheson, *A System of Moral Philosophy*, 1755, I, p. 98. For an interesting account of Hutcheson's philosophy see W. T. Blackstone, *Francis Hutcheson and Contemporary Ethical Theory*, University of Georgia Press 1965. For the general lines of thought in relation to religious questions see Olive M. Griffiths, *Religion and learning*, Cambridge University Press 1935 (though note H. McLachlan's *historical* cautions in *The Hibbert Journal*, April 1936, pp. 475-7).

91. See R. Price, *A Review of the Principle Questions in Morals*, 1787, p. 181.

92. J. Taylor, *An Examination of the Scheme of Morality, advanced by Dr. Hutcheson*, 1759, p. 47.

plenty of work to do in its wake.

Taylor reinforces his point positively in his *Sketch*: "The primary Reason, or Foundation of Virtue, is that Principle, which being supposed, Virtue, or Action morally right, necessarily results; which being taken away, there remains no Ground, nor Reason for Virtue."⁹³ The principle of reason, he continues, is compelling, universal, and "perfectly consistent with Liberty, or Freedom of Choice."⁹⁴ The rightness of an action, or the right treatment of an object, do not depend upon the will or power of the actor, or on good or bad consequences. We are obliged to right action only by the nature of the thing in question. But how do we discern this?

Reason is that Faculty of Mind, by which we perceive, or understand the Truth, or the true Natures of Things, and are capable of considering, distinguishing, comparing and judging of their Natures, Properties, Circumstances and Relations, and of discerning what is agreeable to, or inconsistent with them. Thus Reason is distinguished from the simple perceptions of *Sense*, or the feelings of mere animal Nature, such as Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting. Which indeed may generally perceive, or feel, Objects truly; but cannot perceive or apprehend the Truth, or reflect upon their own Feelings, so as to deduce any Truths from the Natures, or Relations of Objects; which is the Work, not of *Sense*, but of *Reason* alone. *Sense* only sees a Part, and a Whole: *Reason* compares them, and discovers, that the Whole is equal to all its Parts.⁹⁵

Further, reason is distinguishable from instinct; it is the supreme principle in all beings which possess it, and it necessarily implies an obligation to right action. There are degrees of rationality, and the degree of obligation varies accordingly.

For all its loose ends, Taylor's position is largely coincident with that of Price. Commenting on this fact, an older writer drew a slight distinction: in Taylor reason "appears to be the discursive, and not, as in the systems of Price and Cudworth, the intuitive reason."⁹⁶ But in the quotation from Taylor just given, while the emphasis is undoubtedly upon the discursive reason which considers, distinguishes, compares and judges, reason is also said to be the faculty by which we *perceive* the truth.

As to the performance of actions, "*Agency is Liberty of Mind to prefer one Thing before another, to will, or nill, to choose to exert to any Power, or not to exert it... The proper Cause of an Action is the Will of the Agent, and nothing else... Only what an*

93. J. Taylor, *A Sketch of Moral Philosophy*, 1760, p. 8.

94. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

95. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

96. Thomas Fowler, *Shaftesbury and Hutcheson*, 1882, p.224. For Cudworth (1617-88) see DNB.

Agent intends to do is to be accounted his Action."⁹⁷ The scope of morality is wide: "*Moral Action comprehends all Instances of Regard or Behaviour towards ourselves, and all other rational, and sensible, or mere animal Beings, from the most high GOD down to the meanest Reptil, to which we are related, with which we have any Society, or Intercourse, or which we can any Ways voluntarily affect by our Actions... Faithfully to treat or behave toward all rational or sensible beings and the things which may affect them, according to their Natures, Properties, Relations and Circumstances, or according to the Truth so far as known by any particular Agent, is Virtue, or Action Morally Right.*"⁹⁸ In moral action, the degree of virtue present turns not upon the actor's knowledge, but upon his "*real and sincere love of Truth, and faithful Enquiry after it, (according to his Capacity, Opportunities and Circumstances).*"⁹⁹ Virtue cannot be commanded, it can be exercised only in freedom. While we cannot resist God's absolute will (that is, what he himself determines to do), we can resist his preceptive will (that is, what he wishes us to do).

Happiness is essentially different from virtue. Happiness is agreeable sensations, or feelings of the mind; virtue is right action. We may gain happiness *via* suffering, but we cannot gain virtue *via* vice. Happiness may result from virtuous action, though it does not necessarily do so; it may be a motive towards virtuous action, but the only real ground of virtue is truth and reason. God is the judge of all, and his will is "necessarily under the Obligations of Truth and Right."¹⁰⁰ All human instincts, passions, affections and appetites are inferior, and subject to, reason. As for conscience, it "*is not a distinct Faculty in the human Soul; but the Judgment of our Minds concerning our Actions; or it is our Apprehensions of Right and Wrong, either directing, or reflecting upon, our own Conduct.*"¹⁰¹ If we would be guided by conscience, we must lay aside prejudice, guard against deception, and faithfully seek truth: "*Thus endeavouring to gain the clearest Knowledge of Truth and Right, we are obliged to perform those Actions, which our Conscience, or Judgment, apprehends to be our Duty in any Case or Circumstance.*"¹⁰² So to act is to proceed according to the light afforded by our capacities, opportunities, means and advantages. This light "is all we have, and all we can have at present."¹⁰³

To embark upon a general discussion of the worth of the deontological approach in ethics would take us too far afield. It is sufficient here to grasp the nature of the moral theory which undergirds all that Taylor, Bourn and Towgood have to say about subscription, toleration and the establishment of religion. Their convictions on these issues arise from a moral theory which will not permit the rationally-grounded-and-defensible judgments of the individual

97. J. Taylor, *A Sketch*, pp. 37, 45.

98. *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 50.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

103. *Ibid.*

to be coerced by any outside authority whatsoever. If even the deliverances of the Bible must be appropriated by, and conformable to, reason, *a fortiori* the deliverances of confessional statements, of ecclesiastical bodies, and of the state must likewise be subject to reason's scrutiny. By the same token, we cannot claim the right to employ reason thus ourselves without according the same right to others: hence the advocacy of toleration (until we deem others to be behaving sacriligiously!).

ALAN P.F. SELL

MARGINALISING EVANGELICALS: THOMAS BINNEY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA 1858-1959

Thomas Binney, English Congregationalism's leading preacher, visited the colony of South Australia in the spring of 1858.¹ His visit produced a sequence of

1. *An introductory note on sources*: much of the evidence originally appeared in either of the two Adelaide dailies, the *Register* or the *Advertiser*. By 1 Nov 1858 the *Advertiser* was advising the public that the items would be collected and published in pamphlet form. This occurred, first in January 1859, when the bishop's supporters, led by G.W. Hawkes and Nathaniel Oldham, published *To the Members of the United Church of England and Ireland in the Dioceses of New South Wales, Newcastle, Melbourne and Tasmania, and in those of New Zealand and of the Mother Church, these pages are respectfully presented, as containing reliable information concerning a proposal (declined by his Lordship the Bishop) to introduce into her pulpits, in the diocese of Adelaide, preachers in avowed separation from her communion: and in token of the firm determination of Churchmen in South Australia to adhere to, and maintain, the discipline, polity, and ritual of that primitive and apostolic church of which it is their privilege to be members, [hereafter *Members*]*. (This pamphlet was mentioned by Short in a letter to the S.P.G. 26 Jan. 1859, in Copies of Letters Received, Adelaide, I, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. I am grateful to my colleague Dr David Hilliard for providing me with a transcript of this letter.) Then, in April 1859, William O'Halloran and Samuel Tomkinson on behalf of the proponents of co-operation published *Protestant Church Alliance. Thoughts and Facts connected with a movement in 1858 to promote closer Alliance of Evangelical Christians in South Australia by a Lay member of the United Church of England and Ireland. [Hereafter *PCA*]*. Binney himself eventually delivered his full response to Short in an address in Hobart in 1859, which was published in the colony along with the letters and other materials, but also with Binney's connecting narrative, as T. Binney, *The Church of the Future, as depicted in the Adelaide correspondence examined and estimated. An Address: the substance of which was delivered at Green Ponds, Tasmania, to the Ministers and Delegates of the Tasmanian Congregational Union [1859]* [hereafter *Tasmanian Address*]. Never one to miss an opportunity to get into print, Binney published the Tasmanian material again in London: T. Binney, *Lights and Shadows of Church Life in Australia including thoughts on some things at home, 1860* [hereafter *Lights and Shadows*]. There are variations in the minor items included in these four collections, but no divergences in the text where the material is contained in more than one of them. Apart from the pages of the *Advertiser* and the *Register*, where editorials, news items and letters are all to be found, the Diaries and Papers of Augustus Short have proved invaluable: Mortlock Library of South Australiana [MLSA], Private Record Group [PRG] 160. As yet no papers of any other major participants have been found.

events which, though unexpected, were critical in the developing consciousness of evangelicals in South Australia. There was a public controversy which stretched over ten months about the possibility of co-operation, or even reunion, among the Protestant churches in the colony which involved not only Binney, but Augustus Short, the Anglican bishop of Adelaide, Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell, the governor of the colony, and a large number of colonists. But it was also part of a larger process occurring in England and indeed wherever the English pattern of denominational identities had been replicated. The relationship formalised in 1662 and 1689 between the established Church of England and the dissenters, later the nonconforming churches, was being transformed in the first half of the nineteenth century. The legal, social and ecclesiastical dominance of the Church of England was being challenged, mostly with success, by nonconformist churches and their allies. The great benchmark was the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828. The accumulated legal constraints of the eighteenth century were thereby largely, though not completely, removed from the nonconformists. Over the next thirty years or so the nonconformists - Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and less self-consciously, the Methodists - continued their struggle for complete equality of treatment with the Church of England. The outcome was that by about 1870 the Christian denominations of England were competing openly with a much greater degree of equality than ever before. This was symbolised by the growing use of the term "Free Churches" in the late nineteenth century to refer to these non-Anglican groups.²

Interacting with that process of emergent and competing denominationalism was the outcome of the Evangelical Revival which had begun so vigorously in the 1740s. Not only had that powerful rediscovery of Christianity spawned the eager evangelism of the various Methodist groups, it had also seen a resurgence of vital Christianity in "Old Dissent", mentioned already. In addition, many members of the Church of England responded to the call of evangelical Christianity.³ Among all these people the notion of a shared Christianity, the "Evangelical Movement", was widely promoted. For many of them the Exeter Hall, central meeting place for numberless Christian agencies, became the embodiment of that shared and vigorous Evangelical Christianity in England in the mid-nineteenth century.

Others within the Church of England sought to re-vivify faith and worship in other ways. If dependence on the state was to be jettisoned, as many urged, in order to free the church from an alien incubus, it could be justified by a renewed emphasis on the claims of the Church of England to independent authority deriving from the tradition of eighteen centuries of church life, guaranteed by the historic episcopate. The most striking expression of this renewed and self-

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2. O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 1966, vol.1, esp. pp.79-100, 142-157, and ch.6; W.R. Ward, *Religion and Society in England, 1790-1850*, 1970.
 3. D. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, 1989, esp. ch.2. Note also the definition of evangelical, pp.1-17.

confident ecclesiology was the Oxford Movement, launched in 1833. It was eagerly taken up as the answer to the problems posed as much by the Evangelical Movement as by the dominance of the state over the church.

For the most part, the resurgent strength of nonconformity and the recovered confidence of High Church Anglicans ran on parallel lines. Evangelical Anglicans sometimes worked apart from nonconformists, sometimes with them.⁴ It was a difficult problem. In the eighteenth century Anglican rectors had largely gone their own way in responding to Methodism - some favorably, some not. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Anglicans looked to their bishops as the embodiment of the Church Militant to define their attitudes and lead their dioceses. Overseas, the creation of such dioceses as Adelaide, along with Newcastle, Melbourne and New Zealand, represented this same renewed interest in the necessity for bishops and dioceses as the defining entities by which Anglicanism could exist: once more episcopacy was the "bene esse" of the church.

The visit of Thomas Binney to South Australia in 1858 replicated in that colony many of these English debates about church relations. It also helped to shape the understanding of Christians in the colony of the options available to them for action, jointly or separately. Already South Australia was an especially vivid example of these English religious developments since its establishment in 1836. While Edward Gibbon Wakefield placed little personal trust in Christian faith, he and his followers who promoted the colony in the 1830s were well aware of the power of the appeal to religious equality and of the absence of an established church. Among the many believers in search of a more secure material future, as well as a better environment in which to exercise their faith, the promotion of South Australia struck a ready chord.

In the early years of the colony much diligent and busy effort went to establish worshipping congregations.⁵ There was much sharing of plant, much joint effort to establish causes and institutions. The dominant religious outlook was broadly evangelical. Even the Lutherans from Prussia reinforced this same evangelical godliness in search of space to work and worship.⁶ The statistics which signalled this pattern of affiliations have been explored by David

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4. A fine study of such activities is D. Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness. The Evangelical Mission to Working Class London, 1828-1860*. New York 1986.
 5. Anglican: Dickey, *Holy Trinity Adelaide, 1836-1988. the history of a city church*, Adelaide, 1988; Methodist: Hunt, *This Side of Heaven: a history of Methodism in South Australia*, Adelaide; Congregational: J. Cameron, *In Stow's Footsteps: A chronological history of the Congregational churches in South Australia 1837-1977*, Adelaide, 1987; Lutheran: D. Schubert, *Kavel's People: From Prussia to South Australia*, Adelaide, 1985.
 6. I have examined this general theme in "The Evangelical Tradition in South Australia", a first version of which was published in R. Withycombe (ed) *Australia and New Zealand Religious History 1788-1988: A collection of papers and addresses*, Canberra: 1988, pp.157-174.

Hilliard, who has shown from the 1844 and 1855 censuses that⁷ while Anglicans in 1844 were 54 per cent of the population, by 1855 their share had slipped to just under 40 per cent, much lower than even the worst interpretation of the English figures generated by Mann in 1851.⁸ In that same period Methodists grew from 9 per cent to 13 per cent, Congregationalists appeared in 1855 with another 6 per cent, while Presbyterians remained steady around 8-9 per cent. The participants in the controversy we are about to examine were not unaware of these trends and the problems they posed, notably the rapid erosion of Anglican strength and the powerful upsurge in Methodism.

Bishop Augustus Short, appointed to the diocese of Adelaide in 1847, had during the first decade of his episcopate been struggling to maintain the identity and impact of Anglicanism in South Australia. He was a High Churchman who had been influenced by the Oxford Movement. He looked with alarm at the decline in the proportion of colonists who acknowledged membership of the Church of England from the first to the second census. He struggled to establish congregations and to supply them with clergy. He sought to establish a system of diocesan government which was independent of the state; and which gave a voice to both clergy and laity. He watched with jaundiced eye the threats to his authority from laymen whom he suspected of "congregationalism". He even feared nonconformity would invade the integrity of his church through the exercise of state power. He summarised these fears in a letter to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel on 16 May 1866:

It is impossible for me to state the undercurrents working against the Church of England and its bishop in this colony, founded as it was, 23 years ago by many of [the] friends and congregation of Mr Binney.

By the blessing of God we have got clear of the State, that is, a democratic assembly of non-conformists. We have survived the advent of the voluntary system. We have organised a Synod and secured the veto of Bishop and Clergy as separate orders. We are in favour with the people, despite Governors and other self-seekers. My only difficulty is to save the Clergy from anxiety about their small incomes.⁹

The nonconformists meanwhile rejoiced in their share of the religious affiliations reported in 1855. The various Methodist groups eagerly pressed on with evangelism in city and country, much reinforced by copper miners from

7. The fullest version of Hilliard's data is in Wray Vamplew et al. (eds), *South Australian Historical Statistics*, Sydney: History Project Inc.n.d.,ch.7.

8. Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, I, pp.363-9.

9. Copies of Letters Received, Adelaide, I. SPG Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford. My thanks to Dr. David Hilliard for the transcript of this letter.

Cornwall and Wales. The other nonconformists also looked for growth in their mission in the colony.

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There is also a modest historiography surrounding the story of Binney's visit. The biographies of Binney report the events, basing their remarks on the published exchanges.¹⁰ More recently, Judith Brown¹¹ and Janet Scarfe¹² have reviewed the story essentially from Short's point of view. Both present the exchange as part of Short's struggle to gain ascendancy over troublesome laymen in his diocese. Both use his diaries and accept his judgements of events, paying little attention to the motives of the original memorialists.

Frank Engel¹³ summarised the exchange extensively and with a more even hand than Brown or Scarfe, because he was exploring the history of the idea of unity among Christians in Australia, and of course its opposite, the experience of disunity. Thus while to Brown and Scarfe the exchange was a victory for Short, to Engel. "This thoughtful and remarkable letter [by Short] is, almost certainly, the first careful contribution to Australian thinking about church union", which unfortunately ended in bickering and disagreement.¹⁴

These varying treatments of the exchange are not at odds: the issues of authority and unity interacted. But so also did the genuine desire of Christians to promote the gospel cause, and to co-operate whenever possible. They might have been wrong-headed, foolish or worse, to take up the opportunity presented by Binney's visit, as Janet Scarfe implies. But their concerns grew directly out of their good intentions and their past experience. Their endeavours within the Anglican church failed, and indeed had the outcome of ensuring that only the bishop's authority could involve Anglicans in joint ventures of any sort. Thus the barriers for evangelical Christians in the Anglican communion to working in harness with likeminded people from other denominations were increased. Evangelical Anglicans were experiencing a degree of marginalisation. At the same time Short's insistence on denominational integrity had the effect of reinforcing the sense of separate and valid identity for Congregationalists, and, less forcefully, for the other nonconformist denominations in the colony.

Thus it is possible to address the evidence from this well-worked set of letters in a more comprehensive way than has so far been the case. In particular, it is time to look beyond Augustus Short's diary entries, and the well-rounded

10. E. Paxton Hood, *Thomas Binney: His Mind Life and Opinions*, 1874; DNB; *Australian Dictionary of Biography [ADB]*.

11. Judith Brown, *Augustus Short, D.D. Bishop of Adelaide*, Adelaide, 1973, ch.15.

12. Janet Scarfe, "Bridge of Polished Steel as Fine as a Hair": The Oxford Movement in South Australia, 1836-1881", MA thesis, Adelaide University, 1974.

13. F. Engel, *Australian Christians in conflict and unity*, Melbourne, 1984, pp.50-58.

14. Engel, p.55, echoed by D. Hilliard, *Godliness and good Order: A history of the Anglican Church in South Australia*, Adelaide, 1986, p.46.

periods of his letters to Thomas Binney, to enquire into his motives and his relations with the evangelicals within his diocese.

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Binney was pastor of the King's Weigh House Chapel in London from 1829 till 1869. In the high days of the 1830s, when nonconformists believed the walls of Jericho - the special privileges of the Church of England - were all about to fall, he had spoken scornfully of the Church of England.¹⁵ What is more, he gave a widely applauded address to the Congregational Union in 1848 in which he declared that "the special mission of Congregationalism was to the middle classes" which was recognised as a rallying cry defining the task of his denomination amidst the rapidly growing numbers of middle-class people in England. The future of Congregationalism seemed secure in the hands of such a man. Binney's reputation also included major roles in the London Missionary Society and the foundation of the Colonial Missionary Society in 1836 in specific response to the establishment of South Australia. He was the London patron of the colony's founding Congregationalists and especially their first clergyman, Thomas Quinton Stow. He was well known as one of the founders of the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1831. In the 1840s and 1850s, Binney's Weigh House was central in the emerging London YMCA, for its leaders Matthew Hodder, George Williams and Samuel Morley were all members there.¹⁶ Theologically, he was evangelical without being strongly Calvinist, with hints of a softer theology coming to emphasise the love of God, rather than his wrath: a tendency beginning to become apparent in mid-century Congregationalism as the pastors of these expanding congregations worked hard to retain their increasingly middle-class flocks.¹⁷ Therefore, when during 1858-9, at the age of sixty, Binney visited Australia in an effort to recuperate his health after a bout of depression, such a reputation ensured that he was an

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15. Elaine Kaye, *The History of the King's Weigh House Church*. 1965, ch.5 is the fullest modern treatment of Binney's life. The notorious sentence, which pursued him for the rest of his career, was in an appendix to a sermon celebrating the laying of the foundation stone of his new church building:

It is with me, I confess, a matter of deep, serious, religious, conviction, that the Established Church is a great national evil; that it is an obstacle to the progress of truth and godliness in the land; that it destroys more souls than it saves; and that, therefore, its end is most devoutly to be wished by every lover of god and man. (p.67)

16. C. Binfield, *George Williams and the Y.M.C.A.: A Study in Victorian Social Attitudes*, 1973.
17. A major theme of M.D. Johnson, *The Dissolution of Dissent, 1850-1918*, New York, 1987, which supersedes DNB.

immediate celebrity, a widely-accepted spokesman of the best that nonconforming Protestantism had to offer.¹⁸

Arriving in Melbourne in the antipodean autumn, he travelled and on occasions preached in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne before he reached Adelaide in late August.¹⁹ His reputation as a leading evangelical spokesman preceded him to Adelaide, and as elsewhere in Australia, he was soon being invited to speak at public rallies and leading Adelaide nonconformist churches.²⁰ He was made welcome socially too. The Binneys were present at a large reception at Government House presided over by the Governor, Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell, on 26 August. His host, Samuel Davenport, ensured that Binney met Bishop Short at the reception. The bishop, perhaps agreeably surprised at his first impressions of Binney, wrote in his diary later that day that he found Binney "in appearance and manner not overweening - not puritanical but a good able ... clear man".²¹ There is no doubt that Short was eager to spend more time with Binney amidst a variety of legal and ecclesiastical excitements which he was currently enduring, and before he set out for his next country pastoral journey. He had said as much to his daughter Minnie Glen in a letter on 25 August²²: "In return for all this [the excitement of an ordination service at Trinity Church the previous day at which he ordained his first locally-trained clergyman, Richardson Reid] I am going with Mr Smedley to meet the great Mr Binney - who is a fine fellow by all accounts..." Perhaps in a way preempting all the public controversy which was to follow, he went on in this intimate letter to his favourite daughter,

'bigot' as I am in matters of the Catholic and Apostolic Church (whose rules and orders I do not mean to depart from) I am glad to show friendly feeling towards a distinguished advocate of the great Cause of Christianity in the world.

When Short called on the Binneys the day after the Government House reception he found them "as nice as yesterday". Reflecting his awareness of the altered character of the religious tone developing in the colony, he went on to remark in his diary, "I am thankful that Church prejudices as in England do not

18. These judgements about Binney's eminence are derived from S. Piggin, *Making Evangelical Missionaries: The Social Background, Motives and Training of British Protestant Missionaries to India*, Sutton Courtenay Press, 1984, and also Johnson, chs 1-2, esp. pp. 32-4. Having reviewed Binney's *Sermons Preached in the King's Weigh House Chapel, London 1829-1869*, 1869, I accept their judgement, contrary to that of R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in England 1662-1962*, 1962, about his "Calvinism".
19. His movements around Australia can be traced from the dates attached to some of the sermons and addresses he gave and which were subsequently published in the colonies. J. Ferguson, *Bibliography of Australia V: 1851-1900, A-G*, Sydney, 1963, lists seven such pamphlets, with mainly Sydney and Melbourne origins.
20. *Register* 1, 3 Sept 1858; *Advertiser* 21, 24 Sep 1858.
21. Diary 26 Aug 1858, Short Papers, PRG 160/1, MLSA.
22. Short to M. Glen, [25 Aug 1858], Short Papers, PRG 160/22/11.

in this colony hinder such intercourse with such men de facto if not de jure Ministers ... of the New Testament".²³ Already Short was conscious of the key issue which Binney's visit was to pose in public. As we shall see, he was scathing in his criticism of those among the leadership of the Church of England who wanted to compromise its "rules and orders", yet even Short had to grapple with that gap between fact and law as he found it in the person of Thomas Binney.

The public promotion of Binney went on apace. He preached in the country, at Salisbury in support of Congregationalists in the Primitive Methodist Chapel on 1 September, and at Kapunda "in Mr Crase's New Large Room" the following Tuesday, 7 September. Further meetings in Adelaide were advertised in the local press. Binney was by now a celebrity in Adelaide. Archdeacon Woodcock had been noticed by the press conspicuously attending one of Binney's sermons in the Pirie St Wesleyan Methodist church, much to Short's annoyance. The problem was defining itself, at least in Short's mind,

when dignitaries of our church thus appear to sanction schismatic church order & worship, why blame our people for preferring others to us. If the Church of England has no claim beyond that of Wesleyans & Congregationalists why are not the Laity free to choose ... Is not this practically to abandon the peculiar claim of our church as succeeding to apostolic tradition and to lay schism at her door for refusing to admit Dissenting preachers to her Pulpits.²⁴

These were serious issues indeed, and already the question was floating about Adelaide that Anglican pulpits should be open to distinguished nonconformists such as Binney. Short's formulation of the issue in his diary he was to expound more fully a few weeks later.

In an effort to exploit Binney's notoriety in Adelaide, James Way, superintendent of the Bible Christian mission, invited Short to chair a meeting of the Sunday School Teachers' Union at which Binney was to speak,²⁵ only to be met with Short's refusal.²⁶ His private thoughts were already taking public form.

Both Short and the Binneys attended a dinner party on 22 September at the home of Captain Simeon Hare, Superintendent of Convicts. Short and Binney

23. Diary, 27 Aug 1858.

24. Diary, Sunday 5 Sep 1858. Short's puzzle was that he had just heard Woodcock preach on "The Duty of the Church" in Christ Church, North Adelaide, where Woodcock was incumbent. Bishop's Court was next door. The sermon included a denial of the validity of Binney's orders. Clearly Short was not the only leading Anglican grappling with the issues of church order raised by Binney's visit. Unfortunately, it is not possible to reconstruct Woodcock's thinking, except to say that he was an evangelical, and that he refused during the controversy to qualify Anglican independence in any way, as his protest at the 1859 Synod debate was to show.

25. Way to Short, 9 Sep 1858, *Lights and Shadows*, App., 47.

26. Short to Way, 10 Sep 1858, *Lights and Shadows*, App., 48.

obviously enjoyed one another's company. After all, they were both church leaders, well versed in the latest theological and literary fashions. The other guests whom Short recorded in his diary were senior nonconformists such as Thomas Stow, leading Congregational minister in the city, William Giles, resident manager of the South Australian Company and a prominent Congregationalist as was Samuel Davenport, a substantial merchant and landowner. On the other hand, Samuel Tomkinson was an Anglican and a bank manager. He worshipped at Trinity Church, Adelaide, the city's first Anglican congregation, from whom Short had already experienced vigorous criticism for his high views on the church.²⁷ On this occasion Short and Tomkinson could shake hands over some previous disagreement: "thus some good has resulted from Mr Binney's visit".²⁸

More positive good was captured by Short as a witness of Binney's public lecture on writing and speaking presented in White's Rooms on 24 September, which of course the bishop could attend without prejudice to his ecclesiastical position. Binney's power clearly continued to affect Short, as it no doubt did others in Adelaide. "His manner impressive, humorous, dramatic, his style vigorous, clear, pointed and at times eloquently forcible." It was a studied yet powerful appreciation.²⁹

Then, following up their dinner-table conversation, Short took the trouble to pen a long letter to Binney over the next few days. This letter was to become the core of the large public debate which erupted later in the month.³⁰ It reached Binney on 4 October: perhaps Short took that long to refine his text, possibly he had some doubts about delivering it, or perhaps it was merely a matter of convenience only to deliver the letter almost a fortnight after its opening date. We do not know. This thoughtful letter brought the question of the capacity of Protestant Christians, including Anglicans, to act in concert, alliance or even union into public prominence. The ensuing debate came to involve many senior citizens of Adelaide, from the governor down. It led some journalists and other public commentators to speculate that the growing sense of denominational differences and identity in the colony might somehow be broken down, and that the Anglican and the nonconformist groups might somehow rediscover in Adelaide that lost evangelical innocence which had escaped them all in England.

It is possible that Short wrote his letter out of a disinterested concern to continue a dinner-party discussion about the character and conditions of union among the churches, considered purely as a matter of theoretical debate. It is however more likely, given his privately recorded remarks revealing his concern

27. Dickey, *Holy Trinity*, pp.57-60.

28. Short, *Diary*, 22 Sep 1858.

29. Short, *Diary*, 24 Sep 1858.

30. The published letter was headed 23 Sep, but Short noted in his diary on 28 Sep: "Wrote letter to Mr Binney". It is contained in all the collections cited in fn. 1, eg *PCA*, 29-34.

to defend the special claims which his church made about its identity, that Short had another agenda. It is the assertion of this paper that Short's aim in penning this letter was to teach a lesson to the overconfident nonconformists and evangelical Anglicans such as "Tomky" (Short's derisive private term for Samuel Tomkinson³¹) who plainly disliked the bishop's emphasis on the special and unique character of his church, and who hankered after closer relations with their evangelical Protestant brethren. Short's motives as yet are masked, but in the light of the strong and deliberate demands which he made as the correspondence unfolded, his main concern was to emphasise difference and separation, not co-operation, alliance or union. To put it briefly, he set out to marginalise evangelicals in the colony.

Short's letter to Binney was carefully prepared, self-consciously presented, and thoughtful in its analysis, characteristics which in due course led Binney to arrange its publication, a step Short tacitly accepted and probably always intended. In it Short acknowledged the opportunity which the establishment of a new British colony of settlement had given for reviewing and reforging religious arrangements. Certainly, Short remarked, it was a matter for regret that "a mid-wall of partition should have separated kindred souls". Binney's very visit sharpened his desire to share with such eminent men and his concern for the integrity of his own church. "Why should I not go and listen to the powerful preaching of Mr Binney? ... Why is he not invited to preach to us in our Churches? What is the barrier which prevents him and other ministers from joining our clergy at the Lord's table, and interchanging the ministry of the Word in their respective pulpits?" His answer, drawing on his ten years experience of the evolution of relations among Christians in South Australia, remained negative: "a tradition of eighteen centuries ... declares your orders irregular, your mission the offspring of tradition, and your Church system - I will not say schism - but *dicostasy*".³² He claimed that his feelings pressed against his convictions, or rather against the demands of the rules and traditions of his church. Perhaps that was true, though everything he said and did during this controversy pointed to a high, unbending and uncompromising view of his own church as superior to the nonconformists, one needing in no respect to seek to enter into any form of alliance. Not for Short the easy co-operation of the London City Mission or those other evangelical societies where Anglicans and nonconformists worked side by side. To be sure, as far as can be established neither Bishop Barker in Sydney nor Bishop Perry in Melbourne would countenance the idea of Binney actually preaching from Anglican pulpits.³³

Maybe, Short speculated, in some future time closer relations could be

31. Short to M. Glen, 23 Nov [1858], Short papers, PRG 160/22/3.

32. By this Greek word drawn from Gal. 5:20 Short, echoing the teaching of the Oxford movement and perhaps especially of his cousin Thomas Vowler Short, formerly a fellow of Oriel College Oxford with Newman, and by now bishop of St. Asaph, meant "standing apart", even "sedition".

33. *ADB*, s.v.

achieved. Certainly, in the colony of South Australia the immediate barrier of an established character to the Church of England was absent. The fact, Short argued, permitted him to address the "matters in dispute simply as questions of evangelical truth and Christian expediency". Perhaps at this point he jumped too many fences at once: as we shall see, that was the view of the evangelical group which published a critique of the affair some months later. Whatever the wisdom of the exercise, Short set out in the remainder of his letter to examine whether an "outward union" was desirable among "Protestant Evangelical Churches", and if so, on what terms.

Short found no difficulty in approving the idea of outward union as scriptural and apostolic, that the Universal Church should actually be embodied in a united temporal form. But was Short pre-empting the debate, or was his fundamental mind-set becoming clear? Would a man committed to a hierarchical and episcopal church order be likely to accept as a premise the possibility that church order could be variable, and that its character was not essential to the Christian life or fellowship among Christians? True, Short went on to remark that "unity is compatible with variety", but he added that "I cannot call alliance union". Since he was to be criticised by his evangelical Anglican challengers for confusing the issue, might we not suggest that Short was not interested in co-operation, and thus only wanted to explore the tougher question of union? When he did so, it was in order to reassure himself and to restate his settled convictions which, as we shall see, left no room for compromise in negotiations with Binney or any other Nonconformists. In this way he could combat his evangelical opponents.

Notwithstanding these doubts, let us now pursue Short's "principles and conditions". The first was that there must be an attitude of mutual respect. The second was that the church of the apostolic age must be regarded as embodying all the formal characteristics of the true church. Maybe somehow the parts could fit into the whole, Short hoped. He was certainly willing to abolish the power of the state to nominate the episcopate. He did not concede that the state should not aid the churches, but he did, consistent with the clarion call of the Oxford Movement, wish the church to be free from the directing power of the state in this central matter of identifying its leaders: let these leaders be elected by clergy and laity instead. This was the model he had already introduced in his own consensual compact leading to the creation of the synod of the diocese of Adelaide. His successors would be chosen by synod or its delegates. Secondly, he was willing to tolerate some "freedom and diversity in the modes of worship". Again, such a flexible view was consistent with the preferences of nineteenth-century high churchmen, for whom some aspects of the *Book of Common Prayer* were negotiable: for example, Short indicated to Binney that he would allow a measure of extempore prayer in association with the sermon. On the other hand, he looked for the acceptance of a settled statement of belief, that is, a creed. He also wanted to retain the notion of authorisation of clergy by bishops, though in this letter that was less clear than in his next attempt to discuss these matters.

Thomas Binney was residing at Government House when he received Short's letter on 4 October, by which time the bishop was preparing for a pastoral tour of the Clare valley from which he was not to return till mid-November. Not surprisingly, Binney consulted his host about the significance of the letter. MacDonnell's background as an Irishman whose father had become Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1852, where evangelicalism was an acknowledged and significant influence³⁴ predisposed him to friendly relations with Binney. Macdonnell was a regular worshipper at Trinity Church, where Dean Farrell, a Trinity College graduate, was incumbent. The governor replied to Binney from his seaside retreat at Glenelg on 16 October in another long and thoughtful letter. He began by remarking on "the truly catholic spirit in which the subject is treated by his lordship". To MacDonnell's regret, however, all that Short seemed to offer were remarks not about possible action in contemporary Adelaide, but about some future and indeterminate time. True, Short's willingness to abandon established status for his church, to modify worship, and to negotiate over matters such as the form of ordination were encouraging signs. But MacDonnell could not see any practical outcome towards a "general Protestant Church". He did not believe the several existing denominations were likely to modify their order simultaneously, for example in the matter of choosing their leadership. He suggested that some modest steps might be taken, such as co-operation in school and mission work. He made his own conviction plain, one which he was quite well aware the bishop did not share, that no "intelligent, pure-minded, and approved Protestant expounder of that Bible" should "be excluded by an ecclesiastical rule or tradition from preaching the doctrines of any Church in one of its places of worship, if invited to do so by the special minister of the building". To MacDonnell the exclusion was "a pernicious - I would almost say unChristian - distinction of man's device without a spiritual difference". He hastened to add that such visiting preachers would have to conform to the order of worship of their hosts. Despite that last limitation, MacDonnell's views represented a significant, even a radical extension of the established pattern of Evangelical co-operation in such matters as Sunday schools and evangelism among the poor.³⁵ MacDonnell then told Binney that he had that day signed a memorial as a communicant of the Anglican Church requesting Bishop Short to invite Binney to preach in one of the colony's Anglican churches.³⁶ That memorial would be the next public step in the story.

Binney, meanwhile, continued to speak in public amidst admiring tributes. The *Advertiser* described his public lecture on St Paul on 7 October as a

34. For Evangelicalism in the Irish Church, see D.H. Akenson, *A Protestant in Purgatory. Richard Whately, Archbishop of Dublin*, Hamden, Conn., 1981, pp.73-4, and his *Church of Ireland*, New Haven: Yale UP, 1973, 132-141, and D. Bowen, *The Protestant Crusade in Ireland 1800-1870*, Dublin, 1978, pp.67-8.

35. Lewis, *Lighten their Darkness*, is the only study to investigate the issue in the English context as far as I am aware.

36. MacDonnell to Binney, 16 Oct 1858, *PCA*, pp.34-7.

“masterpiece of oral biography”.³⁷ It was at this lecture that Archdeacon Woodcock excited many people by his remarks during his speech seconding the vote of thanks. As Binney later explained to Short,³⁸ “Woodcock ... alluded ... to a matter he knew of, which he was not at liberty to mention, but which was interesting in itself, and might have important results”. Binney claimed to Short that he thought Woodcock was signalling the imminent publication of the bishop’s letter to himself. As we shall see, this was not the case. It is possible that Woodcock was referring to the movement which culminated in the submission of the memorial proposing that Binney be allowed to preach in an Anglican pulpit, or it may have simply referred to the scheme to honour Binney at a testimonial banquet which was also in train. Whatever the reality, Woodcock’s remarks immediately created a buzz of interest. Letters began to appear in the newspapers calling for Binney to be heard from Anglican pulpits, just as Archdeacon Woodcock had seemed to hint. The *Advertiser*, generally favourable to liberals, took up the suggestion on 15 October. Just as Short had done privately, the editorial asked why Binney should not speak from the pulpit of the Anglican church, and urged the Archdeacon to take the lead in this movement. The restraint was not

a religious bar, but an ecclesiastical bar; it is not a scriptural difficulty but a difficulty arising out of the supposed application to this colony of the provisions of the Act of Uniformity - an Act which cannot, in the nature of things, be naturally, be advantageously, or reasonably applied. The ecclesiastical system of England cannot be worked out in this province ...

As if to emphasise the burgeoning public interest in Binney, the same day as the editorial appeared a public breakfast for Binney was advertised in the press, to be held the following Wednesday 20 October. The organising committee for this testimonial included among the twenty-seven names both Dean Farrell and Archdeacon Woodcock alongside a number of nonconformist clergy. Moreover, canvassing began the next day, Saturday 16 October, for a sufficiently representative list of names to support a memorial to the bishop requesting his permission for Binney to preach from an Anglican pulpit, as MacDonnell’s letter to Binney shows. At last the private discussions were public. Between Saturday morning (when government offices were open) and the following Tuesday, sixty-one signatures were appended below that of MacDonnell. As the pro-Short version of these events pointed out, the signatures were originally those of private individuals, but in transmitting the names to the press for publication (which occurred on 22 October), the public offices occupied by

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37. Binney asked the press in Adelaide not to publish a verbatim account of this, his major address for his Australian tour. It eventually appeared in print about the time of his departure from Australia as *Life and Travels of St Paul*, Melbourne, 1859.
38. Binney to Short, 21 Oct 1858, *PCA*, pp.45-6.

many of these men were added.³⁹ Thus we find several members of the government such as W. Younghusband, Chief Secretary, and Arthur Blyth, Commissioner of Public Works, as well as several leading civil servants such as Capt. William O'Halloran, Auditor-General and Captain Simeon Hare, Comptroller of Convicts (and host of the dinner party at which Short and Binney talked so vigorously). We can be grateful to Janet Scarfe for some biographical sleuthing into these signatories. There is little doubt that, as she says, they "included men associated with earlier outbursts of criticism against the bishop". Trinity was well represented with Samuel Tomkinson, Samuel Stocks and Dr William Gosse among others. But there were men from several other suburban Anglican congregations, including Christ Church, North Adelaide, St Peter's, Glenelg, and St Jude's, Brighton.

In their memorial they spoke of themselves as "attached to the Ritual and Church Government" of the "United Church of England and Ireland". But they were also "desiring to promote union and Christian fellowship between the Churches agreeing in our common Protestant faith". They believed that an invitation to Binney to preach from an Anglican pulpit would promote Christian union and Christian love "in the hearts of those who, holding like faith in the great saving doctrines of our common religion, have been hitherto kept assunder [sic] by differences of form and discipline".

The memorialists were excited by the prospect of the benefits which might flow from Binney's visit. But they probably hoped for too much on this occasion. They did not know of Short's privately expressed intransigence about the matters they were raising. They had not yet come to grips with the completely different ecclesiology upon which he grounded his claims to the exclusive identity of the Church of England and his authority over it in the diocese of Adelaide. They based their appeal on the characteristic claims of the Evangelical coalition which had been so effective in England, in Ireland, and in other parts of the British Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴¹

When the memorial was received by Dean Farrell, in the absence of the bishop, on 19 October, it received short shrift. As Grace Marryat, daughter of the colony's first Anglican clergyman, the evangelical Charles Howard (who died in 1843) and now husband of Charles Marryat, incumbent of Port Adelaide and the bishop's nephew, put it,

Charles went to town to be present at a meeting of the Chapter to return an answer to the Memorial signed by the Governor and

39. *Members*, pp.12-13.

40. Scarfe, "Bridge" p.186.

41. J. W. Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, illustrates the strength of that popular undenominational evangelicalism in another British colony during the same period. See also J. Wolfe, "The Evangelical Alliance in the 1840s: an attempt to institutionalise Christian unity", in W.J. Shields & Diana Wood (eds), *Studies in Church History 23: Voluntary Religion*, Oxford, 1986, pp.333-46.

requesting that Mr Binney might be allowed to preach in one of our churches, a request which I am glad to say they considered themselves unable to comply with...⁴²

Dean Farrell was the evangelical incumbent of Trinity Church, the obvious venue for any Anglican appearance by Binney, while Archdeacon Woodcock, the next senior clergyman had already made his interest in Binney plain in public. But when Dean and Chapter responded as the diocesan executive to the memorial, it was to reject the proposal out of hand: "It was resolved unanimously that it is not within the competence of the Dean and Chapter to comply with the above request."⁴³ Caution combined with a commitment to Anglican integrity ruled their actions.

By contrast, the following day the testimonial breakfast to Binney, for which parliament had specially adjourned, evoked some generous public compliments.⁴⁴ MacDonnell had been given the topic of the "visible progress of Christian union" for his speech. While there was not much evidence of that, asserted MacDonnell, he made it plain that he was a supporter of co-operation among the Reformed churches. He voiced his regret at the "usage - [the] despotic tradition" which excluded men such as Binney from Anglican pulpits. He made open reference to Short's letter and expressed the opinion that the absent bishop had in that letter implied that he was willing to permit Binney to preach. Unfortunately, as everyone knew, the Binneys were due to leave the colony before the bishop's planned return, when this issue could be clarified. MacDonnell left his hearers in no doubt that he saw the issue of co-operation or alliance as one larger than the visit of Binney: he hoped for "the commencement of a crusade against every barrier - involving no scriptural difference of vital doctrine - which separated one Protestant Church from another". Binney, in his reply to these and the other expressions of admiration, evinced a becoming humility in well-turned phrases. But he made no secret of his long-term commitment to pulpit exchange as a method of mutual recognition among Protestant churches. What exhilarated him about his time in Adelaide was the realisation that only in the colony of South Australia could these issues be so publicly debated with any likelihood of their being adopted; only in South Australia would the governor be found expressing himself as Sir Richard had just done - a remark which drew immense applause. No doubt Binney was tickling the fancy of his hearers, but he was right. The religious composition of the colony, and the history of its foundation, in which Binney had played his part through the Colonial Missionary Society, made discussion about practical religious equality and co-operation a realistic possibility. That was why Short was so concerned. Of course, Binney had to distance himself from the movement, for as a guest among them he could not take sides in the matter.

42. Grace Howard [Marryat], Diary 19 Oct 1858, D3077/6, MLSA.

43. *PCA*, 13.

44. Extracts from the speeches at the breakfast are found in *PCA*, 46-53.

Certainly, Bishop Short had canvassed the matter, but not conclusively, Binney admitted. However, he advised his hearers, he was going to publish the bishop's letter as a contribution to the discussion in the colony of the issues involved. But he would do no illegal act: that was a different matter.

Not surprisingly, both Adelaide newspapers editorialised about the breakfast the next day, as well as providing lengthy summaries of the speeches. Both took particular note of MacDonnell's enthusiasm for co-operation among the Protestant churches, just as Binney had done. "The Governor has placed himself in the van of religious progress [wrote the *Advertiser*, using characteristic terms] ... [he] saw that there was an opportunity for achieving a great good. He seized the opportunity, bravely and skilfully ..." The *Register* spent more time marvelling at the attention given publicly to a visiting nonconformist minister, but it too then reflected on the evident desire of many leading members of the South Australian community for greater co-operation among the Protestant churches:

We regard the demonstration of yesterday as an act of homage to this Idea, and whether it be realized at once, or postponed indefinitely, it is not a trifling circumstance that the thought has been entertained, and, for a while at least, believed to be of possible accomplishment.

Binney meanwhile sent a letter to Short explaining, as a gentleman should, why he had published the bishop's letter to him. In effect he claimed, MacDonnell had supported the idea of publication and Woodcock had not opposed it, while all three had been impressed with the formal quality of the prose which suggested to them that Short was not averse to appearing in print. He expressed his concern that the idea of unity Short was canvassing might sink to a mere search for "comprehension", a sort of lowest common denominator approach. He also argued forcefully that concrete steps towards that goal could be taken immediately through the mutual recognition of members and clergy, expressed by the exchange of pulpits. This would not be a favour conferred, but a judgement about the value of ministry to be experienced. Like Short then, Binney was enunciating a clear view of the relations that could exist in practice among the Protestant churches, even if that view was diametrically opposed to the one Short had enunciated.⁴⁵

When the correspondence appeared in print a few days later, both newspapers again delivered weighty editorials.⁴⁶ On this occasion they agreed that Short's high goals were not matched by the practical outcome he was willing to contemplate in contemporary Adelaide. Even the more conservative *Register*, normally a supporter of Short, joined with the *Advertiser* in agreeing with MacDonnell's judgement about "a pernicious distinction of man's device". Both papers commended those churchmen who were challenging the "tradition

45. *PCA*, pp.45-6.

46. *Advertiser*, 25 Oct; *Register*, 25, 26 Oct 1858.

of 'eighteen centuries' upon which Short set such store. Janet Scarfe has dismissed these views as the yearnings of old colonists for the days of open co-operation among Christians in the virgin land.⁴⁷ But the criticisms of Short's exclusivism remain, as Binney was to show at greater length in further communications.

Not everyone agreed with these views; letters began to appear in the press asserting that the law did not permit Binney to preach in an Anglican pulpit, or that change should be slow, or not at all. Only one expressed strong support for the movement for alliance, but then went on to warn the nonconformists about over-optimism. It was written by Henry Hussey, by now well launched on his joint careers as a publisher and independent Christian preacher.⁴⁸ While the cautious opponents of pulpit sharing had a point in their emphasis on the status quo, so did Hussey with his view that

It is an easy thing ... to find fault and to discover difficulties; much easier than to do away with prejudices and remove obstacles but if I could see any beneficial result likely to arise in favour of Christianity from the proposed 'pulpit alliance' I would be as ready to make the attempt to remove existing difficulties ... as I am to point them out. The Independents and other non-Episcopal churches may, and will, I have little doubt, exercise a far greater moral power and influence in this colony than the Church of England. With this I think the Independents and others must be content; for any attempt at an impracticable and impolitic union may lead to much strife and discussion ...

Hussey was to prove a wise prophet.⁴⁹

More substantially, G.W. Hawkes (an Adelaide merchant) and Nathaniel Oldham (a lawyer) began circulating a second memorial to the bishop opposing the pulpit exchange idea. Its existence was public at least by 28 October.⁵⁰ Binney was anxious to explain in public that his contribution would only be by way of a preface, but when he detected the division in the Adelaide Anglican community he withdrew this contribution. The memorial relied "on the ... wisdom of your Lordship to maintain our Church in its integrity in this our

47. Scarfe, "Bridge", p.188.

48. H. Hussey, *More than half a century of Colonial Life and Christian Experience*. Adelaide, 1897, ch.14-15.

49. Henry Hussey to *Advertiser* 8 Nov 1858; "A Clergy man of the Church of England", *Advertiser* 23 Oct 1858; "Observer" to *Register* 27 October 1858; "Cunctator" to *Register* late October, reprinted in *Members*, 34-6; "In Statu Quo" to *Register* 2 Nov 1858; "Catholicus" to *Advertiser* 5 Nov 1858; "Anglicanus" to *Register* early Nov in *Members* p.38; A.H. Davis to Short, 22 Nov 1858, *PCA*, pp.67-9.

50. G.W. Hawkes and Nat. Oldham to *Register* 28 Oct 1858; Binney, "The Intended Preface", *Tasmanian Address*, App., 23-4; Binney to Oldham and Hawkes, 30 Oct 1858, *ibid*; *Advertiser* edit., 1 Nov 1858; *Register* 1 Nov 1858; Hawkes and Oldham to Binney 2 Nov 1858.

adopted land, and to preserve her alike from all unauthorised measures within, as well as every intrusion without, which may tend to obliterate even the least of her time-honoured and distinctive characteristics ..."⁵¹ The newspapers acknowledged the right of this second group of memorialists to address their bishop and seemed quite happy to keep the debate alive. The *Register* showed signs of backing away from radicalism when it commented on 1 November that the counter memorial

will prevent false estimates of the position of Churchmen as a whole, correcting the too sanguine hopes which were beginning to be entertained, and indicating the necessity of patience in reference to that consummation of Christian fraternity which a more enlightened world will see ...

At "Anama" in the Clare valley, a hundred miles to the north of Adelaide, Augustus Short caught up with his mail and the Adelaide papers on 2 November. He believed, as he recorded in his diary, that he had nothing to retract, and that the governor had misrepresented him, for he had no intention of opening his pulpits without consulting his fellow bishops. Perhaps worse, Short was put out by the appearance of MacDonnell's name at the head of the memorial and his prominent part in the breakfast: "nor was it right that the *Chief Magistrate* the guardian of Law to press me to take such a step".⁵² Thereupon the bishop "wrote letter to Binney. in the Evening had service at 8. 10 women. 19 men. Evening Prayer".⁵³ In this letter, which like the earlier one he now recognised would become public property (indeed, on returning to Adelaide, he delivered it to the *Register* before proceeding to give Binney his copy)⁵⁴, he expressed his annoyance that the governor should have allowed himself to become involved. Those official appointments attached to the names of the signatories were objectionable to him, and despite later explanations from Samuel Tomkinson, Short chose to continue in his fiction that the state had become committed by their listing. Secondly, he made it plain that if no English law prevented him from acting, he believed centuries of church custom still bound him. He reiterated that he was only interested in canvassing theoretical or hypothetical possibilities about church union in some distant future. In such a future, he still believed that his three prerequisites of a fixed creed, a settled liturgy, and an episcopate must stand. Short concluded by remarking that his first letter had changed nothing even if the issues had been raised, and by placing his trust in the habits of his own church.

In Grace Marryat's diary there is an entry for 9 November, the day previous to Short's return to Adelaide, that Charles "went to dine at Judge Boothby's to meet

51. *Members*, pp.22-3.

52. Diary, 2 Nov 1858.

53. Diary 5 Nov 1858; Short to Binney, 5 Nov 1858; *Lights and Shadows* App., 5-7; *Register* 11 Nov 1858.

54. Short, Diary 10 Nov 1858.

ministers of various denominations and Mr Binney, a step towards Church union!" No doubt the occasion was well intended and probably no more than a pleasant social gesture, but by the time Short had officially dealt with the first memorial, the hopes of those seeking an alliance were dashed. First, in two letters to the *Register* he announced that his first sight of the memorial was at "Anama", which was certainly true; then he remarked that it had just reached him, by which he meant officially and physically. Still miffed about the titles attached to the names, he chose to send his reply to the counter-memorial first (on the fifteenth), delaying his response to the original memorial till the nineteenth. To J.H. Fisher, President of the Legislative Council, as the first signatory on the counter-memorial, he wrote repeating in essence the views he expressed to Binney from "Anama" on the fifth. Once again he claimed that all he was doing was trying to get some ideas *considered*, although one might question the wisdom of throwing fat upon a well-heated fire like that. Still, Short was never afraid of a fight. His letter to MacDonnell as first signatory upon the original memorial was much terser in its insistence that the request was "impracticable".⁵⁵

Nevertheless, even Short began to realise that it was time to refrain from further eager contributions to the public press. On 20 November he noted in his diary that the Hawkes/Oldham memorial, with what he regarded as its impressive list of signatures, was such a rebuff for the governor and his friends, that he need make no further reply. The one he had drafted he showed to George Farr, headmaster of the Collegiate School of St Peter, who remarked dryly that "if he wanted 'pax' that was not likely to secure it". Short adopted Farr's advice, the course which Short felt was the "most Christian": Consequently, that same night, he reflected how much better it was to "leave your cares to God and Christ". Not only had he been involved in "two nasty actions at law", but here was this "attack" by Governor MacDonnell, which he now believed had been dissipated "very much without my intervention. I have been guided to do right and all has gone right. Deo ... Gratias."

Farr's was good advice, for even the *Register*⁵⁶ found time to criticise Short roundly for his "extraordinary course of conduct" by publishing letters reflecting on the personal good faith of individual members of his church even though he could have checked his facts first. In particular, the *Register* believed that Short's charge of falsehood against Captain O'Halloran in regard to the matter of how the memorial signatures acquired titles of office was unworthy and unjust and still requiring an apology. It was good advice, but it was not heeded by the pugnacious Short, who wrote to his daughter the next day referring to "Tomky's" sly addition of the official designations of the

55. Short to *Register* 15 Nov 1858; Short, Diary 15 Nov 1858 (meets Oldham and Hawkes); Short to Fisher, *Light and Shade*, App., 11-14; Short to MacDonnell 15, 18 Nov 1858, *Light and Shadows*, pp.9-10. One could be stronger and suggest that the contrast in Short's two letters was an outright insult to Governor MacDonnell.

56. 22 Nov 1858.

Memorialists' as "cunning treachery and bitterness" and recorded that he had described O'Halloran's letter as "treacherous and insulting" in a conversation with Dean Farrell the same day.⁵⁷

Much more dignified were the letters which Thomas Binney wrote from a succession of addresses in Victoria over the next few weeks. In these Binney took up what he saw as Short's intransigent assumption of rectitude in laying down conditions which the nonconformists must accept, without at any point indicating that the Episcopalians might also be open to making compromises. Binney reminded Short that these demands to observe Episcopalian structures were no guarantee against heresy, for even within the Church of England there were clergy who were Romanists in all but name, along with equally dangerous rationalists. The conditions, then, expected too much to achieve only a little. Surely, Binney argued, the interchange of pulpits should be a practical matter, based on established trust and mutual knowledge, and addressing specific opportunities to promote the gospel. That is how it worked among the nonconformists, Binney explained patiently, and surely this practical and realistic approach should apply to relations with the Church of England. Meanwhile, Binney quite properly issued a public rebuke to his younger correspondent for his references to conflict and battle. It was a reasonable judgement, even if Short's belligerence had probably had the desired effect of frightening the members of the church into silence. Finally, Binney reminded Short that it was the Bible which was the judge of church traditions, for these had no independent accuracy.⁵⁸ As the *Advertiser* remarked, in expounding this letter on 5 January 1859:

Here, we may apprehend, the matter must rest. Many persons gazed with hope and pleasure on what at one time looked like a common platform of religious brotherhood, but which, as it was more nearly reached proved to be nothing more than *ecclesiastical mirage*.

Short's reply⁵⁹, despite an accompanying private letter which also got into print⁶⁰ emphasising his good faith in exploring how "Christian men and ministers may differ without forfeiting each other's esteem and regard" was a reiteration of the Anglican argument for independent authority flowing from the traditional practices of the church, together with some unfortunate nitpicking, notably about baptism, on which subject Short clearly was not about to concede the theological validity of the Gorham judgement which implied that baptism was not essential to salvation. Binney certainly picked up the

57. Short to Glen, 23 Nov [1858]; Short Diary 23 Nov 1858.

58. Binney to Short, 29 Nov 1858 (from Bendigo), *PCA*, pp.58-64.

59. *Lights and Shadows*, App., 28-37.

60. The Church of England Clipping Books held at Church Office contain a clipping of this letter without attribution. These have been published in a set of volumes B. Condon, (ed.) *Newspaper Clipping Books of the Church of England in South Australia*, vols. 1-6, 1848-1878, Adelaide, 1976.

inadequacy of Short's letter on this and several other points in the connecting narrative which he eventually published.⁶¹

While Short remained silent after his letter to Binney, the whole debate was brought once more before the public when the two groups published their interpretations of the events, with attached correspondence.⁶² In their introductory essay Hawkes and Oldham were sharply critical of the original memorialists, describing the movement as "obviously subversive of the discipline of the Church of England", one led by "separatists", who were "impugners" of the teaching of the Church of England. They believed the movement was designed to "coerce" the bishop against his will. This was a strong claim, and an unworthy one unless the laity were never to circulate memorials urging action upon their bishop (a view Short probably held). The basis of their argument remained the assertions that, since the diocese of Adelaide was indubitably part of the Church of England, it was bound by law to repel the proposal for open pulpits. But the authors were also not above casting aspersions on Thomas Binney as a hot opponent of the Church of England, quoting once again some of his controversial remarks from the 1830s.

It was a pamphlet in the tradition of angry controversy, and certainly not one designed to look for improved relations with the nonconformists of Adelaide. Nonetheless Short could argue to the S.P.G that

The result is, our position as Church of England ministers is now very clearly understood, which was not the case before, and I hope future compromise will be rendered impossible. Our Governor ... unexpectedly headed the movement to break down the barriers of our church discipline.⁶³

Whatever Short might say, the Hawkes/Oldham pamphlet permitted O'Halloran and Tomkinson to adopt their more eirenic tone when they appeared in print three months later, and to speak of the "party in the Church [which] had taken alarm at the movement". To rebut that alarm they explained the motives of the memorialists carefully.⁶⁴ It was not church union they sought, but alliance among the Protestant churches of the colony. Thus they rejected the emphasis which Short had placed on the debate in his first letter to Binney. They believed, instead, that "such other Protestant denominations as held the same faith on all vital points of doctrine, were entitled to be considered equal sister branches of Christ's Reformed Church". Alliance on equal terms then, not a futile negotiation involving mutual concessions, recriminations and distress, was

61. *Lights and Shadows*, App., 38-40.

62. A letter from Binney to Short 11 Feb 1859 (*Lights and Shadows*, App., 49) refers to the appearance of *Members* in print, since Binney discussed items which had not appeared, prompting a reply from Short 22 Feb explaining what he had permitted with the correspondence. *PCA* is dated April 1859.

63. Short to S.P.G. 26 Jan. 1859, Copies of Letters Received, Adelaide I, SPG Archives, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

64. *PCA*, p.53.

their goal. As a sign of that equality of regard, they argued, an invitation to Binney would be an admirably positive step on the part of the Church of England, the denomination most obviously separated from the others. It would be "as authentic and convincing a proof of our good feeling and abandonment of former exclusiveness as we could offer".⁶⁵

These views were strengthened by a view of the social development of the colony: it was, they pointed out in the 1859 pamphlet, one where settlement was spread thinly, where competition among the churches was wasteful and, in the view of the memorialists, a sin. What was more, the Church of England had only a minority claim on the allegiances of the colonists, as the 1855 census and other returns showed, which detail was duly quoted. Anglicans could not base exclusivity on any numerical claim to dominance in the colony. Indeed, O'Halloran and Tomkinson shrewdly pointed out, Anglicanism was not gaining ground among colonists, for any growth in its numbers seemed to be from recent migrant arrivals. It was the other Protestants, and most obviously the various Methodists, who were capturing the loyalty of the colonists in rising proportion. It was, in their view, a case of the Anglican leadership "hugging their fetters": the rubrics to which the leadership clung so rigorously were themselves causes of ineffectiveness in the competition for the allegiance of the colonists.

Those fetters, the authors angrily pointed out, seemed to be a vindictive interpretation of the past history of relations between the established church and other Protestants in England, an interpretation which could well be challenged historically and one which the authors clearly felt lacked the moral authority which Short gave it. In their view, Short's exclusiveness was made even more obviously absurd by the presence of Thomas Binney in the colony. Binney's eminence, his commitment to vital gospel truths, his eloquence, all justified the proposal that he be invited to preach in an Anglican church.

They were concerned at what could be construed as the bishop's bad faith in his handling of their memorial and indeed at the general line of behaviour the bishop adopted. Nor did they have any difficulty in dealing with Short's prevarications over the matter of the signatures, though it is fortunate they were not privy to his diary. Their concern at Short's intentions remains a valid question, despite the endeavours of Janet Scarfe to vindicate the bishop and to dismiss these Protestant critics.⁶⁶ Notwithstanding her judgement to the contrary, they were neither confused nor irrelevant.

The next event in this drawn-out tale was the 1859 synod of the diocese of Adelaide. Short referred briefly to the matter in his pastoral address under the heading of "Church Union". He reported that the promoters of pulpit exchange really demanded the "*surrender* of the principle of Episcopal ordination", which, Short angrily asserted merely meant "Separatism as it at present exists in multiplied and varied Denominations". To conclude the request would be "*dereliction* of those principles of church Order which I conscientiously adopted,

65. *PCA*, p.7.

66. Scarfe, "Bridge", pp. 187-8, briefly but unsympathetically summarises their views.

and still conscientiously hold". More: *unfaithfulness, dishonest abuse* of funds, and *surrender* would be involved. Only after such powerful words which so plainly reflected Short's disappointment at the developing rigidity of denominational separation did Short explain that a candid and courteous discussion of the issues involved in reunion was always welcome. His highly charged views were plain and the synod had its lead from the chair.⁶⁷

Among the synodsmen representing Trinity, Adelaide, was Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell, who had taken the trouble to have himself elected, despite his official standing in the colony, in order to initiate a debate on church alliance. It was the last effort of the pro-alliance party within the diocese. His motions proposed a closer alliance between "the branch of Christ's Church which this Synod represents, and the other Protestant Evangelical denominations in this colony". This could be done, his second motion proposed, by "prompt and hearty recognition on terms of equality of our Evangelical brethren". To give effect to these suggestions, he proposed the appointment of a Select Committee to investigate the best means by which such an alliance could be achieved. Boldly he arose to speak to these far-reaching proposals. As with all the alliance suggestions, MacDonnell once more claimed no desire to "attack any fundamental principle of the Church, or ecclesiastical discipline, but simply to require the brethren of the Church to look beyond the pale of their own, and see the large Churches outside holding on every essential point of belief the same doctrine as your own". Alliance might be one of good works, in common causes such as the Bible Society or Sunday Schools for, as the proponents of co-operation continued to remind the Synod, numerical strength in the colony lay with the Methodists and the Congregationalists. The motion avoided specific reference to the controversial matter of opening pulpits.

The debate revealed many who were opposed, quite frankly because they had little time for nonconformist preachers or their denominations. Charles Marryat perhaps revealed some of the pugnacity of his relative the bishop when he boldly asserted.

that the resolutions had been brought forward by the wrong man, at the wrong time, and in a wrong spirit. If the resolutions did not mean the introduction of members of other denominations into the pulpits of [Anglican] churches, it meant nothing. The Governor's spirit through the affair was most bitter [which earned a rebuke from his uncle in the chair] ... if the resolutions were adopted, [it would bring] disunion between their Church and the Church of England at home.

Marryat continued in this blunt vein in effect accepting division among Christians until the last days. Perhaps he said what others felt but did not wish to say. Eventually, amidst the usual search for amendments which might save a

67. The text of Short's address is in the Church of England Clippings Book. The italics are in the original. Synod met in late May.

little face on such occasions, the vote (by orders) rejected MacDonnell's motions 17 to 13 among the laity, while the clergy divided nine all. The bishop did not vote. The excitement of it all, at least to the church party, comes through Grace Marryat's diary entry for that day. "Great day at Synod to discuss Sir Richard MacDonnell's motion as to the desirability of church alliance. Charles, Dr Duncan, Papa [Dean Farrell] & Mr Coombs [incumbent of Gawler] went up ... [they returned, with Russell and Ibbetson, two other clergymen] to dinner all highly excited at the day's proceedings, which had gone against the alliance party".

It may be, as Janet Scarfe suggests, that Short was surprised and relieved at this outcome.⁶⁸ Certainly he was annoyed at this

attempt at Lay domination in spiritualities even ... the discipline of the Church and its external Relations. The Bishop and Elders should be requested first to consider this matter. The faithful laymen however won the day.⁶⁹

These "faithful laymen" had expressed a strong unwillingness to tamper with the existing structure of their church, not knowing where such investigations would lead them. There was to be no watering down of the distinctive identity of the Church of England in South Australia. They had accepted Short's argument that episcopal ordination was essential to the character of their denomination, no matter what the cost in marginalising evangelicals and upon relations with other denominations in the colony. They therefore gave a significant increment of power to their bishop by this decision, one which in future he was not averse to using.⁷⁰

It was the prolific Binney, however, who had the last word. During the winter of 1859 he spent time in Tasmania, and while there accepted an invitation to speak at the annual meeting of the Tasmanian Congregational Union. As always, his remarks were soon into print, first in Tasmania, and, when he had returned to England, in London.⁷¹ It is difficult to imagine how his hearers endured his speech, which in published form occupies over a hundred pages. The material which was originally spoken occupies about 12,000 words. No doubt as always he improved the text for publication, but they must, nonetheless have sat through at least two hours, perhaps more.

So then Binney examined "the church of the future" as Short had outlined it in his letter of the previous September. It was easy for him to draw the contrast between Short's sweet yearnings for unity and his authoritarian assertion of the

68. Scarfe, "Bridge", p.190.

69. Short, diary, 2 June 1859.

70. Scarfe, "Bridge", and subsequently in *[The] Diocese of Adelaide in the nineteenth century: controversies over churchmanship under Bishop Short*, Adelaide, 1982; and "The Diocese of Adelaide (and the West)", in B. Porter (ed), *Colonial Tractarians. The Oxford Movement in Australia*, Melbourne, 1989, pp.75-104.

71. *Tasmanian Address and Lights and Shadows*, cited in fn1.

rights of his episcopal denomination.⁷² It was a familiar and annoying song against which nonconformists were still struggling, as they sensed the unwillingness of Anglicans to accept the reality of legal equality inaugurated by the changes of 1828. To Binney, Short was suggesting ways in which the nonconformists might return to the Anglican fold, rather than develop relations of equality. There was an air of hypocrisy about Short's writings which Binney did well to highlight. When Binney turned to the question of orders, the gulf with Short was once more apparent. If Binney said that he did not himself "attach much importance to 'orders'" he clearly set himself in opposition to Short's fundamental commitment to episcopal ordination. To Binney it was the vocation to prophetic ministry as a response to the divine imperative that mattered. Short's offer of temporary, de facto, recognition to nonconformist clergy was therefore to Binney insulting, presumptuous and divisive. What is more, the claim lacked the historic basis Short so confidently asserted. To Binney the exclusive claim to propriety made by Short was indefensible. Thus Binney could only come to the view that Short had a sacerdotal view of the clerical function⁷³, one plainly at variance with scripture, where eldership was by no means universally exercised in the form of the monarchical bishop so beloved of Polycarp. It was easy, too, for Binney to quote Bishop Perry of Melbourne and Archbishop Sumner of Canterbury in support of his view of the history of the office.

Binney also found time to rebuke Short for the "off-hand, curt brevity" of his response to the O'Halloran/Tomkinson memorial. It was a weakness in Short which recurred in the two subsequent major confrontations over related matters in 1869 and 1879.⁷⁴ Then Binney favoured his readers with some further criticisms of Anglican behaviour: Bishop Nixon of Tasmania and Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford seemed to be his targets at this point. Finally, he returned to his central argument that in no sense should his colleagues in the Congregational Union yield their conviction that they were fully authorised ministers of the gospel, whatever bishops such as Short might claim to the contrary.

Few though the choice, quotable phrases might be, long and repetitive though the speech and published text were, Binney had still stated the necessary reply to Short, and issued the call to action among his brethren. The cost which he and Short both recognised was the necessary continuation of separate spheres of action for the differing denominations. In the new and exciting colonies of Australia, where two of Binney's sons settled, the Evangelical denominations should press on with their gospel ministry unhindered by the limitations and burdens still endured in England, but separately, not in any alliance. It was practical advice, even if it was disappointing to the Evangelical Anglicans of Adelaide. They may have yearned for the old days of shared endeavour in the

72. *Lights and Shadows*, pp.32-46.

73. *Lights and Shadows*, p.61.

74. Dickey, "Evangelical Tradition".

founding years of the colony, but of course they had a valid theological point based upon their reading of the Bible. It was not just conservatism and misty eyed romanticism, but a specific view of the doctrines of the church which prompted O'Halloran, Tomkinson and MacDonnell to enter the realms of public controversy. These Anglican evangelicals were defeated by the reassertion by Short of the primacy of tradition as he interpreted it over the practices and teachings of the Bible. They were also defeated by the cautious conservatism of their Anglican colleagues who were unwilling to take any risks or to explore new forms of Christian co-operation. They were beaten too, in all conscience, by the prickly self-confidence of the non-Anglican churchmen, led by Thomas Binney. They too were conscious of their authority and their mission, and they were not about to give it up in any vague negotiations with Anglicans. The formal and legal battles of the previous thirty years had created an environment of denominational identity based on the assumption of realistic equality. Maybe many Anglicans had not yet accepted that situation, and so they proved unwilling in Adelaide to pay much court to the nonconformists. The result was separate development and the effective isolation of the evangelical party within the Church of England from anything but informal co-operation with their brethren in other protestant churches. Even among those churches, practical co-operation was limited and fitful.⁷⁵ An Evangelical Alliance, on the English pattern, was formed in 1860, but never came to much. Anglicans meanwhile proceeded to enunciate their distinctive rather than their common Protestant heritage. The days of common Christianity on a shared evangelical basis were over in the colony of South Australia. Short's goals were achieved. But, in the words of the historian W.R. Ward, commenting on similar English processes, "the new denominationalism could no more destroy popular undenominational evangelicalism than it could understand it".⁷⁶

BRIAN DICKEY

75. Scarfe, "Bridge", p.191.

76. Ward, *Religion and Society*, p.6.

REVIEWS

Charles I and the making of the covenanting movement 1625-1641 By Allan I. Macinnes: Pp.ix, 228; Edinburgh, John Donald, 1991 £22.00.

The Scottish covenanters were the radical vanguard in the revolutionary coalition which destroyed Charles I's royal government in mid-seventeenth century Britain. That opposition initially took the form of a protest in July 1637 against liturgical reform in the Scottish church. Before the end of the year the crown's control of the kingdom had collapsed. By the end of 1641 a remarkable revolution had been completed. The clerically dominated episcopal church was swept away and replaced by a presbyterian church under the firm guidance of the laity. Parliament was freed from the shackles of royal management,

developed a new and effective committee structure, and held the political initiative. In the localities parish based government provided a level of efficiency in the collection of taxation, raising of troops and imposition of political conformity which Charles had sought but never come close to attaining. The king's domestic supporters were decisively defeated, while efforts to mount an assault on the covenanters from England were repulsed in the Bishops Wars of 1639 and 1640. The latter ended in the invasion and occupation of northern England, forcing the calling of the English parliament which carried out its own revolution with the full co-operation of the Scots.

The importance of uncovering the origins of such a dynamic and successful revolution should be self-evident. Yet in contrast to the excessive research carried out on the origins of the English revolution, the covenanters have attracted remarkably little interest. All too often they have been cast in the role of religious fanatics, principally by English and American historians, although some Scots have colluded in this unhelpful mythology. Since the 1970s David Stevenson has done much to rescue the covenanters from this caricature, drawing attention to the Scots concern to renegotiate the relationship between Scotland, England and the shared monarchy. More recently, Conrad Russell has led a number of British historians in seeking to re-examine the mid-century revolutions in a British context.

Allan Macinnes also sees the covenanters as a Scottish national response to the problems created by an absentee, imperial monarchy. In Dr. Macinnes's view the dual monarchy itself was inherently unstable, a fact which was all too apparent from c.1617 when James VI and I made his only visit north since the regal union of 1603. However, the responsibility for wrecking the political consensus which allowed the union to work at all lies wholly at the feet of Charles I. Dr. Macinnes rejects Maurice Lee's recent interpretation of events which denies any crisis in the Scottish state until the very eve of an aristocratic coup in 1637. Instead Charles is portrayed charging towards a head-on collision with the political community from the first months of the reign. In an analysis of the revocation which forms the core of this book, Dr. Macinnes builds up the picture of a government steadily losing credibility and control of the localities years before the outbreak of revolution in Edinburgh in the summer of 1637.

The place of religion in all this remains crucial, but Dr. Macinnes rightly recognises that the men who made the National Covenant represented a broad alliance between on the one hand the landed and urban élites and on the other the dissident, presbyterian clergy. Of course there was considerable over-lap between the two, but here any surviving notion that the covenanters were a bunch of apocalyptic visionaries led along by their noses by their ministers is utterly dispelled. Without the years of local grumbling over the interfering activities of the teind commission, the growing tax burden, the manipulation of the coinage, the subversion of the national economic interests to those of the English dominated court, the suppression of any form of opposition, and the impact of that appalling coronation in 1633 there would not have been a

revolution. Yes, the Scottish aristocracy were angered by the liturgical innovations, especially as they were known to emanate from the thoughts of Archbishop Laud, but religion in itself does not explain their willingness to ally with the presbyterians.

Charles I and the making of the covenanting movement is a very important work, demonstrating how essential it is to understand the localities in early modern society. One can argue the merits of Dr. Macinnes's class analysis, and there is plenty of room for historians to debate specific issues raised in the book. However, the underlying model presented here, of a revolution with its roots deep in Scottish society and caused by a fundamentally flawed regal union presided over by a political incompetent, is likely to stand for a long time.

KEITH M. BROWN

Atonement and Justification: English Evangelical Theology, 1640-1790: An Evaluation. By Alan C. Clifford. Pp. xvi, 268. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1990. £30.00

Dr. Clifford puts forward a "case for redrawing the theological map". It is generally supposed that, since the seventeenth century, there have been two parallel traditions within orthodox English-speaking Protestantism, the Calvinist and the Arminian. Calvinism is commonly believed to flow from its headwaters in the writings of John Calvin in a continuous stream down to J.I. Packer in the present day. Arminianism, distinguished by its refusal to accept the doctrine of limited atonement, has run in different channels. R.T. Kendall and J.B. Torrance have already argued that the early stages of this pattern need revising. Theodore Beza, followed by William Perkins and others, transmuted Calvin's thinking into a system, making it much more rigid in the process. Now Alan Clifford, the pastor of a Norfolk church in the Reformed tradition, carries the analysis on into the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He tells us that, from a background in the Calvinist revival associated with the Banner of Truth Trust in the 1960s, he has been "liberated" by his study of John Owen, Richard Baxter, John Tillotson and John Wesley. He can preach from John 3:16 without any "high orthodox inhibitions". In his book, a version of a doctorate supervised by Professor R. Tudur Jones of Bangor, he sets out what for many will be a striking thesis.

On the subject of the atonement, he argues, Baxter was the closest of his theologians to Calvin. In the teaching of Calvin there was no insistence on particular redemption. Owen upheld the doctrine because of Aristotelian influence. The end, which is the salvation of certain human beings rather than all of them, must, on Aristotle's principles, determine the event. Hence, according to Owen, the death of Christ availed only for those certain ones. It remained for John Gill and other hyper-Calvinists in the eighteenth century to tidy up the loose ends by inventing, for example, "irresistible grace". The diversion from authentic Calvinism, however, had already begun in Owen. Baxter remained loyal to the tradition by accepting that the atonement was general in provision but particular in application. Wesley, the author contends,

stands much nearer Calvin than the scholastic theologians of Owen's school. The substance of the authentic tradition was therefore shared in the later eighteenth century by the Methodists with the Evangelical Dissenters Andrew Fuller and Edward Williams.

When he turns to justification, Dr. Clifford reaches the surprising conclusion that Tillotson was closest to early Reformed teaching. The archbishop, he suggests, was much less latitudinarian than is often thought. The theme of justification entangles Owen in a web of distinctions. Tillotson, by contrast, reconciles the New Testament teaching of Paul and James by analysing true faith into three constituents: intellectual assent, trusting reliance and simple obedience. Paul affirms that justification is by a faith that embraces all three. James contrasts a sham faith that is merely a matter of assent with a true faith that embraces obedience. That position, Dr. Clifford maintains, corresponds to the ground occupied by the early Reformers. *Sola fide*, if faith is contrasted with obedience, is rejected as unscriptural. It is valid only if it is treated as the equivalent of *solo christo*.

The central reference point in the whole discussion is Calvin. The book, in fact, is partly dedicated to "the memory of the 'authentic' John Calvin". The author does not treat the Reformer as wholly infallible, for he dissents from his exegesis of James 2:20, but there is a tendency to neglect developments between Calvin and Owen. There is no use, for example, of P.G. Lake's *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (C.U.P., 1982), which would have illuminated the background to Owen's criticism of the Reformer for treating assurance as part of the essence of faith. And it is a pity that the greatest Reformed divine of the eighteenth century, Jonathan Edwards, receives only incidental mentions and a single excursus in a footnote.

Yet this is a work of major importance for understanding the history of English-speaking Protestantism. It reveals an eye for contemporary relevance, for it includes consideration of John Stott on annihilationism and Alister McGrath on ARCIC II. The book is concerned to establish the truth to be preached and it presses beyond historical issues to elicit a verdict from scripture. It has breadth, for it covers a century and a half, and it has depth, for it deals with central issues of the faith. And it is convincing. It will be difficult for any future commentator to claim that a continuous tradition of orthodox Calvinism can be marked off from Arminianising divergences. Baxter, Wesley and Tillotson were, in certain fundamentals, closer than Owen to Calvin. The theological map has been redrawn.

D.W. BEBBINGTON

The Bush Still Burns: The Presbyterian and Reformed Faith in Australia, 1788-1988
By Rowland S. Ward. Pp. x, 566. From the author, 358 Mountain Highway,
Wantirna, Victoria, 3152. A\$25 plus postage.

This volume presents an account of Australian Presbyterianism. The record is a mixture of passionate loyalties, pioneering enthusiasms and endemic divisiveness.

The first Presbyterians arrived in 1788. Most of them came from Scotland and they were soon joined by others from Ireland. The first minister was the Scot, John Dunmore Lang who arrived in 1823; he was earnest, compassionate, autocratic and devious and he became deeply involved in politics and in government. He made four voyages to his homeland to recruit ministers; on the fourth he secured eleven from Scotland and four from Ireland.

In the following years, Australian Presbyterianism mirrored all the divisions which divided the Church in Scotland. Some congregations claimed to uphold the principles of the Established Church of Scotland; others held the Free Church position to be the true Presbyterianism, while others stood by the voluntary principle of the United Presbyterian Church. These issues were debated with vigour in an Australia where there was no established system and no patronage. Added to these divisions were many local points of division.

Constitutionally, Australia developed as a group of states with separate governments and this came to be reflected in church organisations. Thus, there were often more than one Presbyterian Church in each state.

In the nineteenth century, further divisions were caused by the biblical and scientific controversies which were troubling the Churches in Europe. In the view of the author of this volume these controversies bore "disastrous fruit" in the twentieth century.

In the twentieth century, immigrants from Holland brought in another strand of Presbyterianism and they formed separate Churches. There were also a few congregations linked to the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland and to the Welsh Presbyterian Church.

Out of all these constituents and controversies there emerged a whole crop of Presbyterian Churches. This volume concentrates on one of these, the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, which is firmly attached to the Westminster Confession of Faith and to a presbyterian system of government; the author has been Moderator of its Synod.

The main strands of Presbyterianism eventually came together in 1901 to form the Presbyterian Church of Australia. This Church had a triennial General Assembly with subordinate Assemblies in the different States. Among the Moderators of the General Assembly was the celebrated John Flynn, pioneer of the Australian Inland Mission and of the Flying Doctor Service.

In 1945, this Church entered into conversations with the Methodist Church and the Congregational Church about moves towards union. After discussions, negotiations, controversies and agitations, the plan for the formation of The Uniting Church was approved in 1973. Forty-two of the fifty-three presbyteries were in favour of the plan, as were over seventy per cent of the members of the Church who voted. Those congregations which did not wish to go into the Uniting Church became the continuing Presbyterian Church of Australia and retained a due proportion of the property and endowments.

The author of this volume takes the view that this continuing Presbyterian Church of Australia and the other small Presbyterian Churches including his own Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia are the true defenders in

Australia of sound biblical doctrine and presbyterian order; in them the bush still burns and is not consumed. This thesis is maintained with conviction and vigour but it is not the whole story.

Over two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church in Australia entered the Uniting Church and its presbyterian flavour cannot have perished in that Church. In particular, I have known many former presbyterians who have served or are serving in the Uniting church; among these have been Dr. Davis McCaughey, the first President of the Assembly of the Uniting Church and now the Governor of Victoria, and Professors George Yule, Ian Breward and James Haire. My Cambridge colleague, Professor John O'Neill, came from Australia and he was a supporter of the union. All these have been devoted ministers of Christ and have valued their presbyterian heritage; they have also been motivated by the New Testament stress upon the unity which already exists in Christ and which it is the Church's duty to make manifest in the world. I believe that the Uniting Church has a place in God's purpose for his Church in Australia. I also believe its worship, life and witness would be all the richer if there could be an accord with those other branches of the Church which claim so firmly to be custodians of the presbyterian heritage and in which there are many fine Christian people.

Readers of this volume will be informed, disturbed and challenged.

R. BUICK KNOX.

A valuable supplement to the preceding volume has been published by its author; it is a compilation by Dr. Barry John Bridges of *Ministers, Licentiatees and Catechists of the Presbyterian churches in New South Wales, 1823-1865*. This list gives the names, background, education and ministry of those who served during these years. It shows the wide variety of those who ventured to Australia and whose families shared their pioneering hardships. The majority came from Scotland and others came from England, Ireland and Europe.

R.B.K.

From Dust to Ashes: The Replacement of Burial by Cremation in England 1840-1967, The Congregational Lecture 1990. By Peter C. Jupp. The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust Ltd. Carroone House, 14 Farringdon Street, London EC4. £2.

1967 was the year in which, for the first time, cremations out-numbered burials in this country. Although cremation has an ancient history, burial had been the dominant mode of disposal for nearly a thousand years. The change began to take place during the 1840s and the reasons were "sanitary, centralising and commercial". The move to the towns and the great increase in population and the numbers of the urban poor and the inadequacy of existing churchyards to cope, all made the change, first to municipal, and therefore secular, cemeteries and then to cremation, both necessary and inevitable.

This not only reflected, but also affected, attitudes to death and religious

belief. Municipal burial grounds and the legalisation of non-Anglican funerals broke the Anglican monopoly of death and liberalised the accompanying ritual possibilities and therefore also the beliefs which these expressed. The replacement of local churchyards with remoter cemeteries, together with improved health care, so that death was seen as something which could be postponed, served to distance people from the experience and consciousness of death, and also changed their understanding of death as due to the mysterious will of God. Cremation gained ground, first in Europe, as an expression of secularism and anti-clericalism, and then in England, prompted by pressure from Sir Henry Thompson and the Cremation Society, as local authorities came to see the practical and economic advantages. Public attitudes to death and to cremation were greatly affected by the mass deaths of the First and then the Second World Wars. Traditional beliefs such as the doctrines of judgement and the resurrection of the body and the idea of hell, were largely abandoned. After 1945 the number of crematoria increased rapidly, and then in 1964 the Vatican relaxed its opposition to cremation.

The fact that death is something that now happens mostly to the elderly, usually away from their families in hospitals or nursing homes, has reduced its importance both socially and to the family, since commonly separation takes place "before the actual demise". Fear of death has become fear of dying, since, for the majority of people, the religious understanding of what follows death has gone. Cremation allows the disposal of remains with the minimum of fuss, and so the dead are expedited out of this world and leave only ashes and memories behind.

This is perhaps the last remaining taboo subject, which meant that the lecturer was able to take full advantage of his hearers' curiosity and ignorance. He did so with scholarship, enthusiasm and wit.

JOHN TRAVELL.

The Nonconformists: In Search of a Lost Culture

By James Munson. Pp. viii, 360. London, SPCK, 1991. £17.50 (paperback)

The Nonconformists is a remarkably well-pitched book. It issues from an Oxford prize essay and a stimulating doctoral thesis on Passive Resistance which any sensible publisher would have snapped up years ago. More recently, however, its author has been writing for the B.B.C. - on Nonconformity, for example, The First World War, or Queen Victoria - and this gives his present book an attack which makes it ideal for the generalist while retaining the specialist's confidence. James Munson writes with verve and a generally well-founded, well-read and well-illustrated confidence. He has discovered no new types of source but he resourcefully uses what there is in order to mine the culture behind that "Nonconformist Conscience" which so swiftly and aptly exploded into everyday speech a hundred years ago. His judgments are sensitive and sympathetic but never sentimental. Perhaps this has something to do with his formation as an American (from the Southern States), with a Presbyterian

father and a Baptist mother, who for twenty-five years has lived in Oxford where he is neither Baptist nor Presbyterian (or United Reformed). He is well placed to write suggestively and sometimes movingly about a shared culture which most of those who share it seem determined to downgrade.

He begins with an arresting comparison: the decline (that word again) of English Nonconformity is perhaps "as profound a change in English history as the suppression of the monasteries under Henry VIII". Their suppression was sudden while Nonconformity's decline was gradual, but both live on, as it were, in their ruined abbeys; and where it comes to cultural influence, Nonconformity's survives far more strongly, however much it may now be unperceived. Munson's task is to sharpen our perceptions.

He is a persuasive guide. He deftly distinguishes between denominations and politics. He sensibly concentrates on the big four - Baptists, Congregationalists, Wesleyan Methodists and Primitive Methodists - and on England between c.1890 and 1914. He gets moving with an almost breath-taking overview of the Nonconformist impact. His statistics of giving - to buildings, to missions, to causes and sometimes to stipends (Dr. Parker at c.£60,000 in 1990 terms) - are staggering. So are his statistics of bequeathing, and not just the wills of the Willses. None of this is new but the totality of it, here displayed, still amazes.

He defuses myths: the myth of Nonconformist "villageness" or of its democracy, or "peopleness". He is brisk about trends: the sheer increase of population, the fact of urban growth, the fact of emigration, the fact of that increase of prosperity which was most marked, relatively speaking, among the lower middle classes. He is kinder than many about the Nonconformist millionaires, or rather he is free of the cant which their Nonconformist conscience imposes on most breast-beaters writing from within the tradition. He will startle, and probably encourage, many readers with his assertion that "Late Victorian Nonconformity was to a considerable extent a man's religion", a feat which, if true, has not since been equalled by any church outside Mount Athos. Perhaps wisely he does not ponder the implications of that for feminist history. Indeed, he entirely bypasses the role of women in Nonconformity.

As might be expected, he is best on literary culture, and on what he calls, Churchill-style, "the Anglo-Saxon World", and on politics, illuminating them with the excellent quotations natural to a well-furnished mind. He highlights Dissent's role in disseminating the printed word (and the paper on which it was printed). He is particularly good in his assessment of such contrasting authors as Arnold Bennett and Mark Rutherford, demonstrating how each is genuinely a "Nonconformist writer", for each shows "the degree to which Nonconformity had become part of the warp and woof of national life if it could thus be rebelled against and rejected". His quotation from a contemporary ministerial reviewer of Rutherford is to be valued for its sharpness:

It is not impossible that the discovery may one day be made that the novel-writer who

would free us from the ethical restraints of the past has been selling indulgences for gain.

In his assessment of that wider "Anglo-Saxon World" where Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians still live in their millions he concentrates on the United States rather than Canada or Australasia or South Africa, and he has a missionary task in hand for:

New ways of thought, concentrated by largely ineffectual attempts to persuade the British that they are 'European', a fear of talking about the English 'race' and its diaspora round the world and the virtual disappearance of the word 'Protestant' as an adjective to describe anyone other than Ulster fanatics, has meant that a once powerful cultural and historic bond is little understood in the late twentieth century.

But how useful it is to be told that the transatlantic differences within the Anglo-Saxon world were differences between *London* and America rather than *England* and America: "it was the provinces, not London society, which were peopling America ..."

On politics and church-related politics he makes the useful point that a Nonconformist had two identities: first, say, as a Congregationalist (in other words there was a doctrinal and ecclesiastical identity); secondly, as a Nonconformist (that is to say, there was a peculiarly British, *politically founded*, identity). The inclination among ministers to preach on their Nonconformity rather than their Christianity took them swiftly along the road of preaching politics. He is useful about other things: the development of the Free Church Movement, the changing nature of relations with the Church of England, and the way in which Nonconformity was shackled (i.e. upheld) by law - a status which disestablishment might jeopardise in unforeseen ways. And of course there is Passive Resistance, though for the exciting complexities of that the determined reader should still make for Dr. Munson's thesis.

Of course there are queries and irritations. There is a "flaunt" when there should be a "flout"; there is a "different than"; there is some repetition and there are some mistakes - F.W. Macdonald was Rudyard Kipling's uncle and not his grandfather, and the Jeremiah Colman who purchased Gatton Park in Surrey was the cousin and not the son of the Jeremiah James Colman who reigned in Norwich. Some readers, noting the reference to the planner Raymond Unwin's "famous" Quaker family, might too easily assume that that refers to the famous publishing and printing Unwins who were Congregationalists. Where it concerns architecture this reviewer is delighted to see a spotlight on James Cubitt and Union Chapel, Islington, but would take issue with some aspects of

the assessment. Where it concerns "Oxbridge" (as James Munson will call it), a Dissenter could matriculate to read for the B.A. degree only at Oxford from 1854; he had to wait until 1856 to take his B.A. at Cambridge.

But these are quibbles. Most readers will want to cap the author's examples and stories. Farrer Herschell was arguably the first Nonconformist - born Lord Chancellor (but what about Lord Eldon and possibly Lord Hardwicke?); he was certainly the first Jewish-born Lord Chancellor and he was the first to be the son of a Congregational Minister (John Simon was the next); but while he was Lord Chancellor he was also churchwarden of St. Peter's Eaton Square, a decidedly high parish church. Or again, Sir Henry Tate (of gallery and sugar fame) was indeed a Unitarian but his widow worshipped at Brixton Independent Church. Richard Mudie-Smith, the journalist and social commentator, began indeed at Westbourne Park but he progressed in 1911 to Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church. The game could go on. W.H. Smith is very properly labelled an Anglican when set beside C.E. Mudie, his Congregational rival in the world of circulating libraries - but Smith's formation was Wesleyan Methodist. And Munson's Anglican squire of Great Leighs who stormed out of his parish church when the psalm was chanted at matins, was a Tritton from a family which had been Quaker for generations and from a branch which until recently had been Baptist. And Symeon Dyson (1823-1904), properly selected as typical of the staunch generality of unsung ministers, married into the fringes of the Asquith cousinhood. All of which reinforces the Munson thesis of Nonconformist cultural influence. To take two examples which might be inserted concerning the dissemination of words. There is one good Nonconformist novel which deserves resurrection and which spans the Munson years: Gordon Stowell's *The History of Button Hill* (Gollancz 1929). Stowell was a son of the manse (Munson mentions the church which is fictionalised as Button Hill: Newton Park Union, Leeds); he became editor of the *Radio Times*. And then there is Matthew Arnold himself, who died from a heart attack caught running for a tram after he had sat under John Watson in Liverpool's Sefton Park Presbyterian Church: the apostle of culture's last word in season was from the lips of "Ian McLaren".

That should not be this reviewer's last word. Like other writers in the field (and it is a weakness of this book that it contains no bibliographical note alerting readers to the other writers who have diligently been working corners of the field for the past decade or so) James Munson ponders the reason for Nonconformity's "decline". He very sensibly doubts most of the reasons adduced by them. The decline of Victorian values? The decline of Liberalism? The impact of World War? He notes that Nonconformity has breasted similar storms in its history - he notes, for example, that no more were killed in the Great War than would have been expected to emigrate between 1914 and 1918; and, anyway, if the Great War is to be seized on, then why not the great influenza epidemic which followed it? He suspects that the reasons have much to do with changes in the very forces, chiefly related to urbanism, which first gave Nonconformity its strength and confidence. He makes no mention of birth

control. For the rest he has an open mind. That is healthy, not least because it allows the student to appreciate the *vitality* of so much of post-war Nonconformity, however reduced its scale.

There remains one seriously non-barking dog. Dr. Munson's theme is the culture of Nonconformity and not its ecclesiology or its theology. Yet its *preached* theology is surely central to its culture and an examination of that with the same degree of understanding might have shed further light on "decline", and on life after "decline" as well as on a culture in full flower. The omission is significant and a historian must sympathise with it; and perhaps Dr. Munson's own sympathies could not have been so signally caught as they have been by the other facets of the culture to which he owes much. As to his last word, few readers of this *Journal* will wish to query his conviction that Nonconformity's legacy is that "conscience" which, once peculiar, is now more or less universal. Yet, is "legacy" the right word for something which still lives? Or does it?

J.C.G.B.

SHORTER REVIEWS

Nicholas Tyacke's interesting lecture published by the Dr. Williams's Library entitled *The Fortunes of English Puritanism 1603-1640* (Dr. Williams's Trust, 1990 £2.00) includes valuable new material on the networks of support offered to some of the deprived ministers of the Jacobean period. He also explores some little known correspondence between leading English puritans of the 1630s and their friends who had emigrated to New England. The lecture sensitively discusses the intricate issues facing lay and clerical puritans during a time when there was real doubt about the final direction of English protestantism and there was a constant sense of danger from episcopal activists like Bancroft and Laud. It is a useful short contribution to the growing literature about puritans on the defensive in the decades before civil war by a leading authority on the English church in this period.

ANTHONY FLETCHER

The Church at the Corner: The Story of Ashford Congregational Church in Middlesex 1890-1990. By G.T. Earl, Pp. 60. Ashford 1990. £5; obtainable from A. Earl, Eltham College, Grove Park Road, London, SE9 4QF.

Too many suburban Nonconformist churches pay too little heed to what has brought them into being. Yet, as the author of this history remarks in his preface: "men and women need the past; it helps them to understand their own present, to evaluate the questions put to them by their current experiences, indeed to know themselves better".

The intimate claims that the Christian faith makes on its own understanding of history, that is, on the course of lives and events on earth, should have a close effect on a congregation's relationship to its own history, that is, to the microcosmic record of God with us, in town or village or suburb.

This history's subject remains a Congregational church, and so is unReformed. If most Congregational churches felt prompted by the Holy Spirit to assent to the United Reformed Church, it is salutary to remember that some two hundred felt equally prompted not to join. What is the phenomenology of that small schism? The influence of dynamic personalities? Links with transatlantic forms of evangelism? Certainly there were the strong undercurrents of local fervour and marked streaks of independence which this book relates in detail. By no means all the united churches faded away, as some predicted. Some indeed have flourished. We need to examine how and why.

ANTHONY EARL

Caring and Sharing: A History of Tonge Moor United Reformed Church, Bolton, 1891-1991. By Kathleen Evans, Pp. 26. Bolton, 1991. Obtainable from Mr. H. Russell, 8 Daisy Avenue, Farnworth, Bolton; £3.50 inc. postage.

Bolton must have a special resonance for readers of this *Journal*. The church at St. George's Road was a power in the Congregational land. The church at Blackburn Road vied with Albion, Ashton-under-Lyne, as a Dissenting cathedral of outstanding quality. The Congregational name of Lever encircled the commercial globe. The Congregational name of Tillotson had its firm place in the world of the provincial press. The church at Tonge Moor was on the foothills of such Nonconforming heights - but it survives and has produced an attractive survey of much that has given it life: the institutes and sports clubs, the gifts of furniture and plate, the chronicling of warmth and devotion and determination. Signally helped by the illustrations, the social historian and the church historian alike will find the clues which are the stuff of local history and which suggest the interior life of a church as well as illustrate the exterior life of a community.

J.C.G.B.

Roll of Honour: The Fallen and Their Families: St. Andrew's URC Sheffield. By Wendy Smyllie. Unpaginated, Sheffield 1991. Obtainable from Mrs. W. Smyllie, 164 Dobcroft Road, Sheffield, S11 9LH.

Each Remembrance Sunday eighteen young men (the two oldest were in their late thirties) are named during worship at St. Andrew's Church, Sheffield. Twelve died during the Great War and six during the Second World War, ten in France, four in Britain (one of them in the Home Guard) and one each in Gaza, Nova Scotia, Germany and in convoy for Russia. Eleven were Scottish and a twelfth had a Scottish stepmother; one was Irish and a second seems to have had an Irish mother; none was Welsh. Their social and educational backgrounds varied but none was above the rank of Second Lieutenant. Wendy Smyllie's *Roll of Honour* is unassumingly in *piam memoriam*, produced to strengthen memories in a congregation in which very few can now in fact remember them. That is justification enough, but for historians there is another significance. Not all these men were from active church families: one appears by virtue of his wife's

commitment; another could be either of two men with identical initials, one of whom could even have survived the war; one worshipped at St. Andrew's, brought along by his friends; others figured more in tennis club than Bible class - but taken together they bring us closer to the English Presbyterian hinterland than most congregational histories can manage: the motor engineer, the florist, the confectioner, the commercial travellers, the blacksmith, the bank manager, the doctors (one of them a former medical missionary), the draughtsmen, the lighting engineer, the telephone engineer, the builder - this Scottish-accented congregational cross-section is also a cross-section of what makes a city tick. It is a proper remembrance.

J.C.G.B.

Also *in piam memoriam*, and no less welcome, is Marjorie Robinson's publication of her late husband's history of *Eccleshill Congregational Church, Bradford*, from 1823 to 1973. Obtainable from Mrs. M. Robinson, 137 Victoria Road, Eccleshill, Bradford, BD2 2BL.

Here am I in the midst - A story of faith, loyalty and commitment. By Madeleine Brand (available from Mr. M.J. Brand, 15 Rectory Close, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants PO14 2NA. Cheques should be made payable to Fareham URC - Book Sales account).

This is a faithful record of three hundred years of Christian witness in Fareham, with a commendable attention to detail and extensive quotations from church records. Two features of the book could probably be followed by other local histories, to the benefit of readers. One is the reference to national events, putting the local history in context; the other is the thorough record of recent history which is often overlooked, and therefore lost when records of this kind are made.

Yarm Road Memorial United Reformed Church, Stockton on Tees 1877-1990: a brief history. By Norman Lake (published privately) pp.38.

A good narrative account of a congregation which was United Methodist in origin, quickly became Congregational and subsequently URC, with an anonymous benefactor, whose identity is revealed, for good measure. The church is now part of Stockton United Reformed Church.

STEPHEN ORCHARD