

Marginalising Evangelicals: Thomas Binney in South Australia 1858-1859

Brian Dickey

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 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-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*’ (or for the good interest and convenience) 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 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 Cornwall and Wales. The other nonconformists also looked for growth in their mission in the colony.

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 Engel 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.¹³ 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 periods of his letters to Thomas Binney, to enquire into his motives and his relations with the evangelicals within his diocese.

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 England¹⁵ 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 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 August: "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..."²² 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 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 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 sonic

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 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 Perry³³ in Melbourne would countenance the idea of Binney actually preaching from Anglican pulpits.

Maybe, Short speculated, in some future time closer relations could be 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 A 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 ‘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 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.⁴⁰ 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 asunder [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 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 harrier - 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 he 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. 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 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 cooperation 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 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 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 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 reply,⁵⁹ 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 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 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 '*a dereliction of those principles of church Order which I conscientiously adopted, 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 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. 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 London⁷¹ 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 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 function,⁷³ 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 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

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. Hawker 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 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: State Library of South Australians [SLSA], Private Record Group [PRG] 160. As yet no papers of any other major participants have been found.

-
- ² O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 1966, vol. I., 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.
- 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: Brian Dickey, *Holy Trinity Adelaide, 1836-1988. the history of a city church*, Adelaide, 1988, Methodist: Arnold 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- ¹⁵ Elaine Kaye, *The History of the Kings 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 YMCA: A Study in Victorian Social Attitudes*, 1973.
- ¹⁷ This is a major theme of M.D. Johnson, *The Dissolution of Dissent, 1850-1918*, New York, 1987, which supersedes DNB. [But see the more recent *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*].
- ¹⁸ These judgements about Binney's eminence are derived from S. Piggitt, *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. 32-34. 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 anti 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 Sep 1858, *Advertiser* 21, 24 Sep 1858.
- ²¹ *Diary* 26 Aug 1858, Short Papers, PRG 160/1, SLSA.
- ²² Short to M. Glen, 125 Aug 18581, Short Papers, PRG 160/22/11, SLSA.
- 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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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. Wolffe, '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.

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

⁴³ *PCA*, 13.

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

⁴⁵ *PCA*, pp.45-6.

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

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 Oct 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.

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.

⁵⁵ Short to *Register* 15 Nov 1858; Short, Diary 15 Nov 1858 (meets Oldham and Hawker); 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.

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.

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 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.

⁶⁵ *PCA*, p.7.

⁶⁶ Scarfe, 'Bridge', pp.187-88, briefly but unsympathetically summarises their views.

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.

⁶⁸ Scarfe, "Bridge", p.190.

⁶⁹ Short, Diary, 2 Jun 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 fn 1.

⁷² *Lights and Shadows*, pp.32-46.

⁷³ *Lights and Shadows*, p.61.

⁷⁴ Dickey, 'Evangelical Tradition'.

⁷⁵ Scarfe, "Bridge", p.191.

⁷⁶ Ward, *Religion and Society*, p.6.