

- (4) 1636 saw the founding of Harvard...for ministerial training and fifty years later it counted 122 men preparing for the ministry.
- (5) In general the New England community saw itself as an experiment of God at work in history. This can be seen in the negative movements of the "witch trials" and the tight legislative structures put on the body. A good literature source for this is Cotton Mather's THE GREAT WORKS OF CHRIST IN AMERICA.
- (6) There was a reasonable Gospel outreach to the Indians in spite of some skirmishes and such events as King Philip's war. Thomas Mayhew began an Indian work in 1643 on Martha's Vineyard and about 1646 John Eliot began a long life time work in Indian outreach. He reduced the Algonquin language to writing and published the Bible in that language...setting up schools to teach both literacy and Christianity. By 1675 there were 24 native Algonquin congregations and in the next century several Indian tribes through conversion and social amalgamation just melted into the core of the New England churches. In 1649 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England was formed and this society raised funds, workers, and supplies for Christian outreach.
- (7) But a general declension in the Massachusetts churches was under way. The acts of the "Halfway Covenant" of 1662 marked what I think was a low point. Such acts permitted the town landholders to become the really strong power in the local church
- (8) in 1705 the Massachusetts clergy (in part) sought a means to prevent the local control from becoming more secularized and issued the much disputed Massachusetts proposals which would have bound the clergy together into protective associations and given them increased power over the churches. The plan was defeated and the Puritan forces continued to lose vitality in this part of the colonies.
- (9) In 1701 a platform was laid for a new college in Connecticut. This became Yale and was formed as a corrective move against certain tides and waves at Harvard.
- (10) Finally, in the Massachusetts era we note the great revivals that occurred in the middle of the 18th century. We have a series of notes on them in time to come as a separate heading. But we may note that the Christian influence in this part of New England was in great difficulty due in part to 1) the theocratic society attempt, 2) the great increase of persons not spiritually committed, 3) the distrust of other spiritual forces outside the immediate state control and 4) the difficulty with having clerical standards that were meaningful and enforceable. New England quickly fell into a religious mold of semi-isolationism and defensiveness.