

- f. Congregationalism (Some background notes on pages 11 and 17)
- (1) Essential characteristics
 - Puritan ideal
 - Non-confessionalism
 - autonomy
 - provincialism
 - idiocentric
 - (2) We have previously noted the quick development of Congregationalism and here we can only note that following the Half-Way Covenant, the body grew weaker although some conservative elements were very pronounced through the 19th century. Its failure to grow was largely due to a lack of concerted effort and agreement within the body. The statistics are given vividly in Gausted: HISTORICAL ATLAS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA.
 - (3) 1801 saw the Plan of Union (renewed in 1837 and 1852) in which the congregational bodies worked with the Presbyterian and other reformed bodies. The plan did little for congregationalism due to its lack of organizational ideal.
 - (4) 1807 saw the founding of Andover seminary as a conservative reaction against the liberal and unitarian ideas at Harvard and, to some extent, Yale.
 - (5) 1826 the American Board of Home Missions was formed.
 - (6) Congregationalism advanced very slowly on the frontier although it gained some adherents in the midwest as New Englanders migrated that way. Kansas City became a notable midwestern center. But the overall growth was slow. This slow growth was helped by the increasing liberalism, the movement of capable persons to other denominations, a general provincialism, and a lack of direction.
 - (7) 1820 saw the Dedham trial...in which it was determined (essentially) that the ecclesiastical properties belonged to the community, not just to the worshippers of the local churches. In effect it "turned over" much congregational property to liberals and Unitarians.
 - (8) 1931 saw the merger with the General Convention of the Christian Church: result: The Congregational Christian Church.
 - (9) 1957 saw the merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the formation of the United Church of Christ.
The inroads of liberalism in the congregational bodies are documented in Gordon: THE LEAVEN OF THE SADDUCEES.