

c. The Episcopal church moved into a high church/low church controversy in the 19th century...the progression was gradual and the lines of difference were with regard to liturgy and form. Considering the background of the body and the Puritan arguments that had such importance in the Church of England, it is not surprising that such differences existed.

J.H.Hobart gets some of the blame for this. Bishop of New York after 1811 he had an evangelistic vigor but promoted high churchly ideals and was very emphatic in their value. His redeeming virtue, if I may be allowed to say so, was in a totality of commitment to the episcopate...his views brought him to regard all non-episcopal ministry as less than correct (I don't know his term for it. He simply defied the validity of non-episcopal ministry!) Hobart scorned interdenominationalistic moves or practices, championed societies within his own communion and worked extremely hard for the welfare of the church as he saw it.

The development of the Oxford Movement in England (ca 1835 and following) brought more tension to the fellowship. Native American bishops were suspicious of papism and the ideas of Pusey. The defection of Newman fired their fears even more. There came a general agreement about 1855 to live with both parties in the church...a situation that continued, or continues as the case may be. But the tensions were strong. This eventually led to the formation of the Reformed Episcopal Church in 1873 under the leadership of Bishop Cummins of Kentucky. This particular shock brought a few reform movements into the Episcopal body including the forbidding of the display of a crucifix in an episcopal church. I should note, in passing, that the Reformed Episcopal body has remained true to its tenets and to evangelical ideals to this day. It has been and is a small body with an influence in general Christian thinking far out of proportion to its size.

d. In the development of missions the Episcopal church was hampered by the form of the clergy, the sacramental rites, and the lack of freedom to move on the frontier. There were outstanding persons in its ranks however, and parishes were established in limited numbers throughout the west. Bishop Chase is remembered for widespread mission work in Ohio and the midwest and the founding of Kenyon College. A number of other names of importance occur in history texts...unfortunately this is something of a survey course.

e. The slavery question divided the Episcopal church, as it did others, but with less severe consequences. A seceding body of Episcopal bishops gave birth to a new group in 1862 but the parent body just did not recognize this or recognize the removal of the bishops. They continued to call their names at conventions! Shortly after the war the recalcitrant bishops were "returned" having never been officially thought of as left.