

--influence of socialism

--a slow erosion of the specific nature of Christian distinctives appearing first in the upper echelon academic circles and then on the mission fields. The development on the mission areas is surprising in some ways but these are less subject to careful scrutinization and more subject to syncretism due to the necessary exchange of ideal and life with the native religious systems. A good example may be seen in the life and influence of Pearl S. Buck, for example.

--the growth of the church (churches) as a financial and corporate institution.

--the development of strongly anti-Christian philosophic strains of thinking. These had been in effect for some time but in the 19th century emerged to show a more pronounced effect on the church. They tended also to move into wider circles of life than in the previous century.

c. Factors producing change in religious alignment:

(1) the World war I...it jolted the euphoric mood considerably when two of the most "Christian" countries were suddenly at each other's throats and were involving most of the "christian" countries of the continent as well.

(2) confidence in technology: a more competent human specimen was overcoming his ignorance and making great strides in technology and science.

(3) Broad acceptance of the evolutionary teaching as being the only correct view of origins, etc., was moving non-committed church types into an anti-theistic posture.

(4) Materialism accompanying the growth of world finance and influence had a marked effect on the religious community.

(5) The structure change of denominations with planned mergers and "world headquarters", etc. Theological differences tended to be minimized in the wake of "bigness."

(6) The fundamentalist-modernist debates resulted in the more complicated polarizing of religious parties. It was generally felt that the modernists won the debates and the church property but with the decline of the mainline churches in the last few decades it has been apparent that they really did not win at all...not even a Pyrrhic victory.