

THE CHURCH IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (1820)

IV. The Church
in the
Eighteenth
Century

This, as is true of others, is a somewhat arbitrary division of time. I do it because of the impending industrial revolution coming to maturity in the middle of the 19th century and the social progress made in Europe and America through the colonial age. The cessation of the Napoleonic wars and that era seems to be the historical stopping point.

IV. 1.
Events in the
Churches of
England and
North America

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Our field of study continues to narrow as we move increasingly into the English speaking world. As mentioned before, it does not mean the rest of the church is unimportant...it is only possible to achieve so much in this sort of consideration and this is the world of our roots and interest.

IV.1.a
Background

Background

A number of items produce the events we are more interested in and we tabulate these in the following pages.

Toleration Act

The English Toleration Act

Following the Glorious Revolution, the Toleration Act of 1689 ended the threat of Romanism as a system takeover of the English church and it also went a short step towards religious liberty for individuals. Although heretics and Romanists were not given much permission to continue in England, the recognized dissent bodies were permitted to continue so long as they gave loyalty to the monarchy and continued a tithe principle for the establishment. The freedom allowed by this was considerable in contrast with other times and other states and the whole thing represented the best expression of religious relief of the time. It permitted a spread of Puritan and other ideals but the harsh previous years had sapped the strength of the movements and many of the previously persecuted minority groups found the newer freedom a good opportunity to relax. They did not therefore launch forth in vigorous programs of evangelism and renewal, commitment and witness, and we are not sure what would have happened if they had. Quakers were still in trouble and total freedom of conscience is not yet allowable.

Scientific
Development

Growth in Science

By "science" we speak in the more technical sense of