

IV.3.b.
American
MissionsThe American MissionsNew England

The primary thrust in New England was to reach the Indians. John Eliot (1604-1690) pioneered this work and the translation of the Bible into the Algonquin tongue. In 1649 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England was formed..and you will soon see a marked proclivity towards long names for all such. Eliot's work had considerable success but the many wars in New England and upper New York did a good bit to damage the Indian missionary aims. The Dutch sought to have some influence with the Iroquois and Mohawks (also Algonquins) but did not make great strides. The most successful were the mission works in New England as well as some in the Delaware valley and central colony parts of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Unfortunately many of the settlers were Indian fighters more than Indian savers. Some of the Catholic missions did much work in this area and the labors of Father Joques, et al, are heroic and stirring.

The Congregational church produced the Home Missionary Society in 1805 which, in cooperation with the Presbyterian church, sought to expand the church ministries on the frontier. It was more of a home mission society but was still oriented to the spread of the Gospel.

The Central Colonies

Among the many heroes in this field we find David Brainerd (1718-1747). He was appointed to serve in the Delaware River area by the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and he labored tirelessly in this territory. Brainerd was not healthy to start with and soon wore himself out... dying in the home of Jonathon Edwards to whose daughter he was engaged. Brainerd was, from the human point of view, a very successful missionary with many converts and the pacification of a considerably hostile part of the world. His JOURNAL is recommended reading...particularly for those who feel that Calvinism somehow impedes zeal for the Gospel.

Catholic Missions

Fleetingly I mentioned the work in upper New England and New York. The character of Roman mission in North America was rather different from that of South America in connexion with the other differences that