

The Oxford Movement...

There are many developments in the Anglican church of this period but we limit our discussion to three of them...the first being the Oxford Movement. In its initial thrust the Oxford Movement was a reaction against the liberalism of the 19th century and was spear-headed by leaders from Oriel College, Oxford. The group was "high church" in tone (as we low church people view it...tending to sacerdotalism and the authority of the hierarchical body) It opposed, initially, not only liberalism but also Erastianism as it was conceived of in the early 19th century. Leaders included J.H. Newman, E. B. Pusey, and others. A number of tracts were published (via the Tractarian Society) under the theme of "Tracts for the Times." In an oversimplification by me...the route of resistance took these high church persons back in the direction of Rome for a more historically verifiable doctrinal position. In the mind of Newman it was not reasonable to accept the doctrines of Rome without the authority of Rome and in 1845 he submitted himself to the authority of the Roman See and was later appointed a cardinal. Several other prominent English clergymen went with Newman in this move and afterwards the Oxford movement tended to lose identity and influence and in the latter part of the century became increasingly ceremonial as a hedge against the things it felt wrong in the church. Pusey remained a leader in the high church party of the Anglican communion and the threat that England might be returned to the Roman church was dismissed by Carlyle with the notation that as the same waves do not return from the sea, the movements of men may be similar but are not the same. Like many other moves the Oxfordians had a goal that was admirable in many parts but a method of execution which actually defeated the desired ends.

Anglo-Catholicism...

Kindred and somewhat dependent upon the Oxford Movement was that which we know as Anglo-catholicism. It was a move by the high church Anglicans to retain the moorings in the Roman Church and to accept as much as possible of the