

## Baptist Groups...

I have earlier noted the distinction in England between the particular and general baptists and the declension of the latter group into liberal ways through the acceptance of unitarian ideals. A reaction within the general Baptists in 1770 (under the leadership of Daniel Taylor) produced the New Connexion Baptist churches. Among the particular baptist bodies a group emerged in 1813 that would eventually be known as the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland. These two bodies merged in 1891. Spurgeon had been a member of the Baptist Union but had resigned in 1887..a number of issues were at hand but a move towards liberalism that would aid in this merger was part of the problem. The Baptist Union has been a forerunner in the ecumenical works in England but in general the Baptist bodies never had the prominence or influence in Great Britain that they have had in the United States. Dissension and doctrinal difficulties have been their great foes plus the fact that the English peoples were conditioned to royalty and courtliness...factors that worked against the lay movement on a broad scale.

## Presbyterians...

Never a power in England, the English presbyterian church probably had its beginning with English refugees in the time of Mary who consorted with Knox on the continent. But following Knox's return to Scotland the English presbyterians had great difficulty in establishing any continuing church in England. Scots emigrants to Ireland carried the presbyterian system there and during the Cromwellian period (1645 ff) the presbyterians in England effected several congregations. The major documents of presbyterian polity were written at Westminster in the 1645-48 period...all long before our period. In the age of our study the presbyterians were a very minor part in the church life in England and even following the merger with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church (in the twenties) remained a very minor force. As with the Baptists...the thrust and importance given the laity was not a factor that appealed to the Brittanic mind..although in both cases this was not the sole factor, of course.