

Regency Manor

Clergy in the Regency Era

Text taken from Eras of Elegance.

In England, the Church maintained its steady influence on government and society during the Regency era. The House of Lords included several bishops, and the parish churches were well-attended and respected in their local communities. Meanwhile, the Evangelical Movement gained widespread popularity in both England and America. The Evangelicals sought to impart spirituality back into a religion which they viewed as having become materialistic and complacent. The Evangelicals preached salvation by faith and called for higher standards of morality, personal reading of the Scriptures, morning and evening family prayers, grace before meals, and Sunday observance. Other notable developments in Christianity included the publication of H.F. Gesenius's famous Hebrew and Chaldaic Dictionary in 1812, the founding of the American Bible Society in 1816, and the emergence of the Plymouth Brethren in 1827.

Jane Austen's literature reflected a society whose Christian faith particularly influenced their livelihood, as many of her characters such as Edward Ferris and Edmund Bertram were clergy in need of parsonages. Austen's father was Reverend George Austen, a pastor who encouraged the young author in her love of reading and writing. In addition to her novels, the author wrote evening prayers for her father's services. At the time, written prayers were meant to be read or spoken by one person and followed by the Lord's Prayer recited by the entire congregation.

The Regency era also saw number of heterodox challenges to the Christian faith. In 1823, Joseph Smith claimed that he was visited by an angel and told of an ancient record containing God's dealings with the former inhabitants of the American continent. In 1827, Joseph began "translating" this record into the Book of Mormon, published in 1830. Shortly thereafter, Smith organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and became its first president.



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"Lend me a tenner?"

Dropping in...

"Butler, if you please..."

"Send for the doctor!"

"I hear he's in trade..."

"Yes, Your Grace..."

"One and one are two..."

"Forgive us our sins..."

Further Reading

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