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Charles Chauncy, Continued

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Chas Channey unt. (2) Conflict with Efiscopolism isw. The rise and growth of the Efis cofobin Church in hew lengland ure a wroment which the clergy looked ofer with curiclerable susfivire and uneasiners. We have already seen how folue by first die tenhed the Plyworth church by his fresence, and by his attempt to worlefy the Pilgrim Chevel, and over come the offere tien that the Puritous had to the Church of tengland, the character of Lyford and the presentant Efforts of the efercofolians to gain a forting here, lead to a general feeling of offosition. The exterses to which religious enthuse iasta had samied their ideas as seen in the Great aurhaning level to a reaction, and under such a reaction the terrelevely in far a few, who are naturally weak and trinich, to seek shelter from the confusion within the hinds of a church of authority. she 1704 a Society for the foofogotion of the bosfel in freign fonts wer organized by the

or within the English Church. Priests were sent In the this country as missionaries, and gained a footing here. In 1742 a low wor forsech executing liferestions from forming taxes to suffert the angregational churches, This is sui eleuce of their in pluence in folities, and it was the evidence of this , as pluence that consect such keen offosition to their on the fact of the elegy. By 1745, there were 24 efiscofol chargy in U. E. and by 1761. there were 90, this represents the results of the labores of the society for the feof og ation of the Horfel in freign fonts, which wer sending out faich nursion aries to work in the here tengland towns. Chauncy become the leader of this contron: nerry, It was a curious incident that set him to studying the problem. In a letter to Ir Ega Stiles, Twoy 6. 1768 he relates how he foffened to become interested in this questirs. He anys the occasion was that The Donenfort (frist rector

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colusions that Colvinium demanded. But the wer a growing tenderry towards arminion and arien thought away the clargy of Eastern Mars, arionism, so wolher sogs. wer distinctly achoested by Jonatha Wayher in 1756, and Lewel Briant of Braintee. E heneyer boy and Doniel Shutzerf Hinghon, and John Genne of Coborsett were behindle to sympothize with this clear of of the drivity." Len 7. 2. Leveler, Chang took a leading fart in this cen : ternery, His Benevalence of the Deity" pothisted

termeny, His Benevolence of the breity" pethild in 1784, strikes at the new worts of lowin in. In this he del declared that were is "an intellise gent word agent; having in him an ability and freedom to suill, as well as to do, in offasition to necessity from any extraneous cause whatever," This is entirely incomfatable with the Columnistic idea of total defairity. and esfecially offosed to lectures clothius.

The flain truth is," says Etwey " Goel, wore, and means we all concerned in the formation of that character, without which we cannot inherit eternel life: Inelue Seums. 0.339. (1) He dewands that govelver in God stoll be like govelners in Tuan, 4 of bookness in God is like boochers in man, then the Colvinistic doctrine of referbation is untenable. When Chancey speaks of the Leverolevce of god he means god's idea tendency to commission haffiners to wer. This destrys the idea of the duction of Election. and with this idea destryed, the idea of the limited atmement goes with it. If you give of the idea of a limited atmement, and still toll to the idea of chists death as an atmement of sotisfection, you are laudely in the duetime of Minneral Solvation, It is just here that the Minewhite toke their rise through John humay.

as characteristic of the unnevent which he refrerents. (1) His constant use of the Beriftime, Book to Jerus, "in its early form. (2) His courtant affect to common seuse, or or me world say to Beasen. of. John Mine. (9) His eugheris upon the freedom and the inforture of won, slosely unweter with the ature. (4) as a natural secult of his idea of waris fredere, and importance, we har the constant surphesis upon means of Grace. E. q. his attitude tomands. Forces Enfler. Poking the niem of Stockdard.

Charles Chauncy, Continued Earl Clement Davis Harvard University or Pittsfield, MA¹ No Date

(2) Conflict with Episcopalianism

The rise and growth of the Episcopalian Church in New England was a movement which the clergy looked upon with considerable suspicion and uneasiness. We have already seen how John Lyford² disturbed the Plymouth church by his presence, and by his attempt to modify the Pilgrim Church and overcome the opposition that the Puritans had to the Church of England. The character of Lyford and the persistent efforts of the Episcopalians to gain a footing here led to a general feeling of opposition. The excesses to which religious enthusiasts had carried their ideas as seen in the Great Awakening to a reaction, and under such a reaction the tendency is for a few, who are naturally weak and timid, to seek shelter from the confusion within the limits of a church of authority.

In 1704 a Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was organized by the, or within the, English Church. Priests were sent to this country as missionaries, and gained a footing here.

In 1742 a law was passed exempting Episcopalians from paying taxes to support the Congregational churches. This

¹ The manuscripts in this series covering early New England Congregational preachers have no date. They are hand-written, dating them before Earl Davis started typing his manuscripts in 1907. So, they date either from his time at Harvard University, or the first year or two of his ministry in Pittsfield.
² John Lyford (1580-1634), a pastor at Leverlegkish, near Laughgaid, Armagh, Ireland, came to the Plymouth Colony in 1624 pretending to be sympathetic to the separatist movement, while in reality he was allied with the Church of England. Evidently he had left Ireland and come to Plymouth Colony because he had been accused of rape in Ireland. Ultimately he was banished from Plymouth Colony.

is evidence of their influence in politics, and it was the evidence of this influence that caused such keen opposition to them on the part of the clergy.

By 1745, there were 24 Episcopal clergy in New England and by 1761 there were 30. This represents the results of the labors of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which was sending out paid missionaries, to work in the New England towns.

Chauncy became the leader of this controversy. It was a curious incident that set him to studying the problem. In a letter to Dr. Ezra Stiles, May 6, 1768, he relates how he happened to become interested in this question. He says,

The occasion was that Mr. Davenport (first rector of Trinity Church, Boston) who married my first wife's sister, declared for the Church, and went over (to England) for orders. ... I imagined that my connections with him would naturally lead me into frequent conversations upon this point. And that I might be thoroughly qualified for the debate with him or others he might be connected with, ... I entered upon this study." (Ten New England Leaders, p. 2893).

The increase of Episcopal churches with, we have noted, coupled with [sic] the attempt to establish an Episcopal College at Northampton about 1760 made the problem very pressing. The third point which brought out the opposition was an attempt to have a Bishop in New England. As early as 1713 this idea had been suggested and repeated in 1724, 1725, 1727, -- 1749, and was in the air in 1762 when Chas. Chauncy delivered the Dudleian Lecture at Harvard. This lecture was a defense of Non-Episcopal ordination. The publication of this lecture put Chauncy in the front in the controversy.

Feb. 20, 1767, Bishop of Landoff preached a sermon in London before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in which the American Colonies were represented as lands of barbarism, and heathenism. Chauncy replied in a very strong, dignified, but unanswerable

³ Ten New England Leaders by Williston Walker. New York: Silver, Burdett and Co., 1901.

defense of New England. In 1771, as a final contribution to this controversy, he published, "Complete View of Episcopacy, as exhibited in the Fathers of the Christians, until the close of the second century." This was a very notable contribution, and very scholarly.

Note the relation of this controversy to the political problems, which were arising. Chauncy here, as in the political problems, was American, and opposed to un-American views.

(3) Theological Controversy

Edwards in his preaching had drawn the logical conclusions that Calvinism demanded. But there was a growing tendency towards Arminian and Arian thought among the clergy of Eastern Mass. Arianism, so Walker says, "was distinctly advocated ... by Jonathan Mayhew⁴ in 1755, ... and Lemuel Briant⁵ of Braintree, Ebenezer Gay⁶ and Daniel Shute⁷ of Hingham, and John Brown of Cohassett were believed to sympathize with this denial of the Trinity." (Ten N. E. Leaders, p. 298-9).

Chauncy took a leading part in this controversy. His "Benevolence of the Deity" published in 1784, strikes at the very roots of Calvinism. In this he declared that man is "an intelligent moral agent; having in him an ability and freedom to will, as well as to do, in opposition to necessity from any extraneous cause whatever." This is entirely incompatible with the Calvinistic idea of total depravity and especially opposed to Edwards' doctrines. "The plain truth is," says Chauncy, "God, man and means are all concerned in the formation of that character, without which we cannot inherit eternal life." (Twelve Sermons, p. 339). (1) He demands that goodness in Good shall be like

 $^{^4}$ Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1797), American Congregational minister at the Old West Church, Boston, Massachusetts.

 $^{^{5}}$ Lemuel Briant (1722-1754), American Congregational minister of the First Church of Braintree, Massachusetts.

⁶ Ebenezer Gay (1718-1796), American Congregational minister of the First Congregational Church of Suffield, Connecticut.

⁷ Daniel Shute (1722-1802), American Congregational minister of the Third (now Second) Parish Church in South Hingham.

goodness in Man. (2) If Goodness in God is like Goodness in Man, then the Calvinistic doctrine of reprobation is untenable.

When Chauncy speaks of the benevolence of God he means God's tendency to communicate happiness to man.

This destroys the idea of the doctrine of election and with this idea destroyed, the idea of the limited atonement goes with it. If you give up the idea of a limited atonement, and still hold to the idea of Christ's death as an atonement of satisfaction, you are landed in the doctrine of Universal Salvation. It is just here that the Universalists take their rise through John Murray⁸.

In Chauncy there are four things noticeable as characteristic of the movement which he represents.

- (1) His constant use of the Scripture, "Back to Jesus," in its early form.
- (2) His constant appeal to common sense, or as we would say, to Reason, cf. John Wise.
- (3) His emphasis upon the freedom and the importance of man, closely connected with the above.
- (4) As a natural result of his idea of man's freedom, and importance, we have the constant emphasis upon means of Grace, e.g., his attitude towards Lord's supper. Taking the view of Stoddard.

⁸ John Murray (1741-1815), one of the founders of the Universalist Church. Born in Hampshire, England, he emigrated to New England in 1770.