

Char. Chauncy.

During the first hundred years of New England Church History, the minds of the ministers were so much engrossed with problems of Church Government, and the relation of the Church to the political problems, and the state, that we may make a general statement to the effect that the Theology remained that which is expressed by the Westminster Confession, adopted in 1648 at the same time that the Cambridge Platform was adopted. True indeed it is that there had been some agitation concerning Baptism, and Communion but this was upon the side of folly, and not out of theology.

The Charter of 1692 had severed the relations of the state and the church, and taken from the clergy much of the influence that they once exercised, and left them to interest themselves in problems that



were more theological in their nature. So  
 be sure we had seen evidence of a new  
 habit of thought at work, which had divid-  
 ed the country into two general parties, the  
 conservative, and liberal. But so busy were  
 these men with questions of policy, that they  
 had no opportunity to apply their habits of  
 mind to theological problems. Even John  
 Wise, hardly thought of dealing with his  
 Colonization in precisely the same manner  
 that he did with his "Dixian Profosols."

But a change was coming, as a natural result  
 of new conditions.

Perhaps it would be well for us to recall the  
 "Five Points of Colonization," for our interests are  
 now turning from questions of government  
 to questions of theology. (1) God elects individuals  
 to be saved. (2) He designs complete redemption  
 for them only. (3) Fallen man is of himself  
 incapable of true faith and repentance. (4) God's  
 grace is efficacious for the salvation of the



Elect. (5) A soul once regenerated and connected  
is never ultimately lost.

But the hard lines of this system were being  
weathered away. (1) The greater freedom of the  
New World made traditions less binding. (2)  
Democratic ideas were developing very rapidly.

(3) There was a tinge of Fatalism in early days.  
E. g. Cotton Mather.

By about 1725 there began to appear wrong  
ideas that were not strictly Calvinistic. Whatever  
these ideas were, they were  
all branded with one name "Arminianism"  
In 1726 Cotton Mather said no minister could  
be found in N. E. who held Arminian views.  
But in 1736 Johnathan Edwards says that it  
was appearing in New England. In 1750 Edwards  
says that there is danger <sup>that</sup> <sup>of</sup> the young generation  
would come entirely under the influence of  
Arminianism.

~~In comparison with~~ In comparison with  
Calvinism above defined, we may notice the  
changed attitude by recalling to mind what



are commonly called "The five points of Arminianism":  
i. e. Christ died for all alike, but only those who  
accept his atonement by faith will be actively saved.  
(3) Salvation by means of Grace, or that man can  
exercise true faith only by the regenerating  
grace of the Holy Spirit, with which grace  
however, he can cooperate. (4) Grace not irresistible.  
(5) falling from a state of grace possible.

The general tendency of this new movement  
is seen in two of its ideas. (1) It places  
greater emphasis upon work. (2) It emphasizes  
means of grace, i. e. education and character  
as means of salvation.

These two tendencies represent the develop-  
ment of a liberal and an orthodox party  
within the Christian Church of New England.  
The conservative branch is represented  
by Johnathan Edwards and his followers.  
The liberal branch, or moderate branch  
is represented by Char. Chauncy, and



terminated in the Unitarian ~~by~~  
Cant.

For the present we shall follow the movement taking as the leader Chr. Chauncy, Pastor of the 1<sup>st</sup> Church of Boston.

Chauncy was born in 1705, the year that Cotton Mather issued the sixteen proposals. Died in 1787. His father was a merchant, his grandfather was 2<sup>nd</sup> President of Harvard. He graduated from Harvard in 1721. Was ordained pastor of 1<sup>st</sup> Church 1727.

His life in so far as it concerns the thought movement with which we are concerned, centers about three controversies. (1) Revival controversy. (2) Episcopal controversy.

(3) Theological controversy.

~~A brief~~ A little insight into the King of a man Chauncy was is seen in the following written by a friend. He was, like Zaccheus, little of stature. God gave him a slender, feeble body, a very powerful, vigorous mind, and strong passions; and he managed them all



6  
exceedingly well. His manners were plain  
and downright, - chiquefied, bold, and im-  
posing. In conversation with his friends  
he was pleasant, social, and very instruct-  
ive." Walker's Ten N. E. Leaders, P. 273.

The New England of the time of Chauncy  
was not the New of 50 or 75 years before,  
and Boston perhaps more than any other town  
reflected this change. The town authorities for  
instance reported to the general court <sup>in 1735</sup> that  
Boston had become "the resort of all sorts of  
foul people, which instead of adding to the  
wealth of the town, serve only as a burden  
and a continual charge." Walker 10 N. E. Leaders 275

Religiously estimated, Boston was not what  
it had been in the days of the founders. The  
old Puritan enthusiasm had departed,  
wealth, commercial interests, and the presence  
of a foreign office holding sway had  
largely defined religion of its original



primacy in popular interest. Whitefield, the<sup>7</sup>  
evangelist, wrote in his journal of 1740, "The  
Nobility seem to be too much conformed  
to the world. There is much of the fricade of  
life to be seen in their assemblies. Jewels,  
Potches, and gay apparel are commonly worn  
by the female sex, and even the common  
people. I observed, directed of in the Pride of  
life.

Unto these conditions came Whitefield, and  
alwart like a thunder storm he swept  
of over this country in 1740, conducting  
revivals in all important places. He was  
a preacher of great power, and with a tre=  
mendous influence. Under his preaching  
the storm of religious enthusiasm which  
had been gathering force for 5 years  
or more, burst upon the country with  
all the force of a cyclone. Many more



converted, and some joined the church. It is 8  
alleged that there were 25 or 30 thousand  
converts. Perhaps their nature is seen in that  
on repeated occasions men cried out, and  
women fainted; many in the weeping  
congregations declared themselves converted.

This "Great Awakening" of 1740 gave rise to  
a very keen controversy, which brought out  
the latent ideas of the clergy and made them  
show their colors. Chauncy was among  
those who condemned the revival. In  
1748 he published a book under the title "Rea-  
sonable thoughts on Religion" which heated  
of the revival.

His objections rested chiefly upon ~~two~~ <sup>two</sup>  
grounds. (1) He objected to itinerant preaching  
because it was un-congregational. Absentees  
~~and~~ and then some of the lesser lights, who  
followed Whitefield were guilty of many  
objectionable actions.



9

(2) He objected to the criticism that the Evangelists  
forced upon the clergy. In the Old South Church  
in Boston, Whitfield said. "The Generosity  
of Preachers talk of an unknown Christ, unfelt  
Christ. And the reason why congregations  
have been dead, is because dead men  
preach to them." At New Haven he preached  
on "The dreadful ill-consequences of an  
unconnected ministry." These words  
which became more bitter and vituperative  
as the controversy increased did not  
agree with men like Chauncy. In fact  
Dover just the last of the lot of Evon-  
gelists become insane, and it seems  
that this cloud of insanity hangs over  
the whole movement.

This revival resulted in, -

- (1) The loss of influence of the ministers
- (2) The rise of Separated Churches, whose  
grounds of separation were precisely



the same as the gowels upon which <sup>10</sup> Brown and others had stood for, but here in New England 150. years later the New England Churches, the direct descendants of the early Separatists, offered these new Separatists.

(3) The third result of this revival was the emphasis it placed upon revivals, the emotional element of religion, and hence the old idea of the direct influence of God upon the soul of the Regenerate. It is on this point that Edwards is so strong. Chauncy held that these "new lights" as they were called do not stand the test, which the Bible or the fruit of the spirit would offer them.

4-Physical Manifestations - Danced  
four miles, neglect of clothes etc.  
Chauncy had no sympathy with it.



The three important results were, 11

- (1) Sharp contrast drawn between the Calvinistic idea, or super votal agency, and the Arminian idea, means of grace or education. Chauvey stood for latter.
- (2) Second, drawing the lines between extreme and moderate Calvinists,
- (3) Among the moderates there was a renewed emphasis upon the Bible, in opposition to immediate grace. This study of the Bible, this reawakening is of no little importance, and in fact prepared the way for the later movement of 19<sup>th</sup> century.