

## SIR JOHN COLEPEPER



SIR JOHN COLEPEPER, or Culpeper, an English royalist politician, who with Falkland and Hyde, was a privy councillor of Charles I, was the son of Sir John Colepeper of Sussex, but the date of his birth is unrecorded and little is known of him before his appearance in Parliament in 1640 as one of the members for Kent. He there distinguished himself by a great speech against monopolies, took part in the proceedings against the Earl of Strafford, and was among those who voted for the bill of attainder. He differed on religious questions from the popular party, and, definitely allying himself at last with the royalists, exercised much influence with the King in the management of military affairs. After the execution of Charles I he supported the cause of Prince Charles, his son (afterward Charles II). During the Protectorate he lived in exile in Flanders, and after Cromwell's death he wrote from Flanders a famous letter to Clarendon, outlining a policy which the government should pursue. Colepeper was extremely ready in debate and wise in council, but somewhat irresolute and changeable in action. He returned to England immediately after the Restoration and died there, June 11, 1660, two months after the Convention Parliament had invited Charles II to return and assume the throne of his ancestors.

## CONCERNING THE GRIEVANCES OF THE CHURCH AND COMMONWEALTH

MR. SPEAKER,—I come not with a petition in my hand, I have one in my mouth, and have in charge from them that sent me humbly to present to the consideration of this house the great grievances of the county of Kent. I shall only sum them up; they are these:

The greater increase of Papists, caused by the remiss execution of those laws which are made to repress them; the life of our laws is execution, without which they become a dead letter; this is wanting and a great grievance.

The obtruding and countenancing of many divers new ceremonies in matters of religion, as the placing of the communion table otherwise, the bowing to it, or cringing at it, the refusing

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of the holy sacrament to those that will not come up to the rails, these carry with them some scandal and much offence.

The third is the new canons; I assign this to be a grievance, first in respect of the matter, besides, etc., and the oath. Secondly, in respect of the makers, they were chosen to serve in Convocation, that falling with the Parliament, the same was altered, and the same men shuffled into a sacred synod.

3. In respect of the consequence within 4 this age was the 2d ill president, becomes a law, is full of danger, the clergy without confirmation by a Parliament have assumed power to make laws, to grant release under the name of benevolences, and to intermeddle with state affairs, our freeholds by suspensions, deprivations; this grievance is of much consequence.

4. The next is military charges, and 1, that of coat and conduct money required as a loan pressed, equally a grievance; the 2 is the enhancing the price of powder, whereby the train-band are much discouraged in their exercisings; howsoever this may appear, *prima facie*, yet upon due examination it will prove a great grievance.

5. The fifth is the more particular to our country, it is this: the last summer was twelvemonth, a thousand of our best arms were taken away from the owners, the compulsory way was this, if you will not send your arms, you shalt go yourselves. Mr. Speaker, the train-band are militia, of a great strength and honor, without charges to the king, and deserve all due encouragements.

6. The next grievance is the heavy tax of ship-money; this cries aloud, I may say without offence, it strikes the very first-born of every family, I mean in our inheritance.

If the law give the king power in any case of danger of the kingdom, whereof he is judge, to impose what and when he

pleaseth, we owe all that is left to the goodness of the king and not to the law. Mr. Speaker, this makes farmers faint, and the plow go heavily. The next is the great decay of clothing, of all our wools; these are the golden mines of England, which give us occasion to our great trades we drive with other nations; there are many stars which concur in this evil constellation; I will not now trouble you with any more than one case, which I dare affirm to be the greatest: 'tis the great custom of imposition laid upon our clothes and new drapery. I speak not this with an intent to lessen the king's revenue, so it may be done by a Parliament, I shall give my voice rather to more charge upon those superfluities, due regard being had to the trade which we import to other nations. Sure I am, the impositions upon native commodities are dangerous, and give liberty to our neighbors to undersell us, and I take it for a rule it is five times as much as the king receives, what is imposed upon our cloth, it is taken from the rent of our laws.

I have but one grievance more to offer to you, and this contains many: it is a nest of wasps, a swarm of vermin, which have overcropt the law, I mean the monopolies, the polers of the people; these like the frogs of Egypt have gotten possession in our dwellings, they sip in our cup, they dip in our dish, they sit on our fire, we find them in our dye-fat, wash-bowl, and powdering-tub, they share with the butler in his box, they have marked and sealed us from head to foot, we may not buy our cloth without their brokerage; these are the leeches that have sucked the commonwealth, that it's almost become heretical.

Mr. Speaker, some of these are ashamed of their right name, they wear a vizard to hide the brand made by the good law of the last Parliament of King James, they shelter themselves under the name of the corporation, they make by-laws, which

serve their own turns, to fill their own purses, and squeeze us: unface these and they will prove as bad cards as any in the pack. These are not petty chapmen, but wholesalers. Mr. Speaker, I have made known to you the cries of the country, I will tell you their hope, they look to heaven for a blessing upon this Parliament, they hang upon his Majesty's exemplary piety and great justice, which renders his cares open to the just complaints of his subjects, we have lately had a gracious assurance of it, they are in the wise conduct of this House; whereby the great affairs of this kingdom, and thereof our grievances no less important, may go hand in hand in preparation and resolution. Then by the blessing of God we shall return home with an olive branch in our mouths, and fully confirmed of those blessed privileges left us by our ancestors, and which we owe to our posterity; to which every free-born Englishman hath an equal right with the air he breathes in: these are our hopes, these are our prayers.

## COTTON MATHER



**C**OTTON MATHER, son of Increase Mather, a learned New England divine, noted in our colonial era for his zealous interest in civil and religious affairs, and for his extended pastorate of the North Church, Boston, was born at Boston, Mass., Feb. 12, 1663, and died there Feb. 13, 1728. In 1678, he graduated at Harvard, and after a theological course he was ordained his father's colleague over the North Church, where he labored until his death, succeeding his father in the sole pastorate of the church from the year 1723. He took an active part in the unfortunate persecutions for witchcraft in Massachusetts, his credulity and superstition on this subject being at variance with later beliefs in a subsequent generation. Possessed of great natural endowments and of much, though crude learning, he was egotistic, self-opinionated, and pedantic. He was, however, a voluminous writer, his chief work being "Magnalia Christi Americana," still of value to the student of New England ecclesiastical history. His other writings embrace "Wonders of the Invisible World;" "Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft;" "Psalterium Americanum" (an unrhymed metrical translation of the Psalms); "The Christian Philosopher;" an "Essay upon the Good that Is to Be devised;" "The Armor of Christianity;" "Batteries upon the Kingdom of Evil;" and over 350 other disquisitions, besides unpublished works, such as the "Biblia Americana, or Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testament illustrated," left in manuscript. Mather's life was written by his son, Samuel, in 1729.

### SERMON: THE BOSTONIAN EBENEZER

DELIVERED FEBRUARY 7, 1698

"Then Samuel took a stone, and set it up, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto the Lord hath helped us."—1 Sam. vii, 12.

**R**EMARKABLE and memorable was the time when an army of terrible destroyers was coming against one of the chief towns in the land of Israel. God rescued the town from the irresistible fury and approach of those destroyers, by an immediate hand of heaven upon them. Upon that miraculous rescue of the town, and of the whole country, whose fate was much enwrapped in it, there followed that action of the prophet Samuel which is this day to be, with some imitation, repeated in the midst of thee, O Boston, thou helped of the Lord.

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The thankful servants of God have used sometimes to erect monuments of stone as durable tokens of their thankfulness to God for mercies received in the places thus distinguished. Jacob did so; Joshua did so; and Samuel did so; but they so did it as to keep clear of the transgression forbidden in Lev. xxvi, 1: "Ye shall not set up an image of stone in your land, for to bow down unto it."

The stone erected by Samuel with the name of Ebenezer, which is as much as to say, "a stone of help;" I know not whether anything might be writ upon it, but I am sure there is one thing to be now read upon it, by ourselves, in the text where we find it: namely, thus much, "That a people whom the God of heaven hath remarkably helped in their distresses ought greatly and gratefully to acknowledge what help of heaven they have received."

Now 'tis not my design to lay the scene of my discourse as far off as Bethcar, the place where Samuel set up his Ebenezer. I am immediately to transfer it into the heart of Boston, a place where the remarkable help received from heaven by the people does loudly call for an Ebenezer. And I do not ask you to change the name of the town into that of "Helpstone," as there is a town in England of that name, which may seem the English of Ebenezer; but my sermon shall be, this day, your Ebenezer, if you will with a favorable and a profitable attention entertain it. May the Lord Jesus Christ accept me, and assist me now to glorify him in the town where I drew my first sinful breath; a town whereto I am under great obligations for the precious opportunities to glorify him, which I have quietly and publicly enjoyed therein for near eighteen years together. "O, my Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me this once, to speak from thee unto thy people!"

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And now, sirs, that I may set up an Ebenezer among you, there are these things to be inculcated.

Let us thankfully, and agreeably, and particularly acknowledge what help we have received from the God of heaven in the years that have rolled over us. While the blessed apostle Paul was, as it should seem, yet short of being threescore years old, how affectionately did he set up an Ebenezer with an acknowledgment in Acts xxvi, 22: "Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day!" Our town is now threescore and eight years old; and certainly 'tis time for us, with all possible affection, to set up our Ebenezer, saying, "Having obtained help from God, the town is continued until almost the age of man is passed over it!" The town hath indeed three elder sisters in this colony, but it hath wonderfully outgrown them all; and her mother, Old Boston, in England also; yea, within a few years after the first settlement it grew to be the metropolis of the whole English America. Little was this expected by them that first settled the town, when for a while Boston was proverbially called "Lost-town," for the mean and sad circumstances of it. But, O Boston! it is because thou hast obtained help from God, even from the Lord Jesus Christ, who for the sake of his gospel, preached and once prized here, undertook thy patronage. When the world and the church of God had seen twenty-six generations, a psalm was composed, wherein that note occurs with twenty-six repetitions: "His mercy endureth forever." Truly there has not one year passed over this town, *ab urbe condita*, upon the story whereof we might not make that note our Ebenezer: "His mercy endureth forever." It has been a town of great experiences. There have been several years wherein the terrible famine hath terribly stared the town in the face; we have been brought sometimes unto the last meal in the barrel; we

have cried out with the disciples, "We have not loaves enough to feed a tenth part of us!" but the feared famine has always been kept off; always we have had seasonable and sufficient supplies after a surprising manner sent in unto us. Let the three last years in this thing most eminently proclaim the goodness of our heavenly Shepherd and Feeder. This has been the help of our God; because "his mercy endureth forever!" The angels of death have often shot the arrows of death into the midst of the town; the smallpox has especially four times been a great plague upon us: how often have there been bills desiring prayers for more than an hundred sick on one day in one of our assemblies? in one twelvemonth about one thousand of our neighbors have one way or other been carried unto their long home: and yet we are, after all, many more than seven thousand souls of us at this hour living on the spot. Why is not a "Lord, have mercy upon us" written on the doors of our abandoned habitations? This hath been the help of our God, because "his mercy endureth forever." Never was any town under the cope of heaven more liable to be laid in ashes, either through the carelessness or through the wickedness of them that sleep in it. That such a combustible heap of contiguous houses yet stands, it may be called a standing miracle; it is not because "the watchman keeps the city;" perhaps there may be too much cause of reflection in that thing, and of inspection too; no, "it is from thy watchful protection, O thou keeper of *Boston*, who neither slumbers nor sleeps." Ten times has the fire made notable ruins among us, and our "good servant" been almost our "master;" but the ruins have mostly and quickly been rebuilt. I suppose that many more than a thousand houses are to be seen on this little piece of ground, all filled with the undeserved favors of God. Whence this preservation? This hath been the help of

our God; because "his mercy endureth forever!" But if ever this town saw a year of salvations, transcendently such was the last year unto us. A formidable French squadron hath not shot one bomb into the midst of thee, O thou *munition of rocks!* our streets have not run with blood and gore, and horrible devouring flames have not raged upon our substance: those are ignorant, and unthinking, and unthankful men who do not own that we have narrowly escaped as dreadful things as Carthage or Newfoundland have suffered. I am sure our more considerate friends beyond sea were very suspicious, and well-nigh despairing, that victorious enemies had swallowed up the town. But "thy soul has escaped, O *Boston*, as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers." Or, if you will be insensible of this, ye vain men, yet be sensible that an English squadron hath not brought among us the tremendous pestilence under which a neighboring plantation hath undergone prodigious desolations. Boston, 'tis a marvellous thing a plague has not laid thee desolate! Our deliverance from our friends has been as full of astonishing mercy as our deliverance from our foes. We read of a certain city in Isaiah xix, 18, called, "The city of destruction." Why so? some say, because delivered from destruction. If that be so, then hast thou been a city of destruction: or I will rather say, a city of salvation: and this by the help of God; because "his mercy endureth forever." Shall I go on? I will. We have not had the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, like many other places. But yet all this while "our eyes have seen our teachers." Here are several "golden candlesticks" in the town. "Shining and burning lights" have illuminated them. There are gone to shine in a higher orb seven divines that were once the stars of this town, in the pastoral charge of it; besides many others that for some years gave us transient

influences. Churches flourishing with much love, and peace, and many "comforts of the Holy Spirit," have hitherto been our greatest glory. I wish that some sad eclipse do not come ere long upon this glory! The dispensations of the gospel were never enjoyed by any town with more liberty and purity for so long a while together. Our opportunities to draw near unto the Lord Jesus Christ in his ordinances cannot be paralleled. Boston, thou hast been lifted up to heaven; there is not a town upon earth which, on some accounts, has more to answer for. Such, oh, such has been our help from our God, because "his mercy endureth forever."

Let us acknowledge whose help it is that we have received, and not "give the glory of our God unto another." Poorly helped had we been, I may tell you, if we had none but human help all this while to depend upon. The favors of our superiors we deny not; we forget not the instruments of our help. Nevertheless, this little outcast Zion shall, with my consent, engrave the name of no man upon her Ebenezer! It was well confessed in Ps. cviii, 12, "Vain is the help of man!" It was well counselled in Ps. cxlvi, 3, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help."

Wherefore, first, let God in our Lord Jesus Christ have the glory of bestowing on us all the help that we have had. When the Spirit of God came upon a servant of his, he cried out unto David, in 1 Chron. xii, 18, "Thy God helpeth thee." This is the voice of God from heaven to Boston this day, "Thy God hath helped thee: thou hast by thy sin destroyed thyself, but in thy God hath been thy help." A great man once, building an edifice, caused an inscription of this importance to be written on the gates of it: "Such a place planted me, such a place watered me, and Cæsar gave the increase." One that

passed by, with a witty sarcasm, wrote under it, *Hic Deus nihil fecit*; that is, "God, it seems, did nothing for this man." But the inscription upon our Ebenezer, owning what help this town hath had, shall say, "Our God hath done all that is done!" Say then, O helped Boston, say as in Ps. cxxi, 2, "My help is from the Lord which made heaven and earth." Say, as in Ps. xciv, 17, "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had quickly dwelt in silence." And boldly say, "'Tis only because the Lord has been my helper, that earth and hell have never done all that they would unto me."

Let our Lord Jesus Christ be praised as our blessed helper! that stone which the foolish builders have refused, oh! set up that stone; even that high rock: set him on high in our praises and say that "that is our Ebenezer." 'Tis our Lord Jesus Christ who, in his infinite compassions for the town, hath said, as in Is. lxiii, 5, "I looked, and there was none to help; therefore my own arm hath brought salvation unto it." It is foretold concerning the idolatrous Roman Catholics that together with the Lord Jesus Christ they shall worship other *Mauzzim*; that is to say, other "protectors." Accordingly, all their towns ordinarily have singled out their protectors among the saints of heaven; such a saint is entitled unto the patronage of such a town among them, and such a saint for another: old Boston, by name, was but St. Botolph's town. Whereas thou, O Boston, shalt have but one protector in heaven, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh! rejoice in him alone, and say, "The Lord is my fortress and my deliverer!" There was a song once made for a town, which in its distresses had been helped wondrously; and the first clause in that song (you have it in Is. xxvi, 1) may be so rendered: "We have a strong town; salvation [or Jesus the Lord, whose name hath salvation in it] will appoint walls and bulwarks."

Truly what help we have had we will sing, "'Tis our Jesus that hath appointed them." The old pagan towns were sometimes mighty solicitous to conceal the name of the particular god that they counted their protector, *ne ab hostibus evocatus, alio commigraret*.<sup>1</sup> But I shall be far from doing my town any damage by publishing the name of its protector; no, let all mankind know that the name of our protector is Jesus Christ: for "among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord: nor is any help like unto thine: and there is no rock like to our God." . . .

Wherefore, O our beloved people, I beseech you leave off, leave off to throw stones at your Ebenezers. Instead of that, pray for us, and "strive together with us in your prayers to God for us." Then with the help of Christ we'll promise you we will set ourselves to observe what special truths may be most needful to be inculcated upon you, and we will inculcate them. We will set ourselves to observe the temptations that beset you, the afflictions that assault you, and the duties that are incumbent on you; and we will accommodate ourselves unto them. We will set ourselves to observe what souls among you do call for our more particular addresses, and we will address them faithfully, and even travail in birth for them. Nor will we give over praying, and fasting, and crying to our great Lord for you until you die. Whatever other helpers the town enjoys, they shall have that convenience in Ezra v, 2, "With them were the prophets of God, helping them." Well, then, let the rest of our worthy helpers lend an helping hand for the promoting of those things wherein the weel of the town is wrapped up! When the Jews thought that a defiling thing was breaking in among them, in Acts xxi, 28, "They cried

<sup>1</sup> Lest, beguiled by the prayers and offerings of the enemy, he should take up a residence elsewhere.