

LIBERTY AND DANGER.

BY THE REV. HUGH FREDAY

Is Congregationalism unsafe? Does it leave the door open for all kinds of heterodoxy and false doctrine? Does it leave room for people to run off into sorts all of extravagance in religious thought? We may as well give a frank affirmative in answer to these questions. Aye, and let us give that affirmative without a blush. Congregationalism would not be Congregationalism if it had not the element of danger.

Joseph Cook is very fond of using such an expression as this: "There cannot be a here without a there, there cannot be a before without an after, there cannot be an upper without an under." Following that mode of expression into the realm of mind and soul we say there cannot be freedom without danger. Give the traveller freedom to scale the ragged sides of the mountains in search of broader landscapes, and you must at the same time give him freedom to place his feet where a slip would be death—freedom to ascend to where the atmosphere is too thin for mortal to breathe. Give the man of science liberty to use his tubes, metals, and chemicals as he peers into Nature's heart, and you must expose him to the danger of being stifled by some poisonous gas, or blown to atoms by an explosive combination. Wherever there is life there is liberty, and wherever there is liberty there is danger. You cannot have progress without freedom, and you cannot have freedom without peril. In religious matters we come under the wide sweep of this law of compensation. He who stands open-minded to the voices that come from the fair realm of truth must also be forced to listen to the voices that come from the kingdom of error, and it is his birth-right, as a man, to distinguish between these voices and choose for himself. If we Congregationalists whine about our danger, we must also complain of our liberty. And if we put one ban upon liberty we may as well pull down the old flag, and float some other banner to the wind.

If theology, "the crown and queenliest of sciences," were in anything like a state of perfection there would be less room for the above remarks. In the "Princeton Review," for January, Dr. Stuart Robinson, referring to compromises between theologians and scientists, speaks as follows: "The fallacy that underlies most of these compromises is that theology is a science which grows from partial ignorance up to full stature, as the merely secular sciences. Whereas while secular sciences must grow up slowly from ignorance to perfectness, the science of theology starts from infallible revealed truth at first, and its changes as it passes through the hands of fallible men are generally in the direction of corruption. For here Tertullian's maxim has its most forcible application, 'What is first is true, what is more recent is false.'" If the sentiment just expressed be a true one, then liberalism in theology is an impossibility, and the attempt at it a fraud. Let us all live under this grand temple of scientific religious thought, and go forth no more as searchers for truth. Thinkers in other realms, "forgetting the things that are behind," press forward. Theologians are to reverse the process and remembering the things that are behind go backward until they come to Tertullian and the rest of them. There they may stop and rest content under the green shady tree of early church theology.

There are some, however, who think that there is still room for progress—that theology, learning new methods, will move onward from the incompleteness of youth to the fully rounded perfection of maturity. It has not yet attained nor is it already perfect. There are questions unsettled as yet—the meaning and scope of inspiration, the nature of the atonement, the final state of the wicked, the relation between works and faith, between the ethics of Jesus Christ and the reasonings of Paul. There are theories on all these matters, but it can hardly be said that the reasonings are so conclusive as to command anything like a universal agreement. No system as yet seems to cover the whole ground fairly. The theological bed is too short, and the theological covering too scant. The timid and despondent despair of reaching anything better.

The ardent and courageous look into the future with a brave heart, hoping and working for the coming "bridal dawn" of religion wedded to science, the twain made one. Meanwhile, let us have a religious system which will not seek to curb the free native impulses of such men as these. Let us Congregationalists cherish our liberty, too many have to forsake it because linked with danger. Truth is the reward of the brave. America was not discovered by timid sailors hugging European shores, but by a man who sailed far out upon a stormy sea. "Nothing venture nothing win," was his motto. Let it be ours.

NEW TESTAMENT MANUSCRIPTS.

(1.) The uncial MSS. are so termed from being written in capital letters. They are engraved on large skins of parchment generally in double columns. From no spaces being left between the words, and on account of there being no marks of punctuation, and no attempt at finishing a line by a syllable, the work of reading them is painful to the eye of a student not familiar with their use. They are difficult to copy and doubtless many of the errors in those MSS. arose from mistakes on the part of the persons who made the now extant copies occasioned by their confusing appearance.

(2.) The cursive MSS. are so termed from being written in what we would term a "running hand." They are not nearly so ancient as the uncial MSS. and are vastly more numerous. Although not so venerable as the great uncial MSS. it does not follow that they are of less value, for a cursive MS. may, so far as we know, have been copied from an uncial MS. of greater antiquity than any we now possess.

The great uncial MSS. are few in number. Scarcely one is perfectly complete, and some consist only of a few pages. To give a list of them would be tedious, and would be little more than a catalogue. Mention must be made however of some of the more important of them.

The one which was last discovered is the most complete, and probably the most ancient. It is known as the Codex Sinaiticus. It was discovered in 1844 and 1859 by Constantine Tischendorf, in the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. Professor Tischendorf was at the convent of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai in his journey through the East in search of ancient MSS. under the auspices of Frederick Augustus of Saxony. One day his attention was attracted to some vellum leaves which were just about to be used to light the stove. He examined them and finding that they contained a part of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament he at once secured them. On his return to Europe he published the rescued portion, which contained Esther and Nehemiah, with parts of Chronicles and Jeremiah. In 1853 Tischendorf was again at Mount Sinai, but could find no trace of the precious MS. On a third visit to the monastery in 1859, he succeeded in recovering the remaining sheets of the missing treasure, and after a good deal of negotiation the monks were persuaded by Tischendorf to surrender the manuscript to the Emperor of Russia. The MS. is now in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. In 1862 a splendid fac-simile edition of 300 copies was published as a memorial of the one thousandth anniversary of the empire of the Czars. Every item of internal evidence leads to the belief that this MS. dates from the fourth century. It is probable that it was one of the fifty copies prepared by order of Constantine in 331, and that it was presented to the monastery by Justinian its founder. This MS. contains the whole of the New Testament and is the only complete MS. in existence. It is usually designated by critics, the Hebrew "*Aleph*."

The MS. known as "A" is the Alexandrian Codex. It is preserved in the British Museum. It was sent as a present in 1628 from Cyril, Patriarch of Constantinople to Charles I. Cyril states that it was written by a monk named Thecla, but when or where is not known. It is supposed to have been prepared in Egypt during the fifth century. The MS. known as B is the Vatican Codex. Nothing also is known of its history beyond the fact that its existence for 400 years

in the Vatican library is ascertained. It is written in characters very closely resembling those in the manuscripts found in Herculaneum. The greatest difficulty has always been experienced in consulting it. Napoleon carried it to Paris with many other literary treasures. It was on his fall restored to the Papal custody. Continued pressure was brought to bear on the Pope to have it published, and in 1857 an edition made its appearance under the editorship of Cardinal Mai. It was found that numerous passages were actually inserted, and the whole edition was so garbled that scholars named it "a copy of the Scriptures according to Rome." The contempt with which this edition was received by scholars induced the Pope, Pío Nono, to issue a fac-simile edition in 1868, reproducing the very "form, lines, letters, strokes, marks" of the MS. itself. We have thus in the hands of critics a scrupulously exact copy of this treasure.

The codex of Ephraem known as C, is an important MS. It is a *palimpsest*, that is a work written over an older writing on the same skin. Over the old MS had been engrossed the work of a Syrian theologian named Ephraem; hence its title. It is now in the National library in Paris. It was not until the end of the 17th century that the existence of a part of the New Testament under the more recent writing was suspected. In 1834 a chemical application was made to it when much of the original writing was revived. It was found to be written with great care and undoubtedly belongs to the early part of the 5th century.

D, or the Codex Beza, is preserved in the University of Cambridge. It was at one time the property of the Reformer Beza who presented it to the University library at Cambridge in 1581. The text of this MS. differs much from the other great uncials. It is supposed to have been written in France by a Latin copyist ignorant of the Greek language. Its age is fixed at the latter end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century.

Space however prevents any further enumeration of these uncial manuscripts. There are about 125 of them known to exist of varying degrees of completeness. Some are almost perfect and others consist of only a few verses, such as the *Fragmentum Nitriense*. They vary in age from the 4th to the 10th century.

A HEROIC LIGHT-HOUSE KEEPER.

The Acadians have a tradition that God enjoined perpetual silence and desolation on Labrador and Anticosti when he gave them to Cain for a heritage. However that may be, it is certain that while other wilds of the earth yield to man's conquests, these vast wastes remain ever void and empty. The Indians called the island Naticotte—the country of wailing—and under the modern corruption of Anticosti it has added to its terrible renown. Its whole history, from the day it was discovered by Jacques Cartier in 1534 to the present, is a record of human suffering. Here and there, however, there is a tale of heroism worthy of a nobler scene. In August, 1860, the family of Edward Pope, keeper of the Ellis Bay light-house, was stricken down by typhoid fever, and, to add to his misfortunes, the revolving apparatus of his light broke. The government steamer had gone, and Pope had no means of communicating with the marine department at Quebec or elsewhere. The light revolved, or flashed, as the technical phrase is, every minute and a half; and if it flashed no more it would probably be mistaken by passing vessels in that region of fog for the stationary light at the west point of the island, and thus lead to dire loss of life. Pope found that with a little exertion he could turn it and make it flash, and at once determined to fill the place of the automatic gear. Accordingly this humble hero sat in the turret, with his watch by his side, turning the light regularly at the allotted time every night from seven p.m. until seven a.m., from the middle of August until the first of December, and from the first of April until the end of June, when the Government steamer came to his relief with a new apparatus. All through the first season, Pope's daughter and grandchildren were ill unto death, with nobody