THE CIRCEAN CUP.

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D.D., NEW-YORK.

The fair-haired, clever goddess, whom Homer describes as smooth-tongued and attractive, had her palace surrounded by numbers of human beings whom she, by her drugs, had changed into wolves and lions. Two-and-twenty of the companions of Ulysses she transformed into swine, and swine they would have remained, but for the mysterious energy of Mercury's herb given to the astute Ithacan, by which he was protected and enabled to secure the disenchantment of his comrades.

There is no such Circe except in the brain of the poets; but the sorceress of mythology has a terrible representative in the thoughtless, generous hospitality which puts the stimulating cup into the hands of women and men, and reduces them from their high estate to grovelling dependence, and to crimes of which the beasts are not capable, and that upon a scale of which the Homeric mind never formed a conception. There are multitudes of men engaged in distributing strong drink, in the commercial sense, who have no principle on the subject; who would count us fools if we ascribed to them any principle; who are in this business because it suits them, and other the hope of rapid money-making. Argument is usually a waste of power upon them. "Eyes have they, but they see not; ears have they, but they hear not;" and one might as hopefully appeal to them as to the heathen gods whom they so far resemble. They will be dealt with in the progress of enlightenment and of Christian civilization, as other men are dealt with, whose private interests conflict with the public good, and who put money in their purses in the proportion in which the community is corrupted and injured.

But the progress of legislation—though it has accomplished more than it gets credit for—is slow, and there is a class of persons who will not come for a long time within its range, yet who need not await help to do their duty from legislation—namely, the moral, well-meaning, but unreflecting persons whose perverted kindness does the work of the sorceress, and helps onward the brutalizing process with alarming celerity. Once convinced and persuaded, these friends can become a law unto themselves, and can legislate within their own domain.

There are three forms in which liquors are presented gratuitously and mischievously—namely, at the private table in ordinary life, to one's family and friends; at the social entertainment to persons of both sexes, at receptions and festive gatherings; and at those complimentary entertainments where usually only gentlemen congregate and toasts are offered and appropriately honored. At the second of these—namely, private parties—it is matter of undoubted fact that wine, of more or less exciting properties, is consumed by young people, even by ladies, to an extent that augurs badly for the future of those whose nervous system is developed out of all proportion to the strength of body or of brain, of character or of conviction. As to the third form, there are not many who have been present at a few public dinners where wine was freely dispensed, who have not been, so far, the associates of some who, while exceedingly good company for one another, were not congenial society for sober men.

To heads of families who make intoxicating liquors common beverages at their tables, to those who present them at the feasts at their social entertainments, and to those who arrange public dinners, and have no personal interest in running up a wine bill, we respectfully submit the following considerations, which we think ought to have weight with those who value public morality and feel any responsibility for their influence and example.

1. This practice, in the degree of its extent and intensity, forms bad habits in the young; familiarizes them with the less repulsive effects of wine, accustoms the palate to the taste of it, and trains the system to need it. The stimulus which gave artificial energy and temporary vitality is sought again, and in the progress of life, as the pressure in the race ways increases, and the waste of natural spirits becomes greater, the perilous remedy is sought; it creates a need for itself, and helplessness and ruin are the result. The writer, without seeing, he trusts, a croaker or an alarmist, but the possessor of that ordinary observation and common-sense which may be safely committed to a clergyman, avows his belief that drinking is on the increase among very respectable people, including the young persons of both sexes, yet in their minority, and that it is time enough to be alarming, not to Christians only, but to moralists and patriots. The social cup promotes this calamitous movement.

2. The ordinary presentation of wine in the ways mentioned gives respectability to drinking customs, and to excesses which all men, not utterly lost, condemn. He whose lunch or dinner is uncomfortable at home without a stimulant must seek it when eating elsewhere; and so is driven to the place and the associations to which the unnatural is drawn by his unnecessitous appetite. Mothers and fathers in this way, unwittingly send their sons where familiarity with degrading vice takes the edge off the wholesome horror with which it ought to be regarded, and prepares them for the easy descent.

3. This custom nullifies in some degree the warnings and entreaties of the friends of temperance. If it did not run too near the edge of experience which have a certain sacred privacy about them, many a minister could tell of his aid being solicited for the preservation of a member of his family, and of his utter hopelessness and despair, when he has seen the very enemy against which he was urged to contend assigned an honored place on the family table of its victim. The duty of this course is incredible, if we do not see it indulged in by sober and successful business men. Suppose licentiousness the besetting sin of a young man whose reform is eagerly sought by his parents and friends; and suppose these friends should introduce the fallen, who exact a terrible revenge by becoming tempters in their turn, to his presence, and into the family circle, what hope would there be of his reform? Is the case essentially different when the hundred sin of drunkenness is in question, and the wine is passed round the family table with zest and recommendation?

4. These customs increase the difficulty of restoring the inoculated, in whose veins the virus is lurking, only waiting for favorable conditions for its operation. The writer has seen the bride nervously watching her husband lest the wine-cup of the wedding-day should rouse the appetite that occasionally mastered him. When small-pox hovered among us, how loudly we demanded precautions, which in rough hands sometimes approached very near cruelty in order to prevent the spread of contagion! But the occasional ravages of this destroyer are mild and insignificant compared with the daily steady devastation drink is making; and we place the destroyer on our boards, and for the utmost facility for the infecting of new victims, and for securing the relapse of those who gave hope of recovery.

5. To no humane or wise man will it seem an inconsiderable item in this account that drinking customs among respectable people go far to demoralize and ruin domestics. What is good for the employer is not bad, it may be inferred, for the employed. The thing is genteel in the parlour; and the kitchen has a code of gentility of its own not very far behind that of the parlor. Where wines are domestic use, they must fall in some degree within the reach of servants. We aid in forming the taste; when it is formed, we see the effect in an intemperate coachman, or a tippling cook or waitress, and we do a little mild moralizing on the decay of the class, and turn the poor wretch over to the Registry office, possibly with a report that would not bear exact examination, but with the benevolent wish to give a chance for doing better. Let us not forget, in these cases, that we gave the chance to do badly in the first instance.

Of course, in this, and on some of the other particulars, precise statistics are out of the question. One can only appeal to general knowledge of human life. Concurrent causes do not admit of having their joint effects distributed and tabulated. If typhoid fever is bad in a street, it is difficult to say how many cases are due to dirty sweets, how many to defective sewerage, how many to the cell like system of the dwellings, how many to low conditions of the physical system of the victims. But he who contributes any one of these items has his share of responsibility for the total result.

This subject is not popular but it is pressing. Many of the ablest public men of Great Britain, who never were in a barroom or on vulgar scenes, become sots. Too many American men of mark are notoriously intemperate. Light wines were supposed to do no harm to anybody, and France was often quoted as an illustration of their innocuous character. But explain it as you will, France has lost her reputation for sobriety. Too many persons in the most respectable society are drunkards. Statistics of the casualties in the mean time that it is perfectly unknown. This includes both sexes, and many very young persons. It is an "open secret." Witness our inebriate asylums; talk to your medical man in easy, unreserved confidence about society in general, or let society lay into your ears its heedless scandal about its own members and you will know.

And knowing it, ye fathers and mothers! ye Christian parents, who vowed to train and restrain those young ones! ye church members, who pray "Thy kingdom come!" ye leaders in society! who are not wholly unconscious when you say, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, do not realize in your own life, at your own board, what was but a dream of the ancients. Do not with dangerous drugs degrade human beings. Do not inflame the passions which destroy the heart or soften the human intellect. Take care of yourselves; or if you have no fear or no feeling there, pity others, and give no help to the slow murders of the genial, the thoughtless, and the good-natured.

THE DYING WORDS OF DR. GUTHRIE.

BY THE REV. NEWMAN HALL.

Dr. Guthrie was distinguished by his perfect simplicity. He was a child of nature. He never did or said anything for the sake of appearances. He would talk as freely and unconsciously and spontaneously in the drawing-room of a duchess as in the cottage of a peasant. So his last sayings are perfectly natural. He was a true bit of humanity in death, as in life. There was no pretending to be superior to bodily frailty. The magnanimous heart confesses infirmity. The strong one bows in the presence of death. He said: "The days have come when I have no pleasure in them."

A smiling country woman tripping past the window from which he could look across the road, which alone divides the house from the beach, he said: "*Vanitas vanitatum.* I would gladly give all my money and fame for that poor body's vigor and cheerfulness." He suffered at last from difficulty of respiration "I have often seen death-beds and often described them; but had no conception till now what hard work dying really is. His sympathy for others was beautifully expressed when he said: "Had I known this years ago as I know it now, I would have felt far more than I ever did." Yes, he often was called to comfort and help the dying. But he had not then died. What a consolation it is that He on whom we chiefly rely for dying help has died himself, felt death in all its bodily and mental aggravations, can sympathize with us fully, and, moreover, shows us in himself how death is the door into life.

Dr. Guthrie's mental power, love of nature, and gentle sympathies were manifested to the last. The following remark was so like him. In reference to the Queen's telegraphic message of inquiry he said: "It is very kind." And then of a humble Scotch kind, who trusted in him with respectful and sympathizing love: "Affection is very sweet, and it is all one from that ever quarter—whether from the Highland lassie or from a peeress; just as to a thirsty man cold water is equally grateful from a spring bubbling on the hillside as from a richly ornamented fountain." He was always fond of children, and a little child was left up on the bed to kiss him, and for him to kiss—a fitting feature of the child to a child loving and of a child-like life. Appealing to God, he said: "O, most mighty and most merciful, pity me—once a great sinner and now a great sufferer." Expressing his faith, he said, as he looked out over the sea: "I am a father, and I know what a father's heart is; but my love to my children is no more to God's infinite love as a father than one drop of water to that boundless ocean out there."

Then, again, blending his human sympathies with his divine aspirations, he asked for some of "the battle's hymns," as he called them; and so, for his special solace, "There is a happy land" and "O, that will be joyful" were sung to him. In a former letter I think I mentioned how he asked for a mirror, and said that, as the sailor climbs the masthead to look out for land, so he wanted, by his change of features, to see if he was nearing home. As he approached the better land, he seemed to see the shining ones awaiting his passage, and as his cheering adieu to the dear wife and children round, him he exclaimed, "Happy! happy!" and peacefully passed away.

Can the "death of the righteous" be the end of the righteous? What? a successful warrior against self and sin perish when he wins the victory? The minister of mental and spiritual life to the souls of others himself lose all life through weakness of the valves of the heart? One who had for years been regulating this life by the hope of a future life find nothing but annihilation beyond? One who had been for years walking with God, trusting, loving, serving God, whom God must have known as one who was thus faithfully striving to be his servant and friend, and God be willing to lose such a friend and let him perish as a dog? Would not God "be ashamed to be called the God" of such servants if he had not "prepared for them a city"? Would he not deserve to be ashamed of having such servants if he did not secure to them another and better life beyond the present? The life and death of such a man as Guthrie flings scorn on materialism. How much more, then, the life and death of Jesus? How righteous was he! And by what an aggravated death he died! Yet how triumphantly he lived again! Pre-eminently righteous! Pre-eminently illustrating the death of the righteous! Pre-eminently living and triumphing after death, we are sure that to Guthrie, and to all who serve the same Lord, to die is gain. "I know that I shall live because I know that my Redeemer lives."

A CAUSE OF WEAKNESS IN PROTESTANT CHURCHES.

[FROM AN ARTICLE BY JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE, IN THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.]

Protestant nations show more energy than Catholic nations, because the mind is left more free, and the intellect is undistorted by the authoritative instillment of false principles. But Protestant nations have been guilty, as nations, of enormous crimes. Protestant individuals who profess the soundest of creeds, seem, in their conduct, to have no moral sense beyond a conviction that pleasure is pleasant, and that money will purchase it. Political corruption grows up; sharp practice in trade grows up—dishonest speculations, short weights and measures, and adulteration of food. The whole commercial and political Protestant world, on both sides of the Atlantic, has blossomed out into transactions of this kind, and the clergy have for the most part sate by silent, and occupy themselves in carving and polishing into completeness their vehement doctrine of salvation. They shrink from offending the wealthy members of their congregations. They withdraw into the affairs of the other world, and leave the present world to men of business and the devil. For the working purposes of life, they have allowed the Gospel to be superseded by the new formulas of political economy. This so-called silence is the most bare-faced attempt that has ever yet been made on this earth to regulate human society without God or recognition of the moral law. The clergy have allowed it to grow up, to take possession of the air, to penetrate schools and colleges, to control the action of legislatures, without even so much as opening their lips in remonstrance.

Imagine Knox, or Calvin, or Latimer, coming back to us again. To what would they address themselves? To the settling doctrinal differences between Ritualist and Evangelical; Broad Churchmen and Socinian; Episcopalian and Independent? Or to the cynical complacency with which the very existence of a God is discussed as a problem of speculation; with which the principle of Cain is enunciated as the elementary axiom of life, that man is his own keeper and not his brother's; that his first duty is to himself; that the supreme object of his existence is to make his fortune, and enjoy himself in this life?

Quam minime credendus futurus.

I once ventured to say to a leading Evangelical preacher in London, that I thought the clergy were much to blame in these matters. If the diseases of society were unapproachable by human law, the clergy might at least keep their congregations from forgetting that there was a law of another kind, which in some shape or other would enforce itself. He told me very plainly that he did not look on it as part of his duty. He could not save the world, nor would he try. The world lay in wickedness and would lie in wickedness to the end. His business was to save out of it individual souls by working on their spiritual emotions, and bringing them to what he called the truth. As to what we should do, or not do, how they should occupy themselves, how and how far they might enjoy themselves on what principles they should carry on their daily work—of these and similar subjects he had no directions to give.

The following anecdote is related of Whitefield, and contains admonition against self-glorification: He had just finished one of his sermons when a man came reeling up to him and said, "How do you do, Mr. Whitefield?" He replied, "I don't know you, sir." "Don't know me! Why you converted me so many years ago, in such a place." "I shouldn't wonder," replied Mr. Whitefield, "you look like one of my converts; for if the Lord had converted you, you would have been a sober man."

Contributors and Correspondents.

THE WILL OF CHRIST ON UNION OUR RULE OF DUTY.

No. 2.

Few, if any, will deny these primary principles, but many fail to apply them through the influence of prejudice. They do not ponder sufficiently the spirit of the Master, and the principles which He and His Apostles set forth for the guidance of Christians to the end of time. Christ says of all non-essential differences, "He that is not against us, is for us," yea, though the party spoken of followed not with the Apostles but yet sought to do good in the name of Christ. This will apply to all who hold the head and all the leading doctrines of the Gospel, though they differ in some minor points of doctrine or polity. We know that there were differences in the Churches founded by the Apostles; yet they were all united under one general supervision. And Paul rejoiced that the Gospel was preached even by those not his friends, because Christ was thereby set forth as the Saviour and sinners were brought to the knowledge of the truth. Applying these principles we believe that Christians should not only be united in love, sympathy and service as brethren in Christ, but that they should also be united in a visible organization when their views of Scripture and church polity enable them to do so. This appears not only from the command and prayer of Christ, already referred to, but also from other intimations of his mind in the inspired Word. The mind of Christ in this matter is thus declared by St. Paul, "Nevertheless whereto we have already attained let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." It is evident that the principle at least enjoins that all christians should unite in the practice of things they know and believe in common. I conceive moreover that it demands greater visible unity in an *actual incorporat on*, in so far as this is consistent with the interests of divine truth and the glory of the King and Head of the Church.

Many think that the Scriptures point forward to the time when all Christians shall be united in one grand organization when "Ephraim shall no longer fear Judah nor Judah Ephraim, but they shall become one in the hand of the Lord." Others think that the Christian Church shall always be divided into sections like so many branches on the one vine and that these divisions have been designed to meet the wants of the human mind—different minds taking different views of the many questions that arise in all departments with which man has to deal, and that this will ever be the case. Be this as it may. The spirit of Christ, the plain teaching of the Word, and a proper regard to the divine glory and the best interests of the Church of God all demand that we should seek to lessen the divisions in the Christian Church. The fewer the branches on the vine the larger and better the fruit; so the fewer the divisions in the Christian Church, the greater will be the harmony, love and fruitfulness of the followers of Christ.

In other words the more fully the visible unity of true and living Christians is manifested, the more will the prayers of our Lord be fulfilled, and the conversion of the world be hastened. The principles set forth in the word of God seem to require that those holding the same views of doctrine and church government should unite together in each country, and thus heal many of the unseemly divisions, which have so long dishonored the Christian Church and greatly hindered its success.

According to the premises laid down it seems to me to be the incumbent duty of all Presbyterians to unite, at least of all who hold the same standards and whose views accord on all the vital points of Scriptural Christianity. If the first steps were taken by the union of those who are thus agreed, we might hope that all Christians would gradually draw closer in doctrine and practice. We have reason to believe that this will be the case in proportion as they draw closer to Jesus and draw their sentiments more directly from His word unfolded by His spirit, especially in humble earnest prayer. They will thus learn to love each other as brethren in Christ. If this principle be correct then it is the duty of the Presbyterian Churches of the Dominion of Canada to unite, as they hold the same standards and the same views with regard to the leading doctrines of Christianity and the order and discipline of the Christian Church. Why then should they keep up seperate organizations? Are they obeying the Scriptural injunction, walking together as they have attained? Let us beware lest by any continued separation, we contravene the purpose and prayer of the King of Zion and delay his glorious design of gathering *together in one* all the children of God that are scattered abroad and of establishing a universal kingdom in which peace, unity and brotherly love shall reign triumphant. We should ever seek the things "that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another.

We argue that these churches should unite, because there is no difference between them that requires the sacrifice of any great Scriptural principle, or that would be opposed to the divine glory. On the contrary we hold that it is manifestly the will of Christ, that Churches so essentially alike should unite together in one body, by which the unity of Christians would be more fully exhibited and thus the glory of God and the conversion of the world be promoted. This of itself ought to be a sufficient reason to induce us to attend to this duty. Even earthly parents expect their will to be a rule to their children. How much more should the will of God be a guide to his redeemed children. But the motive which Christ chiefly presents, is the influence which the unity of the Church will have upon the world. Christians by their unity promote the belief of the world in the Gospel of Christ, because then thereby present a proof that they believe the Gospel. When men of the world see Christians giving up selfish views and feelings, and uniting together in the bonds of Christian fellowship in obedience to the expressed will of Christ, they are thus led to feel that there must be a reality in the religion of Jesus and to join themselves to Christians, saying "We will go with you, for we see that the Lord is with you." Our Lord seems to intimate that the world is to be convinced that his religion is divine largely if not chiefly by the unity of his people. Christianity is thus presented as the embodiment of love to God and good will to man. Such was the influence of mutual love manifested in the unity of the primitive Christians we are told that those converted on the day of Pentecost were united to the Church in Christian fellowship, and that they were of "one heart and one mind." And that as the result of their love and unity, "the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." Again we read that "the churches walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied." Still later the same spirit of unity, love and zeal were manifested, and as the result a great number "believed and turned unto the Lord."

Those the early history of Christianity verifies the view we have taken of the influence of love and unity among Christians. When the dew of its youth passed away and the spirit of the world—the spirit of contention and self-seeking took the place of love, zeal, and united efforts for the advancement of the cause of Jesus, then Christianity degenerated into an insipid, spiritless formality, or debasing superstition. It broke up into parties, seats multiplied, animosities ran high, the grieved spirit of love retired; and then the beauty of the Christian Church was marred and her efficiency greatly impaired. The enemies of Christ, as well as his unwise friends, have sought to bind Christians by rules stricter than He enjoined, and have made the terms of Communion straiter than He made them. They have added new regulations to His few and simple institutions, and thus sought to cut off from the Church those that differ from them ever so conscientiously (Acts 15. 10). The Apostles, the divinely appointed founders of Christianity, opposed this self-righteous sectarian tendency, and astonished the converts simply to observe the laws of Christ which had been delivered to them by Apostolic authority.

This sectarian tendency has ever been one of the chief sources of division among Christians. Sect comes from *secare* to divide or separate. This selfish spirit first manifested itself at Corinth, and was severely rebuked by Paul, who refers to this cavilling and strife and division, and asks, "Are ye not carnal and walk as men." He then solemnly pleads against it, and points out the *unity of unity* among Christians: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions, *i. e.*, schisms, differences resultings in divisions but that ye be perfectly *joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*" He firmly opposes the formation and especially the *continuance* of sects in the Christian Church: "I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it; for there must be also heresies among you," that is not merely through differences of opinion fmproperly manifested, but divisions which become inveterate, that is, *sects*. Thus confirmed schisms or sects were highly disapproved of by an inspired Apostle as dishonoring to God and a great hindrance to the progress of earnest spiritual religion in the world.

UNEX.

A little north of Shiloh the scene changes, the country becoming broken and rugged, with many and steep ravines; but this is softened down at length, and the intersecting valleys wind or stretch out in remarkable beauty. One of these sweet little valleys, not more than 100 yards wide, is enclosed by two mountains, each of which rises 1,200 feet above the vale. Their bases almost touch, although the summits recede; and in the sides of both are circular indents facing each other, and so forming an amphitheatre capable of containing an immense concourse of people. Here stood, six tribes on one side and six on the other, the children of Israel, to hear the words of the law and the blessings and cursings, as Moses had before directed that they should do. The northern mount is Ebal, the southern Gerizim. The vale is the vale of Shechem, unrivalled in Palestine for beauty and luxuriance." Shechem, the city of refuge, stood here. We are, of course, contemplating "the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph," and we know that close to it was a place called Sychar, and that "Jacob's well was there." Jacob's well is there now, veritable well, undisputed in any age or by any form of any religion, of which Jacob himself drank, and his children, and his cattle, and from which, in later days, Jacob's divine descendant asked a drink of water from the woman of Samaria. It is close to the high-road from Jerusalem to Galilee. About half a mile from the well is Joseph's tomb.

The well is 75 feet deep, 7 feet 6 inches in diameter, and is hued throughout with rough masonry, as it is dug in alluvial soil. The bottom of the well was perfectly dry at this time of the year (the month of May) and covered with loose stones. There was a little pitcher lying at the bottom unbroken, and this was an evidence of there being water in the well at some seasons, as the pitcher would have been broken had it fallen upon the stones. It is probable that the well was very much deeper in ancient times, for in ten years it had decreased ten feet in depth. Every one visiting the well throws down stones for the satisfaction of hearing them strike the bottom, and in this way, as well as from the debris of the ruined church built over the well during the fourth century, it has become filled up to probably more than half of the original depth.—*Kitto-wood's Magazine.*

Christian graces, like the stars, shine brightest in the darkest hour.

When any one was speaking ill of another to the Emperor Peter the Great, he at first listened to him attentively, and then interrupted him. "Is there not," said he, "a fair side also to the character of the person or whom you are speaking? Come, tell me what good qualities you remarked about him."