RELIGION IN THE CONCRETE

Takes Something More Than Believing the Bible to Make a Man Religious

"He that doeth good is of God."—III. John, 11.

One reason that religion means so little to many is that we have for a long time been accustomed to thinking of it from the wrong end; we have worried ourselves over its forms instead of using its simple facts; we have substituted its philosophy for its practice; we have acquired the habit of thinking of faith as wholly a matter of creed and opinions.

In those days when the reason feared to trust itself, when ignorance made the many slaves to the few who sought to keep a monopoly of knowledge, men were willing to accept the authoritative statements of the religious specialists that they must give personal unquestioning assent to those philosophical statements prepared by the institutions upon which those teachers lived.

Once men gave the same blind allegiance to the doctrines of religion that they also gave to feudal overlords; they knew not at all what the quarrel was about, but, being told that they must defend the faith or be eternally damned they defended the faith, they paid their dues, and counted that they had performed their duties for religion.

But opinion is no more religion than a guide book is a journey If you had a million copies of even so practical a code as the ten commandments there would be less religion in the whole pile than in one little kindly deed done

BY ONE FOR ANOTHER.

We seem to think still that you can make a man religious by getting him to recite phrases of pious opinion.

There are no meals in a cook book. Health is not the same thing as a doctor's book. You cannot buy wisdom at a book store. Nourishment, health, wisdom are all the product of vital processes. They come through life. You may define all these in words, you may describe them in books, but the things themselves you can neither put into such forms nor get out of them.

Religion is not the bible, nor the creed, nor the church. These are but its symbols, its descriptions, and guide books. It takes a good deal more than faith in Baedeker to take a man to Italy.

You can never make a child know that two and two are four by repeating that formula to him; he must somehow in his experience put this two and that two together. Then addition becomes simple, delightful (because helpful), practical. The gravest difficulty in helping people to the religious life is that we are insisting on putting the formula before the experience.

Let the definitions, the descriptions, the symbols of religion take care of themselves. Let every man express his views in his own way. His need is not some form of expression identical with all others; his need is to find by the actual test of living, by practical experience, that the religious way of life is the best, the most satisfactory, the most serviceable.

Do not worry over the forms and symbols that others use. Get the fact, the great fact, that life has in it higher values than those of the beast and the burden bearer, that

MAN IS MORE THAN DUST,

that living for the good of all is the secret of finding all the good in life. Steadily reach out for the best in life and your religion will formulate itself through experience.

When men are sick they do not need pathological definitions—they need the right life. When this world is wrong, when we find ourselves in conflict with the order of rightness, we need the fresh, invigorating experience of living for the things that are high and worthy.

We can all grasp religion in the concrete. We all believe in good lives. We have no skepticism as to sincere service for sacrifice; we all agree on the creed of character. We can all take hold of religion at the end of duty, of high living, of clean citizenship, of social service, of every day goodness, kindness and love.

Doing the things that are right, following the light of high ideals, why fret and quarrel or even give ourselves special concern over descriptions, definitions, creeds? Take the facts of the right life, enjoy its experience, and let the logic of such a life give its own account of our faith.

HENRY F. COPE.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, JAN. 3.

Lesson I. The Ascension of Our Lord. Golden Text, Acts 1. 1, 11.

Verse 1. The former treatise — Greek, "first treatise." The reference is to Luke's Gospel, which was written, as was the book of Acts, primarily for the information and enlightenment of the author's personal friend, one Theophilus. In the introduction to the Gospel Luke addresses this friend as "Most excellent," which in all probability is the equivalent of our expression, "your excellency," and which, therefore, implies that the person addressed was a man of high rank, perhaps a Roman official. The same expression is used in addressing Felix and Festus the Roman governors(Acts 23. 26; 24. 3; 26.25). The proper name itself means literally, "Lover of God," and may well have been simply a title or epithet prompted by personal friendship rather than the real name by which this individual was known in general society.

2. Until the day in which he was received up—Luke's Gospel narrative, of which he intends that this second treatise (the Acts) shall be a continuation, concludes with the record of the ascension of Jesus. For the commandment here referred to compare Luke 4. 44-49.

The Holy Spirit—Referred to in the promise of Jesus, recorded by Luke (Luke 24. 49). that the apostles whom he had chosen should be "clothed with power from on high." For a list of the apostles compare verse 13 of this lesson; compare also Matt. 10. 2; Mark 3. 16-19. By the treachery of Judas the number had been reduced to eleven, but was soon after this time again increased to twelve by the selection of Matthias, who was chosen by lot to take the place of Judas.

5. Baptized in—Or, "with."

6. Restore the kingdom to Israel—The disciples of Jesus, including even the twelve apostles, shared with their fellow-countrymen the mistaken Messianic conception which looked for the re-establishment of the Jewish state in great splendor under the reign of the Messiah. Jesus does not directly answer the question put to him but gently reproves the apostles for manifesting an unnecessary curiosity with regard to the future.

8. Ye shall receive power — A special equipment for service, rather than the satisfaction of their speculative curiosity, is to be their portion.

Witnesses—Simply testifying to that which they had seen and heard and experienced.

Jerusalem . . . Judea . . . Samaria . . . the uttermost part of the earth—Beginning with their testimony, or witnessing, in their home city, their mission is to extend gradually into ever more distant regions, including first of all the province in which Jerusalem is located, then the semiforeign province of Samaria, lying just north of Judea, and finally even distant and foreign lands. In this verse the author gives us both the divine programme for the missionary activity of the primitive apostolic church and also the sequence of thought to be followed in his present narrative, which begins with the story of Pentecost and ends with the record of the proclamation of the gospel in the imperial capital at Rome.

9. He was taken up—Luke in connecting his present narrative with his earlier treatise repeats and amplifies the record of the closing verses of the earlier Gospel story.

11. Ye men of Galilee—The Galilaen dialect was a marked peculiarity of the apostolic group; though here assembled in Jerusalem most of them were Galilaens by birth and early training.

Shall so come in like manner — The interpretation given to this promise by the apostles and their immediate followers and successors filled the Christian minds during the apostolic age with the reverent joy and hope of Christ's early return, and thus became a source of inspiration and sustaining faith in the hours of trial and persecution which shortly came upon the church.

12. Then returned they unto Jerusalem—At this point Luke takes up the thread of the story and continues the narrative beyond the point at which his Gospel record ended.

A sabbath day's journey—About two thousand cubits or yards, the maximum distance which it was permitted by the pharisaic interpretation of the Sabbath law to journey on that day.

13. The upper chamber—A large guest room like, and perhaps identical with, that in which the Last Supper was eaten, and which the apostles were now using as a common living room.

14. With the women—Or, "with certain women." Who these were is not indicated, but among them Mary, the mother of Jesus, is singled out as especially worthy of mention.

His brethren—The brothers of Jesus and sons of Joseph and Mary. These were James, Joseph or Joses, Simon and Judas (compare Matt. 13. 55; Mark 6. 3). They are here clearly distinguished from the apostles, which would seem to indicate that none of the four were members of the apostolic group.

BAGANDA MANNERS.

Some East African Natives are Unusually Polite.

Neither manners nor clothes make the man. Nevertheless, manners are so vital a part of conduct that by them one can form some idea of character. According to a writer in the Strand Magazine, the Baganda, natives of Uganda, in East Africa, are, so far as courtesy is concerned, the pink of perfection. Sir Harry Johnston has called them "the Japanese of Africa."

If you say good morning to a stranger on an English road, it is as like as not that his surprise will throw him into a posture of self-defense; but when two Baganda meet, they begin to salute each other as they come within ear-shot.

"How are you?" cries the one.

"Who am I that you should care to know?" replies the other.

"Humble though I be, yet I have dared," rejoins the first.

"But say first how are you?" continues the second.

"The better for the honor you have done me," is the answer.

By this time they have already passed each other, and there is only time for Parthian affability.

"The honor is mine and I shall treasure it." Then follows a quavering of delicately modulated, long-drawn "A—a—a's!" of contentment and good-will, which gradually die away in the distance, leaving neither of them the worse circumstanced or the better informed.

I must add, for the reader's caution, that this dialogue is not an invariable ritual. The phrases may be varied ad infinitum to suit the occasion; but it will suffice as an illustration of these roadside courtesies.

If you wish to make a Baganda perfectly happy, all you need to do is to say, "Way wally!" which means a sort of supremely earnest "Well done!"

The moment this tallismanic expression has left your lips, the native to whom it is addressed will probably fall on his knees, and clasping his two hands together, will sway them from side to side, as if he were playing a concertina, while all the time his face beams with a most benignant and compulsive smile, and he purrs, "A—o! a—o! a—o!" as much as to say, "My cup of joy is overflowing."

This action, as performed by the Baganda, involves no servility. Once you are used to it, they do not seem to lose at all in dignity. Only they win your heart.

FASHIONS IN HORSES' TAILS.

Harmony Between Wig of Master and Tails of Horses.

Horses' tails have been subjected to curious changes of fashion. In the time of the Stuarts the English coach-horse's tail was worn long and flowing, and was cut square, like King Charles's charger at Charing Cross. English Country Life says that it was adorned with ribbons on gala days, and strapped up in a leather case in winter weather; thus a certain harmony was preserved between the wig of the master and the tails of the horses.

By the time of George II. a short wig and a pigtail had taken the place of the flowing curls in which the cavaliers of Charles I. and the rakes of Charles II.'s court delighted.

The brilliant idea occurred to Lord Cadogan, a cavalry officer of that period, to reduce the tails of his dragoon horses to a short dock. Possibly this was with the view of saving his soldiers the trouble of cleaning those long tails, and avoiding the nuisance of the splashes uniforms and accouterments must have received from such hair streamers.

Or it may be that the debased taste of the age made him think the appearance of his regiment was really improved by bobbed tails. That is the question that history does not decide.

The next step was to turn bobtails into plugtails, by cutting all the hair for the last two or three inches of the dock. Having thus succeeded in disfiguring the hind quarters of dragoon horses, some monster devised the additional barbarity of cropping their ears.

WORSE JOB.

"Holloa, Jack, old boy, writing home for money?"

"No."

"What are you taking so much trouble over, then? You've been fussing and fuming over it for the last two hours."

"I'm trying to write home without asking for money."

Printing from moveable type was known in Korea over a century before the invention of the art in Europe.

FORESTS OF CANADA.

Recent Estimates of Their Area Greatly Reduced.

Eight hundred million acres used to be accepted as the area of that part of Canada covered by forests; two hundred million acres is the estimate of the commercially valuable forests as given by Dr. B. E. Fernow, head of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Toronto; one hundred million acres, Dr. Judson F. Clark, of Vancouver, B.C., thinks, would cover the "actual cutting area, that is, the area on which are found forests of commercial value, as measured by present-day logging standards," this figure including the areas bearing timber suitable for pulpwood or saw-timber.

Both Dr. Fernow and Dr. Clark are well-known authorities on forestry subjects. The former is the author of the well-known work, "The Economics of Forestry," which is practically the only work in English treating comprehensively this aspect of the subject. Dr. Clark has had extended experience in forest work in connection with the U. S. Forest Service, and later as Forester to the Province of Ontario, a position which he resigned to go into private business in British Columbia, where he has had several years' experience of work in the woods there.

For a long time the people of Canada were quietly and complacently congratulating themselves that their timber supply was "inexhaustible." Estimates like the above, given by men who can speak with authority on the subject, must wake them up to the necessity, not not only of guarding from fire and other enemies the forests they now have, but of introducing rational forestry management so as to increase the growth of the forests and get from them the largest amount of timber they are capable of producing.

CITY'S BUSINESS MANAGER.

A Novel Experiment in Municipal Government.

Staunton a Virginia city of some 12,000 inhabitants, is trying an interesting municipal experiment. The old form of administration, embodied in a Mayor and City Council chosen by the voters, has been left undisturbed, but those officials, who are politically responsible to a self-governing community, have elected a business manager to whom they have turned over all the purely business functions of the city government. In his relations to the City Council, the business manager stands somewhat in the same relation that the general manager of a large corporation does to the board of directors.

In Staunton's case the manager is elected for a year. He presents a report every three months and he is permitted to suggest new legislation along the lines where he is active. In making contracts for all municipal work and in the buying of city supplies, he is given a free hand. The experiment began last April, and the manager has shown himself so efficient that his re-election for a second term has been determined upon. One instance in which the new business manager proved his worth was in placing contracts for granolithic paving at 71 cents a square yard instead of the $2 the Council was paying prior to his appointment.

GOOD NEWS FOR HUNGRY FOLKS.

Here's an Expert Who Sings the Praises of a Square Meal.

"Many middle aged women who are rather stout, but young and fresh looking, diet with the idea of improving their appearance. They lose a few pounds, but their faces become haggard and wrinkled. In pronounced obesity," according to a writer in Outing, "the most effective remedy is exercise, gradually made vigorous, supplemented by a change of diet, but never by starvation.

"Statistics have shown the great value of abundant food. Dr. J. Robertson, an eminent surgeon of Manchester, England, has remarked that the families of working people when well fed maintained their health surprisingly, even while living in cellars, and he observed that during four years of prosperity the number of fever cases admitted to the Manchester House of Recovery were 421 a year, while in two pinching years 1,207 cases a year were admitted.

"The ultimate effect of curtailing the food supply is to weaken the stomach so that it cannot digest what it once could easily. Thus the source from which our energy is derived is weakened, to our great detriment.

"Now, as man is really no stronger than his stomach, and as good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both, should we not rather seek to strengthen the stomach by giving it exercise than to enfeeble it by dieting? Loss of weight is the first symptom of failing health; and cutting the food supply invariably causes loss of weight.

"To develop strong muscles we must train them gradually to do strong work. In the same way we can, by judicious care, accustom even a weak stomach to digest hearty meals. But we cannot do this by forcing into the stomach more food than it calls for; we must first create the need of a greater quantity by a proper amount of bodily exercise Of all cures for dyspepsia, with its accompanying languor, exercise is the best cure I know of."

MEDICINE FOR HUNTERS.

Simple Remedies That May be Found Useful in Camp.

Did you ever notice how awkward one always is with his hands the first two or three days on a trip in the woods? Fingers seem to get in the way of every axe, knife, fire, splinter or thorne encountered, and the result is a pair of hands more or less damaged, says a writer in Forest and Stream.

Adhesive plaster is found useful, but I have found a compound made as follows, most useful and comforting. Equal parts by weight of Japan wax, mutton-tallow and vaseline, melted together. While warm add half as much glycerine. Fill a metal primer box with this, and at night rub it well into the hands. It is neither sticky nor unpleasant, and will cure damaged hands or chapped lips very quickly. I have never tried to do so, but if raw linseed oil will mix readily with this compound, it will be found advantageous. Rubbing it alone on the hands is a good plan; but while it heals quickly all surplus must be rubbed off or it will ruin any fabric with which it comes into contact, and can never be removed in any ordinary way.

Tincture grindelia should never be omitted, as it is a rapid and certain cure for ivy poison, and will alleviate the suffering induced by the bites of chaigers, sand flees and mosquitoes. I consider it the most valuable item in one's ditty box for summer trips.

A three ounce bottle of equal parts linseed oil and lime water is worth its weight in gold for sunburn and for ordinary burns as well. An ounce bottle of chloroform will surely drive chiggers and ticks away. Lacking this, use grain or wood alcohol. Either one must be applied locally, for these pests are not removed by ordinary means.

A tiny tin box of mercurial ointment will prevent rust in firearm barrels in which nitro powders are shot if the barrel is cleaned thoroughly before applying the ointment on a cloth patch.

In places where sand flees and ticks are bad, it will prove the right thing for the occasion, though not pleasant to apply to one's person.

Shellac or spar varnish will keep a cut closed if covered with a bit of muslin. A reserve supply of matches, the heads of which have been dipped in shellac and dried, should be kept handy in a vaseline bottle. These are "good" medicine when everything is wet.

TAKE PLEASURE SADLY.

Some Queer Holiday Customs of Englishmen.

It has been said that Englishmen take their pleasures sadly. There is no doubt that it is true in the case of a man who has a mania for copying epitaphs from tombstones. Every year when the holidays come round he spends them in visiting as many village churchyards as he can crowd into a day's march. He usually leads off, or finishes up, with a day or two in London cemeteries.

There is a man living not many miles from Stoke Newington who suffers with tender feet. He invariably spends his week's holiday sitting in the garden all day with his feet in a foot bath, with a packet of sea salt or a bottle of Sanitas beside him, much to the amusement of the neighbors on either side.

Another man, a Post Office official, being a slave to the clock all the year round, makes it a practice for the first week of his annual leave to stop all the clocks in his house and spend the whole week in bed. He has a supply of newspapers and tobacco brought to him every day. This he declares is the happiest week of the whole year.

Yet another example of eccentricity is that of a lady of independent means, who every summer rents a small cottage for about a month in some secluded country village for the sole purpose of giving her cats a holiday. She generally takes about ten or a dozen away with her in a large crate.

CONTRADICTION.

Ascum—So you think the Bible is contradictory in spots?

Henpeck—Well, yes, I do.

Ascum—Where, for instance?

Henpeck—Well, I can't reconcile the statement that Solomon was the wisest man and that he had so man wives.

After acquiring a business of your own learn to attend to it.

Cripples have running expenses the same as other people.

It's the unexpected that happens when a man makes a fool of himself.

HEALTH

CAR SICKNESS.

Car sickness is a very disagreeable affection, something akin to seasickness and yet differing from it in several particulars.

In seasickness it is rare to find the very old or the very young affected. If children are seasick they are very quickly over it, and running about at play as usual, but a baby will sometimes suffer from car sickness in its baby carriage, and the very old are not immune.

The symptoms of the two disorders are very much alike. They consist of pallor, quick pulse, clammy skin, giddiness, nausea and vomiting. Women are more subject to car sickness than men, and this is equally true of seasickness, and one strange feature of car sickness that has been noted by physicians is that it is frequently handed down through the women of a family from generation to generation.

If an individual is immune all through childhood and early life, and develops car sickness as an adult, the fault will probably be found to rest with the eyes and the way to avoid it is to travel with the eyes closed, or, better still, to start with properly fitted glasses. It is easy to understand why this should be so. When the eyes need glasses the whole nervous equilibrium of the body suffers, even under the best conditions, and when to this struggle is added the vibration of the cars and the temptation to watch passing scenery through the windows the struggle turns into active revolt of the whole system against imposition.

The proof that car sickness and seasickness are not quite the same thing is found in the fact that a person may be a good sailor and yet suffer dreadfully with car sickness, and vice versa, while its occurrence in babies would go to show that the sense impressions, that is to say, the impressions gained by the ear, the eye or the nose, are not at the root of this disorder, because in very tiny babies the sense impressions are undeveloped or at the best very feebly developed.

As a further proof of this car sickness often comes on during sleep and when this occurs the eyes of course are not the cause in that particular case.

The symptoms of car sickness may be of a mose appalling violence, the state of collapse being so extreme that death is often feared. It is comforting to know that this fear is unfounded and that although people may be dreadfully ill they rarely, if ever, succumb.—Youth's Companion.

HEALTH HINTS.

Warm salt water held in the mouth will sometimes banish toothache, and at least make the affliction lighter, while it is both safe and easy to try.

Nothing strengthens the feet more than salt. The right proportion is one heaped tablespoonful of salt to half a gallon of water. Bathe the feet in this once a week.

To ventilate your rooms, open the windows both at top and bottom; the fresh air rushes in one way, while the foul air makes its exit the other. This is letting in your friend and getting rid of your enemy.

It is always a mistake to tell a child that a medicine is nice unless it is strictly true. This is a common error among mothers, but nurses ought to be above adopting a course that in the end will surely lead the child to distrust their word. If a dose is very disagreeable, the nauseous taste may to a certain extent be overcome by letting a small peppermint drop dissolve in his mouth just before giving the medicine, or sucking an orange before and after swallowing will often tide over the difficulty.

To Court-Plaster a Bad Cut. — Fold a piece of court-plaster lengthwise directly through the middle. The plaster should be larger than the wound. Now slash the plaster at even intervals nearly to the edge. Straighten the court-plaster out flat, and cut the slashed pieces at opposite ends. The straight edges should be stuck to the flesh on either side of the wound; this will bring the narrow strips across the cut. Take a strip from each side, and, having moistened them, draw them together gently, closing the cut, and stick the plaster in place. Do the same with all the strips, and the cut will be dressed in a manner to ensure as perfect healing as is possible.

PHYSICIANS IN FRANCE.

The number of physicians in France has nearly doubled in 10 years. There are now 20,000, and nearly 2,000 are turned out every year by the medical schools. Fees have decreased alarmingly because of this competition, and because of the diminution of disease due to hygienic precautions. In some districts in Paris a franc is all that is charged for a doctor's call.

It's easy to talk philosophically if the other fellow is paying the freight.