YOUR CREED AND RELIGION

Church Service or Prayer Meeting May be the Opposite of a Holy Place.

The path of the just is as a shining light shining more and more with the perfect day.—Prov. iv. 18.

"Either religion is everything to one or it is nothing," so a good many say, but the saying means more than they mean. It would be a pity if the religion of forms or of narrowing philosophy became the whole of a man's world. It would be a fine thing if the high motives of religion permeated all things in all our worlds.

We have become so accustomed to calling certain things and acts sacred while others we call secular, to drawing clean lines of separation between religion and life that it is exceedingly difficult for any of us to constantly make all life mean religion and to make religion mean the whole of life.

Here are our creeds and our churches, with their customs and activities; these, we say, are religion. Here are our homes and our occupations; they make life. Thus do we separate the essentially inseparable and confound the tools and products of things with the things themselves.

The churches are the agencies of religion, the communal expressions of the spiritual life of peoples; the creeds are their attempts to state their understanding of religious experience and to formulate theories of the mysteries of

THE HIGHER LIFE.

Church and creed are but tools and expressions of religion; they neither constitute it nor do they make it.

Religion is not a department or section of the life. It is a motive and method of living. It is our life in the consciousness of its highest values. You can be just as truly religious in making money as in saying a mass; you can be just as truly pious in making a pudding as in going to a prayer meeting.

It often happens that one's piety is better expressed in daily commonplace living and duties than in special ecclesiastical exercises. A church service or a prayer meeting may be the opposite of a holy place, while some home, where a mother is too absorbed in the care of the children to think of church, may glow with a divine glory.

Either God is everywhere or there is no God anywhere for us; either our religion operates through, molds, and determines every act and all of life or is an empty, formal, and useless burden to us. The religion you can confine to a corner of your life finds its grave there.

You may measure any faith and you may test your own by its power to vitalize all your life, to permeate and direct every motive, to make itself felt as the constant determinative force of your life. Whatever does this for you, that is your creed and your religion.

No matter what dreams of living bliss, what mystic pleasures or exaltation may become yours through your religious devotion, it is all

A MOCKERY AND DELUSION

unless its power is such that it goes with you on the street, guides your actions and your bearing toward your fellows, and translates its dreams into deeds.

When the religion, or creed, or organization, sect, or opinion fills all a man's mental horizon his heart is chilled, an eclipse of the soul takes place. But the religion that is like a well of water within refreshes and cheers him continually.

He only is religious who is always religious, always facing toward things true, seeking the higher and full life for himself and for all, making all his life tell for the best in all life, and somehow with his wholesome cheer and high faith and idealism, making us believe in goodness, and truth, and love after all.

HENRY F. COPE.

THE S. S. LESSON

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, APRIL 4.

Lesson I. Peter and Cornelius. Acts 10: 1-48. Golden Text, Acts 10: 35.

Introduction. — What indicates that Luke thought the story of Peter and the centurion a very important one? The fulness of detail with which it is given. And what was its importance? It was one of the chief steps in the transition of Christianity from a Jewish sect to a world-religion. The narrow exclusiveness of the Jews, which had fortunately kept their religion pure for so many centuries, was a formidable barrier to this extension. Christ himself had preached only to Jews. That was necessary, for the time of his ministry was too brief for a larger field, and the Jews at first would not have listened to a broader gospel. But Christ bade his disciples go into all the world, and preach the good news to all mankind. The time had come to break down the barrier of Jewish exclusiveness and carry out Christ's larger thought.

I. The Vision of Cornelius the Gentile.—Verses 1-8. Who was the Gentile who was to show Peter that a man who was not a Jew or a Jewish proselyte was fit to become a Christian? He was a centurion, corresponding to our captain, the head of a company of soldiers numbering one hundred when full. This company was part of the cohort called the Italian band, because made up of Romans born in Italy.

Where was the cohort stationed? At Caesarea, on the Samarian coast, about thirty-three miles north of Joppa, where Peter was. Caesarea was a wealthy and important city, built by Herod the Great, and named after Caesar Augustus.

What was the name of this centurion? Cornelius, indicating perhaps that he belonged to the famous Cornelian family (gens or clan), which counted the Scipios and Sulla among its members.

II. The Vision of Peter the Jew—Verses 9-16. As the centurion's messengers, having spent a night on the way, were approaching Joppa about noon the next day, Peter in his turn was supernaturally prepared for the coming event. What was this preparation? It was a vision, received upon the housetop. The sixth hour (noon) was "a set time of devotion with pious Jews." He was very hungry, for he "probably had not yet broken his fast."

III. How the Visions Brought Them Together.—Verses 17-20, and [illegible] had been hap- [illegible] ion came to [illegible] rs from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house (the Grek word implies a careful search through the streets), and while Peter was meditating on his vision, they were even at the gate, and calling for him. Before word of his visitors could reach him, the Holy Spirit in some way made Peter conscious of their coming, and bade him go with them.

EGGS OF STEEL.

Deadly Weapons Carried by Servian Soldiers.

Though Servia has told the powers in a series of notes that she does not want war, she is still very active in getting her army into fighting trim. Her soldiers are to be armed with bombs, of which five classes are being made — the infantry bomb, the artillery bomb, the cavalry bomb, the large bomb, and the "egg-shaped" bomb.

Every second infantryman carries five bombs of the first type, which explode by fuse and percussion, and have an effective range of sixty yards. The average weight of each missile is about 2½ pounds.

The details of the training of the bomb-throwers are extremely interesting. In the first place, men are supplied with stones of suitable weight, and spend a considerable time practising with these. Then they are given dummy bombs, with which they go through another severe course of practise.

Finally the real article is entrusted to them, and they are directed to hurl them at specially prepared plank targets, the result of each throw being carefully noted. The targets stand as high as a man, and the effect of a single well-judged shot must be seen to be believed.

The second type has been served out to the artillery, and is a purely percussion bomb. There is a parachute attachment which ensures the vertical descent of the missile. The range is about fifty yards.

The third type is supplied to the cavalry, and is so devised that it may be fired from a carbine. With this bomb very deadly results have been obtained at a distance of 300 yards and over.

The fourth type is larger than the others, and is intended for use in storming entrenchments. Judging by the feel of it, it must weigh something more than four pounds. The different bombs described are being steadily manufactured at half a dozen places in Servia, and a very large number must be already available.

Finally there is the fifth type—the egg-shaped bomb. Dynamite in one form or another is known to be the charge in the four regular types, but the composition of the explosive in the last-mentioned is kept a profound secret. The effect produced by the explosion of one of these steel eggs is nothing less than devastating.

FRANCE VERSUS GERMANY

IN CASE OF WAR WICH COUNTRY WOULD WIN?

A Military Expert Gives His Opinion of the Position of the Two Powers.

Things are very different now from what they were in 1870. Then the French Government was inept and corrupt. "The army," the Emperor was assured, "is ready down to the last button on the last gaiter."

As a matter of fact, it was quite unready. And when it did take the field the French War Office was able to mobilize at the beginning only about 300,000 men, against Germany's 640,000.

True, in four weeks' time this first instalment of 300,000 was more than doubled, but the same relative disproportion held good, for Germany had by then 1,124,000 men under arms.

The result was seen in such overwhelming disasters as that at Sedan, when on September 1st, less than six weeks after the declaration of war, MacMahon's army of 150,000 men was annihilated and the Emperor taken prisoner; and that at Metz, a few weeks later, when three marshals of France, sixty-six generals, 6,000 officers, and 173,000 men, with 500 pieces of artillery, were made prisoners of war.

That was Germany's triumph and France's humiliation; but it was also France's lesson. She learned it thoroughly. She will never be caught napping again.

To-day she can put 3,500,000 men into the field. It is true that against these Germany claims to be able to pit 4,330,000.

This, however, is largely a paper estimate, and an exaggerated one. In effect, unless all the experts are deceived, the available armed forces of the two nations are numerically about equal.

WAITING FOR REVENGE.

But only numerically. There is no comparison between the two if efficiency is to be taken into account. The German soldier to-day is not the man he was forty years ago. Then he was a patriot, aflame with the zeal that is born of patriotism. There is little of that left in him now. The brutality of his superiors, continued through a long course of years, has driven all that sort of thing out of him. There will be plenty of German officers and non-commissioned officers shot in the back by their own men if war comes.

The army, too, is known to be deeply infected with the virus of Socialism. And Socialism in Germany is a very powerful force indeed, and violently revolutionary.

Last year 3,260,000 Socialist voters went to the polls, nearly 25 per cent. of the total inumber of the electors who voted. In other words, one voter in every four is a Socialist. We may assume that the same ratio holds good in the army—amongst the rank and file, that is to say. Well, that makes 1,000,000 Socialists in arms. Will they fight, or will they not, remains to be seen. They themselves are never tired of declaring that they will not.

The French army, on the other hand, is intensely patriotic. Its members are burning to avenge the disasters of Metz and Sedan, to wipe out the terrible humiliation inflicted upon their country on that black day in January, 1871, when the first German Emperor was crowned in the Palace of Versailles, and his troops paraded in pomp in their hundreds of thousands through the principal streets of Paris. Above all, too, it is anxious to recover Alsace and Lorraine.

GERMANY'S ARMY IS RUSTY.

It is for things such as these that men fight, and to the death. It was of Majuba we in England were thinking when we went to war with Kruger in 1899. But Majuba was a pinprick compared to what France suffered at the hands of Germany in 1870-71.

Imagine King Edward a prisoner of war, our armies destroyed or captured, our country overrun and dismembered, and the Kaiser crowned in Westminstar Abbey, while his legions march in triumph through London after it has suffered bombardment by his artillery. If this happened to us, would we not fight like demons to get "a bit of our own back" if ever we got the chance?

Of course we would. And so will France. She has ben preparing for it for thirty-seven years. Nursing her wrath. Brooding over her revenge. Perfecting her arrangements. Waiting. Watching. Drilling.

Germany, on the other hand, has allowed herself to become more or less rusty; while, of late years at all events, money that should have been spent upon a very necessary army has been diverted to building up an altogether unnecessary navy. This, of course, is the Kaiser's doing. A strong fleet is his pet hobby.

The result has been to estrange from him large masses of his subjects. The inhabitants of the South German inland states—Saxony, Bavaria, Baden, Wurtemburg—are quite willing to submit to be heavily taxed for the upkeep of the army. But they are not at all willing to pay for a navy into the bargain, and have said so at the polls.

For this reason it is by no means certain that South Germany would not rather be a source of weakness to North Germany if war came, instead of a tower of strength, as in 1870.—Pearson's Weekly.

SENTENCE SERMONS.

Self-esteem does not develop self-reliance.

A soft answer never has a sting in it.

Professional spectators get least fun out of life.

Courage is simply the conquest of our fears.

Self-depreciation soon ceases if it be not contradicted.

Knokledge is power only so far as it is practised.

No man bears his burden better by adding your blame to it.

You can complete a good work, but you can never end it.

Life is pretty sure to be tragedy to those who take it only as a play.

New thought is like new coin, the brass seems as good as the gold.

The greatest wonder in the character of the angels is that they endure all the saints.

The proof of an education lies in a mind so tilled that prejudices gain no root.

Conscience is simply our sense of moral social responsibility.

All men would try to be meek if they were dead sure of the promise to the meek.

The man who thinks he is generous to a fault is often generous only to his own.

It's often our failings that hold our friends, but we do not need to multiply such anchors.

The far off vision comes half way to those who follow it faithfully.

Some folks always sing, "O to be nothing" before they sing, "Here, Lord, I give myself away."

WANT OCEAN SANATORIUM.

Proposal to Fit Up Sailing Ship for Consumptives.

Some particulars are given in the British Journal of a proposal to provide an ocean sanatorium for tuberculosis. The suggestion is to fit up a sailing ship of about 2000 tons, for not more than 50 patients, each to be provided with a separate large and well-ventilated cabin. The deck would be used for what is commonly called the verandah treatment. The intention of the promoters is that the ship should cruise in the neighborhood of the Canaries, where it would have the advantage of the trade winds, and of a very equable climate, while a port would not be far distant in case of the onset of bad weather. It is intended that the ship shall carry an adequate medical staff. Our contemporary says that the working of a scheme of this kind would be watched with sympathetic interest by the medical profession, and that there would be no lack of patients if the terms are not prohibitive.

WHAT A WIFE NEEDS.

Good Temper and Cheerful Disposition Among the Essentials.

She needs a good temper, a cheerful disposition, and a knowledge of how her husband should be treated. She needs a capability of looking on the bright side of life and refusing to be worried by small things. She needs a secure grasp of such subjects as are of interest to men, and should not be above studying even politics in order to understand should her husband speak of them. She needs a sympathetic nature in order that, should sorrow fall upon them, she may be able to give comfort to her husband. She needs to understand something of sick nursing. A wife with no notion of what to do in case of illness is but a useless thing. She needs considerable tact and patience—the one to enable her to know when to remain silent and vice versa, and the other to put up with him when his temper is ruffled.

ALMOST TOO KIND.

A traveller, recently returned from India, was giving his impressions.

"What a country it is!" he exclaimed. "There everybody keeps dozens of servants. I had four whose whole business was to look after my pipe. One brought it to me, another filled it, a third lighted it for me——"

"And the fourth?"

"The fourth smoked it for me. Tobacco never agreed with me!"

ALL FOR HIM.

Hubby—"Yes, dear, you look nice in that dress; but it cost me a heap of money."

Wife—"Freddie, dear, what do I care for money, when it is a question of pleasing you?"

Hub—"But if you like the young fellow, Kate, why do you object to our daughter marrying him?" Wife—"Oh, she'll marry him for all that; but I want to give her a chance to say, when they quarrel, that 'Mother didn't want me to marry you, anyway."

FINANCIERS OF JAPAN

MITSUI FAMILY ARE KINGS OF COMMERCE.

They are Factors in Manufacturing, Exporting, Mining, Banking, Etc.

Have you heard of the Mitsui family?

It is the richest of all Japan, and one of the richest of the world. What the Rothschilds are to Europe and Rockefeller is to the United States the Mitsuis are to Japan. They may also be compared with the Astors and the Vanderbilts, and their undertakings include such as have made the fortunes of Krupp, Marshall Field, Stephen Girard, and John Wanamaker.

They are famous as merchants, miners, manufacturers, exporters, bankers, and financiers. They have a capital running high into the tens of millions of dollars, and they do a business of hundreds of millions a year. In some years the foreign trade of this family is equal to one-seventh of the whole foreign trade of Japan. Its coal mines produce about one-third of all the coal mined in the Empire, and they supply a great part of that used in the ports of East Asia.

The Mitsuis own great cotton mills and furnish about one-third of the Japanese exports of cotton yarn. They have other factories and foundries throughout the Empire, and their trading and banking institutions are in

ALL THE BIG CITIES.

This family has also its branch establishments in the leading seaports of China, and in Hongkong, Manila, Singapore, and Bombay. It has branches in Australia and Java, and also in San Francisco, New York and London.

In some years it ships as much as 5,000 bales of raw silk to the United States, and it has a fleet of good-sized steamers, which carry its merchandise to and from Shanghai, Hongkong, the Philippines, the Straits Settlements, Burmah and India. There is no more thriving corporation in the world to-day, and just at this time, when we are talking of the Japanese as being on the edge of bankruptcy, it is surprising to come into contact with an institution like this.

The Mitsui house is a joint association, consisting of eleven families or partners, who have pooled their capital in their joint name under the system of unlimited liability. The bank, for instance, which has a capital of 5,000,000 yen and a surplus of 11,500,000, inserts a statement in all of its banking advertisements that it is owned by the members of the Mitsui family, and that they as partners assume an unlimited responsibility for all its debts. As a result the people know that all the wealth of the family is back of the bank, and it has the highest credit. Its deposits are now about 70,000,000 yen, or

ALMOST $35,000,000.

The same rule prevails as to all the obligations of the eleven families. The properties are all held in common, although each family may have independent property of its own. In the Mitsui establishments, however, there is no particular property to which anyone can enter his absolute claim. The institutions are managed by the Mitsui family council, according to the rules laid down by one of the heads of the family who lived more than 200 years ago. This making the family, and not the individual, the head of an institution is in accordance with the social organization of Japan. Here the individual is subservient to the family, and the rights and obligations of the family should outweigh those of any of its members.

ARISTOCRATS MAY EMIGRATE

Emperor William of Germany is desirous that impecunious aristocrats who cannot make a living in Germany should emigrate to German South-west Africa, and become useful members of that German colony. He has lent Baron de Schmid $12,500 to enable him to settle in German South-west Africa, and begin life again as a farmer. Baron de Schmid was a land owner in Alsace-Lorraine, whose estate was near that of the Kaiser at Urville, and with whom his Majesty was very friendly. The baron lost his money and was obliged to sell the estate.

There was an old soldier, who said to a friend, "My wife does look after me well. She even takes off my boots for me." "When you come home from the club?" the friend asked. "No—when I want to go there."

The Major (thinking to have some fun out of Pat's ancient and skinny steed)—"Good morning, Pat!" "Good morning, yer honor!" "That's a fine horse you're driving." "It is, yer honor." "Draws well, doesn't it?" "It does, yer honor. It draws the attention of every idiot that passes!"

FROM BONNIE SCOTLAND

NOTES OF INTEREST FROM HER BANKS AND BRAES.

What is Going on in the Highlands and Lowlands of Auld Scotia.

Roller skating has become fashionable in Dundee.

Montrose lunatic asylum at Sunnyside is to be extended.

Niddrie school, Edinburgh, is to be enlarged at a cost of £850.

Francis Cullen, draper, Canongate, Edinburgh, got three years for setting his shop on fire.

Bonnington church, which is situated at Bonnington Brae, was practically destroyed by fire recently.

On the 30th ult. Agnes Robertson (31) got an arm torn off by the machinery in Camperdown jute works, Lochee.

In Dundee last year the fire brigrade was called out 180 times. The loss within the city boundaries by fire was $145,230.

Mr. John Torrance, grain merchant, Hamilton, died recently. He had been in business in Hamilton for nearly half a century.

St. Leonard's paper mills, Lasswade, Midlothian, were destroyed by fire, the damage being estimated at from $75,000 to $100,000.

Some sensation was caused within Calder Ironworks by a workman finding a canister of explosives on a limestone heap within the works.

Greenock Infirmary report says that last year 909 were received in the medical and surgical departments, and that 1,147 accidents were treated.

In 1889 the late Mr. Alex Tweedie, Glenisla, lost a pair of field glasses while deer stalking on the Grampians. They have just been found, and practically uninjured.

coming wedding of Miss Maud Coats to the Marquis Douro, eldest son of the Duke of Wellington, and great grandson of "The Iron Duke."

Paisley Town Council passed a resolution calling upon Councillor Brown to resign, in view of his recent conviction at Ayr for defrauding the Glasgow and Southwestern Railway.

At Linwood, near Paisley, a blackbird, which is the possessor of two formed heads, has been seen. It has two bills, and can pick and make use of both, but whether it can pass food through both cannot

Paisley is much interested in the yet be stated.

FOUR FISH IN ONE CAST.

Two Perch and Two Trout, According to This Angler's Story.

It is something after all to be the hero of a record, even if it does not mean much, and perhaps the successful landing of four fish on one cast is not unworthy of being rescued from oblivion, says a writer in the Field.

It happened with me here on the Shannon some few years ago in the last or very nearly the last of my seasons with the wet fly, and is the more remarkable as I have not fished with four flies on my cast half a dozen times in my life. I was fishing from a boat anchored at the tail of the strong broken water of the weir, and rose and hooked what I saw was a trout of about half a pound.

Presently as I was playing him his motions seemed to become most erratic; he would pull heavily down and then instantly there would be slack, or a movement down stream would become a movement up with a suddenness quite bewildering, and for a few minutes I could make neither head nor tail of the action that was going on below. At last on the line coming closer I saw there was a good sized perch on the highest dropper, and presently I saw a second perch on the lower, while a moment later I was astonished to see that my trout was also still on the point with a smaller trout on the dropper next him.

None of the fish was large, of course, though the perch next me was quite a pound; but I saw there was scarcely a possible chance to get all four into the boat safely, so hauling up the stone and rope which held me, I quietly started paddling for the shore a hundred yards off with alternate strokes of the oars. Strange to say, I reached the low shelving shore without a single fish escaping and slipping out of the boat drew the whole string ashore in triumph.

The four fish were about two pounds in weight, and I had an applauding gallery of several young fellows on the bank whom it took me all my time to restrain from rushing into the shallow water to scoop out the struggling fish when they saw the extraordinary catch I was trying to drag ashore.

HIS CATCH.

Irate Squire—"Hi! you, sir! You're fishing in my waters. I demand what you've caught."

Angler—"All right, guv'nor. I've caught a cold and I'm catching the rheumatics, and you're welcome to both of 'em."