

Christianity in Ceylon

Ecclesiastical returns for the past year in the Island of Ceylon will necessarily direct the attention of Catholics to the flourishing condition of the Church in that portion of the far East. There, side by side, are working 133 European secular priests, 43 native priests, 300 religious, Oblates, Benedictines, and Jesuits, and 450 Sisters in various educational and charitable institutions.

The Island of Ceylon, 266 miles long and 140 miles broad, lies to the south east of India, separated from it only by a chain of reefs. Before the Christian era it became a stronghold of Buddhism, and it was there that the Buddhist Scriptures were first reduced to writing in the year 88 B.C. After the advent of Europeans to Ceylon in the sixteenth century and the consequent introduction of Christianity, Buddhism lost much of its prestige, just as it had previously lost much of its purity and activity. The credit of introducing Christianity among the Cinghalese belongs to the Franciscans, who arrived in Ceylon in 1518, and under the protection of the Portuguese government preached the Faith, and converted many thousands.

About the middle of the same century the island was visited by St. Francis Xavier, who converted large numbers to the Faith, especially among the Tamils of the north. Catholicism prospered until it encountered the opposition of the Dutch, by whom the Catholic Faith was proscribed, penal laws enacted against Catholics and the Dutch Reformed religion set up as the religion of the State. Catholicity would have been extinguished were it not for the efforts of missionaries from Goa, who kept the spark of faith alive and even converted many heathens. A new era dawned with the conquest of the island by Great Britain, for although the Church of England became in turn the established form of Christianity, religious liberty was granted to all. In our day Dutch Presbyterianism is represented by a few hundred Dutch descendants, who are ministered to by Presbyterian ministers from Scotland. Anglican disestablishment came about in 1881.

To-day the Catholic Church is the largest Christian body in the island, numbering fully 300,000—the Anglicans coming next with about 35,000, and the Presbyterians with 4000. At the date of the British occupation in 1796, the Catholic population was only 50,000. However, there are still on the island 2,150,000 Buddhists, 830,000 Hindus, and 250,000 Mohammedans, showing that notwithstanding the good work accomplished the missionary field remains a large one. There are now five dioceses in Ceylon, the Metropolitan See of Colombo, and four Suffragan Sees in Jaffna, Kandy, Galle, and Trincomalee. The hierarchy is composed of two Oblates, two Jesuits, and one Benedictine. These five bishops have, besides the priests, European and native, assisting them, communities of Sisters of the Good Shepherd, the Sisters of the Holy Family, the Franciscan Nuns, the Missionaries of Mary, the Little Sisters of the Poor, and the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary, in charge of various schools and institutions. One institution worthy of special mention is the General Seminary, established by Leo XIII. at Kandy, for the education of a native clergy, and placed by him under the direction of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. To-day there are nearly one hundred students in this Seminary, who are recruited from all parts of the east.

Wanganui

(From our own correspondent.)

The parishioners of Wanganui are looking forward to the advent of the newly-appointed parish priest, Rev. Father Holley, which takes place on the same date as that of the Archbishop's visit.

The *Tablet* traveller (Mr. Moriarty) informs me that he has met with a good reception from the Catholics of Wanganui, the clergy having spoken of the *Tablet* from the pulpit, with the result that the Wanganui circulation of the paper will be about doubled.

The ceremonies of Holy Week were carried out in their entirety in St. Mary's Church this year, and large congregations were the rule. Solemn High Mass was celebrated on Holy Thursday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Day, while on Easter Sunday night Rev. Father Gilbert, of St. Patrick's College, preached the 'Resurrection'. His Grace the Archbishop is expected to be in Wanganui on May 7, when he will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation after the last Mass, and will lay the foundation stone of the new Convent of St. Joseph, on St. John's Hill, in the afternoon.

No blister will form if white of egg and olive oil are mixed quickly in equal portions and applied to a burn. The place should be covered with a piece of soft linen. Bicarbonate of soda is more quickly obtained and is quite as good. It should be used dry, covered with a cloth, and kept wet with cold water. A bad blister was covered with a piece of linen wet in 1 per cent. solution of carbonic acid, kept wet for a day or two, and no scar resulted and there was little pain.

Domestic

By MAUREEN

Venetian Blinds.

To make Venetian blinds like new, first take them in pieces, wash them well, and dry thoroughly. Then rub well with a cloth dipped in linseed oil, and polish. They will look as fresh as when new.

The Yolk of an Egg.

When the white and not the yolk of an egg is required for use, make a small hole in the shell and let the white run out, and stand the egg in an egg-cup, which should be set in a cool place. The yolk will keep its color and freshness for some days.

To Soften Paint Brushes.

Very often when paint brushes have been laid aside for some time they become very hard and dry. To remedy this, heat some vinegar to boiling point, immerse the brushes, and allow them to simmer about fifteen minutes. Then wash them in strong soapsuds, and they will be as good as new again.

To Clean Tea Trays.

Boiling water should never be poured over tea trays, japanised goods, etc., as it will make the varnish crack and peel off. Get a sponge wet with water and a little soap, and if the tray is very dirty, rub it with a cloth. If the tray looks very smeary, dust on a little flour and rub it. If the tray is marked, take a piece of woollen cloth, dip it in sweet oil, and rub out the marks.

Cleaning Mirrors.

Take a soft sponge, wash it well in clean water, and squeeze it as dry as possible; dip it into some spirits of wine, and rub over the glass; then have some powdered blue tied up in a rag, dust it over your glass, and rub it lightly and quickly with a soft cloth; afterwards finish with a silk handkerchief. Mirrors may also be effectually cleaned by rubbing them over with old newspapers crumpled up into balls.

How to Wash Windows Properly.

Strange as it may seem, there is a right and wrong way to wash windows, and as this operation is usually dreaded, the following method will doubtless be appreciated, as it saves both time and labor: Choose a dull day, or at least a time when the sun is not shining on the windows, for when the sun shines on the windows it causes it to dry streaked, no matter how much it is rubbed. Take a painter's brush and dust them inside and out, washing all the woodwork inside before touching the glass. The latter must be washed slowly in warm water diluted with ammonia—do not use soap. Use a small cloth with a pointed stick to get the dust out of the corners; wipe dry with a soft piece of cotton cloth—do not use linen, as it makes the glass linty when dry. Polish with tissue paper or old newspaper. You will find that this can be done in half the time taken where soap is used, and the result will be brighter windows.

Use and Abuse of Tea.

An English physician writing on the use and abuse of tea says:—Wholesome tea should be freshly made with water just brought to the boil (a different liquid from boiled water), and allowed to infuse for two or three minutes. This, and this alone, provides the cup that cheers and not inebriates. How often may one take tea in the day without injury to health? Most persons can take tea twice a day, and feel the better for it. Curiously enough, it has been ascertained by experiment that the foods which digest most readily in the presence of tea are the usual breakfast foods, to wit: eggs, bacon, and fish. Tea does not appreciably retard the digestion of these; hence it may be taken with perfect physiological safety at breakfast, when it is peculiarly grateful after the long night's sleep, and is undoubtedly beneficial to the system in virtue of the comparatively large quantity of hot water which is introduced into the tissues along with the *theine* proper. When tea has been taken in the morning it should not be again taken until well on in the afternoon, when a cup or two will be found to be very welcome, expediting, as it so often does, the final stages of digestion of the midday meal, and reviving in an entirely wholesome way the vital energy which tends to flag toward five o'clock. Over-indulgence in tea, like over-indulgence in everything else that is good, will, of course, produce an abnormal condition of the system. It will cause digestive troubles; these must lead to perversion of nutrition, and this, in its turn, to a general disorganisation of the system as a whole.

Maureen

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