







THE Jaffna Catholic Guardian

APRIL 25TH

“WHAT IS SPIRIT.”

The above is the heading of an article that appeared in the last number of the "Morning Star." We naturally expected to find at the beginning of the article a new, clear and precise definition of the nature of a spirit. But our contemporary completely disappointed us. After having hinted that he was going to tell his readers the true nature of a spirit, he was satisfied with merely stating that God and the Angels are spirits and that men are also in part spirits, "because they are spirit, so I and body"—that all the spirits are alike, that there is no essential difference between the Divine and the Human Spirit except that the one is absolute and the other finite. The readers of the "Morning Star" would have more easily understood that God, the Angels and the Human souls are spirits if they had been told that a spirit is a simple immaterial spiritual and intellectual substance; with the help of a good definition they would have at once perceived that all the spirits are alike, because they are all immaterial, spiritual and intellectual substances. Our contemporary should have also shown plainly how God differs from the other spirits. Of course he hinted at the difference there is between the divine and human spirit when he asserted that the former is absolute and the latter finite—viz. that God is the spirit par excellence, infinite, immutable, self existing, uncreated and that all the other spirits are finite, limited and created. But he gainsaid that the human spirit is finite in the following sentence which runs thus: the human spirit comes from God for each new being by some process which is not creation and yet not emanation, but which gives the relation of sonship. We admit that the human spirit viz. the human soul cannot be an emanation from the substance of God which is immutable, viz. from which nothing can be taken and to which nothing can be added. But if it is not created by God how does it come into being? For a finite being is not self-created. How can we understand that a relation of sonship is formed between God and the human spirit when our contemporary points out no relation of fatherhood on the part of God. Our friend belongs no doubt to the school of those who teach that there is only one spirit and that all the human spirits are but manifestations of this one spirit. In the article under review, our contemporary again says that man is composed of a spirit: an animal soul and an immaterial body. Instead of showing how these three components form only one being he simply asserts that they are closely united. He does not explain how the spirit comes to know the sensitive operations, how it can be affected by the senses etc. He brings in again the authority of the Holy Scripture to prove that his absurd theory is grounded on the Revealed Word of God. "That spirit is different from soul, he says, is indicated by Scripture everywhere ascribing souls to animals, and not to angels. The Holy Writ often speaks of the principle of life in animals and calls it soul. The Greek Philosophers, Plato, Aristotle etc. have called it so. The Holy Scripture never ascribes souls to angels, and never calls angels souls, because angels are not like human souls, destined to inform a body or to impart life to it. Angels have not a human form; they are pure spirits. We read in many passages of the Holy Writ that when they appeared to men they assumed a human form or appearance. A little further our friend describes the operation of the human spirit in the following manner. These forms of activity are found in every spirit and are usually called the conscience, the mind, word and spirit, or the knowledge, impulse and feeling. These three activities are the legislative, judicial and executive described by the three Latin words, Index, Judoex, and Vindex. They

have for their object the good, the beautiful and the true.

We hope that our readers will be sharp enough to understand the above description of their mental faculties. As for ourselves we confess that it is above our comprehension.

XXXIII ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE PROTESTANT RULE OF FAITH.

(Continued)

VI.

We read that Jesus Christ has left in the Church a perpetual succession of orthodox pastors and teachers. St. Paul says: "And He gave some (to be) Apostles, and some prophets, and other some Evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ... that henceforth we be no more children carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive. (Eph. iv. 11-13) Here it is plainly taught that in the Church there is always a succession of orthodox pastors and teachers, to preserve the faithful in unity and truth. The same doctrine is taught by the Apostles in another place. "And God indeed, hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors, after that miracles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues, interpretation of speeches. (I Cor. xii. 28). And then he asks: "Are all Apostles? Are all prophets? Are all doctors? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the grace of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? (I Cor. xii. 29-30). Now these texts are quite inconsistent with the Protestant principle that one man is as good an expounder or teacher of God's truths as another, or that the written word of God interpreted according to every man's private judgment is the rule of faith given by Jesus Christ or that we should not allow any authority whatever to interfere between us and the Holy Ghost, in our understanding of heavenly truths.

VII.

The History of the Church shows that care was taken to perpetuate the existence of successors to the Apostles in a divinely ordained manner. Even before the day of Pentecost St. Peter called upon the brethren to fill up the place left in the Apostolic College by the Apostasy of Judas, and St. Matthias was chosen and "he was numbered with the eleven Apostles." (Acts. 26.)

Shortly after, the seven deacons were chosen as a commencement of a hierarchy of different ranks and duties. These they set before the Apostles and they praying imposed hands upon them." (Acts vi 6.)

As the Church increased, we see that care was taken to preserve the succession. And when they (St. Paul and St. Barnabas) had ordained to them priests in every city, and had prayed with fasting they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed. (Acts. xiv. 22)

St. Paul twice reminds St. Timothy of the grace he had received on his ordination by the imposition of his hands (I Tim. iv. 14; II. Tim. I. 6); and enjoins Titus to ordain priests in every city as he had ordained him. (Tit. I. 5)

The clergy therefore were to receive their character by the performance of a Sacred rite designated in the New Testament "the imposition of the hands" of the Apostles and their legitimate successors, and by it the grace of God was imparted to them, and they were admitted to the same spiritual powers as the Apostles themselves.

DUTIES OF CATHOLICS TO THE CATHOLIC PRESS.

The Editor, "Ceylon Catholic Messenger," Borella April 11th 1891.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,

I beg you will publish in a prominent place of your next issue, the following extract from the Holy Father's letter to the Austrian Hierarchy as bearing on a subject of deep interest to the Catholics of Ceylon.

After exhorting the Bishops of Austria to see that Catholic writings are encouraged and developed, His Holiness says:

"It is most necessary in all countries to acknowledge in these excellent writings, whether they are daily or periodic, their great benefit to religious and civil interests, whether they directly uphold them and advance their prosperity, or whether they repulse the attacks of enemies seeking to do them hurt and scatter foul pestilence. This is why, it would be beneficial and salutary that each country should possess its particular journals as champions of altar and hearth so directed as never to deflect from the judgment of the Bishop, in whose conjunction they should walk wisely and in peace; the clergy ought also to support such journals with their wood-will, and aid them with their teaching, while all true Catholics should hold them in high esteem, and aid them as far as their strength may permit."

The point laid stress upon by His Holiness and which I wish to impress deeply on our Catholics here, is the duty incumbent on all of them, lay as well as clerical, to give their unstinted support to those papers, which, under the guidance of the Bishops and in full adherence to their views, hold up here the standard of Catholic Truth, and vindicate the rights and interests of the Catholic Church.

The atmosphere we breathe here is one tainted with all sorts of poisonous, and deleterious elements. Infidelity in all its stages, heresy in all its multitudinous forms, are diffused far and wide and forced down the throats of the uninformed and unwary, through many periodical sheets to which their commercial or political importance secures a large circle of readers.

Often at loggerheads between themselves on very material points, those so-called organs of public opinion are all at one in their hatred of the One, Holy, Catholic Roman Church; and, whenever any occasion offers of slandering her, of misrepresenting her teaching, or of holding up her ministers or members to obloquy, \* all their hands, as though moved by an irresistible instinct, are instantly raised against us.

In that every day struggle against all the forms of irreligiosity and impiety, our little Catholic papers, the CEYLON CATHOLIC MESSENGER and NANARTHA PRADIPAYA in Colombo, and the CATHOLIC GUARDIAN in Jaffna, have, for long years past, rendered signal service. Small and unpretentious as they have ever been, they have in innumerable instances, David like, laid prostrate on the neck of the giant Goliath of the Protestant, Buddhist and infidel Press. Genuine Catholic Truth was always triumphantly advocated by them, and the interest and rights of the Catholic Boy were successfully vindicated in more instances than I could here reckon, thereby acquiring a claim to the lasting gratitude of all the Catholics in Ceylon.

Opinion now-a-days rules the world. Unfortunately, it is oftener than not shaped and guided by mere ignorance, prejudice and hatred. What would now be the state of our Catholic Community here, if by the side of the soul-destroying poison administered to them in such profusion, they had not found an antidote in the sound teaching of our little Catholic Press? if no ray of pure light had been allowed to pierce through the thick clouds of darkness that had gathered round them?

All honour then, and all gratitude to these brave champions of Catholic Truth in Ceylon!

But, it surely needs no great mental effort to understand that the editing of a paper is a work requiring no inconsiderable outlay of money, and that its efficiency and usefulness must ever be commensurate with the amount of support it receives. Its success depends in all cases on a large list, not of mere subscribers, but of paying subscribers.

All well weighed, it is no exaggeration to say that, considering all our present circumstances in Ceylon it is the duty of all Catholics, both clergymen and laymen, each according to his means and capacity, to support our Catholic papers, (1) by subscribing to them, and whenever one cannot afford to subscribe to a copy: by joining with others to make up the small rate of subscription; (2) by contributing to them, whether in the shape of interesting and early news, or by well-thought articles on matters of Catholic interest, subject of course to the control of ecclesiastical authority.

\* I cannot help here calling the Observer to account for its malicious, uncalculated insinuations in one of its latest numbers, that in case of rebellion against British rule, Roman Catholics would have to be closely watched. I tell him—and let him keep it in mind—that among all the natives of Ceylon, the British Government have no more staunch and loyal subjects than the Roman Catholics—which, of course, leaves entire their privilege as British subjects to stand up for their rights on all proper occasions.

I, therefore, resting my recommendation on the earnest words of exhortation of His Holiness the Pope, confidently call on all the Catholics of the Archdiocese to take to heart the matter of this letter, and to exert themselves in right good earnest to increase the circulation of our papers, and thus to render possible the improvements in both which are being had in contemplation.

I remain, Dear Mr. Editor, faithfully yours, CHRISTOPHER O. M. I. Archbishop of Colombo.

COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN CEYLON

Says the "Ceylon Catholic Messenger"— "Public opinion in Ceylon with respect to education is now divided into two different channels, the one of those who claim for our boys the highest classical education, and the other of those who are for something more practical, known as technical education. We have often expressed our opinion on the subject and think that both systems are good in their way, so long as they are not misunderstood nor misapplied. A classical education, including a sound knowledge of Latin and Greek, a study of the best English authors and of the history of the world—not merely English history—and a mastery of logic, is undoubtedly the best method for training a youthful mind and imparting to it a literary and refined taste. It is the kind of education that suits a gentleman and opens the road to the bar, the medical profession, the public offices, and the like. But in Ceylon, to say the plain truth, there are few independent gentlemen. There is properly speaking no aristocracy, and wealthy people are rare. Hence few, if any, seek education for the sake of education. It is a means to an end, and the end is to get a living. Now all cannot be lawyers, doctors, or Government officers. The great bulk of children who attend our colleges leave the school benches so soon as they can muster enough of English to be admitted as clerks on a small salary in some office or another. It is plain that for that class of youngsters—the four fifth of our Ceylon school-boys—a rudimentary knowledge of Latin or Greek and the reading of Milton and Shakespeare are of no avail whatever. But if the industrial side of Colombo is not a bright one, its commercial importance is enormously on the increase, and trade provides very many young men with a livelihood. Clerks are indeed a legion. But really good clerks—we mean those who understand their business—are they so plentiful? We think not, and there is a complaint of the paucity of well-trained accountants. The first effort at technical education should then tend to supply merchants, bankers, planting firms and others with such commercial clerks as are able to write correspondence in English and understand something about book-keeping; and, observe, in our days book-keeping has become a science and is not to be acquired by mere routine. It is upon considerations of this kind that the Brother Director of St. Benedict's has resolved to open a special class for commercial students and thus make a commencement of that technical education of which so much is heard in Ceylon but nothing is seen. The commercial class is now in full working order, with 15 students, whose ages vary from 16 to 18. The programme consists of Book-keeping, Letter writing, Precise-writing, short hand, Physical and Commercial Geography, French, Geometrical and Mechanical Drawing, and Commercial Law. There is no doubt, that a young man who has gone through that course of practical education can well shift for himself and need not be overcome in the struggle for existence. The special class—we are glad to know—is finding much favour with both parents and boys, who have not been long to discover the practical usefulness of the instruction imparted in that class. We sincerely congratulate the able Director on this new experiment and wish him the complete success he so well deserves.

Trichinopoly College: We learn from an Indian contemporary that, in the last Entrance Examination for the Madras Presidency, out of 7,080 candidates, the three first names, at the head of the list in the First Division, were those of three pupils of St. Joseph's College.

Calcutta. The inmates of St. Xavier's College made a narrow escape on Saturday last. During the thunderstorm a corner of the College building was struck by lightning; it tore off a portion of the cornice, ripped up some 10 feet of the brickwork of the terrace dug a large hole in the roof, and then passed off by an iron pipe. Some of the Fathers were in the Refectory at the time, and simultaneously with the flash they observed a large ball of fire in the open space between the Refectory and the Kitchen, which burst like a shell with a deafening report. Indo-European Correspondence, March 24.

The new Chinese Minister at Paris M. Tshing Tshang is a Catholic. He was brought up at the School of Languages at Peking, which was a kind of Diplomatic College of the Celestial Empire. M. Tshing-Tshang's wife is of the same nationality and religious persuasion as her husband.

Workingmen's pilgrimage. Cardinal Langeieux, Archbishop of Rheims, is very actively organising, for September next, the workingmen's pilgrimage to Rome.