

flashed and the waters rose, and the head of the highest summit went down beneath the wave, and the shriek of the last survivor died away over the silent shoreless ocean, there was mercy brooding over the deep. Though Death, the emblem of justice and punishment, then rode in triumph on top of some giant billow, which meeting no coast, or continent, or Alp to break its fury upon, swept fiercely round and round the world, still on that same billow, and looming dimly through the awful gloom, floated a lonely ship carrying mercy in all its beauty on board. She brought the most precious freight that ever sailed the seas, the Saints of the old world, and the Fathers of the new. But not only in that Ark was mercy to be found, but on every silent billow and on every ghastly face that floated round her. For long before the lightnings flashed from the angry heavens and the thunder rolled along the tempest laden sky, God had been calling an impenitent world to repentance, and it was not till mercy's arm grew weary did justice come. There was a truce of one hundred years between the first stroke of the hammer and the first crash of the thunder. Noah grew grey preaching repentance, and the Ark stood the laughing-stock for the scoffer, and ten thousand warnings were ridiculed and despised before the terrible catastrophe came. Most patient and merciful God, none has suffered the justice of your indignation without trampling under foot ten thousand warnings, and mercies even more. Wherever we turn our eyes mercy meets us. We see her preserving the guilty world of sin and folly from the stern destruction it has so long deserved. We see in every sinner that moves along it a monument of saving, forgiving mercy, and in every saint a pillar of mercy too. Mercy floats in every breath. It is mercy that feeds and clothes us, it is mercy that preserves and sustains us. Mercy falls in every shower, and shines in every sunbeam, and in the darkest storm of life she is there watching, saving, loving, helping us, though we see her not. Mercy runs to meet the prodigal, she opens her arms to fold the penitent to her breast; here she murmurs pardon over the most desperate sinner, and there she pleads for the impenitent; here she weeps with those that mourn, and there she kisses away the tear from sorrow's cheek. Mercy despises none, nor despairs of any, and her wings of tender pity and majestic love cover over all the earth, and even beneath that earth we will find her keeping lonely guard at the forgotten grave. In that quiet home has not mercy sheltered many from the gathering storms? Earth, like a gentle mother, has wrapped her mantle round her little ones, and when the tempests blew fierce and loud they were sleeping calmly in the peaceful tomb. If we look up to the sparkling heavens above, there we will find mercy shining in all the robes of light, mercy echoing from every heart of gladness, and mercy beaming from every brow with the mark Calvary upon it. Down in the lowest depths of the dark land of horror and despair, we will find mercy there also, but not mercy enjoyed, but mercy rejected, forming the gnawing worm of the lost. No matter where we go we will find that God is merciful, and no matter how merciful we would wish Him to be we must also everywhere find Him just. And if we shudder at the sufferings of the lost, and look sorrowfully for a ray of sunny mercy in the exterior darkness and cannot find it, still we must acknowledge it is there like a pearl hidden in the depths of the ocean, or like a diamond that lies buried in the dark caverns of the earth. Our common sense will tell us that for the sufferings of Hell, God cannot be blamed, that they are the work of man, they are the offerings of his own choice, and if it is written by the inspired pen, "that God has kindled a fire in His wrath," we will find it also written that "He will draw this fire out of the heart of man" (Deut. xxii. 22; Ezek. xxviii. 18.) If it is written that the condemned shall be the eternal food of death, it is also written that it is the sinner, not God who has created death. "For God made not death, but the wicked with works and words have called it to them" (Wisdom 1, 13, 16.) If in Holy writ we find many passages by which an active part is given to God to punish the wicked, we will find also in Scripture as many others that it is the sinner himself who has dug his own pit, and that he will only reap in eternity what he has sown in time. (Pa. vii. 16; Gal. vi. 8; etc., etc.) We know that God has a perfect right to punish the obstinate wicked, and that He is even bound to do so. We see earthly rulers inflicting penalties as terrible as that of death to inspire a respect for laws whose end is temporary, and for subjects whose happiness is temporal, and we must admit that God should lift the arm of His justice to protect the laws of an eternal society, and to save his faithful subjects from unholy contamination. There is no political society, no corporation or college, but has the power to exclude forever from its advantages, and membership those who refuse to abide by its rules, or who are incorrigible. We must not be surprised if the same law holds good here, and if man knowingly and deliberately breaking the eternal law of God, should be expelled from His society. In wilfully bringing upon himself expulsion from the blessed society of God and His saints, man in consequence becomes the creator of his own hell, for hell is only a continuation of sin and sin is the work of man. Hell is the work of pride, of cupidity, of sensuality. Hell is manufactured by human malice, and man alone is the cause of its existence. But the scriptures tell us that hell is a place of everlasting punishment, of everlasting fire. "And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting." Math. xv. 46. And you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with the angels of his power. "In a flame of fire yielding vengeance to them that know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Thess. I, 7, 9. "And if thy hand or thy foot scandalise thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life maimed or lame than having two hands and two feet to be cast into everlasting fire." And if thy eye scandalise thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. It is better for thee with one eye to enter into life, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." Math. XVIII, 9 10. The Bible certainly speaks in many places of the fire of hell, but about what may be the nature of that fire, scripture and tradition say little. Is it merely, we might here ask, a metaphorical fire, incidental with moral suffering alone, or is it only an eruption of the fires of the soul? What sort of fire is it? It is one, certainly, we cannot form any idea of, and we might say of it as St. Paul said of heaven, "That eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to

conceive." We must not confound the reality of hell fire with its materiality, the materiality of the fire of hell is at least very doubtful. Natural philosophers even call in question, and with sufficient reason the materiality of terrestrial fire. The generally accepted theory of the nature of fire is, that it is only a mode of motion, so says Sir William Thompson. Professor Cooke tells us also that light and heat are only forms of motion, and the differences of the phenomena that have been referred to by these two agents are simply different sensations or different effects, produced by the same wave motion. Burning is merely chemical change and all combustion with which we are familiar in common life, is a chemical combination of the burning substance, whether it be coal or wood with the oxygen of the air. Combustion is, then, a process of chemical combination, and the light and heat, which are evolved in the process, are only the concomitants of the chemical change. Respiration is a true example of combustion. The seat of combustion is the lungs. The substance burnt is sugar. The products are carbonic dioxide gas and water. Decay and burning are essentially the same chemical change. The substances involved are the same, the results are the same, and it has been proved that the amount of heat generated is the same, the only difference being that in burning the whole amount of heat that is set free in a few hours producing phenomena of intense ignition, while in the process of decay the same quantity evolved slowly during perhaps a century escapes our notice. Thus all chemical combinations evolve the same amount of heat, whether the combustion be slow or rapid. Thus that combustion may be so slow as to cause no pain, or it may be fast enough only to produce a slight amount of suffering, or so rapid as to cause a great amount of agony. But from the agencies and combinations that surround us, from the effects of substances we see, or from the powers we feel producing certain results to us, or to other sensitive physical organisations, we cannot conclude anything, or fix on anything that could help to solve the mystery before us. Many passages of the Scripture imply that this terrible agent of Divine justice, this everlasting fire, is only the work of the sinner, and the anguish of his soul. St. Augustine tells us "Not to believe that this serenity and ineffable divine light, can draw from itself wherewith to punish sin, but rather than it has so ordained our sins that what constituted the pleasure of the sinner will serve as an instrument of divine vengeance." The great Bossuet developing the same thought tells us. Let us not imagine that hell consists in fearful torments, in pools of fire and sulphur, in eternally devouring flames, in rage, despair, and horrible gnashing of teeth. Hell, if we understand it, is sin itself, hell is to be deprived of God, and the proof of it is evident from the Scriptures. Ezekiel tells us "I will make to come forth from the midst of thee a fire which shall devour thee." Bossuet adds to this, "I shall not send it from afar against thee, it shall be kindled in thy conscience, and the flames shall burst forth from the midst of thee, and it shall be thy sins that shall produce it. Dost thou remember Christian that while sinning thou art forging the instrument of thy own eternal punishment! Thou art doing so. Thou swallowest iniquity like water and art swallowing torrents of flames."

(To be continued.)

## OBITUARY NOTICES.

MR. JOHN MORAN, native of Ballinacaddy, County Clare, Ireland, died at his brother's residence, Kumara, on Friday, 9th inst. He had been in failing health for some time back, and visited the Australian Colonies for the purpose of recruiting his health, but without avail. He was fortified by the last rites of the Church, and bore his last illness with Christian resignation. His remains were interred in the Stafford cemetery on Monday, the 11th, and the funeral was the largest that ever left the Kumara district, and well he deserved that his remains should receive such honour, for a better warrant to attend funerals than he was not in the district. The deceased was 20 years in the colonies, first in Victoria, then in Otago, lastly, on the West Coast. He was a fine stamp of a man, strong and powerful, and of the most generous disposition. He was always to be found at the wheel when any good work was to be done. In a word it would be hard to find a more perfect ideal of what a man ought to be than John Moran. His remains were brought to St. Patrick's Church, where Mass was offered for the repose of his soul, and Father McManus performed the burial service assisted by Father Walsh.—May he rest in peace.

The funeral of Mr. Peter Hanley, which took place at Gore on Sunday, was largely attended. The deceased during his short career of 23 years had gained the esteem of his friends by a life crowned with many virtues. His death was a happy one, and we may reasonably hope that he is now enjoying a heavenly reward where sin and sorrow are unknown. Would that all young men were as well prepared to meet their God.—R.I.P.

The Emperor of Brazil proposes to go in person to congratulate the Pope on his Jubilee, while the other Catholic sovereigns will appear by their representatives at the Vatican.

"ROUGH ON ITCH."—"Rough on Itch" cures skin humors, eruptions, ringworm, tetter, salt rheum, frosted feet, chilblains, itch ivy poison, barber's itch.

## GUILTY OF WRONG.

Some people have a fashion of confusing excellent remedies with the large mass of "patent medicines," and in this they are guilty of a wrong. There are some advertised remedies, fully worth all that is asked for them, and one at least we know of: Dr. Soules American Hop Bitters. The writer has had occasion to use the Bitters in just such a climate as we have most of the year in Bay City, and has always found them to be first-class and reliable, doing all that is claimed from them. "Tribune"