

JULY 14, 1900.

just looked at it and me contemptuous. 'That's mica,' said he; 'what do you mean by bringing fool's gold to me?'

THE DECADENCE OF HELL.

Under the somewhat flippant title, 'What Has Become of Hell,' the Rev. Dr. Shinn discusses, in the North American for June, the remarkable change which of late years has come to pass in the Protestant world with reference to future punishment.

It was not always thus," says Dr. Shinn. "In days not very long past, men argued with each other concerning the place and concerning the people who were on their way thither."

But such views are now quite out of date. When one of the speakers at the recent so-called Ecumenical Conference ventured to suggest that a little old-fashioned fire-and-brimstone preaching might be found beneficial to-day, he was greeted with peals of derisive laughter.

Dr. Shinn asserts as a fact, which cannot be contradicted, that belief in hell as a place or state of punishment has been the persuasion of Christian people from the beginning of Christianity down to a few years ago.

According to Dr. Shinn the movement for the discrediting of hell began with the introduction of Universalism into this country away back in 1770, and Universalist notions have gradually infected all denominations.

Against all this theorizing—against the growing popular reluctance to hear anything about "the place which cannot be named," Dr. Shinn insists that hell "cannot be obliterated."

Dr. Shinn is to be commended for speaking thus frankly on a subject so utterly distasteful to his co-religionists. We hope his deacons or elders or vestrymen will appreciate his zeal in the cause of truth—that they will not be scandalized by his assertion that ceasing to believe in hell does not abolish hell.

stamp can content themselves with groping in the dusk of half-knowledge when the light is at hand, is one of the things which we have never been able to understand.—Providence Visitor.

SIGN OF THE CROSS.

The various forms of the cross in early and mediæval times were very numerous. Justin Martyr says: "The sign of the cross is impressed upon the whole of nature."

It may be interesting to notice the occurrence of the symbol of Christian faith among the prehistoric remains of the Western Hemisphere, says a writer in the Saturday Review.

On the Island of Cozumel, in the Caribbean, a stone cross attracted the attention of early navigators and explorers.

Among the massive ruins of Yucatan its occurrence is noted at many places. The temple of the Cross, at Palmyra, affords a remarkable illustration.

The question has been asked whether the cross has been found among the works of the Mound Builders. I mention the discovery of a crucifix in a Western mound. In a crucifix county, West Virginia, an earthen mound was disturbed some years ago, and among its contents was a crucifix—the cross of iron greatly oxidized, the figure of bright metal, supposed to be Corinthian gold.

A silver cross was found in an ancient mound near Marietta, Ohio. In a large mound on the Kentucky side of the Ohio, opposite Portsmouth, two silver crosses and thirty buckles have been found.

We regret to say that some Catholics do not think it fashionable to make the sign of the cross before and after meals. Those weaklings are to be pitied. The cross will preach to mankind the infinite sufferings of Our Blessed Saviour for the sins of the world.

We are confirmed with the sign of the Cross. We receive Holy Communion with the sign of the Cross. When dying all our senses are anointed with Holy Oils in the name of the signs of the Cross.

BISHOP SPALDING.

The Church and the Human Mind.

It is one of the glories of the Church that it has scorned no human gift, condemned no forms of genius. Whatever individuals may have done to narrow the scope of its action and influence, its general spirit has been really Catholic.

It has always felt that, in spite of apparent contradictions, there is harmony between Christian faith and science. Its appeal is to reason and conscience, not to force.

who teaching, open to all, assuming the capacity and equality of all, was a world-wide preparatory training for the modern assertion of popular rights and liberties. But it did more than set up in its cathedrals and churches the teacher's chair around which the whole people gathered to listen to the utterance of the sublimest and most elevating truths; it sought to make the temple of religion a temple of art.

WONDERFUL LITTLE BELGIUM

Thriving Kingdom Which Gives the Lie to One of Bigotry's Oft Used Arguments.

From the London Catholic Universe. A wonderful little kingdom is Belgium, so populous and so wealthy, considering its superficial area. It is little more than one-third the size of Ireland, yet its inhabitants number over 6,000,000.

Belgium has an effective army, small but compact navy and considerable commerce. One of its colonial enterprises is the Congo Free State, between which and Antwerp there is a fleet of steamers second only to the Atlantic liners.

Belgium is more Catholic than Ireland, inasmuch as the Protestant minority in the latter country is proportionately greater than the Protestant minority in the former.

In the Missionary Exhibit which was gotten up in connection with the Missionary Conference in New York, a large wooden crucifix was shown, with this inscription:— "This crucifix, for years, was worshipped by a native Brazilian, who gave it up when he heard the Gospel, and knew that the Bible forbids idolatry. Rev. H. C. Tucker, donor."

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THE LATEST VERSION.

According to the latest version of the alleged ailment of the "Rev." Mary Baker Eddy, the mother of Christian Science, she is afflicted with creeping paralysis. Since by her own illiberal teaching, sickness is a myth and there is no reality except the divine existence, consequently no such thing as paralysis or a body for it to creep over, it is somewhat puzzling to the uninitiated to understand how Mary can have creeping paralysis.

it seriously, makes their condition more hopeless and pitiable.—Catholic Universe.

THE MODERN PRIEST.

Mgr. Mignot Addresses His Clergy As to What They Ought to Be.

In a circular letter to his clergy Mgr. Mignot, Bishop of Albi, lays down what the priest of the hour should know. This prelate is an authority on the subject of which he treats, for he is considered to be the most learned one in France. He is locked upon, moreover, as the one the most in the van of modern thought.

By a few splendid strokes of the pen the Archbishop of Albi traces the progress of modern science. He shows how the heavens and the earth have in recent times revealed their secrets, upsetting the old order of things.

Under the progress of physical science the Church's way was comparatively slow, Mgr. Mignot gives the reason. He shows that the Church's first object was to produce saints, and learned men in the supernatural order.

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THE ACTORS OF THE PASSION PLAY.

An English journal has recently the following communication, on a subject that just at present is full of interest to Catholics, namely, the sort of people who enact the parts in the Passion Play at Oberammergau.

"They struck me as a people apart in some mysterious and indelible way. The look in their eyes was different from that of others. One sees it sometimes shining under the calm brows of devout yet unassured persons coming reverently out of church, after a service which has lifted up their hearts."

"And the peasants of Oberammergau occupy themselves all the winter (save only the winter before the Tragedy) with their wood-carving, giving their thoughts shape in the forms of saints, madonnas and the Lord they worship dying on the cross.

"They go to church much; not a man among them is known to look to, or long upon the wine when it is red, or the beer when it is brown, even on a feastday, when a little relaxation is excusable.

She suffered with a terrible internal complaint, which racked her with constant agony. Her husband nursed her night and day; and at last she died. Mayer made no moan; but when he followed the coffin to the grave his hair, lately so black, was white as the snow still lingering on the mountains.

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CHRIST.

In His created capacity Christ was not only the greatest individual of the human race, but the greatest individual of all creation. No intellect amongst the highest rank of cherubim ever penetrated so deeply into the abyss of the Divine Essence; no will amongst the highest rank of seraphim ever came into such perfect union with that of the Divine.

THE NEED OF PRAYER.

Which one of us has not felt the need of prayer? Which of us has failed to see its results? It not substantially in everyday life, at least can we fail to perceive the sweetness penetrate the recesses of our souls?

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We should be pleased to supply any of the following books at prices given: The Christian Father, price, 35 cents (cloth); The Christian Mother (cloth), 35 cents; Thoughts on the Sacred Heart, by Archbishop Walsh (cloth), 40 cents; Catholic Belief (paper), 25 cents; cloth (strongly bound) 50 cents.

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