

absolution of sins, at least until he gives up his Bible to the priest. Booksellers, who shall sell the Bible to persons not authorized, forfeit the price of the books. As to monks (*regulares*) they may not read nor purchase the Bible without leave of their superiors.

All this is plain enough; but these decrees of Pius IV. were rejected by the Catholics of Germany, France and Poland.

Other Popes, Clement VIII. and Gregory XV. ventured however to add to the rules of Pius IV. They decreed in express terms, that leave to read the Bible could not be granted hereafter but by the sovereign pontiff himself, or by the assembly of cardinals and prelates. Oh! if the court of Rome had been able to suppress, to annihilate wholly the reading of the Bible by laymen, how glad would it have been to snatch from the hands of men light which exposes its deeds of darkness and falsehood. But this was beyond its power; it had to bow to a power higher than its own.

However, in our age even, Popes have still tried to hinder the circulation of the Word of God. Pius VII. wrote in 1816 to the archbishop of Gnesen, in Poland, that the Bible Society was a diabolical invention,—a pest,—the destruction of the faith,—the greatest danger to souls,—an impious device of innovators; the ruin of our most holy religion contrived by its enemies,—the malicious work of a wicked Society (*cafarii concilii militiam*)—an irretrievable ruin." Could the most holy father Pius VII have employed stronger expressions to stigmatise the imposture of Mahomet or any similar enterprise? and he applies such terms to those whose only object is to distribute the Word of God without note or comment! What a proof of the hatred of papists toward the Bible!

The present Pope Gregory XVI. has also published bulls against the sale of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue. The conclusion from what has been said is: 1st. That the Romish church has not abandoned the system of preventing the reading of the sacred Book; 2d. That the Bible and Popery are irreconcilable, and reciprocally exclude each other; 3d. That, therefore, the Bible and Popery cannot both be divine institutions: a choice must be made between the two; 4th. That, to preserve the right to read the Bible, the influence of Rome must be opposed.

I believe I have somewhere read that the Roman Catholic Bishops in the United States have recommended to their flocks the reading of the Word of God. This is well; they have acted as Pope John VIII. before the opposition of the Oriental churches of Europe; they allow, they authorize what they cannot hinder in a country like America. But be assured that let them become masters to do as they please, and they will bind the Bible with an iron chain in the walls of their convents.

I am &c.

G. DE F.

THE TRAVELLER.

DECORATING THE GRAVE WITH FLOWERS.

THERE is a kind of pathos and touching tenderness of expression in these sweet and fragrant emblems of affection, which language cannot reach, and which is calculated to perpetuate a kind of soothing sympathy between the living and the dead. They speak of cords of love, too strong for even the grave to break asunder. This practice no doubt gave rise to the ancient custom which prevailed in the East, of burying in gardens, and is one which conduces to the gratification of the best feelings of our nature. It prevailed generally in and about the Holy City, and also among the Medes, Persians, Grecians, and Romans. The Persians adopted it from the Medes—the Grecians from the Persians. In Rome, persons of distinction were buried in gardens or fields near the public roads. Their monuments were decorated with chaplets and garlands of flowers.

The tomb of Achilles was decorated with amaranth; the urn of Philopemen was covered with chaplets; the grave of Sophocles with roses and ivy; that of Anacreon with ivy and flowers. Baskets of lilies, violets, and roses, were placed on the graves of husbands and wives, white roses on those of unmarried females. In Java, the inhabitants scatter flowers over the bodies of their friends; in China, the custom of planting flowers on the graves of their friends, is

of very ancient date, and still prevails. The natives of Surat strew fresh flowers on the graves of their saints every year.

In Tripoli, the tombs are decorated with garlands of roses, of Arabian jessamine, and orange and myrtle flowers.

In Schwytz, a village in Switzerland, there is a beautiful little churchyard, in which almost every grave is covered with pinks. In the elegant churchyard in Wirfin, in the valley of Salza, in Germany, the graves are covered with little oblong boxes, which are planted with perennial shrubs, or renewed with annual flowers; and others are so dressed on fete-days. Suspended from the ornaments of recent graves, are little vases filled with water, in which the flowers are preserved fresh. Children are often seen thus dressing the graves of their mothers—and mothers wreathing garlands for the graves of their children.

A late traveller, on going early in the morning into one of the churchyards in the village of Wirfin, saw six or seven persons decorating the graves of their friends, and of some who had been buried twenty years. This custom also prevails in Scotland, and in North and South Wales. An epitaph there says,

"The village maidens to her grave shall bring
The fragrant garlands, each returning spring;
Selected sweets! in emblem of the maid,
Who underneath this hallowed turf is laid."

In Wales, children have snowdrops, primroses, violets, hazel-bloom, and shallow blossoms on their graves. Persons of mature years, have tansy, box, ivy, and rue. In South Wales, no flowers or evergreens are permitted to be planted on graves but those which are sweet-scented. Pinks, polyanthus, sweet-williams, gilliflowers, carnations, mignonette, thyme, hyssop, camomile, and rosemary are used. The red roses are appropriated to the graves of good and benevolent persons.

In Easter week, most graves are newly dressed, and manured with fresh earth. In Whitsuntide holidays, they are again dressed, weeded, and if necessary, replanted. No person ever breaks or disturbs flowers thus planted. It is considered sacrilege.

In Cabul, burying grounds are held in great veneration, and called *Cities of the Silent*. The Jews call them *Houses of the Dead*. The Egyptians visited the graves of their friends twice a week, and strewed sweet basil on them, and do this to day.

While the custom of decorating graves and churchyards with flowers, and ornamental trees and shrubs, has prevailed so long and extensively among ancient and modern civilized nations, some of the American aborigines will not permit a weed or blade of grass, nor any other vegetable to grow upon the graves of their friends. With few exceptions, there has hitherto been in our country a strange remissness on this subject, which would surprise the heathen. Graves and churchyards are left to the course of gradual dilapidation and decay; which ever follows in the train of moral degradation.—*New-Haven Paladium*.

TRANSPARENT DEPTH OF THE SEA ON THE NEW-FOUNDLAND COAST.

My attention was caught by something moving on the bottom twelve or fifteen feet below me, and I soon found it to be covered with lobsters. One or two of these, by means of a pointed stick, we managed to capture. The singular clearness of the water is most remarkable; when the surface is still, the echini, shell-fish, and cretines clinging to the rocks, crabs and lobsters crawling on the bottom, in its depths, are as clearly visible to a depth of thirty or forty feet as in air itself.

In the passage between Trinity Island, or Lewis's Island, and the Frying-pan, the bottom of the sea consisted of huge peaks and mounds of white granite, rising from dark and deep hollows. The extreme clearness of the water rendered these cliffs and peaks all visible as we approached them, though none reached to within three or four fathoms of the surface, and the sensation experienced in sailing over them was most singular, and to me very uncomfortable. I could not look over the boat without extreme giddiness, as if suspended on some aerial height leaning over a tremendous gulf. The same sensation was described to me by a gentleman I afterwards met with, an

experienced hunter and sailor, as assailing him upon his once, in smooth water, taking a boat within the space of some sunken rocks off the Wadham Island's, on which the water broke in bad weather. These rocks he described as three peaks rising from an apparently unfathomable depth, and the sensation, as his boat gently rose and fell between them, was so unpleasant, and indeed awful, that he gladly got away as fast as he could.—*Jukes's Excursions*.

THE PERSIMON TREE OF GEORGIA.

AMONG the trees here, we saw some fine specimens of the persimon, which grows to a height of not less than 50 feet, and about 18 inches in diameter. The leaf is large and of a deep green; and as the branches spread well it forms an extensive shade. It produces a fruit of an oval shape, about an inch and a half in length, of a reddish colour and fleshy pulp, harsh to the taste when fresh, but said to be agreeable after the frost has shrivelled and softened it. The fruit adheres to the tree long after it has shed its leaves; but it ultimately drops off if not gathered, and is then greedily eaten by domestic animals. A single tree will often yield many bushels of this fruit, and it is sometimes pounded up with bran, and made into cakes. These are baked in the ordinary way like bread, and kept dry, when they are from time to time used to make a kind of beer, which is done by dissolving the cake in water, adding to this some hops and yeast, and fermenting it in the usual manner. Brandy even has been distilled from the fermented water in which the persimon fruit had been bruised; but this is rarely made an article of commerce, though frequently used by the households of farmers. The Cherokee plum, small, light red, and of a fleshy pulp, is also abundant here, but the taste was more bitter than sweet, and far from agreeable, and the red mulberry is also seen, but the fruit is not much used.—*Buckingham's Slave States of America*.

THE MIGRATION OF BIRDS.

"The crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming."—*Jeremiah viii. 7.*

The migration and periodical flight of birds, instinctively as they must certainly be considered, are yet peculiarly demonstrative of the providential superintendence of the Creator. The natural history of the crane furnishes striking evidence of this assertion. Immediately after landing, we were surprised and delighted with a flight of birds; which we discerned at first like a thick dark speck in the heavens, which gradually enlarged as it approached, and discovered at length the array and order of their flight. They wheeled along their airy movements in the form of a semi-circle, enclosing within itself numbers of smaller circles; the component parts of which were constantly shifting their relative positions, advancing to the front as if by a sudden impulse, then falling back to the rear, alternately occupying and giving place to others. The lively competition was constantly maintained; each of them every instant passing or passed by his fellow. All was grace and harmony, not one discordant movement throughout the whole array; every thing appeared as if regulated by a preconcerted plan, in which every member understood and performed his part with freedom and precision, alike the subordinates and the superiors. They were too high in the air for us to hear any noise from the steering of their wings, or to know what species of birds they were; but we judged them to be cranes. They held on their steady flight from north to south, following the course of the river as far as the eye could accompany them.—*Richardson's Travels*.

THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

ERRORS IN FAITH AND PRACTICE,
EXEMPLIFIED IN SKETCHES FROM REAL LIFE.

A MOTHER'S TALE.

THERE is something irresistible in truth when it comes to us with all the weight of personal experience, especially when the mind which receives it is calm and serene. One of the many reasons why the experience of others does but little good to us is, simply, that it is forced on us injudiciously, when our minds are under the strong excitement of present affliction. But let the warning be given before the very crisis of sorrow has