

Franz laughed. He knew it was no such thing. He knew that it was Jakob's gold which was hidden there, and that his cowardly, distrustful nature had prompted this hiding-place, and that now he was but feigning a lie to put him Franz, off the scent. He would, however, pay him a trick now. He had robbed him of his love, and now he, Franz, would by and by rob Jakob of his gold. He saw the twinkling light vanish, he saw the cord move—Jakob was coming up, and Franz laughed a fearful laugh as he stood and waited. Little Joseph came once more in sight, and then—I think that the evil one must have been very near to whisper to the man of the beating Jakob had once given the boy, and of the oath he, Franz, had then made. The temptation to be avenged came to him too, clothed in fluttering white garments—it brought to his mind his dying sister's charge, and the white garments called themselves by the name of *brotherly love*, telling him that in remembrance of his promise to the dead he must avenge the boy. A demon entered into Franz's soul, partly rage, partly disappointment, and partly the tired-out body of the man inflamed with the wine he had just drunken—anyway, he paused not one moment, but cut the cord with the knife which lay in readiness by the bread and cheese, and then—and then—he fled from the spot, the mark of Cain upon his forehead. Little Joseph, who saw all and guessed what the result had been, ran too—on, on till they reached the river, and then Franz leaped madly into the swirling waters, rose and sank a time or two, and then all was over for him as for the other.

And Marie? Well, deprived of both her lovers she still served on at the old place, and was present at the grand concert of A.D. 1841; but all the sweet light had died out of her life—indeed, it is said that she never smiled but once after the fearful news was carried to her, and that was on the memorable day of which I have just spoken. She smiled then when Joseph Holscher, the sweet violinist, appeared upon the scene, but tears filled her dim eyes directly after, and when the hotel was once more converted into a convent she still stayed on within its walls, as one striving to become the “bride of heaven.”

She sleeps now 'neath the violet sod, and the tale of her life is well-nigh forgotten, but the “folk” say that the light is still seen at times in the Nuns' Well, and that the chinking of money may also be heard. They say, too, that on the night when Marie's spirit passed away, soft, sweet music floated up from the river's edge, piercing even the convent walls, and that figures in white were seen passing to and fro, from one place to another. They, (“the folk”) say that Marie atoned for Franz's sin by her life of fasting and prayer, and that her soul sought his upon that night and bore him back to the true gold; but we know full well that “no man can redeem his brother, or make atonement unto God for him.”

“Ah, yes, and I can pray, can pray rejoicingly!
For my misdeeds, if Jesus pleads,
Who then condemneth me?”

Foquo.

CLING FAST.

THIS is a needed counsel, not less imperative to the pilgrim of life than to the drowning sailor who has a grip of the saving rope. Whatever be the field of exertion, or the purpose set before us, still these words ring forth a stern and simple warning—cling fast, or you waver and fall. The world has been often likened to a battlefield, where the fierce din of conflict is apt to unnerve the boldest, and is sure to make the weak and irresolute succumb. The issue does not fail in aptitude, for the strong hearts only can bear up in that fight for progress and liberty which is hourly waging around our path. Are we laggards in the field, or to be seen in the thick of the dusty fray, binding these words as a motto to our hearts? Time will reveal, for ahead in the dim future there is a resting-place, where the drones and the workers will be separated for evermore. But in these brief remarks we wish rather to use the phrase with a special than a general application; to use it in relation to the sublime truths of the Christian religion, so fiercely attacked in our time; and, by many who should know better, so loosely and lightly held to.

Cling fast. How can we adequately express the burning thoughts and earnest desires that are awakened when we remember how pressing is the need for holding on like grim death to the faith once delivered? Words fail to describe the dangers that lie hid in the insidious attempts made to under-

mine vital Christian doctrines by well meaning, but mistaken thinkers. There is nothing more perilous than begging the question in this matter, and this is now widely done. It is so very plausible to argue that new interpretations are the outcome of increased light from above, which is a gain to humanity; and in certain aspects nothing is more true. But when we are told that those truths which have stood like the mighty rocks through tempests of doubt and scolding swept over them by centuries of opposition, are now unsettled and shaken, we demur, and urge all who value Christian principles to “cling fast.” Let us not be drifted away from one fact which is indisputable, come what may—that there exist truths fixed, unalterable, and indestructible concerning God and man which no increase of knowledge or enlightenment has any power to touch. Let us bind our faith to these eternal pillars of religion, and refuse to loose it at any man's bidding; let us with all the energy of our souls cling fast to these.

Observe, we possess a strong admiration for that searching spirit which is actuating the great and subtle thinkers of the day. We sympathise with the pure spirit which reverently seeks to arrive at the truth by sweeping away from ancient dogmas the rubbish which man's ignorance or blindness may have gathered around them. But below this umbrageous growth of misinterpretation, there are the roots of holy realities, and to these we cling as the very messages from God Himself, and therefore sacred to all time. The non-essential, the superfluous, we are content to see cleared away, but germs of spiritual truth are in the heart of much that men are willing to abolish as idle fables. Science may be profound and searching, but there is a power still greater lurking in doctrines Divinely-given as true, and to such we must hold fast in spite of all the hate and bitterness they may evoke from mere human opposition.

Shall we name one or two everlasting truths to which we would exhort our readers solemnly to cling fast? They are the pillars upon which the sublime structure of Christianity must either stand or fall. Some doctrines can be allowed to lapse; others never. Fundamental to all sincere belief in Christianity is a faith in the Divinity of Christ. To this we should cling as the only sure hope for mankind in this world and the next. Let not Science wrest us away from the Rock of Ages, only to cast us into the ocean of doubt and despair. Then there is the inherent wickedness of the whole race in a state of nature. This is a doctrine much disputed, and attempts are being made to prove that after all man in a sinful condition is not so great an anomaly in the sight of a pure and holy being as we are led by the Bible to suppose. Here the deadly error creeps in under the cloak of a pity and love for humanity. But let us rather rely on the words of Scripture, which give no uncertain sound, being full of explicit declarations concerning the truth that man is a diseased creature by nature since the fall; needing the regenerating touch of his Maker before he can rightly enjoy life here or in a future condition.

We sternly wish to condemn that specious form of infidelity which has arisen through the teachings of evolutionists. While it is impossible to dispute the main facts unfolded by the latest discoveries in Science, it is possible, and highly necessary, to do combat with the absurd inferences drawn from them. Never will we admit that there is no creative energy at work in the visible universe. We refuse to consider the system in which we are placed as a great clock that had but to be wound up by its Author, to go on uninterruptedly without His presence or aid. This is not a true rendering of the hidden sources of life and matter. On the contrary, we cling fast to the truths whispered to the conscience by every waving tree and sweet songster rendering nature beautiful; to that doctrine printed all over the creation, “God, the active motive power in all we see around us; in the mighty thunder, as well as in the music of the stream and the loveliest flower that hides beneath our feet.” Oh, reader! let us cling fast to the faith as it is in Christ only, and refuse to be washed from the rocks of Christianity, in spite of all the wisdom or genius of men. “Cling fast,” and cling always; for waves of doubt are surging wildly around us, and many have deserted the standard of the Cross on all sides!

E. CLIFFORD.

Look into the life and temper of Christ, described and illustrated in the Gospel, and search whether you can find anything like it in your own life. Have you anything of His humility, meekness, and benevolence to men? Anything of His purity and wisdom, His contempt of the world, His patience, His fortitude, His zeal?