

Though there are some Christians who bring disgrace upon their religion by going about with long, doleful faces, yet it must be admitted that the brightest, happiest and most restful faces we see are those of earnest Christian people. And yet it is a fact that Christian people do not laugh so loud or so long as worldly people. Why is this?

We are told that Jesus wept; we are not told that He laughed; yet He speaks of His joy. We can imagine our Lord often smiling; we can scarcely imagine Him in a fit of boisterous laughter.

There was a deep seriousness running all through His life. He had come to seek and to save the lost. He was surrounded by sin and suffering and misery. His soul yearned to relieve all who were thus burdened. "Come unto me," was his loving invitation to such, "and I will give you rest." On the one hand He was not blind to the sin and misery about Him. He fully realized it. On the other hand He knew there was a sovereign remedy for all who would make use of it. "Earth hath no sorrow that Heaven cannot cure."

So there could be thrilling joy without boisterous laughter.

Christians must in some degree enter into their Master's spirit. Many about us are on the broad road that leadeth to destruction. Jesus Christ can save all who turn unto Him. He is the gate to the narrow way that leadeth to life eternal. We can rejoice with great joy over those who turn to Him, but when we think of the many who are turning away from this loving Saviour a feeling of sorrow steals into our heart. We fully appreciate the bright side of life and can be the happiest among the merry. Yet we cannot—we dare not—close our eyes to the dark side. For us, then, amidst all our true happiness there is a seriousness in life, and though we can thoroughly enjoy a good laugh our laughter is modified by our view of life. We pause to recollect ourselves.

This brings up another reason why Christians do not usually laugh so loud or so long as people of the world. The object of laughter. This may be pure and innocent, but it often is not. We see a stout man walking along a slippery street, he falls and flounders about. He may be writhing in pain with a broken leg, but our first impulse

is to laugh. Our next better impulse is to rush to his assistance. This is a very literal illustration. We are inclined to laugh at the man's fall. Much of the laughter of the world is at the slips and falls of others.

Intellectual slips. A man has made a blunder; he has said perhaps the opposite of what he means; he is confused. We are naturally inclined to laugh. It may not be at the man, but it is hard to separate things so closely connected. In any case our laugh may wound his feelings.

Moral slips. A shrewd young man has got the better of a staid old partner and fleeced him of his wealth. It was cleverly done. Again, we are inclined to laugh until our moral sentiment rises in condemnation of the act. Think of all the boisterous laughter in the world over the moral fall of the once innocent and fair. How low and degrading, how utterly unworthy of man such merriment is, fit only for the fiendish glee of the demons of hell.

Religious slips. The inconsistencies of professing Christians is the object often of peals of laughter among the worldly. In short, the greater a brother's fall the more merriment some find in it.

Surely it is well, then, for those who are striving to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who never needlessly wounded the feelings of anyone, who came to lift up the fallen, to pause before they go into a fit of uncontrolled laughter in order to reflect a moment whether it be at a brother's expense or not.

These are some of the reasons why Christian people, though the happiest people on earth, do not usually laugh so loud or so long as people who are living entirely for this world.

A man once went to consult a doctor about his health. He complained that he suffered from such overwhelming depression that his life was unbearable. The doctor examined him, and after a little while remarked that he wanted nothing except some lively amusement to divert his thoughts from himself. "Try a lively novel." The man shook his head as if doubtful of the prescription. "Well, go to the theatre and see what that will do for you." Again the man shook his head. "Well, I can I can only think of one thing else. Go and see that great clown who has lately arrived and is drawing such

crowds with his merriment. If he cannot cheer you up I do not know who can." "Doctor," sadly replied the man, "I am that clown." Those who laugh the loudest often do so to conceal an aching heart.

—F. H. DU VERNET.

AFTER ALL.

GRIEF is strong, but joy is stronger
Night is long, but day is longer.
When life's riddle solves and clears,
And the angels in our ears

Whisper the sweet answer low
(Answer full of love and blessing),

How our wonderment will grow
At the blindness of our guessing;
All the hard things we recall
Made so easy—after all!

Earth is sweet, but heaven is sweeter;
Love complete, but faith completer;
Close beside our wandering ways,
Through dark nights and weary days

Stand the angels with bright eyes
And the shadow of the Cross

Falls upon and sanctifies
All our pain and all our loss.
Though we stumble, though we fall,
God is helping—after all!

Sigh then, soul, but sing in sighing
To the happier things replying,
Dry the tears that dim thy seeing,
Give glad thoughts for life and being;

Time is but the little entry
To eternity's large dwelling.

And the heavenly guards keep sentry,
Urging, guiding, half-compelling,
Till the puzzling way quite past,
Thou shalt enter in—at last!

—Susan Coolidge.

FAITH IN LOVE.

ONCE in an hour of great peril an officer showed such courage that his wife said afterward to him, "How could you help being afraid?" He drew his sword and rested the point at her heart. "How can you smile?" he said. "Because," she answered, "he who holds the sword loves me better than his life." "It is the same with me," he said, as he returned his sword to its sheath. "He who holds the winds in the hollow of His hand loves me infinitely."—*Christian Intelligencer*.

HE is a weak man who lets public opinion do all his thinking for him, and who relies for all his views and estimates on the newspapers and other people. Public opinion is simply the sum total of what everybody thinks, and the true man will resolve to be a positive, independent factor in the creation of public opinion, and to do his share toward mending in the right direction.—*St. Andrew's Cross*.