

venture to believe that a man's Christianity is no way imperilled by a prolonged and musical outburst of heavenly exultation. Many, even of this class, though convinced of the existence of Christian joy, look upon it as a transient, fugitive emotion,—essentially fluctuating and intermittent,—as variable in its temperature, as if the extremes of a Canadian summer and winter could be passed through in the course of a single day. Lovefeasts, fellowship seasons, and social religious gatherings, are regarded as the summertime of Christian joy; but in seasons of necessity, privation, and loneliness, they are disposed to think that if the mercury of joy is not absolutely frozen in the bulb, it is standing at a fearfully low temperature.

Such persons, however, greatly err. Joy is certainly ornamental to the temple of personal piety; but it is something more than that, it is one of the strong pillars on which the fabric rests. It may be a shining garment of glory and of beauty; but it is something more, it constitutes part of the soul's very bone and muscle. It may be a sweet harp in the day of gladness, but it is also a strong tower in the day of grief and desperate sorrow. It may be a beautiful nosegay, shedding its perfume on wings of sunshine, through the chambers of the soul; but it is also one of the heavy and richly-moulded columns which give grace and solidity to the edifice. Christian joy can not only exist side by side with the most gigantic sorrow, but it can actually carry it in its arms, and blithely trip along with it, as if it were only the weight of a feather. Indeed, there are times when joy is happier with sorrow than without it. A minister in England paid a pastoral visit to an afflicted member of his church. The prostrate man recounted his privations and described his sufferings. "Ah! my brother," said the minister, "I was once for six weeks in the most excruciating bodily suffering, but my fellowship with God was so sweet that I would gladly enter upon the same affliction, to have granted to me the same consolation." A converted Brahmin had, on embracing Christianity, lost his houses, his fields, his wells, his wife, and his children. The missionary asked him how he bore his sorrows, and if he were supported under them. "Aye," he said, "I am often asked that, but I am never asked how I bear my joys. The Lord Jesus sought me out, and found me a poor stray sheep in the jungles, and He brought me to His fold, and he will never leave me." "Most gladly therefore," said the man, who had the thorn in the flesh, "will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ, may rest upon me." "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

5. Again, *Christian joy* means *Christian boldness*. He who thinks himself the wisest man in the world, may be measured to be the opposite of his estimate; but the man who thinks himself one of the happiest men in the world, is in the main correct. Personal consciousness is the highest form of evidence. A man may err in his opinions, but not in his feelings. If he is happy, he cannot be persuaded that he is miserable, and *vice versa*. Consciousness is sure ground: a man may be drawn from almost every post of evidence, but when he reaches this, he stands.

The man born blind,—“One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see.”
 . . . Similarly, the man once spiritually blind, but upon whom the true light