

ought it ever to be with every true child of God. During the darkest and dreariest season, in his spiritual history, he ought to repose implicit confidence in the Divine promises; and by so doing he will, like David, be able to sustain and cheer his downcast spirit, with the hope of future gladness.

We shall notice some of the causes of spiritual depression, and point out at the same time some of the means whereby the downcast spirit may be cheered and comforted.

1. *The Spirit of Melancholy.*—It is not always easy to explain the source whence this peculiar malady springs. In some it may rise from an ill balanced mind, in others from a defective bodily organization, and there is little doubt that in the case of many it is the result of a long continued course of afflictive circumstances. But be the causes what they may, the spirit of melancholy not only exists, but is wide spread, and in the case of God's children, it greatly interferes with their spiritual comfort. The minds of such Christians are set to the minor key; all things seem overcast with gloom, and every thing that comes within the sphere of their mental vision is tinged with a sombre hue. They are prone to look at the dark side of things. They are inclined rather to think of those aspects of the Divine character that are fitted to inspire awe—than of those which are calculated to awaken confidence to dwell upon the demands and terrors of the law, rather than the provisions and promises of the gospel, and while they are quick to discover the remains of depravity in their hearts; they are slow to discover the work of grace in their souls. Those who have had to administer consolation to such, alone know how difficult it is to soothe and comfort them, in consequence of their proneness to brood over those things by which their spirit of melancholy is

nursed. It would be well for all such frequently to avail themselves of frequent change of scenery, and the society of intelligent and cheerful friends. Let them also pursue at times light, healthy literature, and amuse themselves with the sweet strains of music. These and such like exercises are well fitted to dispel the gloom of their minds, and soothe their troubled spirit. But above all, let them seek their solace and comfort where the Psalmist sought and found his during the season of his depression—in the God of his salvation. Let them place implicit reliance on their covenant God, who has said, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." Then, when like the Psalmist, they are downcast in soul, like him they will be able to cheer and comfort themselves with the hope of future gladness.

2. *Bodily Disorder.*—In consequence of the intimate union that subsists between our body and soul, they mutually affect each other, both for good and evil. When the former is out of order, the latter is almost certain out of tune. While this is the tendency of all bodily ailments, it is peculiarly the case with those that affect the nervous system. These have a powerful tendency to render their subjects susceptible of anxiety and fear. When Christians are in this state of mind, they are in a great measure incapacitated for enjoying the comforts of religion. Hence the need there is for them paying particular attention to the health of their bodies, in order that their minds may be in a fit state to experience the peace and enjoyment that their Heavenly Father has provided for his children.

3. *The Losses and Disappointments of Life.*—

These which are less or more the lot of all, are both numerous and various. They meet us at every turn of life's journey, beset all our undertakings, and spring out of all