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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Transmutation	469
Doubts and their Remedy	469
The Perils of the Play-house	470
MISSIONARY	470
BRITISH AND FOREIGN NEWS	471
HOME NEWS	472
CHURCH OF ENGLAND TEMPERANCE SOCIETY	475
EDITORIAL—	
Editorial Notes	476
The Institute Leaflets	476
Science and the Deluge	477
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL—	
The Conversion of Lydia	478
BOOK NOTICES	479
CORRESPONDENCE	479
CHILDREN'S CORNER—	
How Tom Tomkins made his Fortune	480

TRANSMUTATION.

With wondrous skill the dear Lord brings,
From all things, good to me—
And full of tender, faithful love,
He proves himself to be.

Though Care upon me lays her hand,
And others sit at ease,
While I toil on 'mid heat and dust,
Or buffet heavy seas—

Although I shrink beneath Pain's touch,
Drink Sorrow's bitter draught,
Or stand beside a grave, where once
The happy daisies laughed—

Still by His heavenly alchemy,
Fullness grows out of loss—
And though the fire may hotly burn,
It but consumes the dross.

The duties of each busy day,
Are channels all, for peace;
While little blessings on their banks,
Grow in a rich increase.

Where I have dreaded hunger, there
I've always found enough—
And oh, the soul views!—far and grand—
What if the path is rough?

Shape me, O Master!—I am clay,
Thou hast the potter's art,
To fashion a work beautiful,
Out of my stained heart.

From likeness unto like, mould thou
My nature, till I stand
A perfect vessel, meet for use
In the Eternal Land.

—Hannah Coddington.

He who is godly is both a diamond and a loadstone—a diamond for the sparkling of his grace, and a loadstone for his attractive virtue in drawing others to the love of God's precepts. A good man benefits others more than himself.
—T. Watson.

DOUBTS AND THEIR REMEDY.

There is no greater service which we can render to one another than to clear away, as far as we can, the doubts which cloud the mind and paralyze so effectually all real Christian effort.

Let us first clearly state that these doubts are no necessary part of Christian experience. A rightly instructed believer knows that it is possible to pass from the time of conversion, or from any given time when an understanding of the simple Gospel of God's grace has made clear to him his acceptance in the Beloved, to the close of life without giving way to a single doubt. The doubting state is a diseased and defective condition of soul, and renders impossible both the healthy development of its inner life, and that glorious victory over indwelling sin which results from unclouded faith.

But in order to get at the remedy, we must distinctly understand the nature of the disease; and to this end we will trace these doubts to their proper source.

A careful inquiry into the subject will show that, speaking generally, there are two sources from which doubts arise. They spring either from a consciousness that the surrender to God, and the separation from known sin, is not as complete as it should be; or else they are direct temptations from the Evil One suggested to our hearts, and must be treated accordingly.

We will now further unfold each of these sources of doubt.

Speaking of the first of them, we are obliged to say that there are many whose doubts do not astonish us at all. We would rather be astonished if they had none. It is true that God requires of us nothing at all as the price of our salvation. This has been paid for in the precious blood of Christ. We are saved 'by grace' and 'through faith' (Eph. ii. 8). But He does require something of His saved ones.

His salvation is not only from the guilt of sin, but from the love and practice of everything contrary to the highest standard of holiness. He saves us from guilt, through the merits of Christ, by imputing righteousness to us. This is justification. But 'the will of God' concerning us is also our 'sanctification' (1 Thess. iv. 3). He requires us to be holy, as He is holy (1 Pet. i. 15, 16).

But He does not look for anything from us without giving us the power to meet His requirements. He gives us, through His indwelling Spirit, a renewed spirit, which He expects us to exercise, and grace, which He expects us to use. But He requires us, in the strength of these, to work together with Him; to give ourselves without reserve to His service, and to separate ourselves from every known or suspected evil. This is to 'work out our salvation' (Phil. ii. 12).

It is only upon these conditions that assurance of salvation can be maintained. Let us make no mistake. This does not save us. Christ alone can save. But we can only appropriate His salvation by a 'faith which worketh by love' (Gal. v. 6). A faith which does not lead to this working out of salvation can give no assurance; and those who are conscious of much reserve in their surrender to Him, of allowing habits and practices which they know to be displeasing to Him, of seeking 'the friendship of the world,' which they know to be 'enmity with God' (Jas. iv. 4), must not expect to enjoy unclouded assurance. Those who are still conscious of clinging to any one known evil must

never be full of doubts and fears. There can be no real confidence between their hearts and God while they are knowingly grieving Him.

The remedy for doubts of this sort is simply to throw ourselves, without reserve, into the purpose for which God saves us. We must be willing to be saved from our sins (Matt. i. 21) in every known form, as far as in us lies; and up to the light we have, the separation from evil, both inward and outward, must be decided and real.

But there are doubts of another sort. Those who have gone as far as this, and are conscious of no willing reserve in their surrender to God, are often perplexed with doubts. These spring from the suggestions of Satan, who works either upon their imperfect understanding of the Gospel, or very often upon the disordered condition of their bodily powers.

Doubts of this kind are only one of the many forms in which temptation is presented to our minds by the great Enemy of our souls. And it is from not understanding this that so many get into darkness.

Let us bear in mind that there is a vast difference between having doubts suggested to us, and really giving them a place in our hearts. No believer is free from temptations to doubt. They may come over and over again many times in a day. But so many believers, not understanding that such doubts are simply temptations, allow them at once a place in their hearts, and begin to brood over them.

Let us be clear about this, that the suggestion of doubts is a temptation to which we are all at any moment liable, but that to entertain them for an instant is as much a sin as to give way, however briefly, to any other form of temptation.

Many believers have not a sufficient sense of the terrible sin of doubting, in the slightest degree, the word of God. To those who rightly understand the gospel, doubts are suspicions cast upon the merits of Christ, upon the all-sufficiency of His precious blood, upon the power of His sustaining grace, and upon the truth of God's promises to us in Him.

So many talk of *doubting themselves* as the ground of their doubts. This is only a subtle form of temptation. To doubt self is the best thing we can do; to trust self is the very worst. But doubting themselves need never make believers doubt God's love to them in Christ. Those who really doubt only themselves do not doubt their personal salvation through faith in Christ and for Christ's sake. But this doubting themselves is in too many cases only a false humility. In plain language, it means doubting Christ and His power 'to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him' (Heb. vii. 25.)

Doubts of this sort must be met in the same way as any other evil thoughts suggested to the mind.

Indeed, there are few kinds of thoughts more evil than those which cast suspicion on the faithfulness of God. They will come, but unless we make them our own, by giving them admittance into our hearts, they may harass us by their frequency, but they will not disturb our 'peace with God.' They can be 'quenched,' like all the other 'fiery darts of the wicked,' by 'the shield of faith' (Eph. vi. 16).

But over and above the sin of it, few are aware of the evil consequences of giving way to doubting. The human mind is so constituted that it easily forms habits of thought. Anything we accustom ourselves to brood over becomes, more or less, a fixed tendency of the mind. And many believers