



It Isn't all Right.

BEING A COMPLETE AND

THOROUGH REFUTATION

OF THE PERNICIOUS DOCTRINE THAT

"Whatever is, is Right."

By Cynthia Temple.

WE HAVE HAD A SURFEIT OF "PHILOSOPHY;" NOW WE WANT COMMON SENSE.



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PREFACE.

Within these last two years there has gone forth, on its, destructive mission, a most mischievous doctrine, (as it is popularly understood) to the effect that "whatever is is right"—a sort of philosophical *carte blanche* for deeds that are not, and never can be right. To help crush out this withering falsity—to assert the supremacy of conscience, Divine order and law; to help explode this revived fallacy, and to call back the wandering-souls who, allured by its glare, may have strayed away from the True Path—is the sole object of this publication. And that Heaven will bless the endeavor and crown it with abundant success, is the prayer, and hope, and fervent expectation of

THE AUTHOR.

IT ISN'T ALL RIGHT.

WITHIN a few brief years many, very many novel and exceedingly strange, not to say hurtful, ideas and notions have sprung up, to challenge attention and demand analysis ; nor have they failed to impress themselves upon the plastic front of this, the most remarkable age, and eventful epoch, of the great world's history. No notion, theory, hypothesis or statement, no matter how wild, immoral, obscene or ridiculous; but will find some to accept and believe it, even with all its palpable absurdities. Utopianisms, of all sorts and kinds, are rife to-day in the public mind. Strange, wild vagaries abound on all sides ; and we encounter extremes of the most violent description, turn whithersoever we may. In fact, as a general rule, the wilder the vagary, the more it departs from common sense and innate respectability, the more certain it is to attract attention, and enlist recruits—so deeply runs the abnormal vein through the bodies politic, social, philosophic and religious. Sinners of all sorts, but more especially those with penchants towards a particular *kind* of license, have always been on the *qui vive* for plausible excuses for their derelictions from the path of common honesty and moral and personal rectitude. Nor have the so-called philosophers of the times been at all backward or slow in the work of supplying these excuses. Every sort and species of villainy is, in these days, attempted to be based upon—Sacred Scripture. Your Mormon “seals” a dozen or two wives, according to Scripture ; your affinity-man or woman, claims holy inspiration as his or her warrant for infracting every social law ; the Perfectionist who lives in “complex marriage” with two hundred and seventy-four—*females*—(for to call them women were a desecration of that holy name !) tells you that “the true Church of Christ constitutes one great soul ;” and that the union between its members, of right, ought to be of the most *intimate* character. And these wretches have the effrontery to assert that in so doing they are but following out the example and precepts of Jesus the Blessed ! People there are by thousands who seek to so freely translate texts of Scripture, or

philosophical statements, that they can go on doing just as passion prompts, and yet apparently not transcend the law. Language, in these days, is twisted and distorted to such an extent, that one can hardly affirm that black is black, or that two and two are four, lest some so-called reformer or transcendental genius steps forth, and in a long disquisition proves to you that "black is not black, for the simple reason that the sheen upon which the eye strikes is invariably white; and that so far from two and two being four, they are really only three, because the mind can never conceive of similarities. There are no absolute resemblances, in figures, volume, or anything else; wherefore two and two must make either more or less than four!"

And so with words the fellow plays,
Talks much, yet still he nothing says.

Sophistry reigns King to-day, and rules it with a strong hand over every domain of human life, and human endeavor and interest. There are those who will give you a "moral law" and Scriptural authority for the commission of every crime in the entire calendar. There are others who take refuge behind the walls of an exploded Optimism—call aloud to the passer-by; bid him or her take full advantage of the times; eat, drink and be merry—for "WHATEVER IS IS RIGHT;"—itself, in so far forth as human life, interest and action are concerned, one of the most pestilent fallacies, and philosophical absurdities, that ever seduced a human being from the paths of moral Rectitude and Virtue. The abominable notion has gone forth, and to-day is slowly but surely not only sapping the foundations of domestic and social happiness, but is certainly infusing its deadly miasma over all the land. To do something towards stopping the advance of this horrible doctrine, is the design entertained by the Author of this Pamphlet—a Woman, an immortal soul, a member of the great sisterhood of women—a female pleading the cause of her sex, and one who prizes the virtue, purity and honor of her sex beyond all other things, the grace of God alone excepted.

People in those days talk much of "Liberty," when there is already too much Freedom in some respects; for "Philosophers" (Heaven save the mark!) have talked so much of liberty to do this, and liberty to do the other, that instead of wearing the goddess' crown, she has of late been clothed in the wanton's cap and robe. Virtue has seceded from Liberty; and Vice, for a time, has

usurped her throne ; but with Heaven's aid, we trust to soon drive her from the seat. In the work here undertaken to be accomplished, I confidently look for aid to every honest man. The deeps of my soul assure me that I look not in vain.

Within a comparatively recent period, the *Pope-ish* doctrine, that whatever exists is just as the Eternal One decreed and designed, has gone forth to the wide world under the express sanction of more than one great and honored name ; and it has received the implied, if not the direct, countenance of scores of others, not a few of whom call themselves Thinkers, Philosophers, and Philanthropists. This dogma, as it is, (and it cannot fail to be popularly understood,) is the most formidable and dreadful battery ever leveled against human happiness from the frowning ramparts of Hell itself ; for while apparently encouraging a reliance on the goodness of our Heavenly Father, it in reality sets a high premium on vice, and is the direct result of the most appalling and dreadful enginery of evil, attacking man, as it does, in his weakest points, and throwing a glamour over the moral sense which at once shuts out the benign light of all that is Pure, and Good, and True. It is the Dahlgren gun of wickedness—ignores all human responsibility, fosters all sorts of iniquity, prolongs the reign of Evil, retards the dawn of Righteousness, makes a person a mere natural machine, stultifies the moral sense, sears the conscience, libels Nature, blasphemes the Infinite, panders to the basest of all appetites and prejudices, dethrones the virtues, and inaugurates Discord and Error. It tears down at a single effort every rampart of domestic virtue, and becomes the authoritative warrant for license of every sort, and for every kind of wrong-doing, libertinism and profligacy that barbarous minds can invent.

Surely something can, and ought to be done, on the part of women especially, to extract the fangs of this viper, and to send it back writhing to its home, among all the other festering falsehoods of the past ages ; to send it back to associate with all other foul and loathing things that have ever cursed the earth.

May the world have a safe and speedy deliverance from this last new pirate ! At all events, I feel called upon to do my part towards this most desirable end ; and every man who remembers the word "mother," and recalls all the holy memories which cluster around it—every man who has a sister, or presses an innocent

daughter to his heart, will gladly become my helper in this important crisis.

In a certain, merely material aspect of the subject, it is undoubtedly true that "whatever is is right;" but when the venue is changed to intellectual, social, moral, religious and domestic grounds, *then* the affirmation is as foreign to the truth as any falsehood well can be. Take the civilized world at large, and not over ten persons in every one hundred can or will comprehend, or rest contented with, the higher and nobler definition of the great postulate, but a postulate only on the material, climatic, and other physical planes. On the contrary, if you affirm in the presence of one hundred persons that "it is all right," ten to one but that ninety of them will secretly roll the knowledge up, and profit by their—not your—*intended* definition thereof. It is human nature to take advantage of everything that promises to cut the restraining cords, and permit a looseness of action, thought, and sentiment. There are scores of thousands in this vast empire, who, upon learning that the so-called great men and women of the world, have asserted that all actions and all things are right and proper, will clap their hands in jubilation, and secretly, if not openly, avail themselves of the sophism to drive with a loose rein along the roads of life; do all sorts of evil things; give passion and prejudice full scope and play, and do their utmost to gratify self, heedless of the certain consequences that must accrue to themselves as individual integers of society; or to community as a whole. What care they if the walks and ways of life are transformed into practical realizations of Pandemonium, so long as their ends are served by the removal of the restrictions, every barrier and mound of which is swept away by the little sentence "whatever is, is right?" Not much, it seems to me. True it is, that all men are not either villains or badly disposed; equally true it is, that all women are not at heart unchaste; yet, if this modern doctrine be true, both may become so, and that, too, without violating any of God's laws; for if they remain virtuous, it is all right; if they sink into rotten filth and vice, it is all right still.

Unmistakably, this sophism is the most dangerous one that has yet arisen, either within or without the ranks of Spiritualism—the great and prolific mother of a very singular family of ideas. True, the notion did not originate with those who believe in the advent

of human spirits to the earth, and in their interference in mundane affairs. The advocates of the dogma do not pretend it to be a revelation from the other world, yet it cannot be denied that very many of those who have been most active in foisting this last absurdity on the world, are also those who believe devoutly in the ministration of departed souls. Justice, however, must be done, and therefore it is incumbent upon me to say that, notwithstanding many Spiritualists profess to believe this phase of Optimism, yet itself forms no part of the Spiritual creed; and tens of thousands of this class of thinkers reject the new *ism* in utter scorn. Only a few have clear conceptions or realizations thereof. Some people say that they most devoutly believe in infinite damnation; heartily concur in the assertion that some are elected to reign in the courts of Glory, and that some are god-voted to an eternal baking, roasting, broiling, grilling, in the deeps of Hell. No doubt these people are honest; still all such, save rarely a lunatic, consider the chances of "number one," as most excellent for escape from, or evasion of, the fire-doom, which they feel equally assured will be the lot of their neighbors, the numbers two, three, and four, and so on. Self-love rules this age.

Says G., in public confession, "brothers and sisters pray for me; I am the most heinous sinner, the vilest wretch on earth, and feeling the full enormity of my wickedness, I can but have a blessed assurance that if my just deserts were meted out, I should at this moment be grilling on the bars of hell, over the belching flames of the eternal pit, fanned by the infinite wing of God's justice!" Mr. G. knows that he is not uttering his real sentiments; he does not believe one word of such an All-Right doctrine, and only talks for the purpose of trying to say something eloquent—something that shall tingle in the ears, and awake the sleeping emotions of his audience. Down he sits, and straightway the Moderator calls on brother H. to tell his experience. Brother H. rises, and, having a spice of satire in him, says, "as for myself, I know that I am less virtuous than it is possible to be. I have nothing to say concerning my soul or its conditions, but I feel assured that every word uttered in regard to *himself*, by brother G., is *true*—every *word of it!*" "Why you miserable *lie-beller*, I'm a better man than you, any day!" thinks, if not, exclaims, brother G., in high dudgeon, at the idea of being supposed to believe for a single instant, the unreasonable things whereof he had, but a moment

since, delivered himself. It is utterly impossible that he should believe it. His first speech was unnatural, and its substance false and hollow ; his second one was spoken from the heart, and was, in all respects, a normal exhibition of human nature.

The advocates of the All-Right fallacy, are so many brother G.'s ; they sail in the same boat, and, when weighed in the same balances, tested by their own doctrines, will, to a man, be found wanting, and practically refute their own theory. That very odd sort of philosophers, who claim to be Optimists, and believe that "whatever is, is right," who "recognize neither merit or demerit in souls, have no fear of evil, devils, men, God or angels," and who use words to so little purpose, cannot for an instant, stand the fire of honest, candid criticism. Cheat one of them out of a dollar ; traduce his character ; call his wife a harlot, and his children bastards ; break his heart by all sorts of ill usage, and then ask him if it is all right ? and he will admit it to be so, (if I may use an expressive vulgarism,) *over the left!* If he replies, "it is all right that those things should be done ; but it is also right that I defend myself and make you suffer all I possibly can," then set him down as so far, *non compos*, for green and purple cannot be the same color ; a valley and a mountain cannot be the same. Such a man is bent on riding his hobby ; like Ephraim, he is bound to his idols, and the more he is let alone, the better for all concerned.

Logic is worth something in the affairs of the sublunary world. By its aid we determine truth, and are enabled to detect error ; and whosoever ignores its canons, not only *usurps* the title of philosopher, but evinces a woful want of common sense beside.

"God made all things ; God is perfect ; He never makes mistakes ; *ergo*, 'whatever is, is right,' proper—just what it should be, else God is a delusion and Nature a blank lie." Such is a fair specimen of the looseness with which these modern Optimists reason. One would think they were afflicted with something denser than mere intellectual obtuseness, else they could not fail to detect the glaring absurdities hid away in the above ridiculous proposition. Entrenched behind that rampart, they imagine their fortress to be impregnable ; when, if they would inspect it a little closer, the seeming adamant would prove to be even more flimsy than brown paper. Let us see : The advocates of the doctrine now being anatomized, pretend to believe most devoutly in the great "Principles of Progression." Now if these last do really exist, then their

new *ism* is a falsehood. Why? how? Because the very fact that all things (man and his institutions included,) have, during all past time, been ceaselessly advancing from the imperfect towards a higher and completer state—have been, and still are, steadily going ahead from bad to better, and from better to best—proves irrefutably that God never made a perfect thing, never created perfect conditions, but only planted *PERFECTIBILITY* in all that he has made. Of course, then, if this be so—and all things abundantly prove it—whatever is cannot be right; but all things are steadily moving in that direction.

According to the All-Right people, there must be a period in a man's affairs wherein it will be all just, and correct, and proper, for him to either sit calmly while some one insulates his head from his shoulders, or for him to perform the like operation on another person. There must be a time wherein it is all right and proper, and very fine for him, to run off with his neighbor's wife, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is his. It will be all right for him to seduce his friend's daughter, debauch the morals of his son, and to do other delectable things of the same general ilk—since "there's a time for all things."

Now I broadly assert that whosoever affirms that there ever was, is at present, or ever will be, a time wherein murder—grim, gaunt, spectral, red-handed, bloody-mouthed murder—is all right, is either a maniac or a fool! And yet the oblique, if not the direct, effect of the promulgation of the *sophism*, cannot but be the positive encouragement of that and all the other deep villainies God's earth ever groaned under, or God's angels ever witnessed and wept over!

"Oh, these things are all right to the *conditions* that gave birth to the acts you deprecate," replies the Optimist, to which I rejoin: Sir, or Madam, are these *conditions* right? Let us probe the matter a little deeper. You are a merchant; I enter your store to buy some cloth. We differ as to the price; I am an honest woman and you think to lure me from virtue's path, and instead of conversing about calico, you talk about Love and passion, my red, rosy cheeks, plump figure, sparkling eye, and a deal more in the same direction. Is this all right? Well, I go home, and, somehow or other, my husband finds it out, and as a recompense for your gallantry, breaks nearly every bone in your body; and in laying you on a sick bed for a year or so, not only ruins your business, and reduces your wife and children to beggary, but also blasts your

prospects for life. Is this all right? Again: Suppose that I am a man; that I have a quarrel with you; that, tempted by the devil, urged on by a momentary but ungovernable rage, I deal you a blow which sends you across the sea of Time to the shores of Eternity in less than five minutes: Is that as it should have been? Come, sir Optimist, speak out! Now that stroke of my fist may have forever decided the question whether you are thereafter to be an inhabitant of Heaven, or a denizen of Hades. Do not fail to take this consideration into the account.

Of course I am arrested, jailed, tried, convicted by a deliberating jury, of a deliberate homicide for which I must be deliberately choked—gaspingly, horribly **CHOKED TO DEATH!** Your business was settled in ten seconds; mine takes as many months, and within a day or two of the final act, my ears are regaled with the delicious music of the saws and hammers, busily plied in constructing the gay little platform from whence I am to step into——. Ah, God! what may I *not* step into from that platform!

During the delightful season of my waiting, my poor soul is prayed to, for, with and *at*; I am well fed, it is true, during the intervening days, weeks, and months, but I can't grow fat; my digestion is exceedingly poor, and I cannot eat for thinking. Ah, it is a terrible thing to *think*, under certain circumstances, yet it is our doom, and in compelling man to think, God created man's heaven or his hell. Well, the day has come at last—a gala day it is too, for don't you see the soldiers are out, in all their feathers and finery? *Certes!* it is a gala day—these hanging times! One would think the most fitting colors to be worn on such occasions should be black—black as the heron's plume—black as night.

'Tis a deed of darkness to be done;

Put out the lights—conceal the sun!

There stands the monument of the civilization of the nineteenth century—a gibbet. Up, up its steps I walk—painfully walk—for my arms are tied behind me. True, I am supported by a man of God on one side, and a sheriff on the other; one to sign my passport to the other world, the other to see me safely on the voyage—and the consciousness of these things makes it *very* painful walking up these sixteen steps. At last we reach the platform, and I take a look upward, one last lingering look at the bright blue heaven above me; but instead of it, my bulging eye-balls fairly crack with agony as my sight rests upon the

cross-beam, to the centre of which depends a short chain with one large link. I know that the link is for the hook attached to one end of a rope; the noose at the other end is for *my neck*! Ah, God, have mercy on my soul! "Time's up!" says the Christian sheriff—"and you must prepare to—die!" The military, the policemen, the "invited guests," and holders of tickets to the hempen opera, catch his words, and a nameless thrill pervades the mass, every one of whom stands there to receive a lesson in humanity, justice, mercy and Christianity! And now the rope is adjusted, the signal given; there is a sudden *chug*—strange colors float before my eyes, and stranger sounds salute my hearing sense—soft, low, sweet dulcet sounds—it may be the requiem for the dead which God's angels sing!—I am dead! My soul has been sent upon its long journey at the end of a yard of rope, and my body—poor sinful body—is dangling there to damn the age which sanctions the deed—dangles there a sickening sight, to sear the memories of the little host who had gone out there to see a man die—to see me strangled!

Of course, all these things are right, are they?—all just what God intended when He made the world, are they? Nonsense! But this is not all. Next day the story of my strangling is most minutely told in all the papers. The horripilant feast is forced upon scores of thousands, who read it from the fascination of Horror. Out of all this mass of readers, some three or four, who are life-weary, reading how "very easily" the culprit died, go straightway and hang themselves, as the most expeditious and pleasant way to shuffle off their miseries. We are not to the end even yet; for my wife dies of a broken heart, and my children are very frequently and benevolently told that their father once upon a time, danced a hornpipe on the empty air, until at last the taunts and jibes and jeers upset their reason; they run stark staring mad; one commits suicide, and the other ends her days in a madhouse. *Is all this right?* Oh, but we are dealing with a glorious doctrine, most assuredly!

Have we reached the end of the disastrous results springing from the popular interpretation and acceptance of the All-Right doctrine? Verily, nay! For the terrible act, the slaying of a man in my anger, may have doomed me to an awful punishment in the world beyond. It may be, that by that act of slaying I may have incurred a penalty that may not be satisfied when ages of agony

shall have elapsed ; and by that one single deed every faculty of my being may have been transformed into an instrument of torture. Mankind must think ; and so long as my soul is capable of thinking, the memory of my awful deed must cling to me, and I be doomed to see the fearful drama, myself the chief tragedian, constantly being re-enacted before the mind's eye, until, if ever, it may please the King of kings to bid my torment cease. It may be that my guilty soul shall be compelled to wander through all the eternal ages yet to be, haunted by that terrible remembrance, and lashed to agony by the inexorable whip of Remorse—the racking miseries of a guilty conscience—than which, no greater Hell can be well conceived ! The deed was mine, and I must suffer the dreadful penalty ; there can be no evasion, no escape ; for a man cannot commit suicide in Eternity—cannot run away from himself ! Yet this murder, this execution, and all the dire consequences that follow in its train, is all right ! May God have mercy on us, and forbid it for His own sake !

At this point we are met with something after this style, by the would-be Optimists : “ In the light of great general principles, everything *must* be as it should : From the Infinite's stand-point whatever is, cannot but be right.” To which I rejoin : How do you know ? You are not the Infinite ; and what can you know of the views He entertains of man and his actions, save that, being good Himself, He loves to see His creatures so ?

No one will, or, being sensible, can dispute the existence of certain immutable or fixed principles, which govern all things in God's material universe ; and, so far as dead matter and the unreasoning brutes are concerned, scarce a person can be found silly enough to deny that whatever is, is right. But it so happens that man belongs to neither of these categories—is not a citizen of either of these dominions ; on the contrary, he pertains to a higher realm altogether than those to which trees, stones, dogs, horses, sheep, goats and oxen pertain to, and wherein they begin and end their being ; yet the doctrine in question places man and all else in the same category.

The same things cannot be predicated of man, that are justly so of animals. People have liberty to choose and decide ; trees and brutes do not. Human beings have a sense of fitness, fairness and penalty ; but I have never yet seen a conscientious tree, nor a dog or tiger suffering under the pangs of remorse. How happens it, if

"it is all right," that we cannot elevate robbery and wrong to the dignity of the fine arts? How is it that he who debauches his soul, or the souls and bodies of others, cannot sleep quiet o' nights? Why *will* the thing called Conscience be forever raising up the ghosts of evil deeds, to haunt the doer till the death?

Gentlemen and ladies of the All-Right school, you have missed it this time; for not only the moral and religious sentiments of the age are against you, but it requires but a single effort, like the present, to arouse the common sense of all the world to arms against the sophistry. Nor do I care how closely you wrap yourself in this new blanket, it is impossible for you to evade the law of your own minds, or escape the inflictions of conscience whenever that law is broken; and this consideration and *fact* tells against you with immense force and power.

"Oh," replies the All-Right philosopher, "it is evident that you, Madam, are a Pharisee—one of the self-righteous ones, who rub their hands and thank God that they are not like other men!" Well, I reply, if they are better, why I say—"Good for the Pharisees!" that's all. But, if you go on proclaiming your *ism*, you will be quite Sad-you-see, before long, provided that truth and logic are of more vital stamina than their opposites; besides which, I confess to a liking and respect towards him or her, who in full view of the deep rascality everywhere abounding in scores and hundreds of our human kinsfolk, can inwardly, truly, fully feel that himself or herself is really righteous, and in the heart-deeps of being, and in a strong conviction of personal probity, thank God they are not like certain other people. Good for the Pharisees! I say again, provided they be of the sort just sketched.

At this, the All-Right person feels gleeful, and says—"Ah, *now* I have you; for you can't help admitting that what you have just said is all right!"

Not so fast, friend. I do not for an instant admit that the fearful *contrasts* among men, which alone can provoke such exclamations—without which no such expressions could ever be made—are at all right. *Every* man and woman should be good and true, just and righteous, and not merely a few of earth's children.

The age of virtuous talk is passing away; the age of virtuous action, we humbly trust, is drawing near. The genuine test of a philanthropist's honesty lies in the performance of good deeds—not in contenting himself with telling people it is all right, when

he knows, if he will but look about him, that much that is, is wrong. The only credentials current in the courts of Heaven, are the good deeds done while in the body ; nor will any amount of sophistical twisting impose upon the recording angel who sits within the gates of glory. Heaven has its customs law, nor will any contraband articles be allowed to enter, much less a soul whose best days have been spent in deluding the multitude into the insane belief that every crime in the calendar was All Right. *There*, a man must appear to be what he really is. The law of Distinctness is imperative ; and though Quashee, the negro who died fifty years ago, and whose soul is as fair as the best white saint's among them all, might desire to visit earth again, he could not do so in borrowed plumes, but must come—and to the eye of all who might behold him, must appear—a negro still ; the very self-same good-humored, earnest-praying, singing, shouting Quashee—him who, down on the plantations, used to carol to his dusky comrades all about their seeing

“ Do Lord a-comin’ on his old gray mar’,
Wid de golden saddle and silver bridle,
Bound down to jine de golden Car-a-wan,
Wid a golden pipe and silver ‘bacca,
Bound down to jine de golden Can-a-wan.”

Bless thee, Quashee ! I would not change thee if I could, for thou art good, and true, and earnest in thy singing, and thy prayers, and there is a *verve* and a life to *thy* religion, which the white man might well emulate ; still the law of Distinctness must forever keep thee under its action—nor caust thou appear to be what thou art not. Still, whatever be thy lot on earth or in Heaven, I can but bless thee in all thy outgoings and incomings, for thy lot and the lot of thine has been—still is—*very* hard indeed.

Soul is an eternal asbestos ; it cannot be consumed, but is purified by fire ; and so, whoever would have the soul a pleasant fount of joys in the worlds above, must not lay up bad memories of bad deeds, but forever steer clear of the rocks whereon it is certain to strike if the “ All Right” be the beacon or the chart.

Education has much to do in man and woman's final making up. There is a deal of good in every soul—whole mountains and rivers thereof ; but there is also much that may be perverted—many a little brooklet of very bitter water. In human education many of these have been unduly increased, till now they threaten to overflow the whole estate. Let us dam them up, cut off the supply, and see to it that these brooklets—the passions and bad tendencies

—be not caused to flourish by such culture as the oft-quoted maxims would encourage.

The age of extremes of one sort—now, happily, sliding away—bids fair to be succeeded by another kind, unless good men and earnest women seek to check it ere too strongly grown and mind-entrenched.

We stand in the door of the dawn, fully persuaded that the sun now rising will, ere long, gladden the hearts and homes of men. We have had a surfeit of Philosophy, and we need a little common sense. The fact that the race can see the first gleams of a better day, constitutes no just reason why any man or woman should assume an attitude of self-complacency, and proclaim alike to those who can, and those who cannot think clearly, that all the sin and sorrow, vice and misery now causing the very land to groan beneath the heavy load, is all right. Because to do so is to proclaim—a lie!—and never was, nor can be, otherwise. It will not do to shift the responsibility of all existing evils from ourselves to the Creator. Why? Because man's actions are mainly volitional results, and spring from his great prerogative—liberty of choice! Hence God is no more responsible for your deeds or mine, than we are for those of our descendants forty centuries hence. Were it otherwise, then creation is a stupendous farce, and God becomes our inveterate enemy, instead of being what I believe Him—our best and most benignant friend. The Infinite One created, made, fashioned and decreed the progression and procession of all things. But His work is not yet done—the mighty task is not yet completed; for He is at this day still working up the worlds toward the standard Himself can only know. He is still present with, and over us, in His divine Fatherhood and Providence; He still smiles when we do His will—still grieves, as of yore, at all that is bad or brutal, unseemly, unmanly, unwomanly, and wrong!

No, no; it will not do to charge God with our shortcomings, and none but an arrant coward would seek to crawl away from the presence of the music himself has evoked! Every true philanthropist—and these, be it known, are not such as talk Temperance and fatten on the worm of the still—are not such as publicly mourn over harlotry, and let houses for its prosecution—are not such as say, "It is all right," and by their daily actions give themselves the lie direct; are not such as commiserate poor Pompey, and vote him back to the gyves; are not such as go into holy hysterics once

a year, and from gaily-thronged platforms proclaim the negro a man and a brother, and next day "damn his *black* picture" because he offers love to their daughters, or attempts to sit down at the same table—merely by way of testing their honesty, and perpetrating a "black joke" at the same time ; not the strong-minded ones who are so rampant for women's rights, public applause, oratory and fanaticism, that they must needs enlist for life in a warfare against all men—not one of whom they ever made happy for a single hour ; not your lady of harsh voice and vinegar soul, who, in the business of world-saving, "goes it with a rush," to the utter neglect of the fireside, the husband, the baby, and the dear, sweet home ; not the Spiritualist, who *talks* exceedingly spiritual—and acts as if the body and its gratifications were the only things worth while attending to ; not the Harmonialist, whose harmony of life, deed and influence partakes of the nature of fling saws and discordant penny trumpets ; not of this sort is the true philanthropist ; but rather he (or she) who in a quiet way does all the good possible—and sticks to it. Every such an one, I repeat, realizes that the world needs bettering ; and for that reason feels called upon to encourage much less "talkee, talkee," and much more action, ACTION, with strong arm, steady purpose, and in the right direction. Evils—tremendous, soul-dwarfing, spirit-subjugating evils—such as now afflict the world, can never be talked down ; they must be written, worked, lived and fought down ; and the true business of every man and woman who wishes well to the world, is to be up and doing, and keep doing all the while. Will the evils whereof we so justly complain—prostitution, for instance—disappear if we merely stand idly looking on, proclaiming that it is all right, and voting ourselves philosophers, when we approach much nearer being fools ? He or she who thinks so, is neither man nor woman, but only a sort of "What is it ?" very interesting to look at and listen to, but a "What is it ?" nevertheless.

See ! yonder goes a woman ; she is fallen, degraded, lost to every sense of decency or shame. Her present mission is to sell herself for so much ready coin, to the first human brute who will purchase her. Does she do this fearful sin from the pure love of sinning ? No ! she does it that she may hand over the jingling deity to the baker in exchange for—bread ! bread sir, to keep her soul within her body yet a little while, and to keep that body above the ground for just a little longer. She is coarse and

untidy, uses bad language, and is low ; but still, she is—a woman—like your mother and like mine—and like them too, she was once pure, and sweet, and beautiful, and good ; but ah, Christ ! how fallen, oh, how fallen ! Yes, she was once like them ; God grant that they never be like her. Is she fulfilling her proper destiny ? Virtue is 'natural' ; vice is acquired. Bias towards either is hereditary. Circumstance governs the fate of many unfortunates like that woman : she, nor you, nor I, can control circumstance *alone*, but we can join the army of Goodness, before which bad circumstance must fly, and better take its place. Come, let's do it. Let us see how many of such fallen ones we can save in a year—this very identical current year. I'll try ! Won't you ?

The woman, that wretched sister ! Is she and her actions all right ? Nonsense ! Blasphemy to assert it ? She is sliding down the hill of Ruin ! and will reach the fatal bottom, unless we who can, shall, and will, put forth the effort to redeem and save her. She, poor thing ! and there are millions of such—more's the pity, and the shame, to those who have made her and them what we see—she is marring the beauty of her deathless soul ; is killing by inches the body she wears ; is defacing the priceless tablets of her immortal being ; and whoever says all this is right, is a fit subject for the lunatic hospital. And yet there are those who *do* make this preposterous assertion. Now hundreds, aye thousands, there be, who do not scruple to brand that woman—the unhappy representative of an entire class—with all sorts of infamous and opprobrious epithets, instead of, as they ought, saying and doing all they can to reclaim and save her. They rack the language for harsh names to apply to her, until the poor creature, feeling, most bitterly feeling, that no kind heart throbs for her, no tenderness is, or ever will be, vouchsafed ; that she must remain a victim to the spirit of human cruelty, or what is, if possible, still worse—mock charity ; feeling all this, and that she must continue to grope her way all alone through the world, and then drop prematurely and uncared for into the cold damp grave from a still colder world, and all unprepared, crawl up to the Judgment Seat ; feeling all this and more, it is no great marvel that her heart grows hard, and her once pure soul now totters on the very brink of desperation, while she eats, drinks and sleeps, the food and drink and slumber of vice and infamy, day by day, and week after week. Look ! there she has accosted a man upon the side-walk, but scarce has a single word passed ere one of the patent guardians or costodians

of the Public Morals—an individual in blue coat, brass buttons and arge authority, who has just tossed off a glass of the "good Rhein wein"—the generous proffer of a burly ruffian who can afford to *pay* for the protection of his magnificent looking-glasses and marble counters, behind which he stands to deal out liquid ruin at so much the glass—catches sight of the cyprian plying her dreadful trade. *She*, he *knows*, cannot pay, and so he grows indignantly scrupulous, gruffly tells her to move on, and accelerates her movements with a round oath or two, and a not very gentle push. She mutely obeys, because resistance is out of the question, besides which she knows that he carries a legally authorized bludgeon in his pocket, and that he would not hesitate to use it on the slightest pretext, upon either herself or any one who should expostulate or counsel gentler measures—a very dirty bludgeon it is too—still he tries to keep it clean, and once in a while washes it of the blood-spots and cleans it of the matted hair—human hair—from the heads of the last half-dozen drunken sots whom he found asleep upon the side-walks, and took *such Christian* means to arouse from their airy slumbers. But why should we find fault? Isn't he a Regular Policeman? Well, be quiet then, and don't complain. What better can you expect? Is it at all reasonable to demand that an officer should have plenty of muscle, and a heart at the same time? Nonsense! Now I ask if all the parts, or any of this true picture are right? and I answer *No!* and the utterance is both deep and full; so deep, so loud, so full that the very vaults of Heaven echo back, and ring out *No!*

No human being exists but in whom the germs of the generous and good, the beautiful and the true lie, ready to shoot forth into excellent glory. We know this, and know it well. These germs may be in fallow ground, still they are there, and it is your business and mine to so plow this fallow land that it shall cause these seeds to spring up and thriftily grow. What though the soil be hard and stony, dry and parched; the fruit of our culture will be rich and succulent, for the warming beams of God's sunlight and grace will perfect and ripen the produce, and it shall be immortally sweet, eternally beautiful and fragrant, forever and for aye! Reader, have you never observed the fact that even the very bad and vicious occasionally flash forth somewhat of the Divine—sometimes gleam out the hidden glory? Well, there's a mine of diamonds in every soul, and God and nature, and all human love calls

on you and I to bring these diamonds forth to the sunlight, that they may catch the radiance of Heaven, and flash out their glories on the air and to the world, kindling up the emulation of virtue and excellent doing in all human souls.

There goes that abandoned woman. Let us follow her—this prostitute—this lost and ruined sister—this creature, fashioned after the likeness of our God, but now, alas, so supremely foul and wretched. She is hieing *homeward*! Homeward? what a mockery that word conveys; yet she has what she calls a home, and beneath that shelter, such as it is, lies at this moment, upon its pallet of straw, a babe—*her* child—bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh. Poor infant! truly begotten in sin and brought forth in iniquity; but none the less a precious, priceless, immortal soul for all that—a soul just as dear as any for which God's Son forsook the courts of glory and came to earth to suffer and to die on the stony heights of Calvary—a soul just as precious to the Infinite heart, as the best born of earth—because it is a human soul, and His life pulses through it as well as through you or me, or the holiest ones of earth or heaven; and, albeit, we may, and as virtuous citizens of the great world, can but frown upon the guilt and folly that opened the gate by the which it entered into outer being—yet nevertheless it is a soul, and as such has crying claims upon our love, and care, and kindness; for being here is not that blessed baby's fault, and in the coming judgment God's prosecuting angel will hold it accountable for its own sins, not for its mother's sorrows and misfortunes. And even for its own sins, Sandalphon, the Prayer-angel, will eloquently plead at the feet of the crucified Redeemer.

Well, she has left the highway and turned down a narrow, dark, and dreadful alley, one of these horrible sinks of moral poison, pestilence and perdition—the awful and disgusting vice-cancers, sin-blotches, and festering pest-lanes, which are the eternal disgrace of all the great cities of the world. Infamous purlieus of misery, wherein gaunt robbery moodily sits plotting his villainy, and pale murder lies nursing red-handed butchery, who ere long will fright the very world with horror!

How strangely people change! A little while ago, and that woman's crest was held aloft, and erect in brazen impudence and defiance, as she paced up and down the streets, a human spider, intent upon drawing silly human flies into her horrible web—a web which they can never quit as pure, and good, and innocent in body

and in mind, as when they entered ; for it is poison—every thread and fiber of it, except the baby in the bed—and the deadly odor of the Upas fills all the region round about.

Why turns she so quickly down that lane ? Well, I will tell you. Because the itching and the tingling of her breasts told her that the babe of her agony and her shame was a-hungred for the thin blue milk of her bosom. And so she quits the street, for maternal love is much stronger than the love of guilt or money. Soon the glare of the street-lamp no longer shines upon her form, for it is lost amid the labyrinth and devious windings of that dark and noisome alley way, this horrid tomb of all the human virtues. But her aspect has changed ; and the flaunting courtesan hangs her head, as she carefully and lightly threads her way along. The harlot's sun has set, and the star of the Woman and the Mother reigns triumphant for—an hour.

Up, up, up, the dark and filthy stairs she flies, for the milk pains urge her on ; anon the attic is reached ; a little brass key turns in the lock ; a ready match is ignited ; the little lamp illumines the seven by nine—den, for chamber it cannot be called ; she runs to the bed-side, falls lovingly upon it, snatches up the prattler, presses it to her bosom, and "*My babe, my precious babe !*" she cries, as the great round tears gush up from her heart—her *woman's* heart, after all ! The little one answers with a gleeful chuckle, and in another moment is busily engaged in drawing vitality from the body of weakness—virtuous life from the paps of guilt ! Love, pure, dear, sweet and precious love reigns then and there ; just such love as your mother felt for you, my reader, my sister or my brother ; just such love, in kind, but not degree, as prompted our God to send his only begotten, because most perfectly begotten Son, to earth for purposes of salvation and redemption ; just such love as made the meek and lowly Nazarene toilsomely bear his cross up the stony steeps of Calvary, and afterward groan and die thereon ! Surely that woman is not wholly lost, who feels even a little love like this.

And so we see this woman in all her sin and misery. Is it All-Right ? By the God of Heaven, *no* ; a pealing, thundering, heaven-rending NO ! It can never be right for a true woman, or a true man to rest contented while such things be ! Society—you madam, and I, as integers thereof, must *work, work, WORK*, to bring about a better state of things. It can never be right to foster or in any way encourage the growth of such monstrous evils,

as I, a woman who loves her sex and race much better than a party or a philanthropic clique, herein so feebly attempt to outline and depict. The modern declaimers for the doctrine "Whatever is Right" could not have foreseen the fearful consequences likely to arise from the enunciation of the great sophism. I am charitable enough to believe they did not so foresee them.

Nevertheless the infectious malaria *has* gone out upon its soul-destroying mission; and doubtless there are scores of thousands who, failing to perceive the utter rottenness of the fallacy, felicitate themselves that, being God's creatures, they can do no wrong, because he is at the head of all human founts and springs of action; therefore everything is as it ought to be. It is quite time the calumny was refuted, and the people set right on this question, and if this endeavor in the right direction shall have, as I believe it will, the effect of depriving this new viper of its fangs, this detestable serpent of its sting, this asp of its poison, I shall not fail to thank God with an overflowing heart.

Doubtless all things in the mere material and dumb, deaf, unthinking, unconscientious and unreflecting world, are right, and the man or woman must be insane who would find fault, cavil at or dispute the truth of the what in this light, confessedly, becomes an axiom. My views on this aspect of the question, coincide perfectly with that of the author of a wonderfully wise and common-sense pamphlet on the use and abuse of the physical loves and passions, published by its author* within the last year, who, speaking on the "All-Right doctrine, says:

"Of course, then, I cannot evade the conclusion, looking at the subject from the stand-point of intuition itself, that God understood His business well when He began the world; and therefore when we take this lofty stand to pass judgment on this "All-Right" philosophy, we cannot help affirming that, beyond all cavil, the man is correct who affirms that whatever is right."

The author just quoted took good care, however, to say, that his endorsement of the doctrine extended not one single step beyond the mere physical world, its laws and action; for when the All-Right doctrine ventured beyond that and entered the vast domain of custom, habit, philosophy, morals, and religion, then it was woefully out of place, and unworthy of even respectful consideration. I fully agree with him in his restrictions and criticism

* A Doctor P. B. Randolph, of Boston, Mass.