

# Our Curbstone Observer

## On the Feebleness of Man.

It is not often that I am honored with a letter from a reader of this column; in fact, I have before me the first that I ever received. I have ranged at random over such a variety of subjects that I had come to the conclusion that very little attention was paid to my "observations." Still I kept on making them, possibly from habit. This communication is addressed to "Mr. Curbstone." That may be my name, and it may not; but whether it is or it is not, it matters very little, for the letter reached its intended destination all the same. The writer was greatly pleased with my comments upon the "Invisible Police," and would like to know what I have to say about freemen. If he would be so good as to substitute the word "freeman" for "policeman" and change a few of the situations described in my last article to suit the circumstances, he may apply all that I wrote in that number to the subject he suggests. In fact one need not go into all the particulars regarding the daily duties of any branch of the great public protection body to form an estimate of the real value and the deserved merits of the men belonging thereto.

I have entitled this contribution "Protection." I would not have it supposed for a moment that I have the remotest idea of referring to any political policy—a thing of a very different class. Since the trend of my articles has led me in this direction, I could not do better than have a few words in general. Human nature is naturally vain and consequently independent. We all love to feel that we need no protection, that we are not dependent upon any person. It is foreign to our nature, which is rebellious—to wish for protection. No man cares to admit that he owes what he has to another, or that he could not get along without the aid of others. This is all very natural. But it is contrary to the order of things. There is not one of us who is entirely independent; we all depend more or less upon a certain degree of protection. Were it otherwise we would be demi-gods on earth, we would enjoy that which humanity has never known since the day of original sin. We may possess untold wealth, enjoy the utmost extent of power, occupy the most exalted positions in the country, still we are in need of protection. I will take a few instances as illustrations, and I feel confident that none can gainsay my protection.

In the first place, I will leave aside, as unnecessary for the present, the general dependence of all mankind upon the protection of Providence. Without God's protection our lives would be as though they did not exist. Nor am I going to enter into the religious aspect of the question to talk about the protection of the saints, the angels, the Blessed Virgin, or of the Church on earth. These are matters that belong to another sphere and which do not require any elucidation at my hands. I am only going to deal with the purely natural phase of the question, leaving the supernatural one to those more competent. My proposition is this—and I base it on my own observations—that from the first to the last moment of life on earth the human being is in need of protection.

Truly the affairs of life have been well and wisely ordained. The infant in the cradle is completely and entirely dependent, for its mere chances of existence, upon the protection of its parents, or of others. To secure the very food that is necessary to feed its tiny system, the covering required to protect its body from exposure, the shelter without which it must die, the infant cannot do without protection. When it grows older, commences to walk, to talk, to get into dangers that it cannot recognize, it must have a protecting hand to guide its steps and to prevent it from all accidents. Still it depends on others for its food and care. The child becomes a young boy, or young girl, more than ever does it need the protection necessary to save it from all the dangers that arise before and around it. The young lad must be protected against himself; his youthful tendencies, his natural inclinations, his gradually developing passions, the young girl must be protected against the snares, the errors, the dissolutions, the follies, the hundred and one enemies that beset her path. And so far these youths are as much at the mercy of a harsh world as is the infant, and were it not for the protection they receive their lives would be but of short duration, and of very melancholy aspect.

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It would be out of the question for me to follow him into every avenue of life, but I will take the general citizen, the man of business. During his initial steps upon the way of commerce he needs the protection and guidance of his patron, or employer. Later on he becomes a successful merchant. All he owns is under some protection or other. The law of the land exists for him as a protection against imposition, robbery, dishonest combinations, and all those enemies of success in any enterprise in the world of affairs. The policeman—a mere instrument of that law—protects his stores and residence against the burglar; the fireman is awake while he sleeps, and watches and waits for the hour when the call of duty may summon him to protect the citizen's very life and to rescue his property from destruction. The insurance company protects him in case of a ruinous accident that might otherwise leave him penniless. Has he goods on the ocean, his belongings are under the protection of the captain and the crew of the vessel; are they in transport across the continent, he is dependent upon a score of officials, from the dispatcher to the switchman, from the conductor to the engine-driver. He is unjustly deprived of his rights, he flies to the legal profession for protection; has sickness knocked at his home, he runs to the medical profession for protection against death; turn as he may, hour in and hour out, he is constantly, unceasingly dependent on some person or persons in the world. If he pretends that he is independent, he simply attempts to falsify facts and to belie the condition of human affairs.

I will not dwell upon the protection of the wife by the husband, or the very frequent protection of the husband by the wife. These are matters that would lead me into a very labyrinth of examples and of reasoning. But I will follow the same man for a short time longer. He has built up his future, as it is called, he has made his home, he has educated his family, he has retired from business, he possesses a very large balance in the bank, and his old age is secured. Then comes the gradual descent of the hill; he is on the second slope, and one that appears much more inclined than the one he took so long to climb. The ills that are natural to age come one, and though comfort may assuage them, they nevertheless increase and multiply. He is soon dependent on his children, or his wife, or his servants, or his friends, for all that he needs. Gradually he sinks into as complete a dependence as that from which he emerged into manhood. The cradle and the arm-chair both hold beings that await the ministrations of others for their daily support. Finally, he requires the protection of all whom he has around him for the prolongation of his life, from day to day, then from hour to hour, and at last, from minute to minute. The last minute comes and the so-called independent man is, for the first time in all his existence, beyond the necessity of any human protection.

Is this an exaggerated view of the subject? I think not. There are societies formed for the protection of children, the protection of women, the protection of the indigent, the protection of almost everything on earth. What one of us can lift up his head and say that he will never need such protection? There are asylums for the protection of the insane, can any sane person feel the positive assurance that he will never need such protection? I can boast today a clear head, a normal brain, a solid judgment, and all the ordinary faculties of a man; I have no guarantee that God may not call me to account to-morrow for the use I have made of such faculties; no more have I any warrant that He may not see fit to extinguish, in an instant, that Heaven-imparted gift of reason—and were He to do so, no matter what my gifts or my acquisitions might have been, the plain result would be a refuge under the protection that society extends over those no longer able to protect themselves. The lamented President Lincoln, one of the greatest men that America has produced, loved to ever repeat the opening lines of that poem, which commences:

"Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

There is not one of us who might not constantly ask himself the same very pertinent question. We have nothing to be proud of; we are entirely dependent on some other power for all that we possess. The most brilliant mind may be plunged into gloom in a twinkling, the most perfect features may be altered to a mass of ugliness, the most attractive form must sooner or later bend under the weight of time, and assume the decrepitude of age—if not otherwise altered by the Hand of Providence. We are neither independent, nor free, nor beyond protection, nor can we claim one moment's immunity from any or from all the ills that surround us. It is the "fool" of the Scripture that calls himself independent; it is the wise man that admits his need of protection and is not ashamed to accept it. This is about all I have to say, at least for the present, on this subject. Sometimes or other I may have occasion to return to it when dealing with other matters.

## SPEAK THE GOOD WORD.

It isn't the thinking how grateful we are  
For the kindness of friends come to bless  
Our sorrow or loss  
'Neath the weight of the Cross;  
It is telling our gratefulness.

It isn't the love that they have in their hearts,  
And neglect or forget to reveal,  
That brightens the lives  
Of husbands and wives,  
It is telling the love that they feel.

It isn't the thinking of good to mankind  
That comes as a cooling drink  
To the famishing ones  
Of Earth's daughters and sons;  
It is telling the good that we think.

It isn't the music, asleep in the strings  
Of the lute, that entrances the ear,  
And brings to the breast  
The spirit of rest;  
It is only the music we hear.

It isn't the lilies we hide from the world,  
Nor the roses we keep as our own,  
That are strewn at our feet  
By the angels we meet  
On our way to the Great White Throne.

It isn't the silence of hope unexpressed  
That heartens and strengthens the weak  
To triumph through strife  
For the great things of life;  
It's the words of good cheer that we speak.

—William J. Lampton.

## NOTES OF TEMPERANCE.

THE BARTENDER.—In the issue of January 12, the New York "Journal" had an editorial on "What the Bartender Sees." The editorial in itself is not so remarkable as the fact that it appears in one of the great New York dailies. The endless procession of drinkers that pass daily before the bartender in the ordinary saloon are all well described. The fimsy and false excuses offered by nearly every drinker are all characteristic and the moral drawn is most forcibly stated as follows:

"You Mr. Reader, have seen all these types and many others, have you not?  
"Why did you see them? What reason had you for seeing them?  
"The bartender stands studying the procession to destruction because he must make his living in that way. He is a sort of clean-approved Charon on a whiskey Styx, ferrying the multitude to perdition on the other side of the river. But what is your business there?"

"You might as well be found inside an opium den.  
"The drink swallowed at the bar braces you, does it? If you think you need a drink, you really need sleep, or better nourishment, or you need to live more sensibly. Drink will not give you what you need. It may for a moment make your nerves cease tormenting you. It may do in your system for an hour what opium does in the Chinese for a whole day. But if it lifts you up high, it drops you down hard.  
"And remember:  
"There is no such thing as moderate drinking at a bar.  
"You think you can take your occasional drink safely and philosophize about the procession that passes the bartender.  
"But the bartender knows that you are no different from the others. They all began as you are beginning. They all in the early stages, despised their own fore-runners.  
"They were once as you are, and the bartender knows that the chances are all in favor of your being in the multitude of them.  
"Even like the poor thin nervous drinker of hard whiskey, who once wondered why men drink too much.  
"The bartender's procession is a sad one, and you who still think yourself safe are the saddest atom in the line, for you are there without sufficient excuse.  
"It is a long procession, and its end is far off.  
"It is born of the fact that life is dull, competition is keen, and ambition so often ends in sad and failure.  
"A better chance for strugglers, a more generous reward for hard work, better organization of social life, solution of the great unsolved problems of real civilization, will end the bartender's procession.  
"Meanwhile, keep out of it if you can. And be glad if it can be suspended, temporarily at least, on Sundays."

The Monday morning issue of the Chicago American also contained an editorial in the same vein.

## Catholic Highlanders of Scotland.

No one who has lived amongst the Highlanders and studied the character of the people can fail to love and admire them. Their ordinary life, occupied in quiet, pastoral avocations, induces a shyness with strangers, but under the calm exterior there is a deep fund of emotion, ready to well up when stirred by religious enthusiasm. For their Gaelic prayers are full of poetry and abounding with veneration, and are treasured up from one generation to another. Witness the beautiful hymn invoking the Blessed Trinity, St. Michael, St. Columba and the "golden-haired Shepherdess, Mother of the Lamb without spot," in which the people of Inverness and the other Catholic

islands publicly commend to God and the saints the welfare of their flocks and herds, as they lead them annually to the summer grazing grounds. Generous to a fault, they are ever ready to bestow upon the needy; staunch of purpose, they are a race given to undying friendships, even though, like all people whose affections are strong, they may be slow to forgive an injury.  
The position of a priest in a Highland community, is, as may be imagined, one of exceptional authority. The deep reverence and enthusiastic devotion with which the people regard their faith, extends to the person of the priest, and not only in spiritual things, but even in many of the everyday affairs of life which even remotely concern his interests, his will is obeyed with childlike docility. Examples will show this better than pages of description. The writer knows one Highland priest who has taken that from the public-house, on a Saturday night, the too indulgent members of his flock, and that with a liberal use of his "pastoral staff," nor was he ever grieved. Again, it is still customary in some parishes for the priest to call to the altar on a Sunday, for public reprimand, the notorious delinquents of the past week. It is doubtful whether such a survival of the discipline of the early Church could be found in any other European country, except, perhaps, in some of the more secluded parishes of the kindred race in Ireland.

It is not astounding, therefore, that the temporal interests of the priest should be regarded as the proper object of his people's care. That it is so is shown by the fact that in the country districts the rougher part of the farm work is accomplished gratuitously. Should he need any carting done, he announces from the altar the different days upon which he desires the various farmers and crofters to assist; the whole parish again, will assemble to cut turf for fuel on the appointed "priest's mow-day," and so with other matters of a like nature.

Brought up in such principles, the young Highlander regards the priest's interests as his own, and is not likely to be wanting when his help is needed in things that affect religion more directly. Is there a special feast day—some procession of the Blessed Sacrament—the priest simply announces that help will be needed, and scores of willing hands are at his service. The writer can never forget an occasion of the kind in which he was privileged to take part, and in which the cheerful readiness with which the young men of the glen devoted themselves to the needful labor, was as edifying as their religious demeanor during the sacred function itself.

It is true that in such secluded districts as those we are now considering, the work required is very different in its nature from that so urgently needed in the cities and large towns; but whatever assistance the Highland priest may demand, there is always abundant goodwill to supply it, and that, after all, is the question at issue.—Catholic World.

## FIVE MINUTES SERMON.

ON MIXED MARRIAGES.—From the time of Christianity, Holy Mother Church has always most bitterly deplored and deeply lamented mixed marriages. In no fewer than thirty councils, two of which were general, she warned her children in a most impressive manner against such baneful unions, and when she granted dispensations to the contrary, though the promise of rearing the children as Catholics, and complying with all the other necessary conditions, had been given, yet were, amidst tears of sorrow, and simply to avoid greater evil, i.e., to prevent the apostasy of her erring children. In such nuptials, the Church forbids, even in cases of dispensations, all solemnities at the altar, and preserves that the parties to be united, give their marriage consent in the sacristy or the house, before the pastor and two witnesses, whereupon their names are registered by the priest, who wears neither surplice nor stole, and they are then dismissed, without prayer or blessing. Behold, this is the general law of the Church! Does not this regulation proclaim, louder than words, what the Church thinks of mixed marriages?

And is our holy mother wrong in regarding them as highly injurious? What is it possible that marriages, in which conformity to all that is highest and holiest is wanting; viz.: in religion, where one does not know whether he will meet the other in the next world—where the non-Catholic according to the false principles of his religion, is justified in being divorced and married anew, whilst the Catholic must remain single during the life time of the former. Great God! can such marriages be sanctioned in Heaven! Can they be approved and blessed by the Church?

And yet, beloved Christians, these are not the greatest evils which follow in the train of mixed marriages; such monstrosities appear as naught when compared to the woful consequences which such unholy unions bring to parents and children. For, I ask: How is it possible, that a Catholic can live with a non-Catholic for years, day after day, without suffering injury in his faith, in his religious life? What must become of a consort, who in her house in her family circle, scarcely ever sees or hears anything of her religion, whom no Catholic example protects and supports, edifies and strengthens, who on the contrary, is constantly entreated by non-Catholic relatives to become a traitor to her religion and to permit her chil-

dren to be lost to the Catholic Church. Verily, not to succumb to the violence of such temptations requires more than human power.  
Daily experience shows us that such a parent fares in religion, as does a person sick with consumption. The consumptive will not believe his condition dangerous; he thinks his cough only a slight one, which will be better in a short time. And still his strength becomes perceptibly weaker from day to day, and he approaches certain death. Thus it is with the Catholic faith in mixed marriages. In the beginning, the Catholic is still zealous and does not omit any of his duties. She struggles, but gradually her strength diminishes; she grows tepid in prayer, fails to assist at Mass on a feast of the Blessed Virgin; she approaches the sacrament, but only stealthily, the grace before and after meals, the sign of the cross and the Hail of Mary are no longer thought of, and thus, step by step, the road to indifference widens, until finally the attendance at divine services and the reception of the sacraments are totally neglected, and of her religion nothing remains except her name in the baptismal record. Unfortunately, this, too, has been lost by thousands of such unhappy husbands or wives on account of complete apostasy. Beloved Christians, such are witnessed daily, and should not our holy mothers, the Church, have reason to deplore such marriages and to caution her children against them?

## LIVER TROUBLES.

LIFE FULL OF MISERY 'T SUFFERS FROM THIS TROUBLE

Its Symptoms Made Manifest by a Coated Tongue, Bad Breath, Bad Taste in the Mouth and Pains Extending to the Shoulders.

(From the Brockville Recorder.)  
Suffers from liver troubles and life one of almost constant misery, growing worse and worse unless prompt steps and the proper remedy be taken to restore the organ to its natural condition. Mrs. Joseph Leclaire, of Brockville, was such a sufferer, but has been, happily, released from the trouble by the only medicine known to thoroughly restore this important organ to its normal condition, once disease has fastened upon it. To a reporter, Mrs. Leclaire willingly gave her story for publication. She said: "For a long time I suffered severely from complications of the liver and dyspepsia. I would awake in the morning with pains under my shoulders and in my stomach. My tongue was heavily coated, and I had a horrible taste in my mouth, especially on arising in the morning. I was constipated, and at times my head would ache so badly that I could scarcely lie on my pillow. There was such a burning sensation in my stomach at times that it felt as though there was a coal of fire in it. The pain was especially severe after eating, and for months it was one of misery. A friend advised me to take Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I did so. After using the first box, there was a material improvement, and in the course of a few weeks longer I felt that I was completely cured. My tongue was cleared, the bad taste left my mouth, the pains disappeared, and I am as well as ever I was. Before using the pills I suffered from bronchitis at times, but it has never since troubled me. I can recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to anyone who suffers as I did."  
Dr. Williams' Pink Pills restore health and strength by making new, rich, red blood, thus strengthening every organ in the body. They do not act merely upon the symptoms, as ordinary medicines do, but go directly to the root of the trouble. In this way they cure such diseases as liver and kidney troubles, rheumatism, paralysis, St. Vitus' dance, heart troubles, sick headaches, anaemia, and the irregularities that make the lives of so many women one of constant misery. Do not be persuaded to take any substitute; see that the full name "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People" is on the wrapper around every box. If in doubt, the pills will be sent postpaid at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Denied the Privileged.—Jepson: I notice that you always speak well of me to my face, Jobson, and while I have no reason to believe that you do otherwise behind my back, I think it does not harm a man to be criticized by his friends—to be told his little faults. I know I'm not perfect, and I would be glad to have you remind me of the fact some times. Jobson: Tell you of your faults? Jepson: Yes, criticize me; tell me what your honest private opinion of me is. That's what I want. Jobson: Jepson, you are six foot two and I am five feet four, and you want me to give you my honest private opinion of you? No, sir.

She Had Kept Her Word.—Mr. Martin was talking at her dinner table, in his usual clever manner, about the inconsistency of women. "These young ladies who protest that they are never going to marry!" he broke out. "Everybody knows they will belie their own words at the very first opportunity." He paused, and evidently hoped that Mrs. Martin would come to the rescue of her sex; but that dis-

creet woman held her tongue. "Why, Mary," he continued, "you remember how it was with yourself. I have heard you say more than once that you wouldn't marry the first man alive." "Well, I didn't," said Mrs. Martin.

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## NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that application will be made to the Legislature of the Province of Quebec, at its next session, for a Bill incorporating an Association to be known under the name of "Followers of St. Anthony of Padua, Montreal," for mutual benefit purposes.  
Montreal, Jan. 8th, 1902.

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Discounts 10, 15, 20, 25 33 1-3 50, 75 p.c.  
Delay is Dangerous.

While none of our Clearing Bargains will be withdrawn during the present month, many may be sold out. As a matter of course, the bigger the bargains, the quicker they go. Delay is, proverbially dangerous. Therefore, if you have set your mind on anything special, come at once!

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Men's Unlaundered White Shirts, reinforced back and front, endless facings back and sleeves, \$1.00, for 69c.  
Men's Silk Trimmed Night Shirts, 75c, for 47c.  
Men's 4-PLY Imported Collars, \$1.75, for \$1.35 dozen.  
Men's White Handkerchiefs, half doz., for 25c.  
Men's White Pique, flowing end, Washing Ties, 25c, for 12c.  
Men's White Pique four-in-hand Ties, 20c, for 10c each.  
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