

than most other known systems of insurance.

There is a manifest propriety in our making some reference to the management of the *Globe*. Mr. Pliny Freeman, the President of the Company, is a life manager of many years' experience, whose thoughts for all these years have centred upon the science of life insurance and its kindred topics. He originated this Company, and has administered its affairs from the outset. If, following the lead of the late Horace Greeley, he should incline to write a "What I Know about Life Insurance," he could produce a book worth every one's perusal. He is an able writer on finance, and has made himself a wide reputation by his discussions of financial matters and currency questions. President Freeman is ably seconded in his management of the *Globe* by Mr. James M. Freeman, Secretary; Mr. E. H. Sewell, Actuary; Mr. J. F. Burns, Superintendent-in-Chief of Agencies; Mr. William Sturgis, Manager of Agencies, and Mr. J. G. Holbrook. Messrs Burns and Holbrook have more recently become connected with the Company; but had won in other places high reputation as life managers—Mr. Burns as the founder and upbuilder of the Phoenix Mutual, of Hartford, and Mr. Holbrook in connection with the International Life of London. Obviously, the official and managerial force of the *Globe* is singularly well adapted for efficiency and for the conquest of success. And that the *Globe* is to have its full share in the victories yet in store for life insurance in this country, we will not permit ourselves to doubt.

#### WHAT IS LIFE INSURANCE.

(From the French of L. Bergeron.)

You are the father of a family, and you have the prospect of leaving at death a property insufficient for the support of those whom you love. A friend, pointing out a substantially well-located and valuable house, perhaps asks, "Would you care to bequeath yonder house to your children?" "Certainly," you would answer, "if I were in a situation to pay for it!" "Suppose it could be arranged so that you should not be asked to pay the purchase money, but only the interest; an annual interest, proportioned to your present age—say 2½ per cent. if you are 30 years old; 3 per cent. if 35; 3½ if 40; 4½ if you have reached 50; 7½ if you are a sexagenarian?" "I could, of course, meet these conditions by a little self-denial, but there would be the shadow of a coming time when either myself or my children must pay the capital." "Never, neither you nor they." "But what if I should die suddenly?" "Your debt would die with you; and your children would become the owners without having anything to pay." "Even if I should have made only three or four annual payments?" "Yes, even if you had paid but one. If an accident should happen to you the day after signing the contract, that contract would exist in full effect." "And, supposing I lived a long while, as I have every reason to hope I shall?" "You will never live long enough to regret having made a bad bargain; for a time will come when, in place of continuing to make payments of interest, you will, on the contrary, be in receipt of money." "I would like to make an arrangement like this, but it all appears too good to be true." "Nothing could be more rational; only in place of a house, which, however well constructed would be exposed to depreciation in value, suppose my statement to apply to a capital of five, ten, or twenty thousand dollars, according to the amount of the annual interest you are willing to consecrate to the constituting of a heritage." Such is the mechanism of life insur-

ance, applicable alike to the lowest and to the highest positions of social life. Of a thousand houses, well or poorly built, how many will, on an average, escape destruction by fire? Nine hundred and fifty at least. Of a thousand men, of average robustness, how many may expect to escape death? Not one. Why, then, insure your house and not your life, which is infinitely more precious, and vastly more exposed?

Life insurance is the urgent duty of every man—be he artist, physician, lawyer, engineer, writer, merchant, public functionary, or employed—who finds in his labour or his talents the resources necessary for the education or the support of a family. To expose one's family to discomfort, and perhaps misery, by a father's premature death, is to commit toward them a most selfish and heartless deed, in view of the ease with which all this might be prevented; it is to assume to one's self the moral responsibility of the disorders this misery would beget, a burden so heavy and so dangerous, particularly in the case of persons accustomed to comfort.

How many families have been entirely ruined by the single fact of the death of their head, and reduced to the charity of this benevolent world? The sons will usually draw themselves out of the wreck in some way or other; but the widow and the daughters, what becomes of them? The father who does not shudder at the contemplation of this single thought wastes his time in reading these lines. I despair of convincing such a one. The mechanic or the speculator who risks in an enterprise a part of his fortune, or what is worse, that of other people; the man who contracts a temporary obligation, and sees the advantages of a transaction whose success his death would endanger; the debtor whose labour and honesty are the sole guarantee of his creditors—a guarantee strictly subordinated to his existence—All those, in fact, who are liable for obligations not secured by material collaterals, cannot acquire the certainty of acting honourably in every instance, whatever may be their intelligence or their energy, unless they add the guaranty of life insurance. It is for such a simple question of honesty—an insurance against bankruptcy. Fathers who possess a sufficient patrimony, a business establishment so solidly based that their death would not shake it, a transferable office or position whose value a forced sale would not diminish—these alone have a right to feel indifferent to the benefits of life insurance. Nevertheless, life insurance would be, even for these, a good precautionary measure, a supplemental moral security, and a wise investment. If it should cease to be necessary under certain conditions of fortune, it would become, by way of compensation, less onerous, because the premium is then little more than an unfelt assessment upon a surplus. The father, solicitous as to the future of a daughter endangered by the prodigality, imprudence or misfortune of a son-in-law, could, without prejudicing the interests of his other children, prevent the consequences of threatened disaster, by the aid of that restorative, insurance. Life insurance is convenient also for persons charitably disposed towards endowing benevolent institutions, leaving money or annuities to friends or old servants. A yearly assessment upon their revenues will give satisfaction to their generous impulses, without prejudicing the interests of legitimate heirs.

There are not wanting even sensible persons who assert very seriously that life insurance is unlucky, because, say they, it evinces a distrust of Providence. Then let us bid farewell to the proverb, "Heaven helps those who help themselves," and welcome fatalism; for these pious scruples tend to nothing else. Don't ask these intrepid logicians by what anomaly they think themselves at liberty to insure their houses and their crops against fire, and to call the firemen to the aid of Providence when fire threatens them. They will answer that this is a very different thing. Why? "Because." Of course to this last there can be no reply. But why undertake to refute a sophism which its authors belie by their deeds? For, say what you will, you constantly practice life insurance without being aware of it. You work to give your

children their daily bread: insurance against hunger. You cover them with warm clothing in winter: insurance against cold. At the slightest symptom of disease which awakens your anxiety, you call in the physician and administer the remedies he prescribes: insurance against sickness. You sometimes make sacrifices beyond your resources to give them a substantial education: insurance against ignorance and against the moral infirmities it engenders. Finally, you endeavour to save something by economy. To increase your patrimony, you hypothecate the present for the future profit of those you love: insurance against misery—distrust of Providence. And, in fact, what is man's whole existence spent in doing but insuring himself against death by accident or disease? Therefore be consistent with yourself, and, if insurance is practical blasphemy, cross your arms like the fakir, for there is nothing left for your hands to do; and give yourself over to that Providence which feeds the sparrows, and leave to it to feed, lodge, clothe and doctor your children and teach them how to read. But, if work is the law of humanity, if foresight is a virtue, in what respect could you be culpable in foreseeing that some day you must die? And, if you foresee that, in fact, it is possible for you to have but one lifetime, could it be impious and immoral to dispel, from the future of those whose safety and happiness Providence has entrusted to you, the fearful consequence of your compulsory desertion?

This puerile prejudice chiefly emanates from women, for life insurance, at the outset inspires them with superstitious aversion, or comes into collision with their exaggerated, though creditable, sentiments of delicacy. This class of people, I am confident, would courageously accept misery rather than countenance an infraction of this blind principle. Shall we say that those are bad wives or bad mothers who stubbornly press a theory whose consequences may be so terrible for the future of their children? Certainly not; but they form a judgment from wrong impressions; they condemn before they understand the case. I address myself to mothers worthy of that title, and I appeal from their unreflecting repugnance—to their heart and to their reason. Insurance, you say, brings misfortune. If it be so, you need not be at the trouble of combating it, for the companies who practice this specialty would find it profitable to close their offices; the death of the insured being as much a loss to them as the burning of a house. Experience proves, on the contrary, that life insurance, far from proving a misfortune, is often a title to longevity for the father of a family is thus armed, in the prospect of sickness, with a moral security calculated to keep him in health. Ask physicians if life insurance entails misfortune. They will answer that, among men of the same age and the same temperament, attacked in the same degree by same disease, they feel ten times as confident of curing the one who has provided for the necessities of his family as they are of curing the improvident man, whose agony is kept alive by the misery that menaces his dear ones; because, for this last, remorse for duty unperformed is a cruel aggravation of his sufferings and danger. If the sickness is beyond remedy, and both must succumb, the one will pass away peacefully respecting the future of his family; the other will expire amid the most terrible moral tortures, as he thinks of carrying with himself into the grave the well-being of those dear to him. It is permitted to the wife deprived of maternal joys to enwrap herself in the utmost sentimentalism, and to yield to the inspirations of superstitious terror. Her personality alone is at stake; her disinterestedness is noble and worthy of respect. Let her forbid her husband to enjoy the consolation of insuring her against the chances of poverty which widowhood will bring upon her; we have no objection to make—unless to doubt whether a wife can be loyal, affectionate, and devoted, without carrying conjugal oneness as far as the Malabar widows, who, nevertheless, begin at once, to contemplate marriage again. But this self-denial, which a woman may enjoy when it concerns