



The Price of a License.

What's the price of a license? How much did you say?

The price of men's souls in the market to-day?

A license to sell, to defame and destroy, From the gray hairs of age to the innocent boy—

How much is to pay?

How much is to pay? How compare with your gold?

A license to poison—a crime oft retold—

Fix a price on the years and the manhood of man;

Take what is not yours to destroy if you can—

What's the price, did you say?

How much for a license? How reckon the crimes

Men are caused to commit when besotted at times?

To take character, reason, foredoomed to the grave,

And give men your curses when pity cries 'Save!'

What's the price, did you say?

How much for a license? Count the price of the home;

Of the tears that are shed in its anguish and gloom;

Count the happiness lost on the vote that you gave

When you voted the license that made man a slave.

What price was to pay?

How much for a license? Count the price of her life

Whom your children called mother and whom you called wife;

Who died of her grief, heart broken away, That her home was left bare of its bread day by day,

The license to pay.

How much is to pay? Count the price of one soul,

Multiplied by the names on eternity's scroll, Of those who have gone, once in manhood's strong pride,

Then add those who through them have suffered and died—

What's the price, did you say?

How much is to pay? You count out the gold,

But the price to be paid has never been told, Count the measure you mete out your neighbor to-day,

To be meted you back—but in God's time and way,

'Tis a debt you must pay!

—Mrs. S. A. Gordon, in 'Voter's Orders.'

How It Is Done.

(By Dr. Samuel Smiles.)

'I say, mate,' said one workman to another, as they went home one evening from their work, 'will you tell me how it is that you contrive to get on? How is it that you manage to feed and clothe your family as you do, and put money in the penny bank besides, whilst I, who have as good wages as you, and fewer children, can barely make ends meet?'

'Well, I will tell you. It only consists in this—in taking care of the pennies!'

'What! Is that all, Ransom?'

'Yes, and a good all, too. Not one in fifty knows the secret. For instance, Jack, you don't.'

'How? I? Let's see how you make that out.'

'Now you have asked my secret, I'll tell you all about it. But you must not feel offended if I speak plainly. First, I pay nothing for my drink.'

'Nothing! Then you don't pay your shot, but sponge upon your neighbors.'

'Never! I drink water, which costs nothing. Drunken days have all their to-morrows, as the old proverb says. I spare myself sore heads and shaky hands, and save my pennies. Drinking water neither makes a man sick nor in debt, nor his wife a widow. And that, let me tell you, makes a considerable difference in her outgo. It may amount to about half a crown a week, or £7 a year. That £7 will clothe myself and children, while you are out at elbows, and your children go barefoot.'

'Come, come; that's going too far. I don't drink at that rate. I might take an odd pint now and then, but half a crown a week. Pooh! pooh!'

'Well, then, how much did you spend on drink last Saturday night? Out with it.'

'Let me see; I had a pint with Jones. I think I had another with Davies, who is just going to Australia; and then I went to the lodge.'

'Well, how many glasses had you there?'

'How can I tell? I forget. But it's all stuff and nonsense, Bill.'

'Oh, you can't tell? You don't know what you spent? I believe you. But that's the way your pennies go, my lad.'

'And that's all your secret?'

'Yes, take care of the penny—that's all. Because I save, I have when you want. It's very simple, isn't it?'

'Simple? Oh, yes; but there's nothing in it.'

'Yes, there's this in it; that it has made you ask me the question how I manage to keep my family comfortable, and put money in the penny bank, while you, with the same wage, can barely make ends meet! Money is independence; and money is made by putting pennies together. Besides, I work so hard for mine, and so do you, that I can't find it in my heart to waste a penny on drink, when I can put it beside a few other hard-earned pennies in the bank. It's something for a sore foot or a rainy day. There's that in it, Jack; and there's comfort also in the thought that, whatever may happen to me, I needn't beg nor go to the workhouse. The saving of the penny makes me feel a free man. The man always in debt, or without a penny beforehand, is little better than a slave.'

'But if we had our rights, the poor would not be so hardly dealt with as they are now.'

'Why, Jack, if you had your rights to-morrow, would they put your money back again into your pocket after you had spent it? Would your rights give your children shoes and stockings, when you had chosen to waste on beer what would have bought them? Would your rights make you or your wife thrifter, or your hearthstone cleaner? Would your rights wash your children's faces, and mend the holes in your clothes? No, my friend. Give us our rights by all means; but rights are not habits, and it's habits we want—good habits. With these we can be free men and independent men now, if we but determine to be so. Good-night, Jack; and mind my secret. It's nothing but taking care of the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves.'—*'League Journal.'*

A Mother's Influence.

It was a dreary winter's night; the streets were deserted, the gusts of chilly rain dashed with violence on the house awnings, while the street lamps shone with a sickly glare. Huddled in the corner of a doorway, shivering and hungry, was a ragged little boy. Now and then persons wrapped in their huge coats, hurried by to their warm homes; and an occasional hack, filled with drunken men, drove rapidly by. The lad saw all this as he longed for morning to appear; and overcome with fatigue, he fell sound asleep. By a singular freak of nature he dreamed of downy white beds, and most lordly feasts; but, alas! this felicity was doomed to perish; for a police officer, going his rounds, rudely awakened him.

'What yer doing here?' gruffly asked he, giving him another shake by way of emphasis.

The little fellow blinked his eyes in astonishment; for the transition from the banquet to his present position was indeed a sudden one.

'Where do yer live?' inquired the policeman, thinking he had captured an embryo burglar.

'I ain't doin' nothing,' blurted the boy, beginning to cry with fear.

'Why don't yer go home?' once more queried the custodian of the peace.

'I'm waiting for—my brother.'

'Where is he?'

'In there,' answered the lad, pointing to a beer saloon a few doors away.

'Why don't yer go in and keep him company? Yer can't sit here.'

Still sobbing as if his heart would break, he replied: 'I—promised my mother—when she died—never to go into a place where they sell liquor; and so did my brother; but he's broken his promise, and—gone in there.'

'Are both your parents dead?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Who takes care of you?'

'John does when he's sober, but lately he's drunk all the time.'

'Come along and I'll get yer a bed,' said the officer, taking the lad by the hand and leading him up the street.

The little fellow remonstrated that he wanted to wait for John, but his guide paid no attention to him.

They presently reached the city prison. The boy struggled to get away; the horror of the place frightened him, but his efforts were useless. A bunk was given him, and he wept himself to sleep.

The pauper ward being full, the lad had been placed in one of the tanks, and on awakening the next morning he saw the many faces of hardened sinners. He sat watching them with curiosity and fear. Ere long, members of the Young Men's Christian Association entered to hold morning services for the prisoners. Their singing filled him with joy, and their prayers with awe.

When they departed his attention was called to a man seated with his face in his hands, and apparently weeping. For some moments this continued, when, to his surprise, he recognized in the man before him his brother. The little fellow rushed to his side; both embraced, and the younger cried piteously at the other's grief.

On the following Sunday they were seen in the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association. The expression of eagerness with which they listened to the sermon told plainly that the seed sown at the prison was not in vain. A new era in their life had begun. John never drank again; and the happy brothers are now known in the South Sea Islands as most zealous missionaries.—*'Association Bulletin.'*