

The captain's voice sounded strangely hoarse and dull. A shudder ran through the listening crowd. There was a chance for life even yet, remaining where they were; to enter that blinding cloud, to brave those leaping flames, was certain death; and no one moved forward.

"Will you die like cowards? Is there no man among you?" cried the captain.

"Yis, massa; dar is!"

As the clear tones rang out over the heads of the people, a little black figure darted forward, nimble hands seized a rope, sure feet found the ladder, and before a word could be spoken, before anyone could prevent the lad Jim stood half revealed in the fiery furnace of the pilot-house, the great steering-wheel was in his grasp, and the noble ship yet obeying her rudder turned back again, headed toward the bank once more, and ploughed her rapid way toward life and safety! Then a mighty column of curious, writhing smoke swept forward, the flames leaped to the upper works and rigging, the *New Orleans Belle* became a glowing, blazing mass, and boy, and wheel-house, and everything upon the hurricane deck, was blotted out of sight!

"How de moonlight twingles fro' de leaves, don't it, missus? an' de little stars 'pears like dey was winking to me. No, dare's no pain now; 'tis all over, an' I reckon I'll git well. But it did burn in that pilot house, missus!"

"Hush, Jim; don't talk now. You were brave, too brave for us, my boy. Oh, you must not go!" And Mrs. Sloan lifted the boy's head higher upon her shoulder, and gazed with half of love and half of awe into the little black face, now blistered and scarred in many a cruel seam.

Every one had been saved except the pilot, and here beneath the great live oaks, hung with festoons of living moss, and bending tenderly like pitying giants, they had brought their hero—the colored boy who had given his life for theirs—brought him here to die.

"Missy, do you know God?"

"Yes, Jim."

"De same God, missy, dat my daddy used ter pray to? And His little boy Jesus. Do you know Him, missus? Daddy used ter say dat Jesus loved little childrens, dat He'd carry 'em in His arms, like the lambs, you know. Will He, missy? Oh, will He take me some time?"

There was silence for a moment. The great, rough captain had knelt at the child's side, and with uncovered head and tear-dimmed eyes was leaning over him. Flitting through the forest came the last waning light from the burning wreck, stranded on the shore. Overhead the leaves began to whisper together of the coming morning, and the group of passengers standing between the trees looked ghastly and dim. Suddenly the boy sat upright.

"Oh, missy! I'm glad dat ye all got to de shore. 'Twas a right bad place for me, dough, in dat smoke and fire! Oh, see! see, missy, de mornin's comin'!" and he leaned toward the dim east, gazing intently into the faintly reddening sky. "Im glad, for I's so tired, I want to rest a bit;" and he sank slowly back. "De New Year's comin'," he continued, in a low, half-whisper "an He shall take de lambs in His arms an' carry 'em in His bosom! I'm so glad. Good-night, missy;" and, without a moan, the smoke-blurred eyes closed, the fire-scorched hands dropped peacefully, and the child's pure spirit fled away through the chill, grey dawn of the coming morning, to find its place in the Saviour's loving arms.—*Christian at Work.*

### FATHER'S OLD SHOES.

BY MRS M. A. KIDDER.

Benny C. — was sitting in the room with his mother and little sister. By looking at his sad and thoughtful face, one would have taken him to be ten years of age, yet he was but six. No wonder! For four years this almost baby had been used to seeing a drunken father go in and out of their little cottage. He scarcely remembered anything from him but abuse and cruelty, especially towards his kind and loving mother. But now he was dead! The green sod had lain on his grave a week or more, but the terrible effects of his conduct were not buried with him. The poor children would start with a shudder at every uncertain step on the walk and at every hesitating hand upon the latch. On the day mentioned above Benny's mother was getting dinner.

"Will my little son go to the woodshed and get mother a few sticks to finish boiling the tea-kettle?"

"I don't like to go into the woodshed, mamma," said Benny, looking down.

"Why, my son?"

"Because there is a pair of father's old shoes on the beam out there, and I don't like to see them."

"Why, Benny, do you mind the old shoes any more than you do father's coat and hat upstairs?"

"Because," said Benny, the tears filling his blue eyes, "they look as if they wanted to kick me."

Oh! the dreadful after influence of a drunken father on innocent children!—*Temperance Banner.*

### For Girls and Boys.

#### BERTIE'S THANKSGIVING.

BY L. R.

Bertie's hands were cold, and his little bare feet were blue and pinched. Mamma warmed them in her apron; then she set him down in his little chair and gave him the tortoise shell kitten—the only thing he had to play with. Bertie had been out gathering sticks for the kitchen fire, and while out he heard the neighboring children talk about Thanksgiving and the good cheer already preparing in their homes, and the visitors expected, and the presents, sleds, skates and jack-knives. With his little red hand he stroked the back of his kitten and looked gravely. At length he looked up into his mother's face and asked eagerly:

"Mamma, if Thanksgiving is for presents and things, why don't we have some?"

His mother explained that Thanksgiving was a day appointed so that all the people could with one accord give God thanks for the good they had received during the year.

"But folks have lots to eat, and everybody's grandpa and grandma comes to see them and such times! Burt Hazlewood said so this morning."

"The Hazlewoods have a great many relations," said Mrs. Markley, doing her best to keep back tears.

"And we an't any; only father, and he an't much relation."

"Why, Bertie! You must not say this of papa."

"What's relations but them that gives you something? Papa never does."

"Papa works hard and has not much money," returned Mrs. Markley, now really alarmed lest the child had heard something to his father's disparagement.

"I know why father never has money to give us anything. Bob Stiles told me. Bob's father goes to the 'Three Swans,' and so does papa; that's what makes him fall down. He ain't sick. Bob says he ain't. No danger of his dying; wish he would some time."

"Never mind what Bob said; we were talking of Thanksgiving," said Mrs. Markley. And she began to enumerate the things for which they must be thankful.

"Don't care a bit 'bout 'em all," stammered Bertie. "If God cared for us He'd make papa stay at home nights. I've heard you ask him to do it a great many times. I just don't believe God. Bob says he don't. Bob's got a mother that asks Him."

"Bertie must not feel like this," lifting the child in her arms and rubbing the still blue feet with her hands. "God does hear mamma, and when mamma's little boy asks God will hear."

"Sure!" starting up with energy.

"Yes, sure."

"Then let us ask God now. I want it for Thanksgiving this time."

Kneeling by the side of his mother, Bertie asked God to make his father stay with mamma nights, and would he be pleased to give them everything they wanted for Thanksgiving?

That night Robert Markley and Andrew Stiles were led to the meeting. Some one was praying as they went in that God's spirit might work in the heart of the inebriate and the fetters of strong drink be broken. At the close the pledge was circulated.

"I will sign it, if you will," Markley said to his companion.

"Done!" cried Stiles. "And that whosoever—tell us more about it," he said to the minister.

An hour was spent in the pastor's room, and these two companions in drink and kindred vices went to their homes new men in Christ Jesus.

Bertie's Thanksgiving was indeed a happy one. God had heard his cry and sent his blessing. There have been Thanksgivings since, and never has Bertie forgotten to go to God with his needs.

How many of us are ready to follow Bertie's example?—*National Temperance Advocate.*

#### BILLY MYERS' MARE.

One day, Mr. Hunt the temperance lecturer, was making a hard assault on rum drinking, in a neighborhood where a Dutch distiller named "Billy Myers" was a sort of king. This man was present and continually interrupting the speaker by saying in a loud voice: "Mr. Hunt, money makes the mare go!" At first this raised a laugh which Mr. Hunt took in good nature.