

Young People

A Brave Boy

About thirty years ago, said Judge F., I stepped into a book store in Cincinnati in search of some books that I wanted. While there, a little ragged boy, not over twelve years of age, came in and inquired for a geography.

"Plenty of them," said the salesman.

"How much do they cost?"

"One dollar, my lad."

"I did not know they were so much."

He turned to go out, and even opened the door, but closed it again and came back.

"I have got sixty-one cents," said he; "could you let me have a geography, and wait a little while for the rest of the money?"

How eagerly his little bright eyes looked for an answer, and how he seemed to shrink within his ragged clothes when the man, not very kindly, told him he

could not. The disappointed little fellow looked up to me with a very poor attempt at a smile, and left the store. I followed him and overtook him.

"And what now?" I asked.

"Try another place, sir."

"Shall I go too, and see how you succeed?"

"Oh, yes, if you like," said he, in surprise.

Four different stores I entered with him, and each time he was refused.

"Will you try again?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, I shall try them all, or I should not know whether I could get one."

We entered the fifth store, and the little fellow walked up manfully and told the man just what he wanted, and how much money he had.

"You want the book very much?" said the proprietor.

"Yes, sir, very, very much."

"Why do you want it so very, very much?"

"To study, sir. I can't go to school, but I study when I am at home. All the boys have got one, and they will all get ahead of me. Besides, my father was a sailor, and I want to learn of the places he used to go to."

"Does he go to these now?" asked the proprietor.

"He is dead," said the boy, softly. Then he added, after a while, "I am going to be a sailor, too."

"Are you, though?" asked the gentleman, raising his eyebrows curiously.

"Yes, sir; if I live."

"Well, my lad, I will tell you what I'll do. I will let you have a new geography, and you may pay me the remainder of the money when you can; or, I will let you have one that is not new for fifty cents."

"Are the leaves all in it, and just like the others, only not new?"

"Yes, just like the new ones."

"It will do just as well, then, and I shall have eleven cents left toward buying some other book. I am glad they did not let me have one at some of the other places."

The bookseller looked up inquiringly, and I told him what I had seen of the little fellow. He was much pleased, and when he brought the book along I saw a nice new pencil and some clean white paper in it.

"A present, my lad, for your perseverance. Always have courage like that, and you will make your mark," said the bookseller.

"Thank you, sir; you are very good."

"What is your name?"

"William Haverly, sir."

"Do you want any more books?" I now asked him.

"More than I can ever get," he replied, glancing at the books that filled the shelves.

I gave him a bank note. "It will buy some for you," I said.

Tears of joy came in his eyes.

"Can I buy what I want with it?"

"Yes, my lad, anything."

"Then I will buy a book for mother," said he. "I thank you very much, and some day I hope I can pay you back."

He wanted my name, and I gave it to him. Then I left him standing by the counter so happy that I almost envied him, and many years passed before I saw him again.

Last year I went to Europe on one of the finest vessels that ever ploughed the Atlantic. We had beautiful weather until very near the end of the voyage; then came a most terrible storm, that would have sunk all on board had it not been for the captain. Every spar was laid low, the rudder was almost useless, and a great leak had shown itself, threatening to fill the ship. The crew were all strong, willing men, and the mates were practical seamen of the first class; but after pumping for one whole night, and the water still gaining upon them, they gave up in despair, and prepared to take to the boats, though they might have known that no small boat could ride such a sea. The captain, who had been below with his charts, now came up; he saw how matters stood, and with a voice that I heard distinctly above the roar of the tempest, ordered every man to his post.

I was surprised to see those men bow before the strong will of their captain, and hurry back to the pumps. The captain then started below to examine the leak. As he passed me I asked him if there was any hope. He looked at me, and then at other passengers who crowded up to hear the reply, and said, rebukingly:

"Yes, sir; there is a hope as long as one inch of this deck remains above water; when I see none of it, then I shall abandon the vessel, and not before, nor one of the crew, sir. Everything shall be done to save it, and if we fail it shall not be from inaction. Bear a hand, every one of you at the pumps!"

Thrice during the day did we despair; but the captain's dauntless courage, perseverance, and powerful will, mastered every man on board, and we went to work again.

"I will land you safely at the dock in Liverpool," said he, "if you will be men."

And he did land us safely; but the vessel sunk moored to the dock. The captain stood on the deck of the sinking vessel, receiving the thanks and blessings of the passengers as they passed down the gang plank. I was the last to leave. As I passed, he grasped my hand and said:

"Judge F., do you recognize me?" I told him I was not aware that I ever saw him until I stepped aboard his ship.

"Do you remember the boy in Cincinnati?"

"Very well, sir; William Haverly."

"I am he," said he; "God bless you!"

"And God bless noble Captain Haverly."

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