

A BRAVE AMERICAN BOY.

Those who think that the American boy of today has not the courage and the patriotism of the boys of long ago have only to read the story of young Arthur Venable to know that, when the opportunity comes or the emergency arises, the boy of today will stand to his guns with all the splendid courage and the patriotism of the boy of any day.

Away out near Portland, Oregon, in the town of Sellwood, there was last year erected a monument in the memory of a boy with the blood of a hero in his veins. One will not find in all the annals of history a name thrilling of touching account of simple and yet splendid courage than is furnished in the brief story of young Arthur Venable. Although of English birth Arthur Venable was brought to America before he was a year old, and he has always regarded himself as an American boy and he regarded the age of seventeen years with as much pride for America and American institutions in his heart as if he had been born on American soil. When he was but seven years old his father died leaving Mrs. Venable with two or three little girls younger than Arthur, his young wife was, the little lad promised himself that he would take care of his mother and sisters.

Enrolled in many school, the boy was at work in a shop before he was twelve years old, and four years ago, when his health began to fail, he enlisted as an apprentice in the navy, sending his mother every penny of his earnings that he could possibly spare.

When the great Yorktown went to the Philippines in 1899 young Venable was on board. In April, the Yorktown was sent to Balabac Bay for some Spanish prisoners. Arthur Venable was with the party that went on shore to reconnoiter when the boat reached Balabac Bay. When the little father was about to land there suddenly came, without the least warning, a heavy fire from the shore. Bullets fell like hailstones around the party in the little boat. Several of the men fell dead

and others were wounded, and there was consternation in the boat. Lieutenant Gilmore, who was in charge of the party, fell of the splendid heroism of Arthur Venable in the face of this peril that menaced the rest of the party. It was the first time that the young apprentice had ever been under fire, but he was as cool as any man of the party. Lieutenant Gilmore said:

"Having no other weapon than a revolver, which was useless at that range, I rushed for the rifle dropped by one of the dead. It had been hit in the lock and the clip was jammed in. Venable attempted to fix it. A bullet suddenly went through the flesh of his neck.

"Mr. Gilmore, I am hit," he said, but he continued working at the rifle.

"A second shot ploughed its way through the boy's breast and came out at his arm-pit.

"I'm hit again, Mr. Gilmore," he said.

"He was still trying to pull out the jammed clip, when a ball cut a furrow in the left side of his head.

"Mr. Gilmore, they've hit me again," he said.

"He wiped the blood from his brown eyes with his coat sleeve, and then returned to his task as calmly as if it were only a mosquito that had stung him. It was not three minutes until a ball crashed into his noble, suffering forehead. There was just a slight quiver in the lad's voice as he looked up to me and said:

"Mr. Gilmore, I'm hit—yes more, but I have fixed the gun, sir."

It is sorrowful to read that this brave young fellow was taken prisoner and that he was killed by the order of an ungrateful general. Do you wonder that a monument has been erected to the memory of such a hero as this? Had there been a national appeal for funds for such a monument I am sure that the tens of thousands of American boys would have been glad to have contributed to it. Although but sixteen years old at the time of his death, Arthur Venable displayed a degree of courage and fidelity to duty unsurpassed by any man in the face of a like peril, and it is well that our American boys should know this brief but successful history of the noble young fellow to whom God has given His benediction and His peace.