

## Our Boys and Girls.

### AN EIGHTH BIRTHDAY.

BY GRANDMAMMA.

I look for the baby I used to know,  
(It is not so many long years ago),  
I find him not: can any one tell, oh,  
Where he has gone, this dear little fel-  
low?

I look for the small kindergarten child,  
That sweet kilt-clad darling, with face  
so mild,  
And he has gone also,—gone quite away,  
Oh, where is he now? Oh, where does  
he stay?

I surely shall find the glad trousered  
boy,  
To whom his first pair was a world of  
joy!  
What! He has gone also? Oh, what  
shall I do?  
Can all this sad story be possibly true?

Well, where are my eyes and where are  
my ears,  
I wonder what power that big football  
uprears?  
I wonder whose shouts are so rend-  
ing the air?  
I wonder whose wheel spins like light-  
ning out there?

Aha! I have found him! I know by his  
eyes,  
And his mouth, and his hair; but I  
don't know his size;  
This baby—this child—from my life  
disappears,  
And here stands this big boy, just count-  
ing eight years.

—Chris. Register.

### COFFEE PAIL EZRA.

"No, I can't go," and Ezra looked reproachfully at a pail of hot coffee which he had set down close by, under the shadow of the big ore bin.

"Oh, bother!" said Jack Everts, "uncle doesn't need that stuff. He's well now—been well this two weeks."

"I know, but Grandma Hillis thinks he needs it."

"Well, he doesn't. You know, half time he doesn't touch it."

"And sometimes he scolds you if you get in the road of his pick," put in Herbert James.

"Yes," and Ezra stroked the long ears of Nancy, the burro, meditatively.

"But, then, you see, he might want it to-day, and it wouldn't be there. And besides, grandma depends on me to take it down to him."

Still, he looked at the coffee pail with no friendly eye. If he had a mother, or even a Sabbath school teacher, he would have learned long before that duty is duty, and must be done, however hard it seems, but he had no one except a feeble old grandmother and a big, busy uncle, who worked so hard all day in the mine that he invariably fell asleep at the supper table; at least he fell asleep every evening except that of the pay day. What he did on pay day nights is quite a different and less creditable story. So, it is no wonder that when Jack and Herbert proposed an expedition out in the sage brush after cotton-tails, Ezra looked at his coffee pail in deep disgust. Every day since Uncle Tom had the fever, grandma had sent the boy down in the mine at precisely ten o'clock with coffee, and the task had grown very wearisome to him. At the first, when Uncle Tom was so

weak, and the coffee seemed to do him so much good, Ezra was glad to take it. But, for two weeks past, Uncle Tom himself protested against it, and Ezra felt that he was making a goose of himself in the eyes of everybody, except grandma. She could not be made to see that Tom no longer needed it.

"No, I can't go," said Ezra again, taking his pail and turning toward the engine house.

"It's all nonsense, I tell you," said Jack; "grandma'll never know if you don't tell her and your uncle doesn't want it."

"I know," said Ezra, resolutely, "but it is my business. Grandma depends on me." And then he began climbing the hill as fast as he could go, which, although he did spill some of the coffee, was the very best thing he could do, for he was sooner out of temptation's way.

At the top of the shaft he gave one rueful look at two boys and the burro out in the shimmering sunny valley, and then climbed into the car, nodded to the engineer, and slid down into the dark, close mine. The engineer knew his errand, but he had to scramble out as fast as he could to let the car go on to the seventh, from which ore was being hoisted. At the fifth level, that day, the air seemed unusually close.

"I s'pose it's because I wanted to go after cotton-tails so much that it seems uncommonly hot and nasty down here to-day," thought Ezra. He lighted his candle and plodded his way along the low-walled drift. He was in the "old works," long ago stopped out, at the far end of which the company had a gang of men making a vertical shaft, or "upraise," as it is called, to the level above. At irregular intervals cross cuts came in from the darkness at either side, leading sometimes only a few feet and sometimes from some distant ore chamber. Ezra was eleven years old, but to cross the black mouth of an unused cross cut was till an ordeal to him. Something about its thick silence and darkness and its unknown depth awed and troubled him. He had walked some little distance, trying to keep up his spirits with whistling, when he suddenly halted. His breath was coming quick and short, and he began to realize that he was breathing smoke. Where did it come from? Lifting his candle, he peered out carefully. He could see no sign of fire, but the drift was gray with smoke—a heavy curling mass that was coming toward him in sullen silence.

His first thought was to run for the shaft. But no—where were Uncle Tom and the other men? If the fire was in one of the cross cuts, the smoke would seek the open shaft, as it would act as a chimney, and the men would have no warning until the whole drift was ablaze, and it would be too late. He must find where it was, and he must reach them if he did not already know. He hurried on, but his light grew dim in the smoke, and his feet stumbled over the uneven floor. His breath was growing painful, and his eyes smarted unbearably. He remembered instinctively having read somewhere that one must not breathe smoke, and he stopped and looked back toward the shaft. He could see the faint twinkle of the light that hung over the car track, and he held out his hand toward it as toward a friend. But he knew that his way led in the other direction. He must find the men. He stumbled on, groping with his eyes shut, every breath a stab of pain and his mind holding but one thought — to reach the others before it was too late. Once he fell headlong, but it was a fortunate fall, for the lid of his coffee

pail flew off, and half the contents were dashed in his face. Quickly righting the pail, he dipped his handkerchief in the remaining coffee—one of the big red cotton handkerchiefs of the mining camps—and tied it over his head and face. He could have cried from the feeling of relief that it gave, and the way grew easier until the heat dried the handkerchief and forced him to take it off. Then he groped and stumbled and fell, and picked himself up again, and ran on and fell again, and then on once more. His strength was giving out, and the curling, lead-colored mass wrapped about him closer and thicker. It was the battle of a child against a relentless, unreasoning foe, and it was bravely fought. But he could not fight always. His foot caught beneath a loose board, and he fell at full length. Vaguely he felt that the struggle was over, and he was glad he had done his best. He gave a little gasp—and then sat up and looked around him in surprise. The air was clear and he could breathe. There was smoke, certainly, but still he could see and breathe. Where was he? How did it happen? And then he saw what made him more anxious still for the men in the upraise. His fall had carried him just past the mouth of a deep cross cut from which the smoke was pouring in thick, leaden masses toward the shaft. He could hear the dull crackling of the burning timbers, and he knew that the time was short. He stood up and tried to run, but his mind was in a whirl, and his legs tottered beneath him. Still he would not give up. The worst was past and his head grew clearer in the better air, his strength began to come back also.

In less than five minutes the men in the upraise were standing about him, and he was telling them as quickly as he could of their danger, and of their one chance of escape.

"We must make a dash for it," said Tom Hillis, who was always the leader. The men nodded, threw down their picks and shovels, and marched grimly out into the drift to meet the foe. How Ezra got through the second time he never knew. He remembered being dragged along by hard, kind hands, and, at the last, being lifted on a pair of strong shoulders and carried "pick-a-back" like a baby, but when he opened his eyes he was in the hoisting room, and the superintendent of the mine was there, too, looking very grave and anxious.

"Will he live?" he was asking of the doctor, who was stirring something in a glass.

"Oh, yes. He'll not die yet. He's a plucky little chap. He will be all right in a little while."

"It is strange how things happen," the superintendent went on. "It is certainly strange. If this boy had not been going about his plain everyday business this morning, these men would have been smothered, and the whole mine would have been in such a blaze that we couldn't have stopped it."

When Jack and Herbert came home that night with four cotton-tails, they were very much surprised to find that "Coffee-pail Ezra" had become a hero in the camp, and was to be taken into the superintendent's family to go to school with his own boys.

"It's mighty queer how lucky some folks are," said Jack.

"Tain't so queer," answered Herbert, "when you consider how plucky some folks are."

"Humph, I guess anybody would have warned those men."

"Maybe they would, and then maybe they wouldn't. But what I am



To the Weary Dyspeptic.  
We Ask this Question:

Why don't you remove  
that weight at the pit of  
the Stomach?

Why don't you regulate that  
variable appetite, and condition the  
digestive organs so that it will not  
be necessary to starve the stomach  
to avoid distress after eating.

The first step is to regulate the  
bowels.

For this purpose

**Burdock Blood Bitters**

has no Equal.

It acts promptly and effectually  
and permanently cures all derange-  
ments of digestion. It cures Dys-  
pepsia and the primary causes lead-  
ing to it.

thinking it that there isn't more than one boy in the camp that would have been down there with that coffee pail when the other boys were going out hunting. That's where the pluck comes in, I'm thinking.—Clara E. Hamilton.

### Rhubarb—Some Ways of Cooking it.

About this time grandma will walk through the vegetable garden.

"The rhubarb is starting," she says. And sure enough there were the little red tufts that soon will develop into irregular crinkly leaves unfolding more and more, never minding frosts and cold, until fine, large green leaves are spread over thrifty, succulent stalks.

Rhubarb is an excellent invigorating vegetable for spring, and as good for grandma's daughters as for herself. With lengthening April days the first stalks are grown and generous abundance follows.

It is the home-grown that I allude to. The market variety, of course, may be had, and is often very tender and fresh, growing so quickly as it does under glass or in very warm exposure. And it should not be despised, for aside from its healthfulness it may be made the basis of many delicious dishes.

Stewed rhubarb and ordinary rhubarb pie almost everybody is familiar with, but it is worth remembering that it takes twice as much sugar to sweeten rhubarb if added when it is boiling. Sweeten after removing from the stove.

A change in the two-crust pie is to stew the rhubarb, line a plate with crust, fill, cover with thin strips of crust and bake. This makes what is called a tart pie. The same rule may be followed, omitting the strips of crust, spreading over the top after baking the whites of two eggs beaten to a stiff froth with a little sugar. It is nice.

In making rhubarb sauce or pies do