

**Our Boys and Girls.**

**COIN' BAREFOOT.**

It's more fun goin' barefoot than anythin' I know,  
There ain't single 'nother thing that helps yer feelin's so.  
Some days, I stay in muvver's room a-gettin' in her way,  
An' when I've bothered her so much, she sez, "O, run an' play!"  
I say, "Kin I go barefoot?" en she says, "If y' choose"—  
Nen I alwuz want'er holler when I'm pullin' off my shoes!  
If y' often go round barefoot there's lots of things to know—  
Of how t' curl yer feet on stones so they won't hurt yer so—  
An' when the grass is stickley and pricks y' at a touch,  
Jes plunk yer feet down solid an' it don't hurt half so much.  
I lose my hat mos' every day. I wish I did my shoes—  
Er else I wish I was so poor I hadn't none to lose.

—Harper's Monthly.

**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 Evarts, "your 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 had a mother, or even a Sunday-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 down in the mine. At precisely ten o'clock every day the boy was sent to him with hot 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 had 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 up 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," answered 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 the sooner out of temptation. It was no wonder that when

Jack and Herbert proposed an expedition out into 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 with the coffee for him.

At the top of the shaft he gave one rueful look at the 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 pass the black mouth of an unused cross-cut was still 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 about 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 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 they 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, 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 grasp—and then sat up and looked around him in surprise. The air was clearer, 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 as 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 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 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.

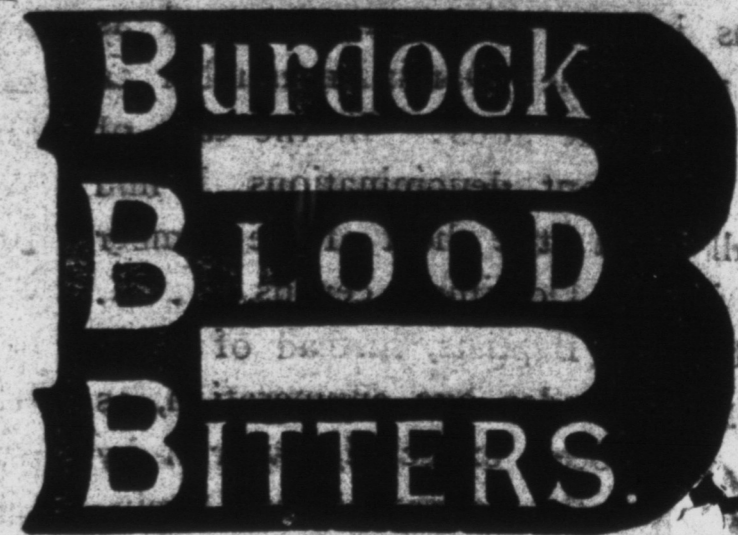
"It's mighty queer how lucky some folks are," said Jack.

"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 thinking is 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."—*Southern Churchman.*

Neuralgia may not be dangerous, but it hurts. It seems to tear the face with red-hot pincers. Stay indoors and use Perry Davis' Pain Killer. The blessed freedom from pain which follows cannot be told.



**Turns Bad Blood into Rich Red Blood.**

This spring you will need something to take away that tired, listless feeling brought on by the system being clogged with impurities which have accumulated during the winter.

Burdock Blood Bitters is the remedy you require.

It has no equal as a spring medicine. It has been used by thousands for a quarter of a century with unequalled success.

**HERE IS PROOF.**

Mrs. J. T. Skine of Shigawake, Que., writes: "I have used Burdock Blood Bitters as a spring medicine for the past four years and don't think there is its equal. When I feel drowsy, tired and have no desire to eat I get a bottle of B.B.B. It purifies the blood and builds up the constitution better than any other remedy."

**DON'T DO IT JUST FOR NOW.**

Many young people form habits which cripple and handicap them for life by doing things "just for now." They let things drop wherever they happen to be, "just for now," thinking that they will put the book, the tool, the letter, or the article of clothing later where it belongs.

When these young people grow up to manhood and womanhood, they find that the habit of putting things down anywhere, "just for now," has become a tyrant that fills their lives with confusion and disorder.

It takes no more time or effort to put a thing where it belongs in the first place than it does later—perhaps less—and the chances are that, if you do not do so at the proper time, you never will.

Even if it costs you a little inconvenience at the moment to put everything in its proper place, to do everything at the proper time, the orderly and methodic habits which you cultivate in this way will increase your power and usefulness a hundredfold and may save you much trouble and mortification in the future.—*Success.*

*A General Favorite.*—In every place where introduced, Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil has not failed to establish a reputation, showing that the sterling qualities which it possesses are valued everywhere when they become known. It is in general use in Canada, the West Indies and Australia as a household medicine, and the demand for it every year shows that it is a favorite wherever used.

We ought to walk so close to Jesus as to be always in his sunshine, make so little of earthly ills and vexations and losses as never to let them envelope us in an atmosphere of Arcadian midnight.