The Boy's Own Room

By Adeline B. Whitford.

No one can give a very good reason as to why the boy's room is not generally as carefully planned and as artistic as his sister's, but, it is safe to say that in nine cases out of ten, the boy's room in a home is not quite equal to any of the other family bed rooms, either in location, light or furnishing. If it should be argued that this room demands les thought, since the owner spends so little time there, or that the decorations and furniture hardly matter "because boys care so little for such things," both statements remain to be proven, for it is quite possible that if this room were to be planned in detail as carefully as other rooms are, and the boy were to have some share in choosing the decorations, and arranging the furniture (even making some of this) for himself, he might suddenly come to feel an owner's pride in it all. In making good use of the chance to bring his belongings, his various collections and his friends there, he would very likely develop the habit of spending more rainy days and long evenings in this place, until gradually its good colorings and solid comfort would make it as dear to him as his sister's room is to her, though it may be long years before he understands why he loves his surroundings or how a room's beauty and good art can come to mean so much to its owner.

We are all so made that we learn more through our eyes than through our ears; learn and remember more from what we see than from what any one tells us; for this reason the boy's room and the girl's room, their colorings, furniture, pictures, conveniences and order, are fully as important as any text book of the grades. If they are well provided and in good taste, their rooms will do more towards making young minds, bodies and souls grow in the right direction.

Usually the boy's bed room is upstairs, back, and very often it has a sloping ceiling and dormer windows. Sometimes there are rafters showing but it hardly matters what the first conditions are if it has good windows, heat, and is not too small; the room may easily be made attractive.

A Place to Entertain.

Girls entertain their friends downstairs and in the living rooms but the boy's ideal room must be large enough for himself and his friends. The finest possible arrangement is found if a large room has an alcove for the bed, or if a door from the room leads out onto an upstairs porch and this is used for an outdoor sleeping room. Either of these arrangements would leave the larger room for playroom, gymnasium, workshop and study. No matter how roughly finished its walls and woodwork are, it can be fitted up perfectly.

A boy's room is often wrong in one of two ways: either it is furnished with such shabby left-overs of old furniture, rugs and draperies that he is ashamed to bring his friends there, or else it is furnished almost as daintily as his sister's room, and there is no chance in it for a group of live boys to have a good time. A room somewhere between these two is the one for which to strive. If one plans with the boy and uses suitable colors and materials, the result should be a room where every detail of the simple, durable furnishings suggests both a sturdy manly refinement, and some of the informality and freedom of camp life. The whole should be in keeping with a boy's needs and use.

There should be simple, straight-line furniture, in craftsman or mission style, but certainly not the large heavy pieces of mission. What is called cottage furniture is of lighter weight and smaller size, more suitable for the average-sized room. The most necessary pieces are the single or three-quarter bed of wood or of straight-line metal. These are now made in brown wood colorings; a good strong couch, to be sprawled upon at any time by "the whole bunch"; a comfortable arm chair, one or two straight hickory rush-bottom chairs or plain wooden chairs painted in the room's coloring; a table that will stand firmly, and endure considerable wear in games or work; a set of book shelves. For clothes and toilet conveniences there should be a chest of drawers, a mirror and, if a bath room is not near, a washstand.

With this substantial furniture, all draperies, chair coverings, cushions and so on, should be of practical materials, carefully chosen in harmony with the room's colorings. Homespun bedspreads, denim curtains or hangings of drilling, galatea or light weight awning cloth; heavy, braided rugs, copper lamps, burlap or canvas couch coverings, walls papered in a plain, coarse-weave paper, or if of rough plaster, kalsomined or stained; these are the materials which make the room suitable for a boy's use.

Share in the Planning.

As I have said, the boy himself should have a voice in planning the room, if one expects him to take a real interest in caring for it. He should be encouraged to express something of his own taste in the decorations, books and furnishings, though no doubt he will at first ask for some starting decorations and vivid colorings and will decide, too, that he wants nothing but Indian and detective stories on his book shelves. You have only to remember, gladly, that children are born without habits and settled tastes, and that if your grown ones are better than his beginnings, he will rapidly change for the better as you educate him.

Let him start his room decorations in things which are temporary such as banners, posters, flags and so forth, against the neutral gray or tan wall which you provide. If you furnish him with a box of glasshead picture pins, the walls will not be marred. Or, if one space of the wall is covered with a panel of stretched burlap, this could be the place for his picture experiments and would show no marks whatever.

As a balance for his choice of poster pictures, you should place two or three framed pictures on the walls. Copies of good art but boy subjects, such as hunting, ranch life, or animal subjects, with a print of some one of the boy heroes of history, and always one of Sir Galahad.

If he declares that red is his choice for the room's coloring, there is no reason why he may not have it, but you yourself know that walls of red are impossible for a good room, so you will first see to it that the walls are of soft gray, and then give him a rich deep shade of red in chair cushions, couch cover and door hangings. For side curtains and bed coverings use some dull blue, such as plain galatea or denim, faced back with a plain band of the red material. With these strong colorings, his furniture could be of substantial but old odd pieces, all painted a dull black, and the effect would be very good indeed.

If the boy chooses yellow as his color, the wall background could be of pale buff or a deep ecru tone. And the hangings, cushions and bed coverings be carried out in browns and yellows, with a few touches of orange. In this case the furniture would be in brown or painted a dark green, or black.

A strong blue room could be worked out against either of the above wall tones but with the blue hangings and covers, use a little of either gold or dark red, to warm and cheer the room.

The success of such furnishings depends upon using only one or two materials for all of the draperies, covers, cushions and so on and having these plain and dignified in tone and rather heavy in weight. Leave all of the dainty, flowered materials and vine-covered wall papers for his sister's room.

The Main Essentials.

At the centres of the windows thin white or cream curtains are necessary. These are of the simplest scrim, unbleached muslin or cheese cloth, cut by the thread, in order to hang well, and made to come just to the window sill. There should be two sets of these, changed often. The colored side curtains are not very full, reach a little below the sill and are tied back with a band of the same.

A hardwood floor oiled or varnished and waxed or a soft wood floor stained and varnished or painted are equally good, but the varnish must be of a very durable quality and the painting done in several coats. Either floor treatment should be allowed to dry thoroughly before being used.

Light colored and light weight rugs are altogether out of place here. Something rather dark and heavy but in small sizes so as to be lifted and cleaned easily is the right floor covering.

Good lamps are very important. For comfortable reading and study, a shaded table lamp is necessary, but for lighting the whole room one or two of the large, modern barn lanterns make an excellent choice. Paint their frame-work red or black and hang them on the end of extending bracket hooks. These make a lighting which is both safe and decorative.

It is of the utmost importance that the room should have a good closet and plenty of shelf and drawer room for, without these, it is useless to attempt to teach order and neatness. If the closet has laundry bags, trouser hooks, coat hangers, tie rack and shoe-blacking outfit; the washstand its towel rack, bath mat, tooth powder, soaps and shaving materials; the dresser its pincushion, clothes brushes, trays for collar buttons, and a case of manicure articles, personal neatness and the habit of keeping both clothes and room in order ought to follow naturally.

Long window seats may have hinged tops or doors in front, allowing a place for ball and tennis things.

Don't Forget the Desk.

Very early in the boy's life he should own a solid little writing-desk fitted with all the conveniences for letter writing and in after years his long newsy letters from college or his distant home will pay you a royal return on this investment.

And just here one may well suggest that all through the work of planning this room there should be the thought of making its influence fine and far reaching—of watching the boy's bent and finding ways in which to help him make something of that.

During all of his growing years a boy has one or another of the collection hobbies, almost any one of which should be encouraged and made the most of while it lasts, as this is often an important part of his early education. Do not consider it an extravagance then to provide a cupboard, with shelves and glass doors, for holding "his collections" as they grow, nor count it any waste of time to help about marking and arranging his little displays in regular museum fashion. If your own book shelves hold a good atlas and an encyclopedia, you and the boy and his friends may spend many a profitable hour in reading about his stamps, minerals, arrow heads or butterflies—and the countries where they are found—and some of this information could go on to the labels, printed by himself, and be fastened to the articles. In this way he makes order and learns much out of what might otherwise be simply a clutter of odds and ends. And the study he had made of these few shelves of specimens will help him, no one knows how far, along the road to a wise man's education, while your part of it will be just one more delightful hold and influence upon the best years of his life.

Surely there are many ways in which a boy's room can be made a joy forever.

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Minerals Your Hogs Need.

The simplest mineral rations, particularly as regards the number of ingredients, are giving the best results in supplying the mineral requirement for swine. Common salt and bone meal, in equal parts, make about as good a combination as any I know of. Equal parts of common salt and raw rock phosphate are another very good combination; as are also equal parts of wood ashes and common salt, and equal parts of common salt and air-slaked lime. These combinations furnish the elements that are most needed in the formation of the skeleton of the hog—namely, calcium, phosphorus, sodium, chlorine. Other elements are necessary, but in much smaller amounts, and they are usually supplied in sufficient amounts in a well-balanced ration.

The average porker should consume about one pound of any of these mixtures a month. They can be fed in a number of ways, the one that best suits the circumstances being the best to use. The Iowa Experiment Station recommends that minerals be mixed with tankage, and fed in a self-feeder at the rate of 10 pounds of the mineral mixture to from 50 to 60 pounds of tankage, according to the amount the pigs will eat. It is possible to mix minerals with the grain feed in sufficient amounts so that each animal will get approximately one-fourth pound each week. Minerals can also be fed alone in a self-feeder, although some animals will not eat them this way. Regardless of the feeding method used, the mineral ration should be kept as dry as possible. They can either be mixed in with the ration for several feeds or supplied with one feed each day.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

MAY 8

Rest and Recreation. Lev. 23: 39-43; Deut. 5: 12-15; St. Mark 6: 31, 32. Golden Text—Zech. 8: 5.

Connecting Links—The social order which provides labor will also provide for periods of rest, and not only the rest of sleep, but also that of recreation. Not only the love of play, but the necessity for play, lies deep-rooted in our human nature. A well-ordered day for young folk will include work, play, and sleep. Work drains one's energies, play and sleep renew them. Every home to which God has given boys and girls should make provision for healthy recreation. Both in work and play not prohibition of what is good, but wise regulation and control, will be the way of wisdom.

Lev. 23: 29-43. **The Feast of the Lord.** The book of Leviticus contains the highly developed and completed legislation of the Jews, having special reference to religous worship. Much of its provisions have to do with occasions of great solemnity, but the brighter side of life is not overlooked or forgotten. It is in this book that we find enjoined consideration for the poor, the stranger, the hired servant, the deaf and blind, and the aged. We find not only justice, and honesty, and clean living, and right domestic and social relations required, but also kindness and thoughtfulness and reverent piety.

Chapter 23 contains a calendar of the great feasts or holidays (that is, holy days) of the Jewish year. The seventh month began in September and would include also the first part of October. In this month the people celebrated the end of the fruit harvest, and the end of the summer. (Exod. 23: 16). The feast of tabernacles, or feast of tents (v. 34), was a grand camping out for seven or eight days. Men, women, and children, who had been cooped up in their little villages and towns, trooped out into the country. They made rough shelters of boughs (v. 40), and had a merry, happy time. The older form of the law (vs. 40-42) provided that the first day should be kept as a Sabbath, a day of solemn rest, but a later statute (vs. 36 and 39) appears to have added a second Sabbath on the eighth day. (compare also Deut. 16: 13-15).

These happy days of play and worship were also to remind the people continually of the time when their fathers lived in tents, or in booths, in the wilderness, in the days of Moses, when the Lord brought them out of the land of Egypt. See also Deut. 31: 9-13 for a special feature of the holiday which was to be observed every seventh year. Deut. 5: 12-15. The sabbath day. The word "sabbath" is taken by us from the Hebrew language in which it means rest. The Sabbath day is the day of rest. There is good reason to believe that this law was actually made by Moses, but the custom of observing certain days of every months as holy days may be much older. It seems to have been originally connected with the new moon day, which was likewise kept holy. The lunar month of twenty-nine days might thus have had five holy days, the new moon day, and the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth days, which we now know were kept sacred in ancient Babylonia. The law of Moses, however, ultimately made the sabbath to be observed every seventh day, irrespective of the days of the month.

This law appears also, with the rest of the ten commandments, in Exod. 20: 8-11, where reference is made to the story of creation, in which God's work in making the world is presented under the figure of the week—six days of progressive labor leading to completion of the work, and a seventh day of rest. This is taken to mean that the Sabbath day of rest is divinely sanctioned.

St. Mark 6: 31-32. **Come Ye Yourselves Apart.** Jesus knew and felt the need of rest, both for Himself and for His disciples. His ministry had been, from the beginning, one of strenuous labor. The thronging multitudes throughout the week gave Him no opportunity of rest or leisure, and on the Sabbath day He was teaching in the synagogues. Now He invites His disciples to cross the lake with Him to a quiet and lonely place on the northern shore.

Such rest and quiet is needed at times by all workers, and especially by those whose work involves great nervous strain. The conditions of toil must be made such as to permit both of the weekly day of rest, and of other periods of resort to God's resting-places by mountain and lake and stream. It is in these quiet places that there is time for thought, that peace steals in upon troubled and weary hearts, and God draws very near.

Application.

A woman sat with her child near the open window and earnestly toiled at her sewing. Every once in a while she looked through the window to where the stars twinkled above. Noticing these movements, the child at length said, "Mother, why do you look at the sky so often?" "To rest my eyes," said the mother, "and get the larger vision." It is a rest for tired eyes to take a wider view, and it is a very real rest for the soul when we look at things in a comprehensive way. The cares of the world are so many and the calls of the world are so insistent and imperative, that we need time for meditation and prayer. We need to get a true perspective.

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Buying Cows at Auction.

When a farmer sells a cow from his herd at a private sale he seldom wishes to sell one of the best cows in his herd. At an auction sale he often closes out his herd and the buyer has a chance to obtain the best cows in the herd. Then it pays to go to the farm at least a couple of hours before the sale and look over the cows that are of special interest. Sometimes the inexperienced buyer can obtain help from some dairy farmer who knows good cows. But be careful in obtaining such information not to try and get it from other bidders on the same animals. It is not to their advantage to encourage rival bids on cows they wish to buy.

Before attending a pure-bred sale it helps to obtain a catalogue and give the pedigrees careful study to see how they will match up with cows in the home herd. Then their value can be estimated. This may save errors at the sale when the mind is sometimes confused by the crowd and the rapid change of animals in the ring and the talk of the auctioneer. Many a buyer has been influenced too much by the auctioneer and gone home feeling rather depressed at the price paid for certain stock. It is better to know your own purse and buy judiciously.

Do not pay too much attention to the records of distant relatives in a cow's pedigree. Most any cow of any breeding at all can have the name of some good one in her pedigree if you go far enough back. This does not mean that such a cow may not be fine. But it pays to know something about her close relatives and her vigor. I believe a cow is no good if she lacks vigor and breeding powers regardless of how many fine cows are in her pedigree. The farmer buying pure-bred cows at auction is buying more than the animal on which he bids. He is buying seed stock. The purchase is not only the one cow but the chance of producing many more like that cow from her and her daughter, and so on down the line. So the vigor of the cow is of great importance.

When buying cows at neighborhood sales it is often possible to learn considerable about the best cows in the herd by visiting the barn at milking time several days before the sale. Then it is possible to see the cows before milking time and note the amount of milk produced and see how they look after being milked. This information will be valuable when the bids are rolling in and a man is in doubt as to the cash value of a certain cow.

It is also useful to see those cows before they are fitted for the ring. A certain amount of trimming often makes cows look better than they are. It takes a little study to find out the accurate value of the cow which has been carefully fitted for inspection in the auction ring.

Buying of a reliable farmer is one of the surest ways of obtaining good cows. When such a man holds an auction he describes his cows accurately. He not only tells the good points of the cow but he tells the bad ones if there are any. He does not necessarily run down his own herd but he does not misrepresent the cows by leaving unsaid anything that a buyer should know.

Why His Berries Won.

Not many years ago a gardener I know, named Brown, determined to put one over on the weather man and, for once, to raise some really monstrous blackberries. That spring he rigged up an irrigation system to use as soon as dry weather showed up. The canes flowered profusely, and a bumper crop of berries set on. When dry weather came, the gardener set his windmill going. Whenever the moisture got low, the patch got a good wetting, and the berries flourished.

At marketing time Brown supposed his berries were the best in the section, so he set his price a little above the market and began to brag. Customers came, looked, and went away empty-handed. After a little he learned what was the matter. A few miles away another gardener, named Thompson, had berries of the same variety that were just a little bigger and nicer than his, and he was selling them for less money. Finally an irate customer told my friend what he thought about it.

"What's the reason you are charging three cents more a quart than Thompson, when his berries are bigger and nicer and better flavored than yours?" he said.

"His berries aren't bigger and nicer and better flavored than mine," Brown hotly replied. "They can't be. I've gone to a big expense to irrigate these berries, and there hasn't been a day when they lacked water. It takes plenty of water to make blackberries. I'm the only one around who has irrigated. I have fertilized my berry patch and kept it in the best condition. This other man simply can't have better berries than I've got."

"Yes, they are; and if you don't believe it jump in the buggy with me, and I'll take you out there and prove it to you."

So Brown climbed in, and drove out to see those wonderful berries. On arriving at Thompson's patch he was astonished to find long canes loaded down with fine fruit. There were more canes and more berries per cane than he had, and he readily admitted it. The berries were a little bigger, too, and were selling at three cents a quart less. He admitted his defeat, but started at once to find out why.

It developed that Thompson ran a crushing mill each fall, and utilized all the crushed stalks as a winter mulch for his berry bushes. The water from the winter snows and rains soaked down into the soil around those briers, and some of it was stored up for future use. As the soil was well drained, I suspect that a greater portion of the surplus water ran down into the neighboring creek. Yet the stalks themselves absorbed a large amount of water, and held it. During the drought this mulch did not dry out, and the soil underneath remained well filled with water. The root bed was like some enormous sponge that held an unlimited supply of moisture. The rainfall soaked down into the stalk mulch, and the soil became capable of holding more water each succeeding season. Evaporation was stopped by the loose mulch. Artificial irrigation was wholly unnecessary.

Judging from these two gardeners' experiences it seems folly to use irrigation with berries. Instead, let's utilize the old corn stalks.

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