

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 bedrooms, either in location, light or furnishing. If it should be argued that this room demands less thought, 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 bedroom is upstairs, back, and very often it has a sloping ceiling and dormer window. 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 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 style. 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.



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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 glassed 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 plain hand 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 he carried out in browns and tans, 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 hand 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.

Even this surmise is unfair in its comparison with the little boy. To squirm is not to sin. What healthy youngster of four can sit through a two-hour train ride without moving around a little? I wonder how the little chap explained away the shakings in his small mind. When they were administered he looked bewildered, then resigned as though he thought that was the way things were.

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 narrow 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 boxes, most 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 making 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.

Orchard Cultivation.

It is a well known fact that growth in the orchard tree is made during the months of June and July, after which the growth fills out and ripens. It is also known that early cultivation stimulates growth. The loosening up of the earth aids in the warming of the soil and makes it possible for soil organisms which liberate plant food to become active earlier; air will penetrate better and these organisms will become active to a greater depth than if cultivation is not given. Hence the importance of

the early spring cultivation to furnish suitable soil conditions for the tree and the organisms upon which the tree is dependent for the liberation of plant food. Uncultivated areas may be made suitable for the tree by supplying nitrogen in an available form early through the use of nitrate of soda and by using a mulch to conserve moisture, but on the whole the practice most suitable for general orchard areas is early cultivation followed by frequent cultivation at intervals of a week or ten days to the middle of June or July 1st, after which orchard cultivation should cease.

The first cultivation may be shallow plowing, four to five inches deep, after which surface cultivation with the disk and smoothing harrow to maintain a surface mulch of fine earth is all that is required. Deep cultivation is not desirable, as the feeding roots naturally grow in the surface soil and deep cultivation may injure them. Shallow cultivation prevents the formation of a surface crust, thus checking excessive evaporation and moisture and retaining it for continuous growth of fruit, and insuring a proper moisture supply for the tree later in the season. As soon as the ground is dry enough after rain it is wise to start the harrow. It is a crop fairly easily turned under and it is satisfactory at picking time, as it flattens down after making considerable growth. This cover crop may be plowed under in the fall or not until the following spring, but the usual practice is to fall plow and work with the disk harrow in the spring, which is considered the best method.

The area close to the base of the tree looks better if kept well cultivated, but the cultivation of this area is not necessary and very often much injury is done to the main roots from plowing too deeply close around the tree. It usually is better to leave this space untouched and keep the grass cut to give a neat appearance. Discarded pillow shams make excellent curtains for a closet or pantry window.

Fine natures are like poems; a glance at the first few lines suffices for a guess into the beauty that waits you if you read on.—Bulwer Lytton.

The Welfare of the Home

Most Don'ts for Children Are Based on Selfishness.

A great many people on the train the other day were both amused and horrified at a young woman. She had a little boy and she shook him regularly every fifteen minutes just on general principles.

The little boy's gravest offence was wiggling. And so with each shake would come "sit still." The youngster was about four—a little boxed-hair, cuddly sort of a gray-eyed boy any one might be tempted to let squirm around a little if it made him any happier. The mother was young and well dressed. It got to be quite a joke among the passengers—that is, among those who weren't too incensed to laugh. As regular as clock-work she would stop reading her book and shake that wiggling boy.

We laughed and got mad in turn, because it was so fearfully silly for anyone to punish a child on general principles; and yet it occurred to me as we sped through the April sunshine that more children are brought up in this way than in any other. For instance, if you would take a census of the vocabularies of all mothers it is safe to say the word "don't" would take the prize for being in the lead in 75 per cent of them. Whole families are raised on the "don't" plan. Looking around, it's a marvel to wonder we're all here and we're any initiative left at all.

The trouble is, though, now that we're here in the land of do-as-you-please, we've forgotten the painful process of arrival. It would be interesting to apply the "don't" system to parents. For instance, if one of us had dared to go to the lady with the child-shaking propensities and demand that she stop reading, I have not the slightest doubt that an uproar in the train would have resulted. Yet, it is thoroughly possible that that young woman had no more the right to read than her little boy had to squirm, and not half as much. Perhaps she should have been at home doing her spring housecleaning or darning stockings. Yet, who is there to say "don't" read; "don't" go to your mother's house over the weekend and save yourself the trouble of cooking the Sunday dinner?

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Soils and Crops

Address communications to Agronomist, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto.

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 to not 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 pedigree 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 see how much 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 mon-

strous 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 supported 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 berries, 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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THE ARMY AND NAVY PLANT

By the time Bobby and his mother had reached the tropical lily house in the Royal Gardens at Kew, Bobby was very tired. He had been walking round the gardens the whole afternoon.

"Mother, let's go in where the lilies are and find a seat," he begged.

But they had not gone far inside the lily house before he forgot his weariness.

"Look, mother, look!" he cried.

"Isn't that the biggest flower you ever saw?"

They stopped and looked. It was a big flower, to be sure; from one edge to another it must have measured a foot and a half. It was very beautiful, too—pure white, with a little rose color at the centre. And it was very fragrant.

"I never saw a flower like that before," Bobby said thoughtfully.

"Let's sit down here," his mother said, "and if one of the attendants should come by I'll ask him to tell us about it."

So they took their seats and before many minutes had passed Bobby was hearing one of the men tell the story of the strange great flower.

Victoria regia was the name of the big lily, the man said. It was named for Queen Victoria; during her reign it first flowered under cultivation in England. It was discovered in a sluggish stream that flows into the Amazon River.

"The flower opened late this afternoon for the first time," he went on. "To-morrow morning it will close; and when it opens again to-morrow evening the centre will be a deep rose color, shading to white in the outer petals. Some of its fragrance will be gone. The second morning it will close again, and a little later it will sink to the bottom of the pond. There it will stay for about fifty days, working busily all the time."

"Working?" said Bobby. "What do you mean?"

"I mean," answered the man, "turning into a great round pod as big as your head, packed full of seeds. In South America the natives use those seeds as Canadians use corn. They call the plant 'water maize.'"

Bobby kept gazing at the plant. "The green leaves," he said, "are almost as big as boats—green boats painted red under the bottom."

"Each leaf is five or six feet wide," the man told him. "And they are boats in a way. You might call them battleships."

"Battleships!" echoed Bobby in surprise. "Really battleships?"

The man nodded. "In its native country," he went on, "the Victoria regia has an army, a navy and aeroplanes to protect it."

"When?" said Bobby, staring at the lily. "I never heard of such a plant. You're just fooling, aren't you?"

Then the man explained. "The navy," he said, "is made up of swimming and diving birds. They live on the plant and keep the under side of it free from snails and insects that would soon destroy it. The army is a standing army, that is, made up of birds that dive from the big leaves after insects that live on the surface of the water and little fish that come too near the surface. Both the insects and the fish would nibble the ship if they could, but the army takes good care that they do not eat, but are eaten."

"And what about the aeroplanes?" Bobby asked eagerly.

"The aeroplanes, too, are birds; they fly round above the plant like vigilant airmen, and destroy the ravaging hordes of winged insects that would soon blacken the beauty of the Victoria regia if they were left alone. The aeroplanes are in motion almost constantly, but the big ship is their base. Sometimes soldiers, sailors and airmen in as many as a dozen different uniforms can be seen on one ship."

Bobby pondered. "Aren't they really getting their dinners when they do that way," he asked finally; "those army and navy and aeroplane birds?"

The man laughed. "Yes; but they do protect the lily, you see."

"That's so," said Bobby. Then, as his mother rose to go, he walked over and stood close to the big lily. "I wish I could see it in South America," he said. "Perhaps I shall some day. Who knows?"

"Women must either be housewives or house-moths; must either weave and embroider men's futures, or feed upon and bring them to decay."

Good care means good breeding, good feeding, constant watchfulness of small details, and finally marketing at the right time to get the most dollars.

"To what do you attribute your wonderful cure," asked a man of his friend who said he had had a very remarkable cure. "I don't exactly know yet," he said. "There are several patent medicine concerns I have not yet heard from."

Salt is required by all animals. The dairy cow requires an ounce or more a day and while she should be given all she needs, she should not be forced to take more than she wants. It is best, therefore, to give only a small quantity on the feed, and to place rock salt in boxes in the yard where she can lick it at will.