

THE BOYS' ROOM.

"I like the plan of your new house very much, my son," said old Mrs. Lane to "David," whose prosperity was showing itself by a change of homes. "But where is the boys' room?"

"That is what I have asked him many times," said the meek little mother of "the boys."

"Well," replied David Lane, as indifferently as if he were speaking of a kennel for his dog, "you can poke boys away anywhere! I can't afford to finish off a nice room for two great romping, tearing fellows! Why, mother, when I was a boy I slept in a great unfinished garret, and I've often got up in the night and hammered a shingle over a hole to keep the rain off my bed."

"Yes, David; but we were very poor then, and your boys would sleep in a garret and nail shingles over holes, too, if it were necessary; but God prospered your father after that, and He has prospered you, and the boys ought to share the blessing. Where do you mean to put them, David?" persisted the old lady.

"Well, in the chamber of the short L. The ceiling is low, and the half-windows come down to the floor, but they don't care. If they had a palace of a chamber, they wouldn't stay at home evenings," and David Lane took up his hat, and went out.

Morton and Willis Lane, two great boys of fourteen and sixteen years, were brimming over with life and fun. They played ball, rowed boats, practised gymnastics, scraped on violins, blew horns, whistled, sang and shouted, and thus relieved, as by safety valves, their surplus animal spirit.

This did very well by day; but when night came, or storms raged, they were like caged eagles. If they went into the sitting-room, they were forced to sit still lest they should disturb their father, who was always closing up his day's accounts there. If they went into the kitchen, they were sure to give offence to old Betty by leaving foot-prints on her well-scoured floor. If they drummed on the piano in the parlor, they disturbed their sister's study, or made somebody's head ache. So they too often took up their hats after tea, and went off to sit on a fence with other boys, or to rove about town, whistling and singing and shouting.

These boys were in a fair way to be ruined for want of a cheerful home-shelter, and they would have been but for one blessing—they had a grandmother who thought their comfort and enjoyment of more importance than that of an occasional visitor of their sister's, or a bevy of country cousins who came there twice a year to do shopping, and thus saved a hotel bill. This good grandma had a little money, and half-a-dozen homes; so she was not afraid to express her opinion on this subject, now that she had come to them for a long visit. The new house was being discussed again one evening, and her opinion was asked upon some matter.

"David," she said to her son, "who is that large chamber for, with the bay-window and two mantel-pieces?"

"For company, mother," was the reply.

"What company! I didn't know you expected any," said the shrewd old lady.

"Oh, for any one who happens along. By-and-by Emma will leave school, and have company, you know. James' wife and Cousin Hepsy come down twice a year to shop, and always stop here a night or two."

"But your own boys come here to sleep three hundred and sixty-five nights in the year, and have a thousand times the claim on you that any 'company' has."

"Yes?"

"What arrangements have you made for them?"

And the father repeated the remark he had made to his easy wife so often, that "boys didn't care, and that they could cuddle down and sleep anywhere."

"But these boys must not sleep anywhere after the new house is done. Unless you divide that long square chamber into two moderate-sized ones, and give one to them, I shall settle them in the room you have planned for me, and make my home with Catherine. She has plenty of room, and is always urging me to come to her. I will not crowd your sons out of a room."

David Lane loved his mother, so the result was that the long "spare chamber"

was finished so as to meet the wants of the boys.

Two happier boys never lived than these two when the time came for furnishing and ornamenting that room? Grandma took the matter into her own hands, and said they should have everything to their mind, as long as they kept within bounds.

"Now, what do you want in your room?" she asked, when the house was nearly done.

"In the first place, we don't want a carpet, because somebody would be always telling us not to kick holes in it. We don't want black walnut furniture, nor a big looking-glass, nor china vases, nor anything grand that scratches, or tears, or breaks," Morton said.

"Well, say what you do want, then," said their grandmother.

"Well, grandma, we want an oiled floor and two of your great-bruited mats; and an open fire-place with your brass andirons from the garret; and a big hearth, where we can pop corn and roast nuts; and we want bright wall-paper, with pictures of the country; and two little iron bodsteads with blue spreads; four chairs, painted blue; a glass-case for our stuffed birds; shelves for our books; and lots of hooks to hang our bows and arrows, violin, French horn, boxing-gloves, bats, and Indian clubs on. These, with the old sitting-room lounge and the old easy-chairs, will make us the most comfortable boys in the world."

"I'll go with you to-morrow to buy all you want new, and it shall be a present from me to you," said the dear old lady.

"Grandma, dear," said Willis, "we don't want a single new thing! Let us have the old things that nobody else wants; and then we'll feel easy,—besides, I like the home-things better than new store-things. Let us have what father was going to send off to auction."

"That is a good thought, dear boy," said the grandmother, "and a week from to-day we will begin to fashion this 'boys' paradise.'"

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No one now complains of the Lane boys for hooting from the top of stone-walls, or howling about the streets by night; and their mother says their music and their company do not disturb her half as much as the anxiety as to where they were by night used to do. — *Youth's Companion.*

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Question Corner.—No. 19.

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