

THE HOUSEHOLD.

THE BOYS' ROOM.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

A separate room for every member of the family should be contrived wherever it is possible, and separate sleeping quarters may usually be managed by a convenient arrangement of screens, if the importance of privacy is recognized. The mistaken economy which sacrifices the sleeping-apartments to the drawing-room sometimes obliges the delicate child to share the bed of the stronger one, or permits a young girl to sleep with an invalid or an aged person. Always inadvisable, in the latter case, there is real peril to the younger, whose life forces are insensibly drained, and who grows ailing and pallid while the other derives new strength. In our present knowledge of sanitary science we have learned that the babe sleeps more comfortably in its crib than on its mother's arm, and we look well to the ventilation of our chambers, shuddering as we think how stuffy and close must have been the sleeping-rooms of our ancestors, with curtains drawn around the couch and every precaution imaginable taken to exclude fresh air.

But if the boys are obliged to share a room, let it be a large one, and give each his own bed. There are homes in which any place is supposed to be good enough for the boys. Theirs is the old threadbare carpet voted too shabby for the girls' use, and worn to the last verge already in some other apartment. No furniture in the house is so mismatched, so unsightly, perhaps so uncomfortable, as that given to the boys.

"What if it be hideous?" says the dainty elder sister; "the boys are very little in their room except to sleep, and they wouldn't appreciate it if we made it beautiful. What do boys—great rough creatures—care for graceful rooms? They are never in the house when they can help it, except to eat and sleep."

Whose fault is it, if this be true? "What do the boys want of a new mattress?" the father observes, on hearing that the affair on which Bert and Jamie repose is hard, lumpy, and in the mother's opinion unfit for service longer. "They are so tired when night comes that they are asleep in two minutes after their heads touch the pillow. Besides, it is not well for boys to be coddled. Let them get used to hardship while they are young."

I never hear without a protest the statement that boys, *per se*, are rough, coarse, or ill-bred. Their good or ill breeding is, like that of their sisters, entirely dependent on the home environment, and as a very plain-spoken but very sensible woman once observed in my presence, "If you treat a boy like a clown, you cannot expect him to behave like a gentleman." I should be always as scrupulously courteous, as gently considerate of my boys as of my girls, and remembering how full the world before their feet will be of temptations to take the wrong path, I would do my utmost to make the home a refuge and a delight.

Choosing for the boys as large a room as I could conveniently spare, with an exposure to the morning sun, I would do all in my power to make that room attractive. A carpet in any sleeping-room is an article of doubtful comfort, and in the boys' room a painted or oiled floor, with large rugs which can be easily shaken and kept free from dust, is immensely the better thing to have. Fur rugs are very luxurious, but the Smyrna rug, comparatively inexpensive, and almost as elegant as the costly Persian or Turkish carpet, will satisfy any reasonable boy. There are tasteful and durable rugs of home-made manufacture which are warm to the feet, bright and restful to the eye, and while answering every other purpose, are extremely cheap, being composed of ravelled ends of old carpet and odds and ends from the rag-bag, woven in cunning designs by the deft fingers of mother herself.

A fireplace where in winter the boys may have a cheery blaze on the hearth, an open Franklin stove, which is the next best substitute for the glow on the hearth itself; a grate, if neither of the former can be allowed, or, failing everything else, some hot-air contrivance to warm the room, should be considered essential to its occupants'

comfort. Short summers and long winters prevail over wide latitudes in our country, and it is too much to expect of boy nature that a boy shall spend a large proportion of his time in a room where the temperature stubbornly sinks to freezing or even to chilling point. The items of fire and light are among the most important, and gas-burners or a cheery lamp should be regarded as prime requisites. Boys are gregarious, and a boy ought to have a room into which he can freely at his pleasure invite the "fellows." Every mother who cares more for her boys than for her polished stairway or velvet carpeting feels a thrill of satisfaction when the boot heels of her sons' comrades tap on her floor. She is a wise little mother if, like Caroline in *Magnum Bonum*, she sets her children first, and cares a great deal less for the properties and appliances of life than for life itself as it daily blossoms out in her growing sons.

A mother to whom her son is a man in embryo can tolerate with serene philosophy the shouts of mirth which reach her from the den above her head, and the occasional tumultuous rush and whirl, the far-off echo of the wrestling match in which the lads are having a friendly tussle to see whose is the stronger muscle, will not greatly disturb her. Wrestling bouts are bad for carpets, but rugs can be kicked aside, and the oiled floor will be none the worse, which furnishes another argument against the carpet.

A boy usually passes through several stages, during which collecting is one hobby on which he rides delightedly. From postage-stamps, the collection of which teaches him geography, history, and political economy, every stamp being one token of some advance in civilization, and a sign of the fraternal union of the race, the transition is easy to the coins, pebbles, butterflies, moths, and rare plants which evince the taste for natural history, of all tastes the safest and most wholesome for a boy. Let him have cabinets in his den where he may label and preserve his specimens, and see that no careless hand wielding a reckless broom or duster ever displaces and mars these. A boy has a right to expect that his possessions shall not be ruthlessly invaded in the interests of house-cleaning or curiosity.

What shall I say of the honesty of a mother who, generous with the goods of another, despoiled her son's cabinet of its curios and treasures wherever the whim seized her, saying, airily, "Oh, Leo can easily procure others; take this, dear, if you like it," to some small marauder who had gazed longingly on Leo's collections? This brings me to the suggestion which I am thankful few mothers need, that the law of ownership should be rigidly respected as regards our children's wealth. Nobody has a right to give away what does not belong to her without asking and gaining its owner's consent. The owner's relationship to herself gives her no claim upon his goods, and by no means excuses either petty larceny or highway robbery.

A boy has sometimes the taste of the bibliograph, and likes to gather books about him in dainty dress, perhaps in rare editions. To encourage him in this he should have shelves whereon to arrange his books, and, pursuing the line of thought just indicated, neither sister nor cousin should borrow his volumes without leave, while to borrow or lend them to any one else should be a criminal offence.

In the home we should respect the rights of one another. Only in the home where there is due regard for the rights of everybody can there be constant opportunity for the exchange of gracious amenities and amiable courtesies. Privilege and right are quite different terms.

The boy who has a mechanical turn and is handy with tools, if he cannot have a regular tool-shop somewhere on the premises, should be allowed to keep and use his tools in his room. Of course he will not abuse the permission, and saw and plane will never break in on his mother's afternoon nap, nor rasp the nerves of a convalescent in the next chamber.

I am not sure that anybody is such an acquisition to a house as a man who is deft and skilful, mending a hinge, replacing a window-cord, setting a pane, hanging a picture, repairing a broken chair, upholstering a cushion or a couch. The boy who has a turn for carpentry or mechanics will

by-and-by be that sort of man, saving dollars upon dollars in the yearly income, holding the plumbers at bay, and giving no end of agreeable surprises to his wife in the way of handy helpfulness.

As a rule, a boy does not care to accumulate bric-a-brac, and his den will have few small articles to dust and arrange daily. But a really good print or two upon the walls, a few well-chosen photographs, a picture cut from a favorite illustrated paper and neatly mounted and framed, will add grace to his apartment and relieve the monotony of bare walls. His rifle, if he be a sportsman, his violin or banjo, if musical, his base-ball and bat, tennis racket, chess board and men, all belong to his own room. They are part of his resources, and all help to bind him to the home which is dearer to him than the corner on which homeless boys congregate, or the street where they take lessons in evil and crime.

Homeless boys! There are too many of them with good clothes on their backs, good shoes on their feet. With enough to eat and to wear, they are practically as badly off as the boys who live in the narrow and crowded tenements to whom home is a mere name. For to the latter the boys' club or lodging-house opens wide a door to something of interest, some entertaining game or attractive study. The homeless boys who spring from the family table and fly to the street, who think of home as only a shelter, if not as half a prison, move my profoundest sympathy. What will they come to when a half-dozen years shall have deepened the lines around the boyish mouth and bronzed the beardless cheek!

A boy's home can be the strongest influence to bind him to the kingdom of heaven. And one of the most prized elements in making his home all that home should be is a boys' room.—*Harper's Young People*.

BEING NEIGHBORLY AT TABLE.

The one thing that should be invariably insisted upon is absolute promptness and regularity at meals; and children should be taught that they can show no greater and no more selfish discourtesy than either keeping others waiting to sit down, or, if this ceremoniousness is excused, in breaking the harmony and propriety that good manners demand, by being late at table. Respectable, considerate manners are almost out of vogue, and the children of today ride rough-shod over the proprieties in a manner to make their great-grandparents believe that there is no saving grace left in the world, if their horrified shades ever revisit their accustomed earthly walks. The old-time stiffness and formality of manner may have had its absurdities, but there is no sweeter charm in life than the habit of considerate regard for the common comfort and regularity of the home—the thoughtful deference to others, the affectionate dependence upon one another. If this spirit is cultivated, the family unity, with all its tender and helpful relations, is assured, and the home becomes a real centre and influence of the life. There is no better or surer test of this than the manners at the table. And therefore it is a great loss to the best training and camaraderie when its arrangements are so formed as to leave altogether to the waitress the duty of attending to the wants of the company. To keep a watchful eye upon the needs of others, to invite them with gentle courtesy to partake of what they may lack in their supply of the different dishes, will add a glorious spirit of unselfishness and harmony, for which nothing else gives opportunity. No collection of dainty dishes, no extent of formal elegance of arrangement, will give the heart warmth and delight of simple, unobtrusive, kindly attention from one's neighbors at the table.—*Good Housekeeping*.

CRAZY AFGHAN.

Collect odds and ends of Zephyr and Germantown—all colors and shades—of various lengths—none longer than a yard, mostly bright ones, break and tie together and wind in balls. Crochet in strips 12 inches wide and the length of afghan in star stitch, keeping the knots on the wrong side. Alternate the crazy strips with plain black in crazy stitch or star stitch. Crochet the strips together with yellow. Tie the fringe in ends, or crochet a black border edged with yellow. I have three strips of crazy work 12 inches wide and four strips of black six inches wide. It is

very handsome, and much easier than tri-cot stitch embroidered; besides using up bits of worsted one doesn't know what to do with.

The same idea can be carried out in a chair scarf, or sofa pillow, using velvet or wool canvas for the black strips.

PRETTY BEDSPREADS.

Those who have as heirlooms old heavy home-made linen sheets, can transform them into handsome counterpanes by the following method: Divide them into squares or parallelograms, by drawing out the threads, and working the open spaces by merely twisting three or four threads over as many others with the wash filoselle, or heavy red or blue working cotton. In each square or oblong space, with one or two colors of the same, work little quaint designs. These may be irregular geometrical patterns, or such figures as fancy may suggest. It can be divided into squares by briar or feather-stitching, if preferred to the open work. Finish the edge with coarse linen lace. Pillow-shams to match are easily made.—*Prairie Farmer*.

PUZZLES—NO. 22.

ENIGMATICAL REBUS.

A well known shell-fish first disclose,
A letter drop and then transpose,
To find what often gives delight,
When round the hearth we sit by night,
Again reject, transpose and name,
An ancient city of great fame,
Reject once more and I will be,
What often pleased your infancy,
Again reject and you'll discern,
A preposition—So good-bye. S. MOORE.

INVESTIGATION PUZZLE.

Find the word father-in-law once in the Old Testament and once in the New.

SQUARE.

1. A part of time. 2. A lazy fellow. 3. Dazzling. 4. A waterfowl. 5. To run. S. MOORE.

DIAMOND.

1. A letter. 2. Common name for a near relation. 3. Name of a Biblical King. 4. A verb. 5. A letter. ANDREW A. SCOTT.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.—NUMBER 21.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.—Thomas, John 20: 25.

Tabitha, Acts 9:36.
Hannah, 1 Sam. 1:20.
Othniel, Judges 3:9.
Methuselah, Gen. 5:25.
Absalom, 2 Sam. 3:3.
Saul, 1 Sam. 13:1.

SQUARE.—

S E N T
E V E R
N E R O
T R O Y

BIBLE ACROSTIC.—

S-amari-A 1 Kings 16, 24.
O-re-B Judges 7, 25.
L-azaru-S John 11, 14-19.
O-meg-A Rev. 22, 13.
M-icha-L 1 Sam. 14, 49 and 19, 11.
O-n-O 1 Chron. 8, 12.
N-ahum-M Nahum 1, 1.

DIAMOND.—

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RECIPES.

SAGO CREAM.—One-half cupful of sago, one pint of rich milk, three tablespoonfuls of sugar, a little salt, whites of three eggs, one cupful of whipped cream (cream whipped until stiff with a Dover or other egg beater). Cook the sago in the milk until clear; add the salt and sugar; beat the whites to a stiff froth; add to the mixture; cook two minutes. Flavor delicately with vanilla and a drop or two of bitter almond. When a little cool, whisk in lightly the whipped cream, pour into a melon mould, and place on ice. Turn out, and serve with a strawberry or raspberry sauce, or with cut peaches and sugar and cream; or with a soft custard made of the yolks of the eggs; or mould in layers, with thinly-sliced and sugared bananas. It may be served warm with creamy sauce.

CARROT CUP CUSTARDS.—One pint of milk, yolks of three eggs, two heaping tablespoonfuls of sugar, a little salt, one-half cupful of carrots (parboiled, then grated or mashed to a smooth paste or pulp), and the grated rind of one-half of a small orange. Beat the eggs well; mix the salt, sugar, and orange rind with the carrot. Heat the milk; stir in the eggs gradually; then pour over the carrot mixture. Fill the custard cups, place them in a pan of hot water, and cook on the top of the range until they are firm in the centre. If preferred, they can be steamed in a steamer. When cold, cover with a meringue made with the whites of the eggs, two heaping teaspoonfuls of powdered sugar, and two tablespoonfuls of dried and sifted sponge-cake crumbs. Heap it upon the custard, brown lightly in the oven, and garnish with fine shreds of candied orange-peel, or quince jelly cut in shreds one-half an inch long.

BREAKFAST PUFFS.—Take two quarts of flour, a teaspoonful of salt; half a teaspoon of sugar; two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, four eggs and a quart of boiled milk, stir well, fill greased puff moulds two-thirds full and bake in a hot oven.