

LADDIE BOY

KEYWORD: Scope.

Right around the corner from a big apartment house where Dick and Rosalie lived was the quaintest little, low, one-story house. Once it had been white; but that must have been a long, long time ago, for it was anything but white when our story began.

Dick and Rosalie had really never noticed the queer little house. In fact, they did not know it was there until one morning the newspaper didn't come. Dick's father seemed lost without his morning paper and was just going out to get one, when Dick said: "Oh, please, Father, let me go." So out Dick went to get the paper. When he reached the front door, he asked the hall man why the paper had not come.

"Well, my little man, I don't know, but I dare say there is trouble of some kind or other in the little house around the corner."

Dick was not at all interested in the house around the corner, but he was eager to get a paper for Father, so he said: "Can you tell me where I can get a morning paper?"

"The paper boy lives in the little house around the corner; you might try there. No harm to try."

So Dick ran around to see. Well, when he arrived, breathless, to knock on the door, he stopped quickly, for he heard voices.

"Laddie boy, please start out with your papers. You may lose your route if you don't, and tomorrow you may be glad to go on again. Laddie boy, won't you go — just to please Mother?"

"No, can't do it, not even to please you, Mother dear.

I've got to be a man right now. Can't go on being a news-boy all my life. I've got to have more scope."

"Scope, dear? That is an unusual word for a little lad. Do you know what it means?"

"Yes, Mother, it means I can be free and have a chance to do big things."

"You are a bright boy, Laddie, and mother is proud of you. But do you not know that there may come to you an opportunity for bigger work that will give you freedom just by being a newsboy a little longer?"

"Why, Mother, how in the world can I ever take care of you the way I should by just being a newsboy?"

"But, dear, that is where the *scope* comes in. If you keep your route just a little longer, you will be better known and your customers will probably order magazines, too. And then it won't be long before we can have the house painted. I've thought it all out. We'll have our house, and I'll soon be strong and well again. We can make the little house attractive, and with the magazines and papers we shall soon have a real business, and then you can go back to school."

"Oh, Mother, I do believe you are right about it. You have it all thought out. I wanted *scope*, but I didn't know how to get what I wanted right away, so I was going to throw away the very thing that would give me freedom and plenty of chances to do things. Yes, Mother, I'll take my papers right this minute. I am a little late, but it's the very first time, so maybe my people will overlook it just this once."

Then out he came just as Dick knocked on the door. Imagine Dick's surprise when Laddie opened it. He could scarcely believe his eyes for there right before him stood Laird Gordon, the brightest boy in his class in school, who had dropped out so suddenly. And to think he never had known that Laird lived just around the corner.

Well, you can just imagine that Dick told his Father

all about Laddie Boy and his "*scope*." The whole family, Father and Mother and Rosalie and Dick, decided to help Laddie get his freedom.

A little later the "little white house round the corner" who got its badly needed fresh coat of paint, as Mother had said. In the windows were bright flowers and magazines, and it was so attractive that one day it caught the eye of a rich man. He was so pleased with it that he bought it, paying a large sum of money — enough indeed so that Laddie and his mother now have many new opportunities as well as plenty of freedom for study and pleasure.

Now, you see, it is really doing lovingly and well the things that we have to do each day that brings us new opportunities, so let us do with all our might what our hands find to do.
