

Mafeking made B.-P. the boys' hero, and it was not surprising that many wrote to him for advice and help. He took a great deal of trouble to answer these letters. Here is part of his reply to one from a Boys' Club in London: "You should not be content with sitting down to defend yourselves against evil habits, but should also be active in doing good. By 'doing good' I mean making yourselves useful and doing small kindnesses to other people - whether they are friends or strangers.

It is not a difficult matter, and the best way to set about it is to make up your mind to do at least one 'good turn' to somebody every day, and you will soon get into the habit of doing good turns always.

It does not matter how small the 'good turn' may be - even if it is only to help an old woman across the street, or to say a good word for somebody who is being badly spoke of. The great thing is to do something."

Letters of this kind set B.-P. thinking of how he could do more to help boys and how they could best be trained. He had had many years of experience in training soldiers and, as we have seen, he made some successful experiments. He found in India, for instance, that scouting was a subject that made a great appeal and brought out the best in the men. At Mafeking he had watched and noted the success of the boy cadets who had done fine work when given the chance and the responsibility. Why not draw up a scheme of training for all boys on the same lines? Why not train boys as peace scouts, ready at all times to help others?

The training would have to be attractive and interesting. Here his own boyhood gave him a clue. He remembered the fun of boating and tramping with his brothers - the B.-P. Patrol - and the eagerness with which at Charterhouse he had slipped away into the copse to watch animals and make fires and cook rabbits. To all this he could now add his own experiences as a practical pioneer and scout in the army.

On his return from South Africa in 1903 two things helped to point the way towards the Boy Scouts. First he heard to his surprise that the little book he wrote for soldiers, 'Aids to Scouting', was being used for the training of boys in observation. One instance concerned

Brigadier-General Allenby - later Field-Marshal Lord Allenby - and his son. As he rode home after a field day, the General was surprised to hear a voice call out, "Father, you are shot. I am in ambush, and you haven't seen me. You should look up." The General did so, and there was his son lying along the branch of a tree, and higher up was the boy's governess. It was she who in her work had made use of B.-P.'s ideas on observation. Then the editor of a boys' paper, 'Boys of the Empire', had also seen the interest of the book, and had serialized it under the heading 'The Boy Scout' - probably the first use of the term.

The next important fact was that B.-P. was invited to take the chair at the annual display given by the Boys' Brigade at the Albert Hall, and later to review the Brigade in Glasgow. The sight of all these boys, so smart and keen, made him wish that thousands of others would come along and be trained in the same way. He talked of this to Sir William Smith, the Founder of the Brigade; as a result he promised to work out a scheme of training which could be used by the Brigades to add to the attractiveness of their work and so bring in more boys.

The chief subject he suggested was scouting, especially training in observation and deduction. He had no idea of starting a new movement; his aim was to give some ideas to the Brigade officers to help them in their work. They did in fact do this, and found that the boys like it. B.-P.'s first suggestions were published in the 'Brigade Gazette' in 1906, and the following tests he put down are of great interest.

- " 1. Look into five successive shop windows, one minute at each. Then write down the contents of, say, the 2nd and 4th from memory.
2. Look at six passers-by and describe from memory, say, the 2nd, 3rd and 5th, and what you reckon them and their business to be.
3. Remember the numbers of the first two cabs that pass, and presently write them down from memory.
4. Describe the compass-direction of certain streets, landmarks, etc., by the sun; or, if dull weather, 'box the compass'.
5. Read tracks and their meaning - if in the country (or park) send someone out to make a fairly clear track (using walking stick, etc.).

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Each boy tracking for a few minutes in turn, or till he fails.

6. The instructor lays a 'paper chase' (in town or country), not with paper but with small signs such as buttons, bits of cloth, card, et., all of one colour, some on the ground, some on bushes, trees, etc., to make the boys use their eyes. (Objects all of one colour to be used to prevent confusion with ordinary rubbish.) Boys follow the track, each one being given the lead in turn for four or five minutes or till he fails.

7. Lay two fires and light them, using two matches only.

8. Cook 1/4 lb. flour and two potatoes without the help of cooking utensils.

9. Draw a sketch of the Union Jack correctly.

10. Scouting race. Instructor stations three individuals or groups, each group differently clothed as far as possible, and carrying different articles (such as stick, bundle, paper, etc.), at distances from 300 to 1,200 yards from starting-point. If there are other people about, these groups might be told to kneel on one knee, or take some such attitude to distinguish them from passers-by. He makes out a circular course of three points for the competitors to run, say, about a quarter mile, with a few jumps if possible.

The competitors start and run to No. 1 point. Here the umpire tells them the compass direction of the group they have to report on. Each competitor on seeing this group writes a report showing:

1. How many in the group.
2. How clothed or how distinguishable.
3. Position as regards any landmark near them.
4. Distance from his own position.

He then runs to the next point and repeats the same on another group, and so on; and finally he runs with his report to the winning-post."

The more B.-P. thought about this training of boys, the more enthusiastic he became. He discussed his ideas with all kinds of people, and he watched how the suggestions worked in those companies of the Boys' Brigade where they were tried. He was never content to sit by

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and watch other people, so he decided to try out the scout training himself with some boys in camp. He found a site on Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour, and there he pitched his camp on 25th July, 1907 - a red-letter day for Boy Scouts. The Boys' Brigade helped him to collect a mixed party of boys. They did not, of course, wear uniform; some wore trousers and others shorts with collars and ties. For shoulder-knots they had long twists of coloured wool hanging almost down to the elbow.

It was not an ideal camp-site, but there was plenty of woodland on the island for scouting games.

B.-P.'s nephew, Donald, was present as orderly; Major Kenneth Maclaren - one his fellow-subaltern in the 13th Hussars - came to help, and Mr. P.W. Everett there saw Scouting in action for the first time.

The following is B.-P.'s report on the camp:

"The troop of boys was divided up into 'Patrols' of five, the senior boy in each being Patrol Leader. This organization was the secret of our success. Each Patrol Leader was given full responsibility for the behaviour of his patrol at all times, in camp and in the field. The patrol was the unit of work or play, and each patrol was camped in a separate spot. The boys were put 'on their honour' to carry out orders. Responsibility and competitive rivalry were thus at once established, and a good standard of development was ensured throughout the troop from day to day. The troop was trained progressively in the subjects of scouting. Every night one patrol went on duty as night picket - that is, drew rations of flour, meat, vegetables, tea, etc., and went out to some indicated spot to bivouac for the night. Each boy had his greatcoat and blankets, cooking-pot and matches. On arrival at the spot, fires were lit and suppers cooked, after which sentries were posted and bivouac formed. The picket was scouted by Patrol Leaders of other patrols and myself, at some time before eleven p.m., after which the sentries were withdrawn and picket settled down for the night.

" We found the best way of imparting theoretical instruction was to give it out in short installments with ample illustrative examples when sitting round the camp-fire or otherwise resting, and with demonstrations in the practice

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hour before breakfast. A formal lecture is apt to bore the boys.

"The practice was then carried out in competitions and schemes.

"For example, take one detail of the subject, 'Observation' - namely tracking.

1. At the camp-fire overnight we would tell the boys some interesting instance of the value of being able to track.
2. Next morning we would teach them to read tracks by making footmarks at different places, and showing how to read them and to deduce their meaning.
3. In the afternoon we would have a game, such as 'deer- stalking', in which one boy went off as the 'deer', with half a dozen tennis balls in his bag. Twenty minutes later four 'hunters' went off after him, following his tracks, each armed with a tennis ball. The deer, after going a mile or two, would hide and endeavor to ambush his hunters, and so get them within range; each hunter struck with his tennis ball was counted gored to death; if, on the other hand, the deer was hit by three of their balls he was killed."

The boys were roused in the mornings by the koodoo horn which B.- P. had captured in the Matabeleland Campaign.

The camp was not without its amusing incidents. Thus when B.-P. was stalking a Patrol, he failed to observe one of his own injunctions, "to look up", and he was captured by his own nephew who had concealed himself up in a tree. One evening the male members of a house-party which the owner of the island, Mr. Van Raalte, was entertaining, decided that they would try to pay the camp a surprise visit. They had not gone far, however, before two of the boys sprang out from cover and "arrested" them; the prisoners were marched into camp and had to pay a suitable ransom.

The camp was so encouraging, and the boys so enthusiastic - it was indeed a thrill to be trained by the defender of Mafeking! - that B.-P. decided to make the general scheme more widely known. While he was looking about for means to do this he met Mr. Arthur Pearson, the head of the publishing firm of that name. He was at once interested, and arranged for B.- P. to go about the country lecturing to

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audiences of interested people, and at the same time to write a handbook for the boys. Mr. Pearson himself undertook to publish the book, and to start a paper, The Scout, in which B.-P. promised to write a weekly yarn - this he continued to do for many years, and some of his best articles on Scouting are to be found in old volumes of The Scout.

In order to be free from interruptions while writing the book, B.-P. rented a room in the Windmill on Wimbledon Common, London. There he got down to work to produce one of the most popular boys' books of the century. Mr. P. W. Everett supervised the publication, and this early close contact with B.-P. was later to lead to his taking a large part in the growth of the movement.

Scouting for Boys was published in six fortnightly parts, the first appearing in January, 1908, at a cost of four-pence. The first issue of The Scout was published on 14th April, 1908. Then the fun began! B.-P. still thought of Scouting as an extra activity that could be done by existing clubs and other boy organizations, but the boys themselves soon made it necessary to begin a separate movement.

Thousands of boys bought the first part of Scouting for Boys; it was sufficient for them that the magic initials B.-P. appeared on the cover. But they were not content with reading about Scouting; they wanted to do it, and if they were not members of a Brigade or Club, they goth together in little gangs, formed themselves into Patrols, and got down to practical, out-of-doors Scouting. Then they would try to persuade some grown-up to become Scoutmaster. In this way Scouting spread, and as the numbers of boys rapidly grew, it was obvious that something would have to be done about it.

Mr. Pearson again helped; he provided a one-room office as a centre for the Boy Scouts, as they were soon named. The first Manager of the office was Major Kenneth Maclaren, and he was followed by Mr. J. A. Kyle. The movement grew at a most astonishing rate. By the end of 1908 there were 60,000 Scouts enrolled; there were probably many more actually going through the training, but it took some time for all to be brought into touch with the new head office.

The problem of uniform had to be faced very early, and B.-P. thought out the details in his

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usual practical fashion. In the following note he set down the whys and wherefores:

"I knew from experience with boys of all sorts in our first experiments in Scouting that one fellow got his trousers all torn and wet going through a scrub, another wearing a small cap got his face - very nearly his eyes - badly scratched by thorns in going through the bush at night, and the rain ran down his neck, others got too hot in their coats and waistcoats, another, going bareheaded, got sunstroke, and so on. So it became necessary to suggest some kind of dress that would suit all phases of Scouting and yet be healthy and inexpensive and comfortable. Then everybody would come to be dressed much the same as his neighbour - in fact, in uniform. So I thought out what would be the best patterns to adopt. Now - and here is a useful tip for you - whenever I went on an expedition of any kind I kept a diary and that diary included a list of the clothing and equipment I took with me, with a note of what I need not have taken and also of what I had omitted to take. All this information came in useful when one was going on another expedition. Also I drew a sketch of myself showing what dress I found to be most convenient for the job I happened to be doing. At one time it was in India, another in South Africa, also Scotland, Canada, West Africa, Himalayas, etc., etc.

From these data I compiled what I thought would be a dress applicable to most countries. I had used it to some extent in dressing the South African Constabulary when I formed the Corps, and so a good deal of the idea came into the Boy Scout uniform when I devised that. But there was nothing military about it. It was designed to be the most practical, cheap and comfortable dress for camping and hiking, and in no way copied from soldier's kit."

The origin of the Scout staff - its usefulness in Ashanti - has already been noted.

The question is sometimes asked, "Which was the first Troop?" A number of Troops have claimed to hold that distinction, but it is impossible to make any definite decision because some Troops had been formed long before there was any proper system of registration. The honour of being first is really shared by a number of pioneer Scouts who by their enthusiasm made an organized movement necessary.

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The Scout ran competitions in 1909 to select Scouts for B.-P.'s second camp; this was held at Humshaugh in Northumberland in the August of that year.

B.-P. had himself taken a holiday earlier in the year in South America, and found that Scouting had already reached that part of the world. As a result of his visit the first foreign Scout Association was formed in Chile.

In 1909 the movement gathered speed. A party of British Scouts toured Germany - the first foreign visit of the Boy Scouts. Then came the summer camp under B.-P. This time it was partly on land, at Buckler's Hard, Beaulier, and partly on C.B. Fry's training ship, the Mercury. This was the beginning of Sea Scouts as a distinct activity. B.-P.'s eldest brother, Warrington, wrote the handbook for the new section, and his expert advice was of the greatest value.

The same year saw two rallies. At the Crystal Palace in September 10,000 boys marched past their Chief Scout, and shortly afterwards 6,000 Scotch Boy Scouts were inspected by him at Glasgow in company with Sir William Smith, the founder of the Boys' Brigade.

The Scout competition in 1910 was for a party of Scouts to tour Canada, and the lucky winners crossed the Atlantic with B.-P. They were greeted at Quebec by French-Canadian Scouts - the first Empire Scouts outside Great Britain to meet B.-P. on their native soil.

By the end of 1910 there were over 100,000 Scouts in Great Britain; the movement had established itself as one of the leading boys' organizations within little more than three years of that first camp at Brownsea Island.

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