



CAMP FIRE YARN. No. 28

OUR WORLD-WIDE BROTHERHOOD

The Boy Scout and Girl Guide Movements have spread all over the world. In July, 1939, there were over three million Boy Scouts in some fifty different countries. So if you become a Scout you join a great host of boys of many nationalities and you will have friends in every continent. The number is not, alas, as great as it might be, for some countries have banned Scouts simply because they did not fit into the political scheme of the rulers.

I am sure that when the full story of all that has happened in the occupied countries comes to be told it will be a story you will all be proud of reading, and retelling, for I am confident it will show that Boy Scouts and Girl Guides will have lived up to their training and put our principles into action.

The Jamborees

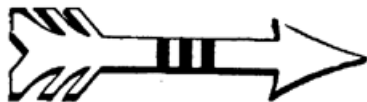
We can look back, though, to considerable progress in the years before 1939. A series of Jamborees, and other meetings of Scouts from many countries, shows what a firm link the Scout Law is between boys of all colours, races and creeds. We can camp together, go hiking together, and enjoy all the fun of outdoor life, and so help to forge a chain of friendship and not of bondage.

At each of these Jamborees it has been my privilege to try to sun' up the message of the meeting at a final rally. I want to repeat here some of the things I said.

In 1920 the Jamboree was at Olympia, in London. As Chief Scout of the World, I said:—

“Brother Scouts, I ask you to make a solemn choice. Differences exist between the peoples of the world in thought and sentiment, just as they do in language and physique. The War has taught us that if one nation tries to impose its particular will upon others cruel reaction is bound to follow. The Jamboree has taught us that if we exercise mutual forbearance and give and take, then there is sympathy and harmony. If it be your will, let us go forth from here fully determined that we will develop among ourselves and our boys that comradeship, through the world-wide spirit of the Scout Brotherhood, so that we may help to develop peace and happiness in the world and goodwill among men. Brother Scouts, answer me. Will you join in this endeavour?”

In 1929 we celebrated our Coming-of-Age; it was 21 years since the first edition of this book had appeared; what had been an acorn had grown into a mighty oak. The Jamboree was held at Arrowe Park.



near Birkenhead. The name of the place suggested that a good symbol of this meeting of Scouts from 41 nations and from 31 parts of the Empire, would be a Golden Arrow. At the final Rally I therefore handed to the various contingents these symbols, and in doing so I used these words:—

“From all corners of the earth you have journeyed to this great gathering of World Fellowship and Brotherhood. To-day I send you out from Arrowe to all the world, bearing my symbol of Peace and Fellowship, each one of you my ambassador, bearing my message of Love and Fellowship on the wings of Sacrifice and Service, to the ends of the earth. From now on the Scout Symbol of peace is the Golden Arrow. Carry it fast and far that all men may know the Brotherhood of Man.”

Four years later we met at Gödöllő, in Hungary. The symbol for this time was a White Stag. My message was:—

“You may look on the White Stag as the pure spirit of Scouting, springing forward and upward, ever leading you onward and upward to leap over difficulties, to face new adventures in your active pursuit of the higher aims of Scouting—aims which bring you happiness.



Those aims are your duty to God, to your country, and to your fellow men by carrying out the Scout Law. In that way, you will, each one of you, bring about God’s kingdom upon earth—the reign of peace and goodwill.

“Therefore, before leaving you, I ask you Scouts this question

—Will you do your best to make friends with others and peace in the world?”

Then came the Jamboree in Holland in 1937. The symbol then was the Jacob’s Staff which mariners used in olden times in navigation.

We little knew then what agony was to come to that gallant country and to many others before many years passed. At the final rally I said:

“This Brotherhood of Scouting is in many respects similar to a Crusade. You Scouts have assembled from all parts of the world as ambassadors of goodwill, and you have been making friends, breaking down any barriers of race, of creed, or of class. That surely is a great Crusade. I advise you now to continue that good work, for soon you will be men, and if quarrels should arise between any nations it is upon you that the burden of responsibility will fall.



“If you are friends you will not want to be in dispute, and by cultivating these friendships such as have been cemented at this great Jamboree, you are preparing the way for solutions of international problems by discussion of a peaceful character. This will have a vital and very far-reaching effect throughout the world in the cause of peace, and so pledge all of you here in this great assembly of Youth, to do your utmost to establish friendship among Scouts of all nations.”

The Coming of War

When war came in September, 1939, it looked at first as though we had failed. But there was another side of the picture. The wonderful way in which all members of the Boy Scouts offered themselves for service to their countries; the courage shown even by the youngest, and the heroism displayed by many a boy, give us hope. If only the same spirit can animate us during peace, we can face the future with confidence.

It is the spirit that matters. Our Scout Law and Promise, *when we really put them into practice*, take away all occasion for wars and strife between nations.

So let us all do our part. Those who are Scouts now should determine to be better Scouts, not only in backwoodsmanship and camping, but in sticking to the Law and carrying it out. If you are not a Scout, come along and join this happy Brotherhood; there are great times ahead, and we shall need you!

Finally

I hope I have been able in this book to show you something of the appeal that lies in Scouting for all of us. I want you to feel that you are really Scouts out in the wilds, able to work things out for yourselves, and not just Scouts in a Troop carefully looked after by Patrol Leaders and Scouters. I know that you want to be up and doing things for yourselves; that these old explorers and frontiersmen appeal to the spirit of adventure in you; that, despite all the modern inventions of the cinema, wireless, motor-bicycles, etc., you want to get out on your own, fending for yourselves, pitting yourselves against the forces of nature, exercising yourselves with games, enjoying the freedom of the open air.

I have just tried to suggest to you some ways of doing this and of helping yourselves to become real men.

Scouting is a fine game, if we put our backs into it and tackle it well; and no game is any good to anyone unless he works up some kind of enthusiasm about it. As with other games, too, we will find that we gain strength of body, mind, and spirit from the playing of it. But remember ! it is a game for the open air, so whenever the opportunity occurs get out into the open, and good luck and good camping go with you.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

- 1. Some of the suggestions made at the end of the previous yarn can be applied to foreign countries; e.g., yarns of exploration, pen-pals, linked-Troops and Patrols.*
- 2. Films of Jamborees can be borrowed from I.H.Q.*
- 3. Every attempt should be made to get some of the Troop to the International Jamborees; the aim should be that every Scout at least once in his Scout life gets to one Jamboree. This will mean raising funds and saving-up, and a Troop fund for this purpose is worth instituting.*
- 4. Camping and hiking abroad can be done without exceptional expense, and both activities are to be strongly encouraged. The aim should be, not so much sight-seeing, as bringing British Scouts into contact with Scouts of other countries in camp or in their homes. Exchange visits between Troops are another way of achieving this.*

