

The Unnamed Scout

Category Yarn
Time to allocate (mins) 5

What We Owe To the Good Turn

As a real matter of fact it was an unselfish, fine spirited Good Turn by an unknown English boy which brought Scouting to America in the first place. The incident, now a cherished tradition in the history of the Boy Scouts of America, ran as follows: William D. Boyce, the Chicago publisher, a matter-of-fact business man, had lost himself in the heart of a London fog, and in his bewilderment he looked here and there.

A street urchin, noticing his embarrassment, came up and saluted Mr. Boyce and said, "May I be of service to you?" Mr. Boyce said, "If you can show me how to find such-and-such an address it will be a real service." This lad very smartly saluted and said, "Sir, follow me." He forthwith brought him to the place that Mr. Boyce desired.

Then Mr. Boyce, characteristically of the traveler, pulled his coin purse out and offered the boy a shilling. The boy promptly saluted and said, "Sir, I am a Scout. Scouts do not accept tips for courtesies. The man said, "What did you say?"

The Scout repeated, and then added, "Don't you know what the Scouts are?" He said, "No, I don't, but I would like to know." The boy said, "Follow me." Boyce completed his errand and then, as he tells the story himself, this lad was waiting for him outside and took him to the office of Sir Robert Baden-Powell, leading to him bringing back to America a trunk-load of printed materials.

Story

He went to Washington and with his good friend Mr. Livingstone, who subsequently was for 15 years the president Boy Scouts of America, he incorporated the BSA under the laws of the District of Columbia.

The Boy Scouts of America was incorporated in 1910, and in 1916 granted Federal Charter by Act of Congress.

Every year has seen Scouting grow larger and larger in its outreach until literally millions of American boys have had brought into their daily lives the gospel of the Good Turn.

What Is a Good Turn?

Performing the regular routine duties about the home is not a Good Turn. The Good Turn is a bigger finer thing--the Good Turn is really a philosophy of living, of which Service to others becomes the key. A good Turn is a volunteered kind act or deed. If you can stimulate a boy so that such actions become habitual, then you have made the Good Turn Philosophy work in his life.

Such a process is a process of education, and will not be accomplished except by careful planning and by presenting the matter again and again under all sort of circumstances, and by yourself setting up and keeping in operation certain sorts of activities which will help the boy catch the idea and experience the thrill of the real Good Turn.

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