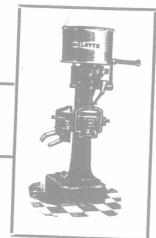
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Scouting.

By E. P. Powell, in New York Independent. Boy scouts are not a novelty. In my very boy days we scouted after the cows for father, and then we helped milk them. We scouted the weeds out of the onion beds, and there was no baseball nine in all the world. But the sun shone; and the apples blossomed, and there were wild strawberries, and we scouted for them. The girls were scouts too—in blue calico. They scoured the tin pans, skimmed the milk and played fox and geese in the snow. Then we all scouted together in the corn fields, and we picked up potatoes together till our backs ached; and we helped in the pink beds. I am sure we did not need to go away from home to scout, although there were only two pianos in our township, thank the Lord! And these were elaborately covered over in the spare rooms, and seldom touched but to dust them. Good piano playing is delightful, but scouting, ah, that is another thing.

But if there are boys and girls who are not needed at home to take the burdens off old age, let them scout all over the neighborhood till they find somebody to help. Dear me, but how well I remember those dear church boys of mine, who came to evening service, each with a blessed girl on his arm; only the handsomest of all, Harry Hull, came down the middle aisle firmly linked with his mother. And his eye caught mine with a diamond snap, and her eye was so dimmed with bliss that she did not need to ask the Lord for more. I have an idea God got the world up on the scouting principle; only the right sort of scouting begins at home; and so far as I can see, schools and scouts and a good deal of church work forget all about father and mother, and the behind-fence duties.

Yes, we all scouted together in those days; the mother knitted and quilted, and the daughter knitted and quilted; and they spun their homemade yarn and made soap together. The mothers, dear souls that they were, did not need to go away by themselves and play bridge; and I wonder it we would look back so yearningly for them if they had. Puritanism had a wonderful power on woman. It brought religious sentiment into such close accord with the feminine instincts that to-day the church would go to pieces without the mothers. What we want above everything else in our social evolution is to preserve the mother instinct. When that is gone the suffragette can accom-

plish very little if she have the ballot. When one of my parishioners, a man of wide business associations, was dying, I asked him what he wanted most. And he said, "I want my mother; I don't want anything else in this world or any other-I just want to see that blessed woman, the one who bore me, who carried me, ved me into decent manhood, taught me all the good there is in me; and never asked for any pay, and I'm afraid she never got paid. All the rest is rubbish. I could have got on without the rest; but I want my mother. I want her arms around me. I know it is second childhood; but let it be childhood, it is better than all the manhood the world ever taught me. God got nearer to me generous. in my mother than in any other way. If I can find her I won't have to hunt for Him. They won't be far apart." Yes, mothers who scouted with their boys and girls brought God very near to

I was never in my life happier than with me for spring beauties and anemones, and later for fringed orchids and moccasin plants; when she named for us ginseng and witchhopple and wild hazel, or helped us pick up beech nuts by the Harding Brook-while the squirrels scolded us-for indeed did they not own what they could harvest? and what right have we to more? Yet I cannot quite say which was most delightful, these hours with the mother soul, or when our father shook the chestnuts, saying to as Come. for the squirrels have their -bare, and there is enough for all of us, and gently he taught us the fine manh. It of cooperation in Nature, and how help the birds and the anic also take their help; and so gether with one Lord in one come. At we went home with aching let . not then best of all when the hand o

the little mother rubbed us much as one would rub a pony; and she said, Little Ned! you need not wear out scouting, for truly the Lord will have need of these legs by and by. You'll see; yes; you'll see! And truly it has been so; and I am glad that legs can worship God as well as tongues. Nor am I quite sure that one might not better hang salvation on good sprinting than on good praying. The tongue has some advantages, for it can go a long distance, and it can be very boastful; and yet I advise you to try the legs if you care for service in God's church-which I take to be the whole world itself.

You will be astonished when you really begin scouting about home, to learn how much there is to scout for, how much to discover and find out. Some folks know a deal about every spot on earth, except home. They will tell you about Bombay and Paraguay and Manchuria, but their own twenty acres holds only dullness. I should not like to have my boys scout in that way, away from home all the time, until home gets to be the most remote and the strangest land in the world. Is it not barely possible that we may organize too much? Was there ever anything more perfectly conceived than the family bond? Farm life as it may be lived in America, and as it sometimes is lived, is the completest, the one allsufficient organism yet devised. Beyond that let us have the town, that is the old-fashioned tunship. But as for clubs on every corner, I am not so sure of it. Someone sent me a boy to spend a few months learning horticulture. The father wrote me, "This fellow wants to go somewhere to learn something and be somebody, as if he could find nothing worth while about his old home. I think it the best thing to let him scout for a while. I hope you will show him something worth while." I found he was a sprinter. It was wonderful to see that boy's heels fly over the tops of the timothy and clover, when there was something else to do. As for his head, it only went because his heels had gone. It is bad to give too much directive control to your feet. Tom could think of nothing else and talk of nothing else but sprinting; and I was glad after a bit to let him sprint homeward—a fine boy spoiled.

I cannot be quite pleased if my boy outrun all the rest, unless he run for something and something worth the while. That he has toed a line, where obedience or honor or economy are involved, counts. When I was young, they used to set me to reading the history of martyrs, men who died because they would not disown a religious belief. I have known a few horticulturists who would fight all day to demonstrate their confidence in a favorite spraying material. Dr. Underwood and John Cary peeled pears and ate them combatively by the hour, each to prove that his selected variety surpassed others. There is always a chance to do sprinting that comes to some definite end. But when my boy says, "I outjumped them all," or "I outran them all," wish to know what it was all for. This Tom of mine was a member of the Y. M. C. A., and he had a dozen medals for his legs, that was all. I could not find that he had ever done anything noble or

I am not belittling the new swouting propaganda, not a bit of it. It will probably do a great deal of good, as Sunday schools have done good; but I would rather a school where the young and old go together; and I am just old when the little mother scouted the woods to believe that we shall yet use our big town school buildings for all ages, and any old woman may go and learn to read when she is sixty; and better yet, her boy shall bearn to make garden with her in the school lot Not I am sure of nothing, only of God and progress. I am sure that to morrow will be wiser than to-day, and we shall not do then just as we do now And so I think of this scoreing that and of it will come some the things, and so far as it of old to find themnot to weigh, and ... can have the house doors and two old for The wonouthty as it brevents two

