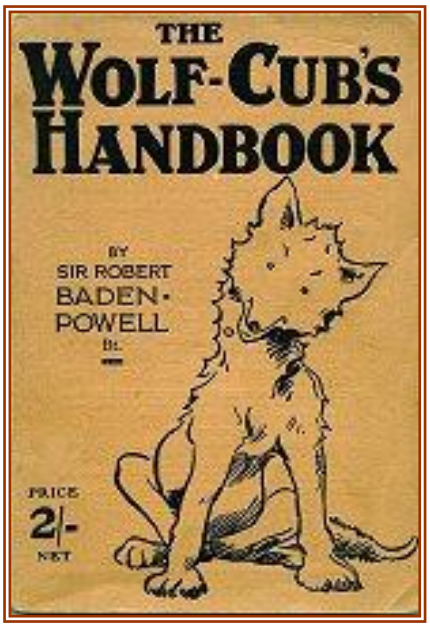
A story about the Isle of Wight, Baden-Powell, the beginning of Wolf Cubs, writing Children's Stories, the Cresta Run, the Catholic Church, Olympia, Camping at Seaview, Foreign Spies, France and a hushed up romance..... The story of Vera Barclay!



MAIN STORY FROM COLIN WALKER'S "SCOUTING MILESTONES" : -

VERA CHARLESWORTH BARCLAY {1893-1989}

LEADING FEMALE PIONEER SCOUTER AND AUTHOR

Vera Barclay was the daughter of a Church of England Vicar and Florence Charlesworth, a then-famous novelist. Her father was vicar of Hertford Heath and Little Amwell in Hertfordshire between 1881 and 1920. She was born in 1893, the fourth of eight children. Her eldest brother Cyril became the vicar of Helmsley in North Yorkshire.

Vera joined the Scout movement in 1912 and was an early (though by no means the first) Scout Mistress. In 1914 she became one of the first Wolf Cub Akela's. She joined the staff of Imperial Headquarters in 1916 as the national Wolf Cub Secretary. There was a corresponding Boy Scout Secretary, J Archibald Kyle (a future subject for these pages), and these two offices were very senior and significant appointments. Miss Barclay clearly had a tremendous effect on Baden-Powell's revision of the Wolf Cub section, but her influence went beyond this. She was, apart from Baden-Powell's sister and wife, who were Guiders rather than Scouters, the most significant woman in the Scout Movement at this time. She helped to change the way women were thought of as leaders and administrators and, significantly, aided the role of the Catholic Church in sponsoring R.C. groups within the Movement.

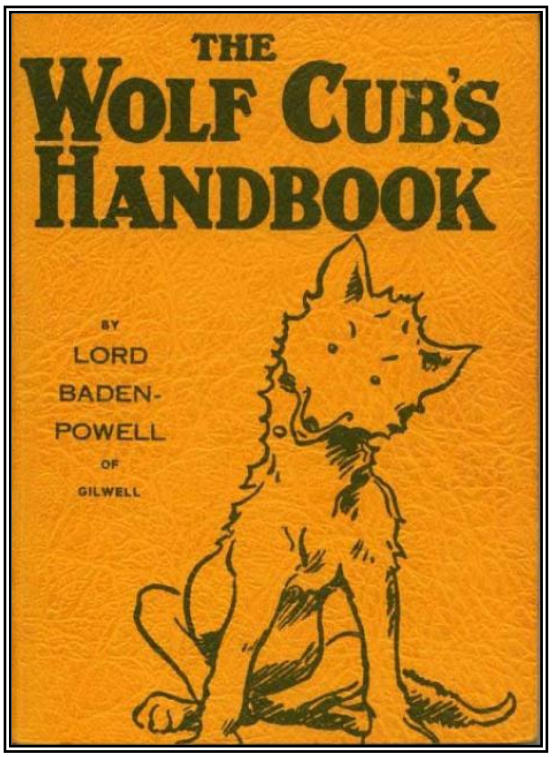
The earliest mention of Vera Barclay that I can find in Scouting literature is in the January 1915 edition of *Headquarters Gazette*. In an article entitled *How a Lady Can Train the Cubs*, she explains that whilst already running her village Scout Troop, she was being continually pestered by young boys wanting to come into Scouts. Keen-eyed neglected youngsters would run after her, she claimed, calling out, **"Miss, Miss if yers wants anuver Scout, I'm ready."**

"When inarticulate youngsters of two and a half in dirty pinafores took to saluting me with three fingers, I began to feel that something really must be done for those under age. It was then that someone handed me a pamphlet on Wolf Cubs"

The following day Miss Barclay set about founding the 1st Hertford Heath Pack which had a programme that would delight any modern Cub Scout. The troop, in her father's parish had its headquarters in the Hertfordshire countryside north of London, only 15 miles from Gilwell Park. Her Scouts had first claim on her time but since Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings were devoted to them, with camping and riding at the weekends, Vera co-opted her younger sister Miss Angela Barclay to assist her with the Wolf Cubs. In typical Barclay style, she concludes her article by saying:

"If every Scoutmaster could persuade a woman of his acquaintance to run a pack in conjunction with his Troop, he would find Scouting in the future vastly simplified."

On December 16th, 1916 on a wet day in London, Vera Barclay was present to see Baden-Powell re-launch the Wolf Cub Section from a stage in the Caxton Hall in front 200 educationalists and some Wolf Cubs. She was later to describe the venue as **"a place in the sun"**. Baden Powell had given Scouting's youngest section a completely new look. He had changed its structure to incorporate his friend Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*. What was required now was a new handbook. Vera Barclay was, at that time, a wartime Red Cross nurse working at the Netley Red Cross Hospital near Portsmouth. She knew that she could not carry on nursing because of a re-occurring **"old skiing knee cracking up"**, but she was not to know just how her life was to alter. She was at the Caxton Hall as a dedicated Scout Mistress, forced to the fore by the absence of male leaders, many never to return after the carnage on the Somme and in Gallipoli. She did not, she thought, like the idea of working with younger children, of being an office worker, or living in London. The Chief Scout, however, had decided that she was to be the one to help him 'work up' the transformed section and help write *The Wolf Cub Handbook*, and evidently he was very persuasive.



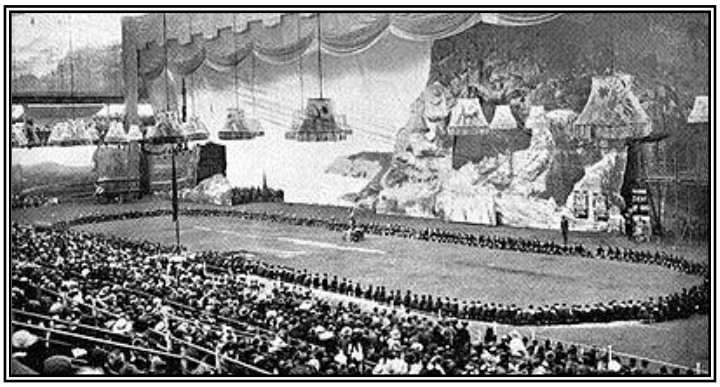
Vera quickly fell under the spell of the existing London Wolf Cubs - she called them 'the little cockneys' - and, like Roland Philipps, seemed particularly at home when working with poorer families. Her job was to "straighten out" the new handbook and to think up badges and tests to go into the next edition. As always, The Chief was on hand to offer advice in the form of little notes on her desk every morning written on shaving paper (small pieces of wafer-thin absorbent paper, made by the same manufacturer who made cigarette papers, to staunch the flow of blood from accidental nicks made whilst shaving with 'cut-throat' razors). Evidently B-P thought best when in his bath and wrote the notes immediately he had completed his ablutions.

In her review of the Handbook dated November 1916 in the *Headquarter's Gazette* on *The Cubmaster's Page*, she wrote like a breath of fresh air:

"Those solemn people who expected a heavy manual of how to educate the child of eight to twelve; that is, how to drill him until you turn him into a stupid little machine; how to crush his eager spirit under a nightmare load of academic precision - those people would be painfully disappointed. But when they buy the book . . . they will be let down gently. For on the cover they will come face to face with a genuine and furry Wolf Cub, who, as the Chief hopes, will not let them expect anything very serious between the covers!"

Prior to 1916, Miss Barclay had converted to Roman Catholicism and was aware that there were those of that denomination who were suspicious of the Scout Movement (as indeed there were in the Church of England). Her books *Good Scouting: Notes from a Catholic Parish* (1927) and *The Scout Way* (1929) were aimed at Catholic audiences and gained the support of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church in Britain, notably from Cardinal Bourne, the then Catholic Archbishop of Westminster. This led to an increase in the number of R.C. Scout Groups. Pierre Péroni was a member of the 8th Westminster Troop, the 'Cardinal's Own', and in 1983 in his 'Origin of the Scout Movement', a series of articles in the magazine 'Kim', wrote that when Vera converted to Catholicism she became Akela of his troop's Cub Pack and helped to organise the first parade of Catholic Scouts on St George's Day 1917. Péroni went on to become Vera Barclay's French translator, her books published in this language making her perhaps even better known in France than at home.

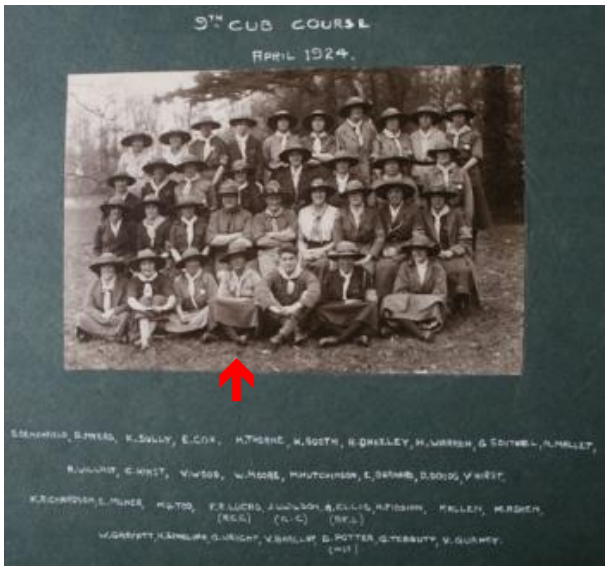
During her last year at International Scout Headquarters, B-P asked if she could supply 1,000 Wolf Cubs for a Grand Howl to take place at the first World Jamboree at Olympia in 1920 **{see picture left}**. She thought for a moment about the practicalities of getting so many Cubs in one place at one time without their needing to go to the toilet and suggested that 500 would be a better number. The Chief seemed satisfied, but we know now that Grand Howls of thousands of Cubs were to become commonplace. Vera Barclay needed to ensure that the 500 Cubs involved all had been taught the same version of the Howl and visited each pack concerned. It was just as well she did, because with little central training for the majority of Akelas (this was in pre-Wood Badge days) there was no uniformity. One young man had been teaching his pack to spell out each of the letters of DYB DYB DYB (Do Your Best), and DOB DOB DOB (Do Our Best).



Miss Barclay's work won official recognition and was awarded Scouting's highest award - The Silver Wolf - but not until she had announced that she was leaving the Movement. Pierre Péroni wrote an article in a 1939 edition of *Kim*, (a *Scout de France* magazine), reporting that the presentation was made in front of her Cubs at the 1920 Olympia Jamboree (as he was one of Vera's Westminster pack, he ought to know!) There is little doubt that B-P thought Vera deserving of the award. I am grateful to Milestones reader Thierry Le Cam, for confirmation of VB's award, though I have, as yet, been unable to discover its whereabouts. Shortly after this time Vera Barclay was invited to visit Charmarande, (the Scouts de France Training Grounds near Paris) by Father Sevin. She made many visits and was present in September 1923 for the first French Wolf Cub Wood Badge course. Her work led to her being awarded the Scouts de France prestigious Cross of St Louis.

Scout Association records show Miss V C Barclay was the 'CM' i.e. Cub Mistress of the 21st St Francis of Assisi Group at Edgbaston, with 12 Cubs. The certificate notes the group was 'confined to R.C. boys'. In August 1924 VB had become Acting Scout Master with 16 'active Scouts' at St Peters 21st Birmingham (Edgbaston). When it registered in October 1928, Vera filled in the form and added the word 'acting' to her Scout Master status. She also crossed out the designation 'Group SM' against her

signature as the person who had filled in the form, leaving the officially printed designation '(or officer in charge)'. Her leadership, 'acting' or otherwise was a success as now there were 44 Scouts in the Group with 24 Wolf Cubs with M. Shoebotham as Akela.



Vera Barclay became a leading figure in the Catholic Scout Guild which ran a standing camp, the Gospel Farm Camp, at Hall Green some 25 minutes tram journey from the center of Birmingham. Y (Yvette or perhaps Yvonne)Dollé wrote an article about the camp in *Le Chef*, the French Scout De France magazine in Nov 1925. It appears that the camp was a haven for Cubs and Scouts **"whose home life gives them no affection or comfort, whose ragged shorts show how poor they are"**'. Though the Gospel Farm Camp operated mainly at the weekend and holiday periods, Vera lived there under canvas for six months a year for three years. Y Dollé wrote;

"Don't imagine that the St Francis Troop (sic) or Pack suffer from Miss Barclay's absence during the summer. On Wednesdays and Fridays, she cycles back into town and has two scout evenings from 6.30 p.m. to 9 p.m., where her imagination comes to the fore to ensure that the scouts and cubs have fun, whilst also doing them good. In the dark, she cycles home to her tent.."

VERA Barclay was forever conscious that she was a woman in a man's world and in her writings there is constant stream of apologies for her gender. She wrote:

"The only rank in the Scout Movement that a woman can adequately fill is that of Lady Cubmaster. Such am I. Sometimes a woman has to fill the gap and keep a troop going until a Scoutmaster can be found. I have done this on and off for the last fifteen years and got to know half a dozen troops intimately."

The then Gilwell Camp Chief J S Wilson, who was later to become Director of the Boy Scouts International Bureau, apologised on her behalf in his introduction to *The Scout Way*, including a quoted passage in Vera Barclay's own words:

"It is impossible for a woman, however clever, however observant, however experienced who has not been a boy, to understand, to be in tune with, the boy's mind. The older a boy gets, the more does he needs a man's leadership. To substitute a woman's leadership is, in fact, to deny him his birthright; for, after all, where also would a boy be without his father? And more, "these happy small boys will go to work and receive the shock that causes more suffering to clean-minded boys than most of us realise." The boy's moral welfare is intimately concerned with this question; his soul may be at stake."

And this was meant to promote the book! It was typical of the rather luke-warm response to Vera's early printed efforts. Thankfully, however, things were about to change. B-P in *The Scouter* in 1928 commended her on her book *Good Scouting*,

"Yes - there is a world of difference between Scouting and Good Scouting. *Good Scouting* not only shows the difference, but how Scouting on the higher plane may be achieved by all."

She wrote, in what she believed to be her last *Cubmaster's Page*, in the *Headquarter's Gazette* of September 1920, that she was leaving the Scout Association to become a nun and a Sister of Charity in the Order of St Vincent de Paul. Baden-Powell wrote of her in the same edition:

"Miss Barclay has, through her own personality, put much soul into the Movement and has made it already a very lively institution . . . Her loss will be very deeply felt by all of us that have the welfare of that branch (Wolf Cubs) **at heart or who have had the pleasure of working in co-operation with her. She is one who can never be exactly replaced or adequately thanked. We can only hope that she will carry away with her happy recollections of the time spent over her young protégés, and the consciousness that she has successfully accomplished a very great work towards putting young souls on the right path for life and salvation."**


Taken at Chamerande in 1926

A completely different side of Vera Barclay's life is revealed by her younger sister Angela Barclay, who in 'The Cresta Run' by Michael Seth-Smith, writes of Vera's experience on the famous Alpine toboggan course before the First World War. "For several seasons I believe, she was the only girl riding the Cresta". Vera was serious tobogganist who had started the sport when she was 15 winning many trophies often dressed in skirts. As we know however Vera was not one for social convention and so some of her descents were made in riding jodhpurs. Somewhat surprisingly Angela describes her sister as a 'flapper' and hints at a socialite life style that included friendship with 'Little Willie' the Crown Prince of Germany. On one famous descent of the Cresta she was followed by young American who crashed and died of broken skull, the third Cresta fatality. Women were subsequently banned from taking part. It would appear that the entire family including Vera's mother adored Alpine sports though Vera was the expert. This expertise was sustained by wintering in St Moritz, paid for from Mrs Barclay's royalties as a best-selling authoress.

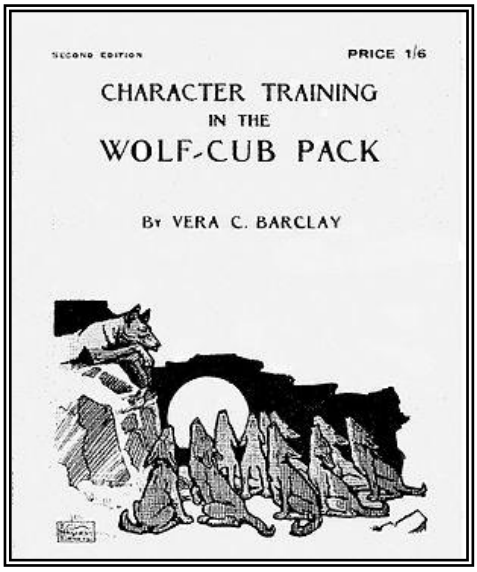
Later, whilst researching through back-copies of the *The Scouter* over a different matter, the issue of December 1923, revealed the amazing find of the by-line 'Vera Barclay' at the top of the page normally written by N D Power, the Chief

Commissioner for Wolf Cubs. She began her article in the 'Red Indian' style that was popularised by the one-time Woodcraft Commissioner John Hargrave, but which was very much out of favour in 1923. Perhaps this is an indication that Miss Barclay had lost touch with Scouting matters over the intervening three years. (*Scouting Milestones* has a projected article on 'Other early Scouting Organisations', including John Hargrave and his offshoot movement the Kibbo Kift.)

"It seems a long time ago that I sat on this Council Rock and howled good-bye to you! And I didn't expect, then, ever to say "Here we are again!" But lots of unexpected things happened, including me becoming a sick and useless Old Wolf for rather a long spell. And after all I didn't leave the jungle. So Mr Power has asked me to raise my voice once more, while he's away, to tell you some of the things that have occurred to me about Cubbing during the last three years."

Evidently N D Power was still 'away' the next month, because Vera Barclay again wrote his page, but there are no more personal disclosures and no hint of a goodbye. Rather ungallantly, N D Power, on resuming the authorship of the page the following month, neither mentioned or thanked Vera Barclay for her contribution. It was to be some three decades later that before she was to write again for the magazine.

In her last article in *The Scouter* in November 1956 entitled *Forty Years Ago* Vera Barclay having been “told to write on 'the early days'" apologised for the rather glum look on her photo used to accompany the article which was taken in 1920 at the time she was about to leave the Movement (see above), explaining that it was taken just after the conclusion of what she thought was to be her last Cub camp. Fortunately, as we have seen this was not to be the case as she went on to form Cub Packs and a Scout Group in Birmingham and was involved in training Akelas at Yorks Wood in Kinver, near Stourbridge, Staffordshire.



A part from her brief re-appearance in the 1956 article mentioned above - part of the build up to the 1957 Jubilee Jamboree - it did seem as though Miss Barclay had disappeared from active Scouting that could be explained by her acceptance into religious seclusion. This however left the nagging question of how it could be that she continued to produce a stream of Scouting books, some, but I am sure not all, of her titles listed in the Bibliography below, which were only a fraction of her output as she became a successful children's' author, publishing in both English and French, including religious works and schoolgirl fiction under the pseudonyms of Margaret Beech and Vera Charlesworth, her works including the *Jane* series for girls. I know now thanks to Vera's niece Jill Whitcombe (See Acknowledgements below) that Vera in fact did not take her vows or stay long term with the order of St Vincent de Paul. This was probably because of the illness she hints at in her 1923 articles for *Headquarter's Gazette* in place of N.D Power. It may well be, I surmise, that it was this illness that gave her 'time out' from active Scouting, but her still vibrant mind channelled its energy into using the writing skills she had inherited from her mother. VB left these

shores to live in France in 1931 and in her 1956 article she says this was when her Scouting days ended.

At various times in her life she had also lived in Bern and Zurich. She was back living in England in Bognor Regis near Brighton in 1939 and she was also, though I do not know when, the Area Director of the Christian Women's League for Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. She spent the war years in Britain and was living in the London region in 1983, by which time she was 89 and, unfortunately, going blind. She then went to live at Seaview Isle of Wight where the family had a home. Vera Barclay died in Sheringham, Norfolk, in September 1989, aged 95. The Scout Association was represented at her funeral.

A significant figure in the history of Cub Scouting and indeed the Scout Movement, Vera Barclay's influence, because of her sex, was somewhat suppressed in those early days, but there is no reason now why she should not now be given the prominence she deserves, not least in 'liberating' women to take their rightful place in Scouting today.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful for contact with Jill Whitcombe, Vera Barclay's niece who answered an appeal on these pages for information about her aunt's later life.

This biography has endured now for many years on Scouting Milestones, being first completed in 2004. Since then, thanks to *Milestone's*correspondents mentioned above there have been many revisions. A regular correspondent has been Fiona Mercey who was attracted to research the life of Vera Barclay finding this English woman's name mentioned in her son's French Scout handbook. (Fiona lives in France.) In the early days of our correspondence I was able to assist Fiona in her researches but latterly her enthusiasm has been such that it usually she who now provides me with information including the revelation that VB was a champion Cresta Run tobogganist.

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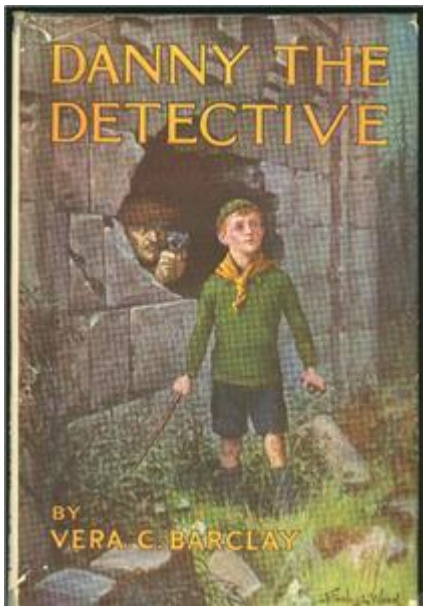
VERA BARCLAY
A PIONEERING HERTFORDSHIRE SCOUT.
Written by Frank Brittain and reproduced with his permission.

When on holiday I am always seeking out second hand bookshops and in Hadleigh, Suffolk, I had a rare find, "*Potted Stories to tell Scouts and Wolf Cubs"*. *(1931)* by Vera Charlesworth Barclay (1893-1989). She is mentioned in my book *Milestones of 100 years of Hertfordshire Scouting (1914, 1926 & 1933)* and was a daughter of the famous author Florence Barclay (1862-1921).

Prior to World War 1, Vera was the Scoutmaster of the Hertford Heath Troop. She later started the Hertford Heath Cub Pack in Hertford Scout District but unfortunately the village has no Group now. Vera was a forward thinking Scoutmaster and had realised that there was need to provide Scouting for boys under the age of 11.

Vera started to experiment with programmes for younger boys and brought this to the attention of Percy Everett her County Commissioner who had already been asked by the founder Baden-Powell {B.P.}to put together a scheme for "Junior Scouts". These became Wolf Cubs and were founded in 1916. Vera had a long association with the Wolf Cub Section in Hertfordshire, becoming the County Akela Leader and responsible for all training of Cub Leaders. She was also County Secretary (1916-1918). She wrote nearly 50 books and some of these are in the County Scout Library at Well End Campsite.

Her experimental work with younger Scouts resulted in discussions with B-P who persuaded her to help him write *The Wolf Cub Handbook (1916).* Also, in 1916 she was invited to become the first National Wolf Cub Secretary and became a most significant woman in the Movement at that time, helping to change the way women were looked upon as Leaders and Administrators and often contributing articles to *Headquarters Gazette* and *The Scouter* monthly magazines. Soon after the introduction of Wolf Cubs, Vera acted as an ambassador for B-P. She toured the country visiting individual Packs and making sure his message was really getting through. Some problems were found with bossy lady Cubmasters who ran their Packs like a Sunday Schools or on military lines. B-P's notion of a "Happy Family" where the boys learnt by playing games came as something of a shock to them.



The books, pamphlets and articles Vera wrote, were the only training aids available to Scouters. Her book *Danny* (1917) was the first book of Wolf Cub stories and her *Cub Scout Games* (1920) is still in print. Another, *Cubbing: How to run a Wolf Cub Pack (1920)* is now very rare.

At the First World Jamboree at Olympia in 1920, Vera was asked to provide 1000 Wolf Cubs but thought 500 was more realistic! The Grand Howl was a great success and in later years this was regularly performed by thousands of Wolf Cubs at once.

Vera converted to Roman Catholicism in 1916 and became aware that some of this denomination (and others) were suspicious of Scouting in general. Her books *Good*

Scouting: Notes from a Catholic Parish (1927) and *The Scout Way (1929)* were aimed at Catholic readers and helped to change the minds of the church hierarchy, notably the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Bourne. This resulted in a large increase in the number of Roman Catholic Scout Groups in the country, and in Hertfordshire where relationships with this church flourished they became very strong right up to the 1960s. Vera also took over an existing Wolf Cub Pack at Westminster Cathedral that kept going all through WWII.

During WWI Vera nursed at Hertford Hospital and Netley Sanatorium, Southampton.

Before Vera left Scout HQ, B-P wrote glowingly of her work for Scouting and awarded her Scouting's highest Award, the *Silver Wolf*, during the closing ceremony of the World Jamboree at Olympia in 1920.

It is thought that Vera lost herself in religion, travelling widely and moving to France in 1931. This left the nagging question of how she continued to write a stream of Scouting books. She also became a successful children's author, writing in both English and French, publishing religious works and schoolgirl fiction under the pseudonyms of Margaret Beech & Vera Charlesworth.

Her works included the *Jane* series for girls. Vera had lived in France, Zurich, Birmingham and Bern starting Scout Groups and Cub Packs and helping to run Leader Training Courses in Staffordshire, the South of England and in Chamarande, France, in 1923, 1925 and 1926. Vera was also physically active, as she became the first woman to conquer *The Cresta Run.*

Returning to England in 1936 to live in Bognor Regis, she was still writing children's books as well as having an interest in the Turin Shroud, corresponding with the greatest authorities of the time. After the evacuation of Dunkirk, she was advised by her family to leave the South Coast as it was thought an invasion was imminent and she moved to Helmsley, North Yorkshire where she spent some years running a school before moving back to Bognor Regis in the 1950s.

Vera moved to Seaview on the Isle of Wight in the 1970s and lived there with her sister Claudia in a small flat at The Old Yacht Club, Old Salterns Gate, until the 1980s. Following Claudia's death, Vera could not manage. She was 89 and going blind. Her niece Mary Hyslop who lived at The Gatehouse on the corner of Common Lane and Havelock Road, Sheringham, took her in, and later, another devoted niece Betty Ross and her husband Peter cared for her in a house in St Austin's Grove.

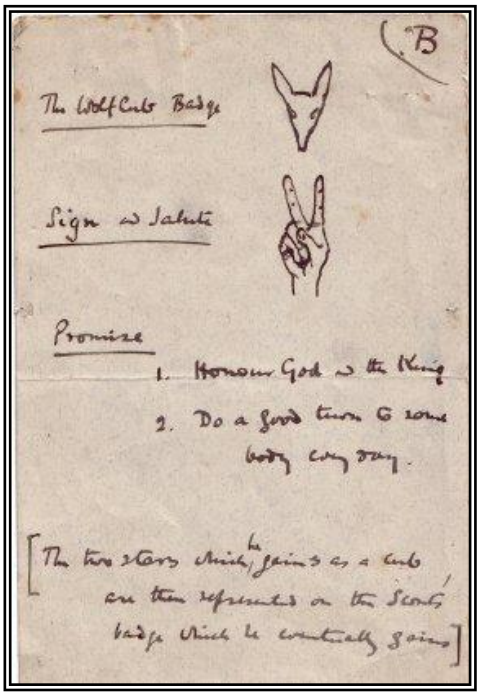
Vera died in 1989 aged 96 in St Nicholas' Nursing Home. She was buried in Sheringham cemetery. Her memory was honoured for the Scouting Centenary in 2007 with a First Day Cover and on the www. Sites to her memory can be found as far afield as Chile and Italy, where her irreplaceable contribution to Scouting is commemorated.

Vera's mother Florence Barclay, the famous novelist had a holiday home, The Corner House, Overstrand, Norfolk. It is now the Danum House B & B, 22 Pauls Lane, NR27 0PE.

Without doubt Vera Barclay was a remarkable lady and quite rightly takes her place (with others) who started their Scouting lives in Hertfordshire, then becoming nationally famous. If anyone has any of her books they would like to donate or has any more information about her, please let me know.

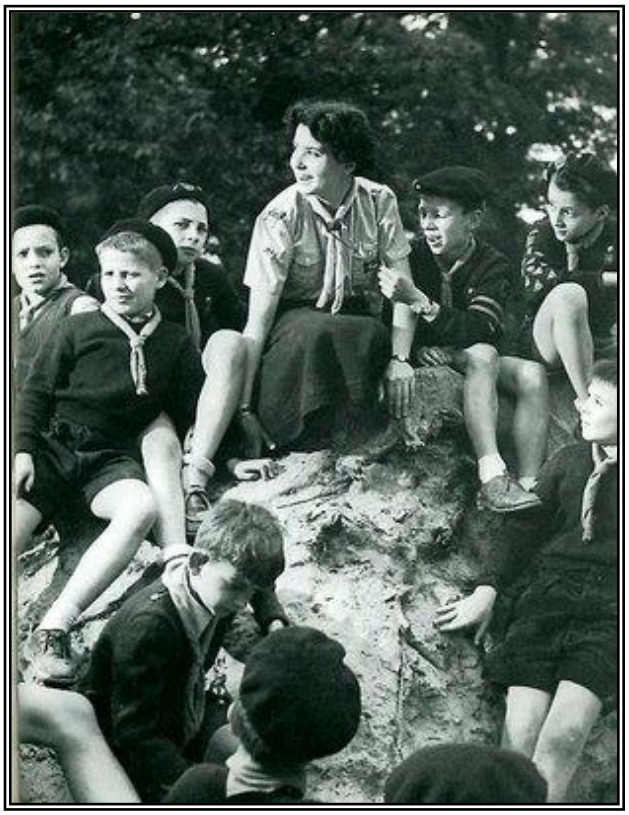
Compiled and researched in 2010/11/12 by: Frank Brittain
Archivist. History & Heritage Support Team, Hertfordshire Scouts. archivist@hertfordshirescouts.org.uk 0845 643 6973.

The assistance of a fellow researcher, Fiona Mercey from France, is appreciated. Fiona had contacted me after finding references to Vera Barclay on the Hertfordshire Scouts website via -*Milestones of 100 years of Hertfordshire Scouting* in 2008. Updated 16/01/12



Above:

Investing a French Wolf Cub in the 1920's in a ceremony probably influenced by Vera Barclay during her visits to France.



Right:

Is this Akela sitting on the Council Rock with the young Wolf Cubs?

The following are letters from Vera when living on the Island and published in The Catholic Herald.


THE CATHOLIC HERALD

Cardinals to report on Medjugorje this year

Catholics asked to fast for Middle East peace

Bishop urges faithful to face 'the reality of hell' in Lent

9th December 1966

I began reading the Catholic Herald nineteen years ago, and have carried on ever since without a break.

My reaction to it was a gradual but increasing sense of disappointment.

During the last few weeks, however, this reaction has gone into reverse. I hope this will persist; and it will, if there are more articles like Michael Wharton on "The World as a Huge Factory" (November 25); and if the present readable as well 'as sound editorials go on; and good letters on subjects mostly worth writing about; and useful reviews; and the weekly laugh (Ryan). Also news, and comment on it, given space in a reasonable ratio to its importance.

Probably other readers will be feeling as I do, and may be glad to have a once-frequent contributor to this page voicing their gratitude. Anyhow, thank you.

Vera Barclay Isle of Wight

SHROUDED IN CONTROVERSY 7/12/1973

This is a reply to the NUT's surprisingly misleading letter (November 30) which suggests that there have been no "substantial works on the Shroud since 1954" — except the book by John Reban (alias Kurt Berner), here described as "eccentric," but which is, in fact, highly heretical as regards both the Christian Faith and the Shroud.

It was fully answered by a long and informative article in the Ampleforth Journal (Autumn 1969) by Fr. Maurus Green, 0.S.B., and in The Tablet by Dr. David Willis, Director of the (Turin approved) organisation for the distribution of the official photographs of the Shroud, pamphlets, reprints, etc. This is now run from the office of the Mission for the .Relief of Suffering, 7 Market Mews, London, W.I. The price list is sent on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

As to books, there have been many useful works, popular and scientific, published during the period mentioned. Most are in Italian, some in French. One very authoritative in German, two in English (U.S.A.) one of these issued also in London by W. H. Allen, "The Shroud" by John Walsh (1963), well documented and illustrated.

The other, by Fr. P. Rinaldi. SOB., "It is the Lord," is to appear in England entitled, "The Holy Shroud." The most recent book in French is Le Visa Re de Jesus-Christ, et son Linceuil, by Fr. Paul de Gail, S.J. (1971).

Also in French, but only for those curious about contemporary records and documents in the Shroud's most puzzling period, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there is a very revealing study by Andre Ferret, archivist, published in 196 0 by l'Academie des Sciences, Belles Lettres a Art de Savoie. It throws light on an aspect of the Shroud's history which, if better understood in 1898 and the following decade, would probably have saved the regrettable and damaging controversy started by Canon Ulysses Chevalier (and continued until 1931 by Fr. Herbert Thurston), answered by the official defenders of the Shroud's authenticity. I hope to publish my translations of extracts from the Savoie article.

I mention the controversy because it may well have been the cause of the leading English historians and scientists being so loth to take up the study of the Shroud, and give us the toplevel authoritative works which were so badly needed.

One more thing more important than the error about the absence of books. It is that when Pope Paul (as mentioned in the report of November 30 of the TV programme), in his eight minute talk, described the Holy Face as "so true, so profound, so human, so divine," he was not referring to "the image imprinted on the cloth" (as stated in the report), but to the Face as it was so providentially revealed by the camera, when it reversed the negative image on the linen. The latter is not a recognisable human countenance at all, any more than is the plate by a portrait photographer. This needs particularly emphasising whenever the Holy Shroud is discussed.

Vera Barclay (Corresponding Member of the International Centre for Study of the Holy Shroud) Seaview, Isle of Wight.

INTERNET DISCUSSION ON THE BOOK "WE SAW SPAIN DIE" FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR BY PAUL PRESTON

Lois and Charles Orr, an inquisitive, left-of-left couple, arrived in Barcelona in the autumn of 1936. Charles was 30, a serious fellow from Michigan; Lois was 19, more or less fresh from Kentucky. They had married earlier in the year and decided on a honeymoon in Europe. In Catalonia, a matter of weeks after Franco's military uprising against the Second Spanish Republic, they settled happily into a political climate of intrigue and rivalry among the variegated species of anti-Fascists who failed, in the end, to hold the pass: bourgeois democrats and left republicans, socialists, anarchists and Marxists, as well as a host of foreigners, many in tune with the doctrines of the Communist International.

Lois and Charles were revolutionaries in search of a revolution and Barcelona was an exhilarating place to imagine they'd found it, even though it would soon be in ruins. They took up propaganda work with the Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista, a not quite Trotskyist party of which Trotsky himself was fiercely critical. The POUM's members (including a number of its leaders) were drawn from the Left

and Right Opposition to the Comintern, though it's commemorated for its influential Left Opposition intellectuals – and for its role as a canary in the Stalinist mineshaft, as Orwell records in Homage to Catalonia, a memoir of his time in Spain, most of it spent at the front as a member of the POUM's ill-equipped military detachments.

In Barcelona, Charles Orr worked for the party's English-language bulletin and broadcast news in English on Radio POUM. Lois, an ardent revolutionary, also broadcast from time to time. 'I have been speaking on the radio a lot lately,' she wrote to her father. 'You should try to hear me, short wave.' She went on to work for the propaganda office of the regional government of Catalonia, the Generalitat. Soon enough she was unemployed and took up the role of outspoken pamphleteer: her tracts were distributed by mail to her family in Kentucky.

How Lois and Charles had arrived in Spain with fully-formed 'far' left positions isn't clear from this edition of their letters or from the notes and interviews at the end of the book. All we know is that Lois's mother was a socialist and that Lois herself had been a high-school supporter of the Socialist Party of America under Norman Thomas and perhaps, at university, an admirer of the young militants whose star rose in the party during the early 1930s. Lois sends a funny letter to her family in December 1936, responding to 'Mother's crack that she was sorry I was a Trotskyist': 'Lady, I ain't no Trotskyist. You should read up on the position of the USA Socialist Party on war, etc, and you will find that it is exactly ye old Leninist principle that the POUM stands for: turn imperialist war into civil war.' Who was or wasn't Trotskyist was a tough question, and a dangerous issue, at the time. Lois knocked the whole thing off succinctly in another letter: 'The POUM, you see, has many faults, one of which is that they are afraid of being called Trotskyists. They really aren't of course; probably they would be better revolutionaries if they were.'

Lois is scathing about bourgeois democracy and profoundly anti-Republican: she wants a radical outcome in Spain, to which she sees the Republic as an obstacle; she and Charles despise 'popular fronts' of any kind, particularly the Popular Front in Spain, and they loathe Communist parties. They have little interest in Franco's military encroachment on the Republic or the evolution of the Axis. Anti-Fascism, in other words, is a second-order struggle: the real enemies of these industrious visitors are the forces opposing the Spanish social revolution, championed by the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists (the FAI and the CNT) and to some extent the POUM, though it was always liable to disappoint them.

When the Popular Front took a turn to the left in September 1936, the Generalitat in Barcelona followed suit, bringing members of the POUM into the regional government. Lois felt very quickly that the progress of the counter-revolution – to which she was endlessly alert, like an ecstatic in a religious sect – could be measured not simply by the new centralising tendency but by the way her comrades acquiesced in it. Members of the POUM were more than happy, she believed, to trade away the sacred gains of the revolution in Spain – land collectivisation, worker-management and locally organised anti-Fascist militias – for a share in the corrupt political process.

Lois went up and down about these gains: sometimes, it seemed, there was still everything to play for, but her anxieties were nearer the truth. The moment for a radical modernisation of labour and land in Spain had not survived the general strike of 1934 and now, even in the short-lived gala days of the Popular Front in Barcelona, it ought to have been obvious that a complicated indigenous struggle against centuries of backwardness was giving way to a crude, internationalised war against a quarantined peninsular Republic. The prospect of bourgeois democracy, or even

'workers' democracy' of the kind the Orrs favoured, was growing slimmer by the week. Yet the couple couldn't have seen this: their busy seclusion in the city meant that Lois never visited the front and Charles only managed a few days; the war intruded on their thoughts only when startling news came through or when air raids came closer, but then the blind was quickly drawn on these unwelcome truths. Military imperatives, they felt, could be used to excuse far too many evils; Lois hated the idea of the war effort squeezing her revolution into a tawdry parenthesis and she saw, correctly, how the rising influence of the Communists deprived the POUM and anarchist militias on the Aragon front of the weapons they needed to do their job.

For all their frustrations, the Orrs had a good time. Lois writes early in 1937: 'Tomorrow the Feminine Section and the Communist Youth' (both of them POUM structures) 'are sponsoring a picnic – all day picnic to the sea.' And later: 'Boy, am I sunburned!' Neither she nor Charles spoke Catalan, they evinced only the barest interest in the host culture in which their revolution had germinated and they lived mostly in expatriate circles, but their friendships with other foreigners, including John McNair, the ILP representative in Barcelona, were rewarding. Lois was close to Eileen O'Shaughnessy ('nice but very vaguish when she talks and is eternally smoking cigarettes'), who spent most of her time in the city while Orwell was at the front. In the spring of 1937 Charles and Lois took a day out with Eileen in the country ('so mountainous and beautiful'), starting early and returning late: 'we climbed part way up a hill and lay in the grass for a couple of hours in the sun eating candy and talking.' Eileen had no axe to grind, which made her a rare bird among the expats in Barcelona and may have accounted for her charm in Charles and Lois's eyes. For all their zeal, they were a lively, sociable couple.

The fourth member of the party on that bucolic outing was George Tioli, an 'Italian boy . . . quite a civilised and interesting person'. Tioli was a 'child-psychologist' according to Lois, who disapproved of all psychology, and according to Charles 'a refugee from Fascist Italy' who 'pretended to be a journalist'. He tagged along with the Orrs when he was free, which was rather often, and he was a dab hand at getting their mail out of Spain through connections he claimed to enjoy at the Turkish mission. In spite of his charms, they came to feel that George was an obscure fellow, but in May 1937, as the Generalitat and the Communists resolved to stitch up the libertarian left in Barcelona, he began to hint that he was not just a feckless, pretty face.

On May Day the Generalitat cancelled the traditional workers' marches in the name of the war effort. Two days later the Guardia de Asalto marched on the telephone exchange, run largely by the anarchists. Ministers in Madrid and locally had had it up to here with the Barcelona telephone exchange. In The Spanish Civil War (2001), Hugh Thomas tells of an anarchist phone operator interrupting a call from the president of the Republic to his counterpart in Catalonia and announcing that 'lines should be used for more important purposes than a talk between the two presidents.' The POUM rallied to the anarchists once the shooting started; Orwell (who'd come into the POUM militias via the ILP) was among them, having arrived in Barcelona for some well-earned leave from the front only to find himself holed up with a rifle alongside POUM comrades, defending the Telefónica – owned, as it happened, by the US corporation ITT.

From Robin Dibblee

I was intrigued to read of George Tioli in Jeremy Harding's review of Spanish Civil War memoirs (LRB, 24 September). I can confirm that he was a Comintern agent, working in Britain before going to Spain. He lodged in Felpham with a great-aunt of

mine, **Vera Barclay**, who among other things helped Baden-Powell start up the Wolf Cub movement. Tioli (he adopted an assumed name during his stay with her) was a problematic lodger who claimed to be a journalist; he used to disappear for long periods and not pay his rent. When he finally decamped to Spain, Vera discovered by going through his correspondence that when lodging with her he had been busy setting up a network of Communist cells in the UK. Letters from Barcelona stated that he disappeared in Spain but after the conflict he got a message to Vera saying that he proposed to return to England, but that since all ports of entry were blocked to him he was planning to land from an open boat at Folkestone Pier in the early hours: could she meet him? Vera had had enough of him by that time and passed the information to my grandfather, who had worked for military intelligence and still had contacts. Tioli turned up at the appointed hour, only to be met by MI5 and sent back to France.

Robin Dibblee
Great Chishill, Cambridgeshire

From Rob Stradling

There's even more to George Tioli than Robin Dibblee suspects (Letters, 22 October). The main point is that he was irresistible to women. (Superficial reasons for this are conveyed in the celebrated photograph of the original British International Column, taken in Barcelona in August 1936, where, clad in Tyrolean gear, Tioli squats stage front next to his captain, Tom Wintringham.)

The list of his conquests included a woman I met some years ago: she fell in love with George while a member of the Young Communist League in Oxford. She attended a lecture I gave more than 60 years later and was keen to discover what had happened to him in Spain. Well, among other things, Sylvia Townsend Warner and Valentine Ackland, Angela Guest, Eileen Blair and Jeanne Spero happened to him (not all in quite the same sense). So, I rather suspect that Dibblee's Great-Aunt Vera happened to Tioli in Felpham. The story about Folkestone pier seems too good to be true even in the fabulous context of Spanish Civil War (and MI5) stories. A good deal of circumstantial evidence indicates that – helped by fellow agent Georges Kopp – he betrayed the Blairs and other 'dissident elements' to the NKVD in Barcelona. Other survivors from Jeremy Harding's 'snakepit' believed that the last thing that happened to Tioli was Stalin. He was apparently arrested in summer 1937, placed onboard a Soviet supply ship returning to Odessa, and 'disappeared'.

Rob Stradling
Penarth

From Robin Dibblee

The first two of George Tioli's 'conquests' presumed by Rob Stradling are Valentine Ackland and Sylvia Townsend Warner, who had a same-sex partnership together throughout the period when either might have met Tioli (Letters, 5 November). I checked with Frances Bingham, Ackland's biographer and foremost authority on the couple, who says for certain, given the openness which with each described their private lives and the papers to which Frances has had access, that neither 'happened' with George.

As for my great-aunt, she lived in a same-sex relationship for 16 years, during the time Tioli was a lodger at Felpham. Although less public about her private life than Ackland and Warner, the relationship with her illustrator was referred to obliquely in her last children's book, They Found an Elephant. So no 'happening' there either.

Tioli's Communist activities in England in 1936 were, however, recently confirmed in the Journal of the Oxford University History Society. Before that, it is said, he courageously ran an underground scout troop in Italy after the movement was banned by Mussolini. This might explain both his meeting my great-aunt and his eccentric uniform in the British Brigade photograph.

Robin Dibblee
Great Chishill, Cambridgeshire

TAKEN FROM WOLF CUBS BY GILCRAFT

PREFACE

This book does not set out to put forward many new and original ideas. The aim when writing it was to look back on the road we have travelled since Cubbing started and to sum up the lessons we have learnt; and at the same time to look ahead and gain some idea of the prospect which lies before us. As we were told in a former Preface *{Editor: this was the 1948 Eighth Edition}* the writer tried to be as practical as possible and therefore quoted from many of his own experiences, and though he actually wrote the whole book (with the exception of the last chapter) it was without question a co-operative effort.

For the author was indebted to the *Handbook, The Jungle Book,* to **Miss Barclay's writings** (and in particular an unpublished manuscript by her) and to the Gilwell Training Course.

It must never be forgotten that "Ours is a Movement and, therefore" (to quote our Founder), "it must move," and so, from time to time, it has been found necessary to make slight adaptations to this book. It is in the light of this that the present edition has been brought up to date for, as the years go by, there are bound to be some changes of policy and slight differences in our outlook, otherwise we should stagnate.

The spirit of the book is as fresh as when it was first written, and it is hoped that those Akelas who are comparatively new to the Jungle will be helped and inspired by it, and that the older hands will look upon it as their well-tried friend and counsellor.

TAKEN FROM THE DIAMOND JUBILEE BOOK OF SCOUTING

{Editor: Vera Barclay was a very important part of this development}

THE COMING OF THE CUBS

The Wolf Cubs were recognised as existing officially in 1916. As early as 1913 a programme had been outlined for "Junior Scouts" although B.P. said that name would never do: he had in mind something like Colts or Beavers or Wolf Cubs. In The "*Headquarters Gazette*" {later called *The Scouter*} in January 1914 a scheme was outlined for "Wolf Cubs or Young Scouts ". But the scheme was only watered down Scouting and B.P. was not satisfied. At this time B.P. went to live at "Ewhurst Place", Bodian, East Sussex; Rurltard Kipling was living at "Bateman's", Burwash quite nearby and they were in constant touch by letter and visit. It is therefore quite natural that the idea came of using tire great Jungle Books as a background for the new venture and equally natural that Rudyard Kipling was delighted to give his consent. The first Cub Conference took place at Headquarters on Saturday 24th June, 1916 when B.P. outlined the new scheme. "*The Wolf Cub's Handbook"* was published on December 2nd, and the first Wolf Cub display ever took place in the Council Chamber of Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Saturday December 16th. **{Editor: Caxton Hall was where Vera was a Cub Mistress}** The Wolf Cubs had arrived! And their numbers grew rapidly

They had two "great days" in 1922 and 1924. On Saturday October 7th, 1922 they played their part in "The Posse of Welcome" arranged to welcome H.R.H. The Prince of Wales {later the Duke of Windsor} on his return from an Empire tour: of them B.P. wrote "Those hordes of imps of enthusiasm, the Wolf Cubs {19,000 instead of the 10,000 we had expected} with their throat-gripping Howl and spontaneous cheering was perhaps as moving a feature as any in the day." Mr. Kipling was there.

In 1924, on Wednesday August 6th, Wolf Cubs had their own day at the Imperial Jamboree at Wembley when the Duke of York {Later King George V1} was present: since then the Cubs of the host country have normally had their special day at World Jamborees. I remember writing about this in 1947: "Mondav was the day of the Louvetaux in their dark blue shorts

and crossed braces and ski-blue shirts and dark berets. It will be difficult to forget a vast circle of 1,200 of then all turning head over heels at once."

CUBS ARE CUBS, THE WORLD OVER

In 1966 they celebrated in their own country their 50th birthday and in no uncertain fashion. They crammed into a special Jubilee performance of Mr. Mills' circus; they made scrap books on their Cub life for Cub Packs overseas and sent them birthday cards; they undertook a vast national good turn collecting silver paper for Guide Dogs for the Blind as well as local good turns at Eastertide; they had a special Pack Meeting on Saturday June 4th and their own musical pageant play with 800 Wolf Cubs taking part in the Albert Hall, London on June 25th.

EXTRACT FROM THE DIAMOND JUBILEE BOOK OF SCOUTING

THE YOUNGEST MEMBERS

The noisy ones, the unpredictable ones, overflowing with energy and enthusiasm liable to spoil everything and guaranteed to catch the public eye: those Cubs.

Most people know the story of the "boys who were too young", the boys who, in the early days of Scouting, bombarded the nucleus of Troops like neutrons, many of them breaking through the barriers and upsetting the balance of the Patrols with 10-year-olds for whom Scouting was not intended and was not suitable.

Jungle Wisdom* by Vera Barclay**, tells how the Founder met this challenge, not by embargoes or by formulating a "holding brigade", as many people believe, but by this new set of ideas and ideals, to which he gave his whole attention and his inimitable flair for meeting demand with exactly the right supply. For "he was convinced" - and I quote from ***Jungle Wisdom - "that a boy can't start his Scout life too early".

He also knew that "a full programme is the secret of success", and for this purpose he wisely consulted, at a Conference in June 1916, those Troop Scouters who were already suffering from the effects of the Scouts who were too young. From these he selected **Vera Barclay** as the one to formulate experimental tests and to work out an appropriate scheme of training, planned especially to keep the eight to eleven age-group busy and therefore happy: to segregate them from Scouting but, all the time, to prepare them for the Troop, so that they might be ripe and ready when the time came.

But the inspiration of the Jungle background, the adaptation of it to our needs, and with it the wording of the Cub Law, the action, noise and symbolism of the Grand Howl, was all his own, and shows his extraordinary understanding of

small boys as well as bigger ones. These basic principles and methods are now accepted and wholeheartedly approved by the child psychologist of today, who acknowledges B.P. as a genius fifty years ahead of his time.

It is the Jungle which is most often the target for criticism, but nobody has thought of another background which would combine such colour and atmosphere with so many underlying examples of loyalty, team spirit and obedience to an acceptable law. These the Cubs absorb into their systems along with the fun and excitement. The most ardent critic, too, would not like to sacrifice the title "Akela", which symbolises the very special relationship between Scouter and Cub.

As a background, once established, properly used and kept in proportion, the Jungle is, in my opinion, irreplaceable and leaves room in the foreground for any amount of variety and up-to-the-moment activity.

On this foundation Cubbing has grown, both in size and scope, and still, as from the beginning, the Scouters who are working with Cubs have their say and express their opinions, which have effected many minor changes over the years. Headquarters, with its manifold departments and complications, has had to grow as the Movement grew, but all those concerned with Policy and Administration are themselves Scouters, experienced in their particular field but with the well-being of the Movement as a whole as their first concern.

With a quarter of a million Cubs ill the British Isles alone, there are of course considerable variations, both in demand and in application. What suits Packs in the Isle of Skye may not suit those in the **Isle of Wight**. It is for Headquarters to achieve a fair and reasonably elastic balance to suit them both, and all their brothers in between from Donegal to Skegness - particularly Skegness, perhaps, where their voices are most vociferous. And now that Cubbing has spread to so many other shores, the variations and a certain amount of healthy competition have increased. We can all learn from each other: from the Cub Scouts of America, maybe, the importance of including the family: from Canada perhaps the value of a set of projects, particularly out-of-doors ones: from the Welpen of the Netherlands something of the practical out-door fun of tile Jungle: from Malaya the adventurous nature of their programme. This is a random selection and not intended to be invidious, for one only has to meet Cub Scouters from the five continents to realise the adaptations that are necessary and the common purpose that unites us. This perhaps is crystallised in the Founder's own country, where we may show the world a loyalty to those basic ideas and ideals which have stood the test of time, combined with a width of vision in keeping Cubbing up to date and, all the time, in line with the developments of Scouting.

It is evident that we must move with the times and step up Cubbing to match the Cub-aged boy of today, who is, in some respects, so much older than his Dad and his Granddad were. But only in some respects!

At the Open Cub Day at Gilwell one gets an idea not only of the size of the mass but also of the individual. With every wonderful device laid on for their entertainment, one may see small parties defending a ditch for a happy hour, with sticks and loud war-cries: while hundreds of others besiege the “I Spy” bookstall thirsting for information on an incredible variety of subjects from Aircraft and Antique Furniture to Zoology, and thousands are queuing for the Aerial Railway and Scout-like adventure. But there are many who claim that the best part of a wonderful day is sitting round a camp-fire after a swim and devouring enormous slabs of bread and jam. It is usually, in my opinion, these simple things which delight them most, and would equally have delighted my Cubs of fifty years ago.

One may assume that the Cub of 1966 is more of a mixed-up kid than the Cub of 1916. Certainly his mind is more elastic than it used to be: there are many more stretching agencies and, perhaps, many more stresses and strains under which elastic may snap unless it is reinforced with stronger material. The boy’s opportunities, experience and general knowledge are much greater than they were, but fundamentally he is a Boy, just as performing animals in a circus are fundamentally Bear and Elephant and cannot ever be anything else. And thank God for it, because basic Boy, before the mixing-up effect of puberty, is essentially a thing of sound and simple delight, of straight dealing and ready response to any lead.

The secret of the success of Cubbing is that it caters for the natural instincts of Boy. giving him what he needs and what he wants, which in other fields of education often seem to be diametrically opposite, and for which only a genius like B. P. could find the formula. That must continue to be the key to Cubbing in the future, it must go the way the boy is growing, adding to his natural fun, bringing out the best that is in him and helping him to make the most of his opportunities and his gifts.

We must go with the current of contemporary development, using it for our own good purposes rather than pulling against the stream. But with the same sure foundation of the Law and Promise with its habit-forming steadfastness which is more important than ever. The “full programme" must be active, exciting and challenging to both mind and body, but all the time streamlined with Scouting, so that when the boy goes up he may continue with the same forward impetus.

Nowadays there are fresh problems to complicate the programme planning. It must cater for the two extremes: the boys who are not wanted at home by parents who are too much preoccupied with their own work or amusements or troubles: and the boys who are given everything they could desire, oil a dangerous tide of prosperity. These, and all the individuals in between, must be made to feel that they are wanted, that they are committed to a family way of life with a job to do, a sense of purpose and a tremendous enjoyment of those early, glorious years.

The problem of catering for the older Cubs is also more pressing than it used to be, since statistics have shown that more boys leave the Pack and

therefore the Movement, after ten years old than at any other time. At this age they need more attention, more of a progressive, challenging programme than the younger boys, who are carried along on a wave of indiscriminate enthusiasm. The enormous in-take of eight-year-olds is no credit to Cubbing, since they would just as gladly join a troupe of performing sea-lions. But they wouldn't stay with them long once they had plumbed the limitations of the pool and tired of a fish diet. They need to explore wider fields and a variety of expanding interests. It is this holding power which is the test of Cubbing. Cyril Fletcher summed it up for us, apropos something quite different, when he said: “It is a pity to curdle the cream in an effort to coddle the clot."

The material is as magnificent as ever it was, and Cubbing has been tested and proved to be the right tool, if it is properly handled, tempered with imagination, ground with sharp vision. And the greatest of these, perhaps, is imagination, without which one cannot capture or hold the elusive boy.

But imagination doesn't necessarily mean wild flights of fancy and crawling about on the floor. It is often the gliding on the pill, or the magic that transforms penny-plain into tuppence-coloured. Nor is it entirely the preserve of the Cub Section. Cubs need realism just as much as Scouts do, and all Scouters need imagination in presenting their realistic projects**,** and plenty of realism to make the best of the imaginative activities.

One can learn a tremendous lot from the boy himself. When he was Chief Scout, Lord Rowallan told a story about a large gathering of Cubs to whom he was to speak. It took a little time to get them all sitting quietly, but still he paused a moment before saying "I'm just waiting till the two boys at the back have finished fighting". He had not realised, he said, that every Cub in the place would promptly surge to his feet and crane his neck to watch the fight.

The taste and capabilities of the adult vary much more than those of the individual Cub. When an Akela states, for instance, that his or her boys don't like yams, it is reasonable to assume that the Scouter is not very good at telling yarns, for the boy is still the same with his innate hunger for romance, his readiness for imaginative adventure and his capacity for fun. Even today, with television invading every home and comics providing a weekly fare of juvenile purple pills, the appeal of live story-telling cannot be replaced by any mechanical means, and is one of the greatest educational mediums. F

ew parents nowadays tell their children stories or introduce them to the delights of children's literature.

I remember giving a new boy a little talk about his Promise and when I asked if he had any questions he said: "Please, can you explain how a jet plane works?" I know now that a boy has a built-in defence mechanism against "little talks". It would have been much more effective if I had told him a story about flying, mentioning in the course of the excitement that the Pilot had prayed for help, and that he was doing his best to serve his Queen.

Yarning, acting, making things, achieving small skills, getting out to find out and explore, these things must never be omitted from the Cub Programme and must always be geared to fun: fun alike in games and in work, fun in belonging to a gang with secret signs and symbolism: super fun just being a Cub.

There is a peculiar magic in Cubbing which must never be impaired.

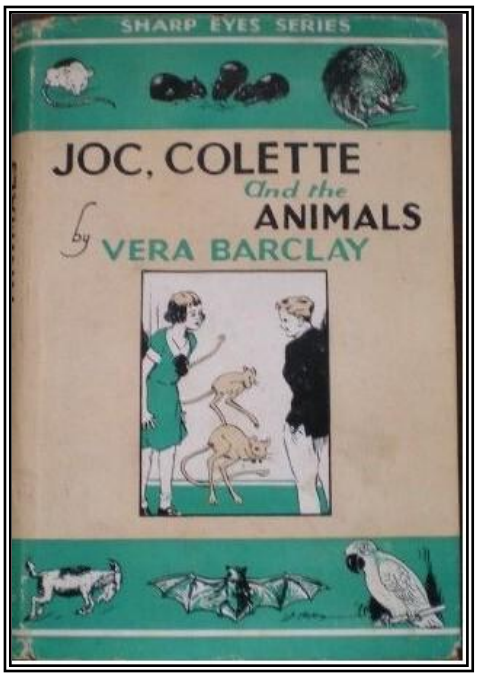
Pictures of the family summer home at Seaview where Vera spent her early years on holiday on the Isle of Wight.

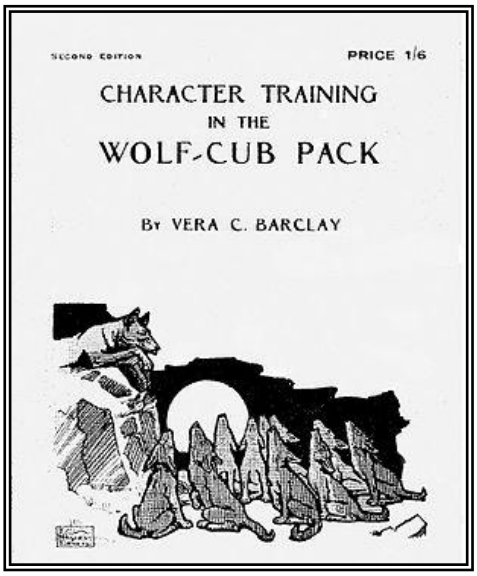
Rockcliffe, Circular Road, Seaview as it is in the present day.

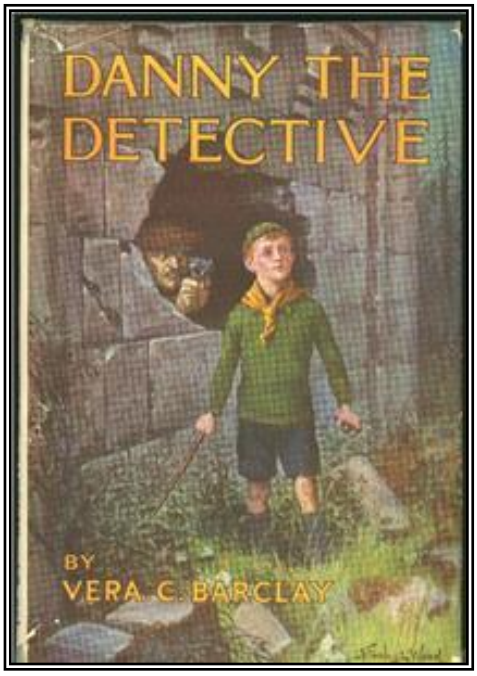
Pictures of the home that Vera lived in when she was in her 90's.

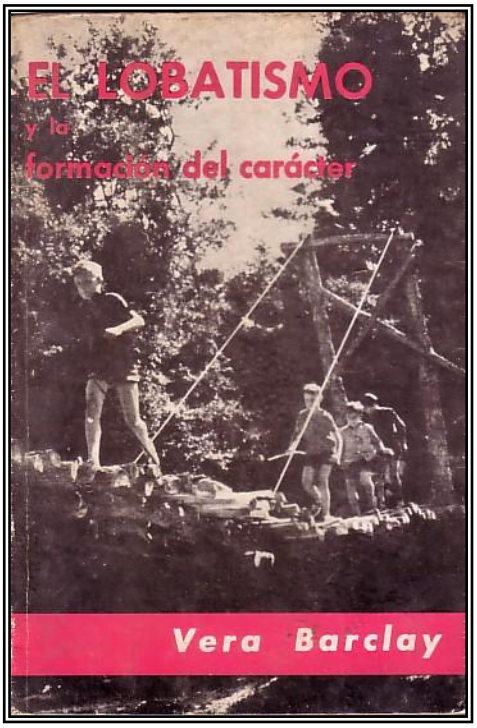
The Old Yacht Club, Bluett Avenue, Seaview

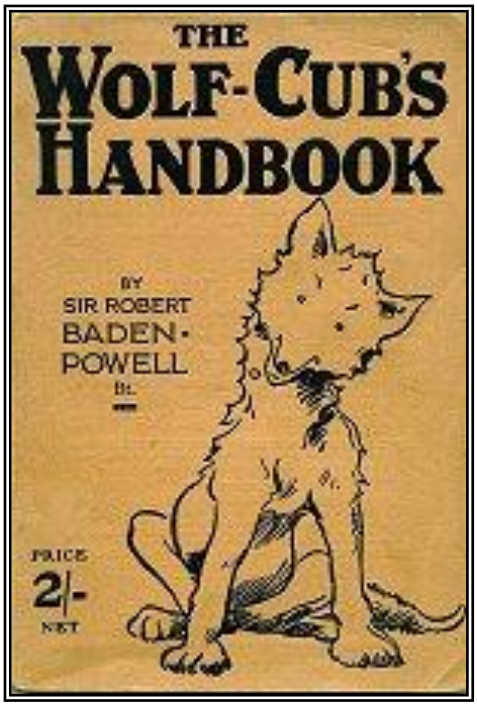
An example of some of the books that Vera was involved with, both in English and translated into other languages.







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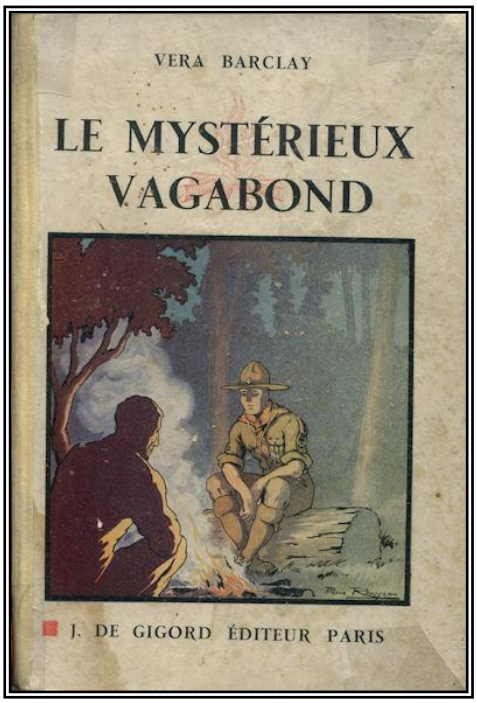
VERA BARCLAY
LE MYSTÉRIEUX
VAGABOND
J. DE GIGORD ÉDITEUR PARIS


VERA BARCLAY
Jeux
pour
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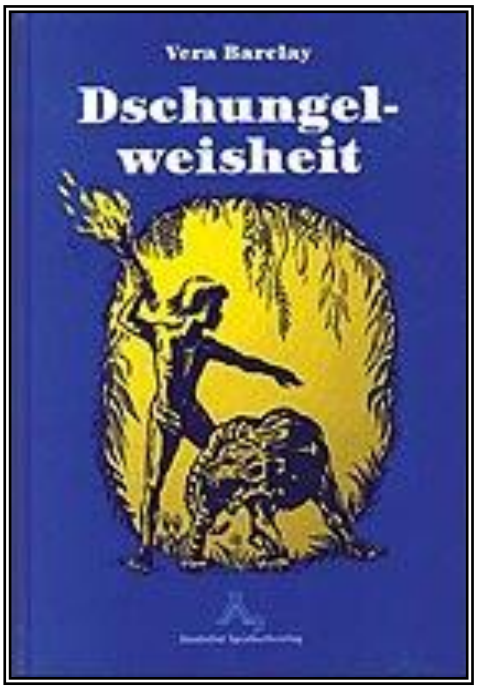
ALEXIS REDIER
11, RUE DE SÈVRES, PARIS


Vera Barclay
Dschungel-
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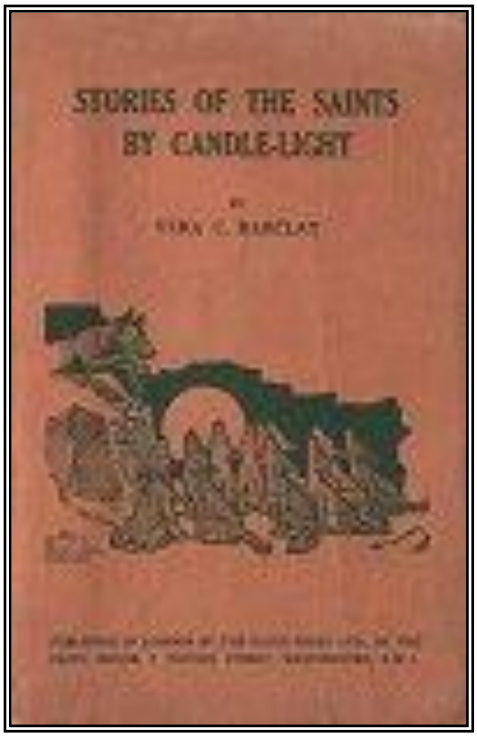
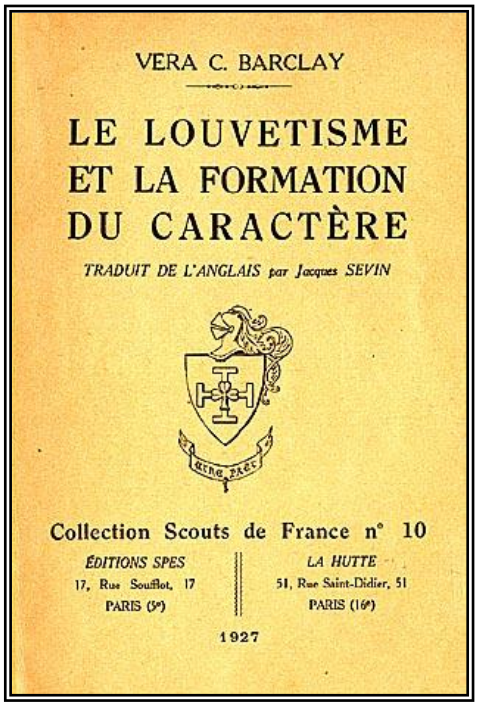
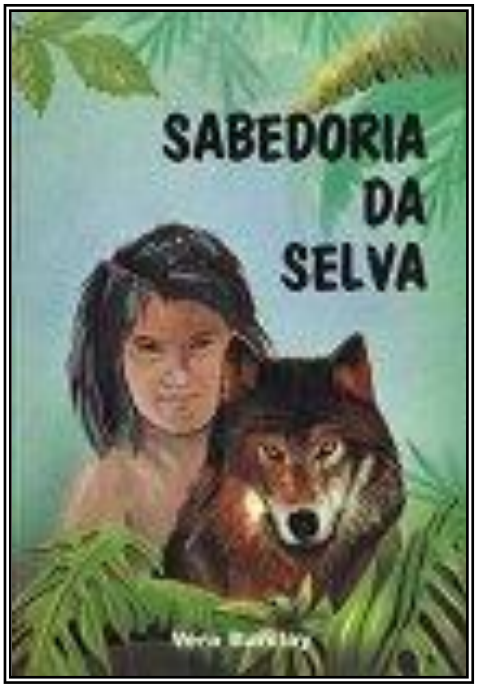
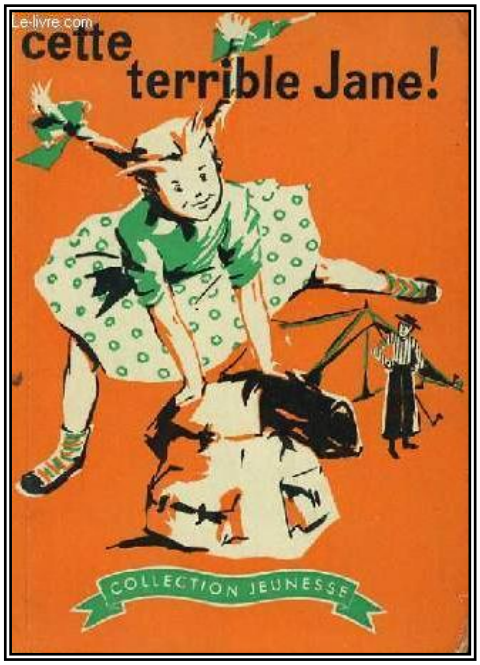
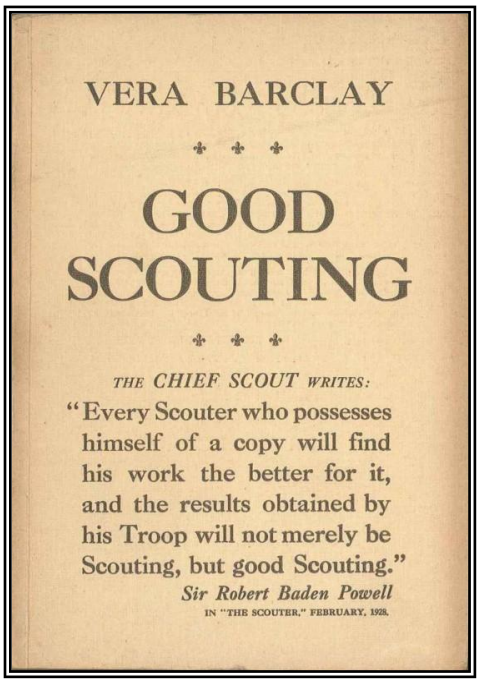
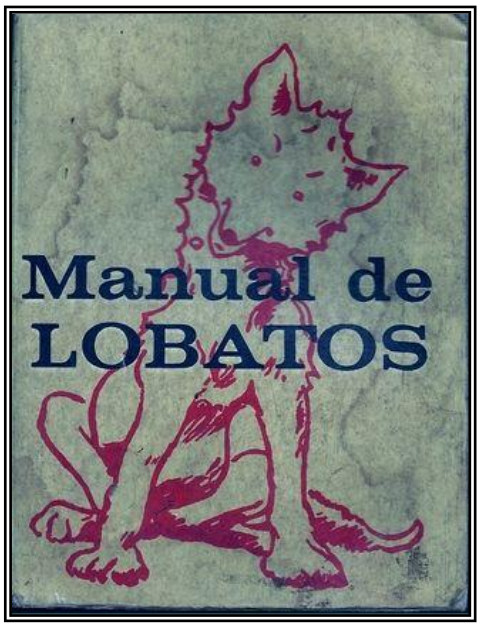

STORIES OF THE SAINTS
BY CANDLE-LIGHT


VERA C. BARCLAY
LE LOUVETISME
ET LA FORMATION
DU CARACTÈRE
TRADUIT DE L'ANGLAIS par Jacques SEVIN
Collection Scouts de France n° 10
ÉDITIONS SPES
17, Rue Soufflot, 17
PARIS (5e)
LA HUTTE
51, Rue Saint-Didier, 51
PARIS (16e)
1927

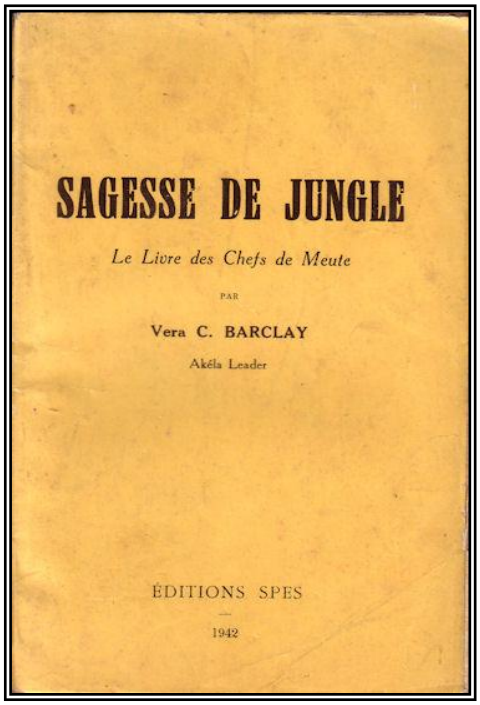

SABEDORIA
DA
SELVA


cette terrible Jane!
COLLECTION JEUNESSE

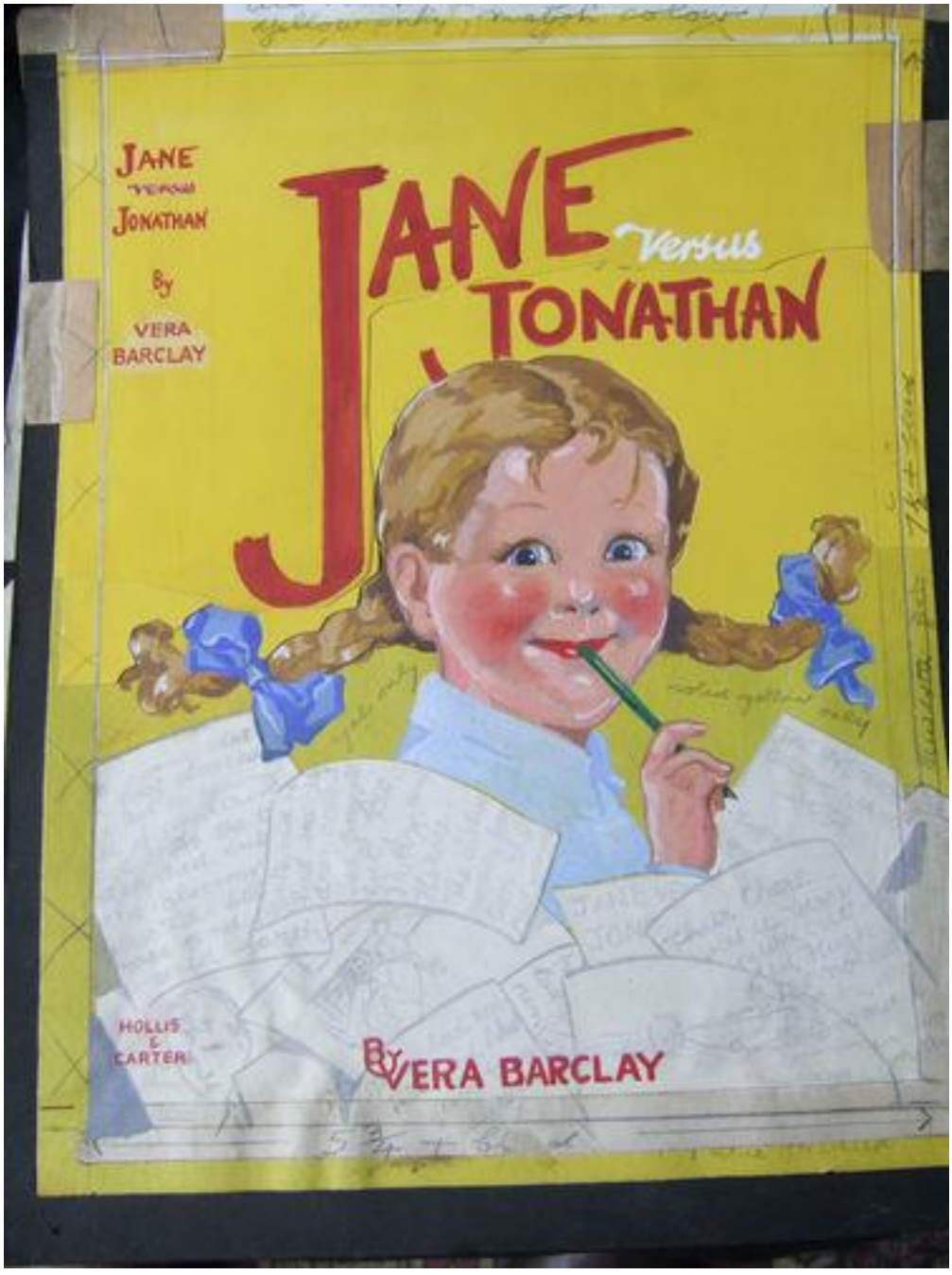

VERA BARCLAY
GOOD SCOUTING
THE CHIEF SCOUT WRITES:
"Every Scouter who possesses himself of a copy will find his work the better for it, and the results obtained by his Troop will not merely be Scouting, but good Scouting."
Sir Robert Baden Powell
IN "THE SCOUTER," FEBRUARY, 1928.


Manual de LOBATOS


ESPERIENZE PROGETTI
SCAUTISMO e LUPETTISMO
con
VERA BARCLAY
166
ANNO XXXVI
NUMERO SPECIALE
NOVEMBRE-DICEMBRE 2006
Centro Studi Baden-Powell
2006


SAGESSE DE JUNGLE
Le Livre des Chefs de Meute
PAR
Vera C. BARCLAY
Akéla Leader
ÉDITIONS SPES
1942

Whilst looking for more stories on Vera Barclay, I cam across this original artwork for one of Vera's books. After a brief period of haggling over the price the editor became the very proud owner of one of the original artworks for her book "Jane Versus Jonathan".



Extracted from a French Web Site and translated into English.

Charlesworth Vera Barclay was born in 1893 into a family of eight children of a pastor, the Reverend Charles W. Barclay, writer, and mother Florence Louisa Charlesworth (1862 - 1920).

She joined the Scout movement in 1912, becoming one of the first Scoutmistress and then, in 1914, one of the first leaders of a Wolf Cub pack. For fifteen years, especially during the war, women will replace the scoutmasters until they can find a man to fulfill the task. *(Editor : This was due to the heavy loss of young lives during the First World War. Baden Powell was worried that this loss of young men during the war could spell the end of the Scout Movement.)*

She recalled in 1915 how she founded her first pack in Hertford, north-east London, because the boys were harassing her when she took care of her Scout troop, "Miss, miss, if the scouts want us, we're ready. ", she wrote: "When I saw these boys three apples high and ragged greet me with a three fingers salute, I began to feel that something should be done for them."

She devotes her evenings every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, her weekends and part of her vacation to Scouting. She then recruits her sister Angela as her successor as the head of the pack.

In 1916, she is a nurse at the hospital of the Red Cross of Netley, near Portsmouth. On June 16, Baden Powell organised a meeting in Caxton Hall, where he presents his overhaul of the "programme for Cubs" because he wants to incorporate the Jungle Book of his friend Rudyard Kipling . He persuaded Vera to work with him to redesign the manual. She then joined the National team to look after the branch of Cub Scouting. Every morning she found on her desk small notes written on B.P.'s cigarette papers (at that time this paper was used as a coagulant for cuts caused by shaving) that he wrote during his ablutions.

She recalls with humor that this manual will not be for ... "These solemn people who have waited for a thick manual describing how to educate a child of eight to twelve years, that is to say, how to train up and to turn it into stupid little machine; how to crush his spirit willing to learn a load of school nightmare precision, these people will be painfully disappointed "

However, she wishes to harmonise the different practices, and will travel great distances to teach at least 500 Wolf Cubs to learn the Grand Howl properly for the First World Scout Jamboree in 1920 at Olympia.

Converted to Catholicism, she works a lot to raise suspicions that the clergy are against the scout movement. She will win the support of Cardinal Bourne, allowing a significant increase in the number of scouts in England.

It is she who will award Father Sevin the title of "leader Akela" enabling the latter to form in turn pack leaders. She also goes to Chamarande in 1923 , 1925 and 1926 .

In September 1920 , she bade farewell to the English national team in an article in the Gazette headquarters announcing her arrival at the Sisters of Charity (St. Vincent de Paul). In the same edition, Baden Powell gratefully acknowledges her services giving her the Silver Wolf, Scout's highest honour for services rendered.

However, it seems that it was only a test, since three years after she is found at the National Scout Team again where she publishes training manuals. She writes a lot, especially under the pseudonym of Margaret Beech, children's books, but also of religious tests in both English and French.

In 1931, she finally leaves her Scout position to settle in France. However, it is likely she has spent the Second World War in Bognor Regis, near Brighton.

She died blind, in September 1989, at age 95.

From the Scout Association Archive & Records Office

Although girls could not be Scouts after the creation of the Girl Guides there were certainly female leaders and role models to influence the Movement. One of the first female Headquarters staff who had a critical role in shaping Scouting was Vera Barclay who joined in 1916. Her first task was to compile the Wolf Cub's Handbook for the new section aimed at boys between eight and twelve which would include creating the badges and tests. She spent four years in the role as Wolf Cub Secretary before moving to Birmingham where she continued to be a leader of a Pack and Troop of Scouts. Vera had an interesting career working for the Catholic Church and the author of several adventure stories for children

Twenty years ago in Sheringham

In September 1989, in St Nicholas' Nursing Home, Sheringham, an old lady of 96 passed away.

Probably no-one in the home realised, for she was not one to brag, that she was one of the pioneer members of the Scout Movement, who had been personally summoned by Baden Powell to come to London and help set up the Wolf Cub section of the movement.

Vera Barclay had become involved in scouting during its very infancy. A vicar's daughter from Hertfordshire, she had set up a Scout Troop in her father's parish before and into the First World War whilst at the same time serving as a VAD. For an idea of how intrepid she was, at the age of nineteen she was one of the first women to ride the full length of the Cresta Run.

When Baden Powell sent for her in June 1916, she did not suspect that he would ask her to help him draft the Wolf Cub Handbook and set up Cub Packs all over England. At that time, she had viewed the cubs as being rather a nuisance, but after becoming an Akela in Pimlico, she was quite won over by the little Cockney sparrows and devoted the next years of her life to them.

Her Norfolk connections began with family holidays spent at the Corner House, Overstrand (now the Danum House B&B) which her mother, the highly successful novelist, Florence Barclay, had bought.

Her sister Muriel lived at the Gatehouse on the corner of Common Lane & Havelock Road, Sheringham for many years. Vera Barclay's niece, Muriel's daughter, Mary Hyslop, will be well remembered as she worked as a midwife in Cromer.

After some years in Birmingham running cub and scout groups, Vera Barclay moved to Switzerland where she continued a successful writing career. Over her life, she wrote nearly 50 books, on subjects such as scouting, natural history and the Turin Shroud. Probably the best known was her "Jane" schoolgirl series for children.

At the end of her life, she was looked after in Sheringham by a devoted niece, Betty Ross née Barker and her husband Peter, in a house on St. Austin's Grove.

Her grave is in Sheringham Cemetery. Her memory was honoured on the First Day Cover for the Scouting Centenary in 2007 and on the web, sites to her memory can be found in places as far afield as Italy and Chile, where her irreplaceable contribution to scouting is commemorated.

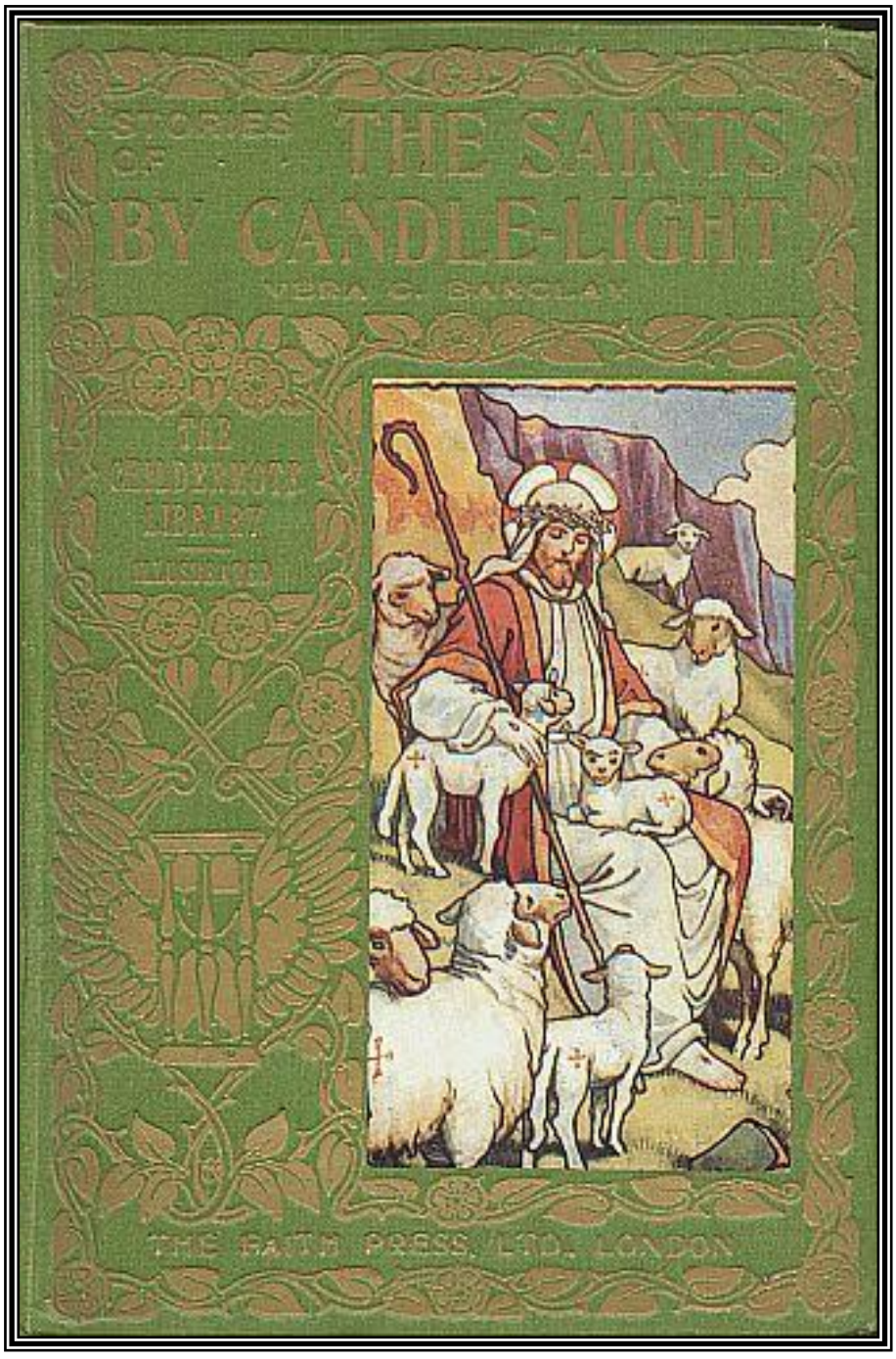
If any local residents have memories of her, which they might wish to communicate, Sheringham paper will be pleased to send them on to a researcher in France who is currently preparing a study on Vera Barclay.

To view pictures of Gravestone visit

http://www.flickr.com/photos/saffron_walden_snapper/4790344612/

VERA BARCLAY'S GRAVE IN NORFOLK

There follows one of the stories that Vera wrote entitled “The Saints by Candlelight” which happens to be the diary of a Cub Camp held at Seaview on the Isle of Wight. Images have been added to illustrate the IOW connections.



TO THE MEMORY OF SIXER FRANK SPARKS AND SECOND BOB SMITH

TWO FAITHFUL CUBS OF THE "CARDINAL'S OWN" PACK

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED BY THEIR OLD WOLF. R.I.P.

BY CANDLE-LIGHT.

CONTENTS
NINE DAYS IN CAMP AND NINE STORIES BY CANDLE-LIGHT

STORIES OF THE SAINTS BY CANDLE-LIGHT

NINE DAYS IN CAMP AND NINE STORIES BY CANDLE-LIGHT

Once upon a time there were fifteen Cubs who spent nine wonderful days in camp. They were London Cubs, and the camp was on a beautiful little green island whose rocky shore ran down in green, tree-covered points into the bluest sea you ever saw. These nine days were the most splendid days in those Cubs' lives. And so they often think of them, and dream about them, and live them over again in memory.

So that they may more easily go over those days their Old Wolf has written down all about them in this book. Perhaps other Cubs will like to come away, in imagination, to that fair, green island, and so have a share in the nine days.

Now, one of the very "special things" about those days in camp were the candle-light stories which the Cubs listened to every night, seated in a big, happy pile, pyjama-clad, on their palliasses. All day they used to look forward to those stories, and sometimes, in the middle of a shrimping expedition, or a paddling party, one or another would remark, "Story to-night, boys!" and turn his thumbs up to show he was pleased at the thought. And so you will find the candle-light stories, too, in this book; and remember that all the stories in this book are true—both those about the Cubs and those about the Saints.

THE FIRST DAY

The train steamed slowly out of Victoria Station. "Now we're off!" shouted a Cub, and he and all the others began to jump for joy, which was not easy in a railway compartment packed like a sardine-tin. Then someone began to sing the Pack chorus, and everyone joined in with all their strength:

Let the great big world keep turning,
Now I've joined a Wolf Cub Pack;
And I only know
That I want to go
To camp—to camp—to camp!
Oh, I long to set off marching
With my kit-bag on my back.
Let the great big world keep on turning round,
Now I've joined a Wolf Cub Pack!

Then someone yelled "Are we down-hearted?" and the Cubs yelled "No!" so loudly that Akela thought she would be deafened for life.

Presently the train ran out into the country, and plodded along between woods and fields. And the early morning sun shone brightly, and the sky was very blue. The country, the country! And, very soon, the sea! There were some of them who had never been to the country, and "Spongey," the youngest of the party, had never even been in a real train.

"Talk about hot!" said someone, panting, when the train had thundered on for about an hour. And, my word, it was hot! Besides, there were blacks and dust, and everyone began to get very grimy—specially the people who were eating bread-and-jam and sticky fruit, and the people who had to crawl under the seat to pick up things that had got lost.

"Never mind," said Akela, "we shall be in the sea this evening, and then we shall be cool." That started everyone jumping for joy again, of course.

Presently the train passed Arundel Castle—its white towers and turrets and battlements rising up amidst the dark green woods like an enchanted castle in the days of knights and fairies—and the Cubs learnt that there are castles in real life as well as in story-books.

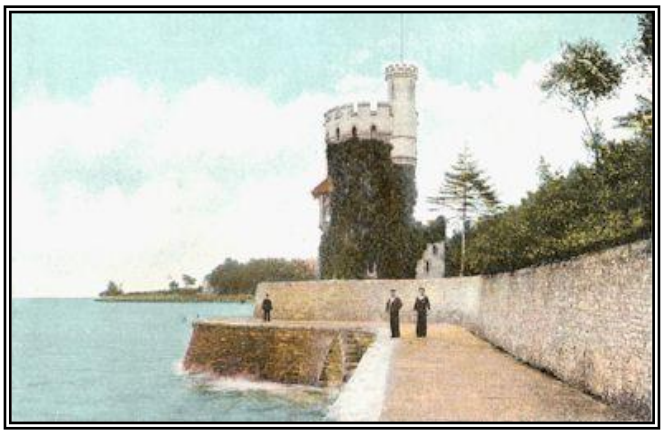
After that they began looking out of the window to see who would be the first one to catch sight of the sea. "Bunny" was the first to, and his friend “Bert”, the Senior Sixer, came a close second.

At last the train got to Portsmouth Harbour, and, shouldering their kit-bags, the Cubs ran down on to the steamer.

The harbour was thrilling: battleships, cruisers, torpedo-boats, the Royal yacht, the Admiralty yacht, and, most interesting of all, Nelson's ship, the Victory. As if the steamer knew that a crowd of eager Cubs were longing to see all round the Victory, it went out of its way to steam right round it, slowly and quite near, and the Cubs had a splendid view.

The boys all wanted to be the first to touch the sea, but “Bunny”, who had seen it first, forestalled them again, by letting down a ball of string over the edge of the boat and pulling it up all wet.

At last the ship reached the Isle of Wight, and the Cubs and their great mountain of camp luggage went down the long pier. I forgot to tell you that besides Akela there was the Senior Sixer's father and mother, who were coming to help look after the camp—they became the "Father and Mother of Camp"; and there was also a lady who was a very kind camp Godmother. The grown-ups and the luggage were soon packed into a large motor-car, and then, relieved of their kit-bags, the Cubs set out to walk the two miles along the sea-front to the village called Seaview.



The way lay along a thing called a "sea-wall"—a high stone wall about six feet broad running along above the shore, with the sea lapping up against it at high tide. Along this the Cubs walked (or rather ran and jumped), their eyes big with wonder at the great stretch of blue, blue sea, with here and there a distant sailing-boat, and, above, the sky even bluer than the sea. "I didn't know the sky could be so blue!" said a Cub; and that was just how they all felt.

It was very hot walking in the midday sun. There was no hurry—nine days to do just as they liked in—so halfway along the sea-wall the Cubs and Akela scrambled down some steep stone steps on to a tiny stretch of sand not yet covered by the incoming tide. Boots and stockings were soon off, sleeves and shorts tucked up, and everybody paddling deep in the cool green water.

"The Stable" still exists although now converted to a holiday home. The fascade is still as it probably was when Vera and the Wolf Cubs stayed there!

When they had all got thoroughly cool they went on their way, and at last arrived at the Stable.

This was where they were to sleep. It consisted of a courtyard, a couple of stalls, a coach-house, a shed, and two tiny rooms. Akela occupied one of these, and the Cubs were divided into two groups. The Stable was in charge of Bert, the Senior Sixer, and in his stall he had Bunny (a Second), Dick (a big Cub very nearly ready to go up to the Scouts), and Patsy, a small but lively Irishman. Sam, another Sixer, had in his stall four young terrors—Terry, Wooler, Jack, and "Spongey" Ward.

Then there was the coach-house. This was in charge of Bill, the last Senior Sixer, now a Cub Instructor. The other occupants were Jim, a Sixer (Bill's young brother), "Mac," a Second, two brothers, "Big Andy" and "Little Andy," and a rather new Cub called Bob.

"The Coach House" also still exists although now converted to a holiday home. The fascade is still as it probably was when Vera and the Wolf Cubs stayed there!

It took a good while to stuff the palliasses with straw and unpack. But when this was finished everyone had a good wash and changed into cool old clothes—shorts and cotton shirts. Tea followed, in a jolly old garden behind the bake-house. There was a seesaw in it, and the grass was long and soft, and the shade of the apple-trees very cool. Then the party ran up the hill to the camp field. Here there was a lot to do: the bell tent to be pitched, the fireplace

made, wood to be chopped, water fetched, all the pots and pans unpacked, a swing and a couple of hammocks to be put up, the two great sacks of loaves to be fetched, and, oh! a hundred other things. But all the Cubs set to and did their best, and at last all was ready.

A picture of Seaview beach from the same time as the book refers to. In the background is the now disappeared suspension pier.

"Now for the shore!" said Akela, and everyone cheered and ran for their towels and bathing-drawers. It was only a few minutes' walk down to the most lovely shore you can imagine—stretches and stretches of golden sand and little, lapping waves. On one side you could see rocky points running down into the greeny-blue sea, with trees growing right down to the shore. An old, brown-sailed coal barge moved slowly past on the gentle wind, the many browns of its patched sails forming a rich splash of colour in the evening sun. The Cubs soon turned into "water babies." Boots and stockings had been left behind at the Stable, and now they got rid of clothes as well. How cool the sea was! That first bathe seemed to wash away all the heat and smoke and grubbiness of dear old London.

After the bathe came a splendid paddle among brown, sea-weedy rocks, and the Cubs caught their first baby crabs and found their first shells, and got just as wet as they liked.

But the sun was sinking down behind the grey line of sea, and the clock there is inside every Cub was telling supper-time. So, with hands full of sea-weed and shells, they made their way back to camp.

The camp-fire was burning merrily. "Godmother," in a large blue overall, was stirring a steaming Dixie of cocoa, and "Mother and Father" were cutting up bread and cheese.

After supper there was time for a little play in the field. Then, as it began to get dusk, a whistle-blast called the Cubs in for night prayers. It was still quite light enough to read, so each Cub had a little homemade book of Morning and Night Camp Prayers. Kneeling in a quiet corner of the field, with just the evening sky overhead, with a pale star or two beginning to appear, it was easy to feel God near and to pray. The camp prayers started with "A prayer that we may pray well." It was a very old prayer, really, but it seemed just to fit the Cubs, and help them to do their best in their prayers as in all other things. The prayer was this: "Open Thou, O Lord, my mouth to bless Thy Holy Name; cleanse also my heart from wandering thoughts, so that I may worthily, devoutly, and attentively recite these prayers, and deserve to be heard in the sight of Thy Divine Majesty. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen." Then followed the "Our Father" and some short prayers. And after that the Cubs said altogether: "I confess to

Almighty God that I have sinned against Him in thought, word, and deed." Then Akela read out very slowly the following questions, and each Cub answered them in his heart—not out loud, but silently, for God only to hear:

"Have I done my best to pray well when saying my private prayers and at camp prayers?

"Have I really meant to please God to-day?

"Have I done my best in my orderly duties, and in other things I have had to do?

"Have I given in to other people quickly and cheerfully when given an order?

"Have I spoken as I should not?

"Have I been disobedient?

"Have I been unkind to another boy—selfish? quarrelsome? unfair?

"Have I told a lie?

"Have I done anything else I am sorry for?"

Then, after a pause, Akela said:

"Tell God you are truly sorry, on your honour as a Cub, that you have grieved Him by the sins of to-day."

Then there was perfect silence for a moment, and after that, the Cubs said, all together:

"May Almighty God have mercy upon us, and forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting."

Then they said a short psalm, and the following beautiful little hymn:

Now with the fast departing light,
Maker of all, we ask of Thee,
Of Thy great mercy, through the night
Our guardian and defence to be.

Far off let idle visions fly,
And dreams that might disturb our sleep;
Naught shall we fear if Thou art nigh,
Our souls and bodies safe to keep.

Father of mercies, hear our cry;
Hear us, O sole-begotten Son!
Who with the Holy Ghost most high
Reignest while endless ages run.
Amen.

Then came "A prayer that we may be forgiven any wandering thoughts we have had while reciting these prayers," and, to end up with, "Our Father" once again, because it is the prayer that Christ Our Lord specially told His friends to use.

The nine o'clock gun booms out across the Solent as the Cubs and Akela, having bidden good-night to Father and Mother and Godmother, walk down the hill to the Stable. The sea looks like a great piece of shimmering grey silk. "Look at the little twinkle lights!" says a Cub. It is the street lamps over on the mainland, but they look like so many winking diamonds. There is quite a cluster of them on the grey ghost of a battleship, and the old, round fort has a light which looks like the red end of a cigar. "Please, please let us go down to the front and look at the little twinkling lights," beg the Cubs. So, on condition they get undressed in five minutes, Akela says "Yes."
A few minutes later the Stable and the Coach-house are having an undressing race. One of the two tiny rooms has been made into a little chapel. In less than two minutes the first Cub ready whisks once round the yard in his night-shirt, like a white moth in the dusk, and into the chapel to say his prayers. The door stands open. In the red light of the tiny lamp you can see the little white form kneeling on the floor, very quiet and devout. Presently he is silently joined by another—there is only room for two, it is such a wee chapel. Several impatient people in pyjamas think it would be fun to start jazzing in the courtyard, till Akela warns them, "No story if you start ragging."

Soon all prayers are said, and the people in the Coach-house are in bed, and ready to "invite" the Stable. The Stable having been duly invited, its eight occupants come in, and each finds a place on a palliasse. It is a warm, still night. The great doors of the Coach-house stand wide open. The stars are out thick by this time. Little black bats flit and swoop about in the darkness. If you keep very still you can just hear the gentle "hshshsh, hshshsh" of the sea. The candle flickers as the night gives a little sigh. A few Cubs are rolling about on their straw beds. "Shut up, all!" commands an imperious Sixer. "Now, miss, go ahead."

Akela is sitting on a palliasse already occupied by two people. Silence reigns, for these Cubs belong to a story-telling Pack, and it is almost the only time they are ever quite quiet. "Well," begins Akela, "many hundreds of years ago there lived a boy——"

THE STORY OF SAINT BENEDICT

Many hundreds of years ago there lived a boy called Benedict. He lived in Italy. His father and mother were rich people, and lived in a beautiful house on a beautiful estate. St. Benedict and his twin sister must have been very happy playing among the olive-trees and vines of sunny Italy, where the sky is nearly always blue, and where there are all sorts of lovely wild-flowers and fruits we don't get in England, and lizards and butterflies and all sorts of things.

St. Benedict was brought up a good Christian, though lots of the people round were still pagans in those days. There were terrible wars and troubles going on in Italy and in all the countries round, like there have been in our days. But the boy Benedict in his happy home knew little of these. Little did he know that the beautiful fields of Italy were being left to be overgrown with weeds and over-run with wild beasts; that the children had

never heard of God; that the poor were dying of starvation? To him the world was a happy place, where one played and had a good time, and where people loved Christ and obeyed His words. But some day he was to learn the truth. For God was going to use the boy Benedict to do more than any one man has ever done to civilize the world. This story I'm telling you is the story of how St. Benedict discovered all God's great plan for him, and worked it out, bit by bit.

When St. Benedict had learnt all that his tutors could teach him at home his father sent him to the great city of Rome to learn there from the scholars and learned men, and attend lectures and classes. St. Benedict was a very clever boy, and he must have got on very quickly and pleased his masters very much. He could probably have carried off all sorts of prizes and won great fame and praise for himself, but there was something which stopped him caring for things like that. In the great city of Rome he saw two things—one of them was all sorts of wicked, selfish, horrible, and ungodly pleasures in which men wasted their lives and altogether forgot God; and the other was the beautiful, holy lives of the Christians, many of whom could tell wonderful stories of the martyrs who had been killed in Rome not so very long before, and whose bodies lay in the Catacombs. There were some beautiful churches in the city, and St. Benedict loved to go to the solemn services. As he knelt there in the holy stillness, or listened to the chanting, he began to think. And more and more he felt that all the glamour and selfish pleasures and greediness of the people was stupid and wrong, and that what was really worth having was a good conscience, and peace, and the friendship of God. And as he thought, he began to care less and less for his learning and his chances of glory, and he began to feel as if he wanted to get right away from people and have the chance of thinking about God.

When St. Benedict had these feelings he knew they came from God, and so, instead of not listening and just letting himself get keen on his study and his amusements, he made up his mind that he would always do his best to follow God's will, and would keep his heart always listening, so that if God did want to call him away to some special kind of life he would be ready to hear and to obey.

Well, when anybody does this God does not fail to tell him what to do, and so, when St. Benedict had been seven years in Rome, and was still only a boy, God made known to him that he must leave Rome, and his friends and his masters, and go right away into the mountains. His old nurse, Cyrilla, had always stayed with him, faithfully; and now she decided to go with him wherever it was that God was leading him.

So, one day, St. Benedict and Cyrilla set out secretly, and made their way by hidden paths towards the mountains. At last they reached a certain village, and St. Benedict went into the church to pray God to make known His will. When he came out the peasants who lived near the church pressed him to stay with them. St. Benedict took their kindness as a sign that it was God's will, so he and his old nurse settled down in the village.

It was while the boy was living here that (so the old books tell us) a miracle happened which made people feel sure that God was especially pleased with him. One day, as St. Benedict returned home from the church where he had been praying, he found his old nurse very unhappy; in fact, she was crying. This distressed him very much, because he hated to see other people miserable. At first he wondered why Cyrilla was crying, and then he saw the cause. She had accidentally broken an earthenware bowl that one of the good villagers had lent her. Full of pity for his old friend, St. Benedict took up the two pieces and went outside the house with them, and knelt down. Then he prayed very hard that the bowl might be mended. And, as he opened his eyes and looked at it, sure enough, it was whole! Very pleased, and thinking how

good God is to those who really trust Him, he ran into the house and gave it to Cyrilla.

St. Benedict had not thought of himself, but only of God's wonderful power and kindness. But Cyrilla and the village people to whom she told the miracle all began to talk a lot about St. Benedict, and say he was a young saint, since he could do miracles. People even came in from the places round to stare at him. Do you think this pleased him? No; he wasn't that sort of boy. If he had been, God would never have done anything for him. He was very distressed at the way people went on; and more and more he felt that God was calling him away, and had something very important to say to him. And one day it came to him that he must leave even his faithful old nurse and go away. You can imagine how terribly sad he must have been at that thought, not only because he loved her and had always had her near him since he could remember, but because he knew how very, very much she loved him, and that if he left her she would be sad and lonely, with no one to comfort her. But you remember what I told you about how St. Benedict had made up his mind to do his best always to carry out God's will, and not give in to himself and pretend he had not heard; so, because he knew that it is more important to be faithful to God than to any person on earth, he made up his mind to go away. He did not tell his old nurse, but one day he set out, alone.

He must have felt very strongly that it was God's will, otherwise he would not have dared go out all alone and unarmed into the mountains, and with no money or food. Don't you think it was very brave of him? Perhaps you think it was foolish? Well, people have often been thought fools for doing God's will faithfully, but in the end God proves that really they were quite right. Anyway, something very soon happened to St. Benedict to show that God was with him.

As he tramped on, along the mountain-sides, between the flower-covered banks and thickets full of birds' songs, he prayed to God to guide him in the right way. And so when, after some hours of solitary tramping, he saw a man coming towards him out of a lonely mountain pass, he felt sure this was someone sent by God to help him.

The man's clothes showed that he was a monk. As he drew near he looked curiously at St. Benedict, wondering who this noble-looking boy could be walking all alone among the wild mountains. He, himself, had come out there to meditate and be alone with God and his thoughts. Stopping St. Benedict, he asked him kindly who he was and where he was going. St. Benedict quite simply told him the truth: that he had come out to seek God's will, and didn't know where he was going, except that he was seeking some place where he could live hidden from the whole world.

At first the monk Romanus tried to argue with him and show him that it was foolish to come out like that alone. But St. Benedict spoke so wonderfully about God's call that Romanus saw he was right, and made up his mind to help him find somewhere where he could live alone for a while. So he led him up a steep winding path, and showed him a cave opening into the rugged mountain-side. The cave was about seven feet deep and four feet broad, and there was just room on the rocky ledge outside to make a little garden. St. Benedict stepped into the cave with his heart full of joy, feeling sure that at last he had found the place he was seeking. Before going away, Romanus gave him a long garment made of sheep-skin, which was what the monks of those days used to wear. He also promised to supply him with food. His monastery was far up, on the top of the great rock in which the cave was. He said that every day he would let down a basket with bread in it for St. Benedict, and he promised faithfully to keep his secret. Then he went away.

What happened in the time that followed no one knows—it is a secret between God and St. Benedict. But we can guess that God made known many wonderful things to His faithful young servant—things that later he was to teach to thousands of men; and that He filled him with grace and strength to do what he would have to do, to make the world a better place. Also, we can be sure that he was very, very happy, in spite of the loneliness, and the dark, cold nights, and the hard ground he had for his bed.

Three years St. Benedict lived like this, and then one sunny Easter morning God made known St. Benedict's secret to a certain holy man who lived in those parts, and told him to go to the cave and take St. Benedict some of his Easter fare. St. Benedict was very pleased to see him, but surprised to hear it was Easter, for he had lost all count of time. So the priest laid out the good things he had brought, and they said grace, and then they had a meal together, and then a talk. After the priest had gone some shepherds and country-folk climbed up the steep little path to see where he had been, and they found St. Benedict. He welcomed them, and spoke so wonderfully to them that they saw he was a man specially taught by God. They felt he was their true friend and loved them for God's sake, and so they often climbed the steep path to visit him and ask his help and advice. But very soon news of him spread beyond the mountain shepherds and people of all sorts from far and near flocked to see the holy man and ask his prayers and his advice. Sad, wicked people went away with sorrow for their sins, and became good. Cowards went away full of strength and courage. And many people began to learn a new way of serving God truly, always doing their best for love of Him, and never "giving in to themselves."

It was then that God allowed St. Benedict to have a terrible temptation, to test him. Suddenly he felt within him a great desire to give up all he was doing for God and return to the wicked city he had left and live a life of ease and pleasure. It was the Devil who put this thought into his mind, but God's grace in St. Benedict was stronger than the Devil. With all his heart he vowed that he would never give up doing God's will, and, to punish himself for the thoughts that had entered his mind, he threw himself into a mass of sharp, thorny briars and stinging-nettles, so that his flesh was all torn and stung. After that he was so strong that no temptation was ever able to conquer him, and he was able to lead thousands of souls to victory.

The time had come when God wanted St. Benedict to leave his cave. He had learnt what God had to tell him in secret, and now his great work was to begin.

A large number of men who wished to serve God with all their hearts began to collect round St. Benedict. Gradually they formed twelve monasteries, all within about two miles, and got St. Benedict to rule over them all. This was the beginning of St. Benedict's great work for God. He drew up a Rule which showed men how they could live in the way most pleasing to God. It was not so terribly hard as to be impossible for ordinary men, like some of the holy hermits and Saints in the past had taught. And so thousands and thousands of men began to promise to keep this Rule and to live together in monasteries, doing good. St. Benedict had many wonderful adventures during the rest of his life, but I must keep those stories to tell you another time. The end of this one is that after God had called St. Benedict to Heaven, his great work went on. His followers began to travel all over the world as missionaries, teaching the pagans about Christ, and bringing peace and goodness to the poor, sad, wicked world. They cultivated the land and made it fruitful; and built churches and hospitals and schools; and taught the children, and looked after the poor, and civilized the world. It was they who brought the Christian Faith to England, for St. Augustine was one of St. Benedict's monks, and did more than anybody else to make England the great country which she became; for before St. Benedict's monks came the country

was all wild and the Saxons were heathen. So, you see, by listening for God's voice, and doing his best to obey faithfully, the boy Benedict became one of the men who have done very great things for the world. "Tell us some more," said the Cubs sleepily. "Tell us all the adventures St. Benedict had."

"No, no," said Akela; "that was a long story. Now you must go to sleep and dream about St. Benedict, and then you will be ready to get up and have a glorious day to-morrow."

So the Stable boys stumbled sleepily back to their own quarters, and Akela tucked each of them up in his blankets. A quarter of an hour later everyone was asleep. As Akela crept softly round she could only hear the regular breathing of sound sleepers. True, at midnight Patsy made some loud conversation, and thought he could do without any blankets at all, but he did not wake up even then, and was soon tucked up quietly again.

So ended the First Day.

THE SECOND DAY

The sun has already been up some time when the first Cub wakes up and wonders where he is. Finding he is in camp, he feels sure it would be a good turn if he thumped the sleeping form next him and woke him up, that he, too, may have the delight of remembering that "to-morrow" has actually come—the first real day in camp! These two make conversation to each other, and become so cheery that soon everybody else has woken up. It is 6.30, so Akela gives leave for everyone to turn out.

There is a tap in the Stable-yard. Soon everyone is washing in a tin basin. The two cooks have dressed quickly, said their prayers in the little chapel, and are off up the hill to the camp field.

At the Stable it is some time before everyone is thoroughly washed and dressed, beds are tidied, and everything spick and span. Then the crowd of happy Cubs race off to the field.

The fire is burning merrily, and a big Dixie of porridge bubbling for all it is worth. Away, between the trees, you can see the blue sea glinting and sparkling. Overhead the sea-gulls circle on silver wings, and cry good-morning to each other as they pass with swoops and dips, like so many tiny aeroplanes. The dew is thick on the grass, the blackbirds sing, the sun shines, and the camp-fire sends a steady column of blue smoke into the fresh morning air. How different to early morning in London! With a howl of joy the Cubs scatter over the field.

Here comes Godmother in a big blue overall and a sun hat; and Father and Mother appear at the same moment from the farther corner of the field. They take over the cooking, and the two cooks run off for a bit of sport after their labours.

Then everyone collects in the council circle for prayers. A short run wild again, and then a series of whistle-blasts calls the Pack in for breakfast. In come rushing the ravenous Cubs, and each squats down where the cooks have placed their mugs in a circle. Caps off, and all stand quiet for a moment, for grace, and then porridge and mountains of bread-and-butter begin to disappear at a great rate.

Breakfast finished, the pots and the pans washed up, the Pack invades the post office, and, armed with picture postcards and pencils, the Cubs squat along the sea-wall and write to their mothers. That duty done, and spades, pails, boats, and shrimping-nets bought, they lose no more time in getting down on to the shore.

It is a happy and hungry crowd with wet and rumpled hair that turns up again at camp, all ready for the splendid dinner Mother and Father have cooked.

After dinner a rest, while Godmother reads aloud.

The day ends up with a wonderful shrimping-party. Besides shrimps, the Cubs catch every kind of funny little sea-creature—star-fishes, jelly-fishes, baby sea-anemones, tiny, tiny crabs, a devil-fish, baby dabs, and everything else you can think of. The tide is right out, and there are mysterious green pools under the pier, full of feathery red sea-weed and little darting fishes. Of course, Sam falls into one in his clothes, and comes out looking like a drowned rat. Akela wrings him out and sends him home to get into dry clothes, for the sun is beginning to sink.

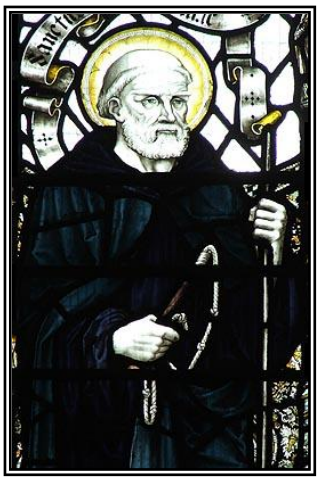
Supper, night prayers, a race down the hill, a few minutes, to see the little twinkling lights, and the happy family is getting undressed in double quick time, for Akela has promised a good story to-night—a "nexiting" one about a robber chief.

Soon everyone in the coach-house is settled on his palliasse, and has invited a Stable Cub to share it with him. The candle has been lighted and stuck with a dab of grease on the ledge.

"Fire ahead, miss," commands a Sixer. Silence reigns.

"The story I told you yesterday," said Akela, "was about a boy who started good, and went on being good all his life. To-night I am going to tell you about a boy who started good, but became bad, and was very wicked until he grew up, when something happened which sent him on the great adventure of serving God."

THE STORY OF SAINT GUTHLAC



Many hundreds of years ago, in the days when England was ruled over by the Saxon Kings, there lived a boy called Guthlac. He was a very intelligent boy, not dull, like some children; he was obedient to the grown-ups, and, as the old book says, "blithe in countenance, pure and clean and innocent in his ways; and in him was the lustre of Divine brightness so shining that all men who saw him could perceive the promise of what should hereafter happen to him."

But when he got to be about fifteen he forgot all the things he had been taught as a child. When he felt a kind of restless longing for adventure rising up inside him, and a desire to do wild things, and a cruel feeling that he did not care what happened to other people so long as he had a good time, he gave in to himself and began the most wild and reckless life you can imagine. He armed himself with a great ash-bow and a sharp spear from his father's armoury. He slung a shield on his back, and stuck his belt full of knives and daggers and arrows. Then he went about and collected a gang of all the wildest boys he could find, and put himself at their head. Then, going through all the country round, these wild boys attacked anybody they thought was an enemy of theirs, paid off old grudges, killed and wounded innocent people, set fire to their houses, and did all the damage they could. Mad with excitement and lust for blood, they soon became just a robber band, attacking friend and foe alike, killing just for the pleasure of killing, or sacking farms and houses to satisfy their greed. They knew all the woods and by-ways so well that no one could catch them. After a time they began to build themselves huts where they could sleep, and also hide the treasure they had plundered from rich men. You can't imagine any wicked or horrible thing they did not do. And, of course, they forgot God entirely, though once they had been Christian children and had been brought up to know and love God. Nine years passed like this, and then something happened.

One night as Guthlac, the chief, lay on his bed of rushes and soft, warm skins in the darkness of the wooden cabin, thinking over the excitements of the day and planning all the wicked things he would do the next day, a wonderful thought flashed into his mind, and it seemed to swallow up all the other thoughts. He lay still, gazing into the darkness and trying to understand what it was. Then, gradually, he found that it was God he was thinking about—God, Whom he had forgotten for nine long years.

He did not turn away his mind, but went on thinking about God until his heart was full of a kind of glow that was love. He was surprised, for he knew he did not really love God; for he was spending all his days fighting against Him by every wicked thing he could imagine. And then he began to understand that this feeling inside him was sent by God—it was God's love for him, and not his love for God. Could it really be that God loved him? He was so very wicked and cruel, and God—God was so good and just and merciful.

The robbers, sleeping on their rush beds, breathed heavily; they were tired after a hard day. Guthlac listened to their breathing. They were his men; they obeyed him as their chief. He remembered the day, nine years ago, when he had thought of the bold robbers and sea-kings and brave men of the past, and longed to show that he was as daring as they, and could lead men to war. But as he lay, very wide awake, with the strange feeling of God near, he began to think of other great men he had heard of in

his childhood—men just as brave and daring as the sea-kings, just as good leaders of men, more famous and wonderful, and—lovers of God.

God loved them, and they loved God and gave all their strength and courage to serve Him. They were His special friends. And now it seemed to Guthlac that God was filling his heart with love and asking him to be His special friend. A great feeling of shame came over him. How could God forgive him and want him for a friend after all the terrible things he had done? But suddenly a great longing filled him to be one of God's special friends, and obey Him, and go on always loving Him. He longed for Christ to become his Chief and Leader; and then he began to understand that this would mean he must tell God from the bottom of his heart that he was sorry for all the wicked things he had ever done, and must promise on his honour that he would never again do a single one of them.

Guthlac sat up in bed and thought hard. This would mean that he must give up being a robber, give up his free life in the woods, give up leading his daring followers, give up all the unlawful pleasures of which his life was made up. It would be a terribly big giving up . . . but then, what a big, big thing he would get in exchange! He would get the friendship of God, and the knowledge that he had become very pleasing to Him. Stretching wide his arms in the darkness, he told God that he gave up all, all, all that was wicked, and he begged to be forgiven and made clean once more, like an innocent little child. Then, very happy, he lay back on his bed of skins and fell asleep. The sun was streaming into the long, low room when Guthlac awoke. It was a glorious English spring morning. The sleeping robbers were stirring, one by one, beneath their warm deer-skins. They little thought that their chief, sitting up in bed with the morning sun in his eyes, was thinking about God, and how wonderful it was that He had come to him in the night and called him to become one of His friends. It was rather difficult to believe, in the light of day, with the coarse laughter and wild voices of the robbers ringing out on the morning air, and yet Guthlac knew it was true, and knew that he had made a great promise. He was too brave a man to go back on a promise, however hard to keep, so he stood up with a strong purpose in his heart.

The first step would be to tell his men. That would be terribly hard. He suddenly felt very lonely, and wished there was someone else there to back him up. Then he remembered that the Lord Christ was his Chief. Surely He would be near and help him in his first adventure?

So he stepped out into the dewy woods, where all the birds were singing as if they, too, loved God with all their hearts. And he called his men about him to hear the important thing he had to say. They all came crowding round, expecting to hear some splendid new adventure that Guthlac, their chief, had planned for them.

Then he stood up, taller than any of them and more splendid, and in his clear, ringing voice he told them that a wonderful thing had happened—God had called him to join the band of His brave friends. When God calls there's no hanging back. And so he had given up for ever the robber's life. He was no longer their chief. He had found a new Chief for himself, and was off, at once, on the adventure of God's service. And so he bade them—good-bye.

The robbers looked at each other in horror and surprise. What had happened to their chief? Was he mad? What would happen to them without their brave leader? Falling down on their knees about him, they begged him to stay; but Guthlac's eyes were already looking away at the new adventure he saw before him. The pleasures of his

old life did not seem worth anything now; he scarcely heard the voices of his friends as they pleaded with him.

At last they gave up all hope of persuading him, and Guthlac walked away through the woods, leaving his old life behind him for ever.

He did not know where to go at first, but he felt sure Christ, his new Chief, would help him; and, sure enough, he presently remembered that not very far away there was an abbey of St. Benedict's monks. He knew those men were all Christ's friends, and he was quite sure they would welcome him.

So he walked through the woods until he came to the abbey. There he knocked loudly on the great door, and presently a brother opened it. He must have been terrified when he saw the tall young chieftain standing before him, for all the countryside feared Guthlac. But very soon the brother saw the love of God shining in Guthlac's eyes, and the gentle humility in his voice showed that he was no longer the cruel robber, but a servant of Christ.

The monks took Guthlac in and made him welcome. Soon he found that conquering himself and the Devil was a harder fight than he had ever fought against his enemies in the world, but he threw himself into the battle with all his heart. He did not do things by halves, but began to serve God with all his might, because before he had fought so hard against Him. Remembering how often he had got drunk with the wine he had stolen, he now would not drink one single drop even of the wine the monks were allowed to have. At first the brothers did not like this, but soon they began to understand the strong resolve of the young robber, and, seeing how very pure his heart was and how much he loved God, they all loved him. The curious old book which tells all about him says: "He was in figure tall, and pure in body, cheerful in mood, and in countenance handsome; he was modest in his discourse, and he was patient and humble, and ever in his heart was Divine love hot and burning."

For two years he lived in that monastery, and then he began to long to live a harder life for Christ's sake. He heard about the hermits of old days who used to live apart from other men in wild places, and he got leave from the Abbot to follow their example. So one day he set out.

He did not choose the beautiful green woods that he had once roamed in, but turned towards a most horrible place—a great marsh full of pools of slimy black water, and reeds, and rough scrub and bushes. It was the most lonely place you can imagine, and people feared to go there because they said it was haunted by evil spirits.

On an island in this lonely fen St. Guthlac settled down with two servants. It was a very hard life, and the Devil sent him all sorts of horrible temptations and haunted him and gave him no rest; but St. Guthlac rejoiced in the chance of fighting under his Captain, Christ, against the evil spirits.

It would take too long now to tell you of all the wonderful things that happened to St. Guthlac on this island—we must keep them for another time. For God rewarded his love and his courage by giving him a wonderful gift of miracles and of great wisdom, so that the news of him gradually spread all over the country, and people began to understand that the great robber had now become a great Saint. And so from far and near, the people flocked to him. But one thing more about him I will tell you.

Though he had now no human companions, and chose to set all his love on God, he had a wonderful friendship with the wild animals that shared the island with him. In

those days there were many wild beasts in England, such as wolves. These would come to St. Guthlac and eat out of his hand. Even the fishes would come to him; and as to the birds, they did not fear him at all. The swallows, which are very timid birds, would come and settle all about on him, and there were some ravens which were a trouble because they were so tame and would come and steal things from his house. Once a holy man called Wilfrith, who had come to see St. Guthlac, was surprised to see the swallows settle on him, and (as the old book says) asked him "wherefore the wild birds of the waste sat so submissively upon him." St. Guthlac explained to him in these words: "Hast thou never learnt, Brother Wilfrith, in Holy Writ, that he who hath led his life after God's will, the wild beasts and wild birds have become the more intimate with him? And the man who would pass his life apart from worldly men, to him the angels approach nearer."

So it was that the wild place called Croyland became a place of God, and St. Guthlac, through God's power, was able to do more good to his fellow-men than ever he had done them harm in his wild days. But though St. Guthlac was doing miracles as wonderful as those of the Old Testament prophets, and preaching in his wilderness as wonderfully as St. John the Baptist did in his, God did not mean to leave him there very long, for He wished to have His brave and true friend in heaven. After fifteen years St. Guthlac, who was still almost a young man, fell ill. Knowing that God was calling him to Heaven, he gladly began to prepare. His illness lasted only seven days, and he himself knew that he would die on the eighth. But he had nothing to fear, for he had so truly repented of his sins that night when God spoke to him first that they had been all washed away. So he lay in his little house waiting. And when one of his faithful servants, who was some way off, at his prayers, chanced to look up, he saw the house with a kind of bright cloud of glory round it. And this brightness stayed there till day broke. And at dawn St. Guthlac called his servant and gave him last messages for his friends. "And after that," says the old book, "he raised his eyes to heaven and stretched out his arms, and then sent forth his spirit with joy and bliss to the eternal happiness of the heavenly kingdom."

"That was a good one," said the Cubs. But they were too sleepy to ask for another story, as usual, and in less than five minutes every one was asleep, sailing away through the dream-sea towards the golden, sunlit country called "To-morrow."

THE THIRD DAY

Seven o'clock and no one awake yet! Akela crept softly out and roused the cooks. Sam woke quickly, but Bill was just like a hermit crab—the more you poked him, the more he drew back into his shell and hid his head under his blanket. Presently, however, he began to uncurl, opened his eyes very wide, sat up, and discovered it was not his mother calling him, but that he was at camp. He got up quickly, and was the first ready.

Gradually they all woke up, but no one was in such a hurry to turn out this morning.

They put on uniform and boots and stockings, for it was not to be a shore day.

Breakfast over, haversacks were packed with grub, and the whole party tramped off along the sea-wall to Ryde. The first thing that happened was a beautiful service in a very beautiful little church, for on this day (August 15th) the Pack always goes to church. Then five of the younger ones who didn't fancy a long tramp went home with Father and Mother, and the rest set off on an adventure.

Along the roads and lanes they went, but the way did not seem long, for they talked of so many interesting things. After about two miles, as they were going along a narrow lane, they suddenly came on a man sitting on the bank, who stood up and said, "Hullo!" The Cubs gave a yell and fell upon him, for, you see, he was their Scoutmaster.

He led the way past an old ruin, under a ruined archway, and along a little path, till they got to a great building called Quarr Abbey **{see picture left}**, where he was staying. There, under the shade of the trees, the weary travellers sat and had an enormous lunch. Three big jugs of cider had been provided for them. It was the first time they had ever tasted cider, and Akela began to be afraid they would never be able to walk home straight if they drank any more; so it was decided to pour the remainder into the water-bottles, and take it back for the five boys in camp.

After dinner the Scoutmaster took the Cubs for a row in the creek, and afterwards they bathed. Then they had a good tea, and were allowed to see over the abbey and go down in the crypt under the church. It interested them very much to see a wonderful library of eighty thousand books! Some were hundreds and hundreds of years old, and all done in writing and painting, because there was no printing in those days. Some were books done in the very first days of printing. There was one enormous book you could hardly carry, and by it a tiny wee little book you could put in your waistcoat-pocket.

At last it was time to go home, and they set out once more to tramp along the lanes. The evening sun shone down through the thick green leaves, and the blackbirds sang as if they were saying all sorts of important things to each other, if only you could understand. The grey, broken arches of the ruined abbey seemed to tell sad tales of long ago—seemed full of secrets nobody will ever hear.

"It's been a good adventure," said the Cubs, and they tramped home contentedly, for their minds were full of things to think about.

Even at the end of a four-mile tramp they were ready to run up the grassy hill into the camp, each keen to be the first one to tell Father and Mother about the eighty thousand books, and the ruin, and the cider, and the crypt. The five Cubs enjoyed the cider, and everyone talked at the same time round the camp-fire that night, all telling different things.

"Story to-night, miss?" said a Cub, suddenly.

"Yes," said Akela. "Good one?"

"Yes—a very good one about a soldier-Saint."

"Hooray! Buck up, boys, and let's get down to the Stable for the story," cried the Cub, cramming the last bit of bread-and-cheese into his mouth.

The trampers were quite ready to lie down on their beds that night.

"It's been the best day we've had yet," they said; "and now, please, tell the story."

So Akela curled up on someone's palliasse, and silence fell.

THE STORY OF SAINT MARTIN

A little more than three hundred years after Our Lord formed the Christian Church and then went back to Heaven, having promised always to be in spirit with His people, a boy called Martin was born in Hungary. This boy God chose to be a very great leader among His people, the Christians, and so He began to arrange Martin's life in such a way that he should be led, little by little, to the fulfilment of God's plans. Now, part of God's plan was that Martin should be given the chance of conquering himself, and, with the addition of a lot of God's grace, be made strong and able to bear bravely the terrible dangers and hardships that were bound to go with a high position in the Church of Christ in those days of persecution. This story I am going to tell you is the story of all the hard things and disappointments and adventures God sent to the boy Martin, in order to prepare him well, and bring him, at last, to the position he was to fill in the Church.

Well, the first thing that happened was that the Holy Spirit put into the little boy's heart the idea of praying to a wonderful, unknown being, Whom he called "the God of the Christians." You see, his father was a pagan, and Martin had never been taught anything about God, and must have picked up this idea all on his own. He had no church to go to, or anything, so he set to and built himself a little chapel on the top of a hill near his home, and there he often ran off and prayed to the God he knew so little about, but Who, he felt sure, was a kind and loving friend of little boys.

Well, God was pleased to see that Martin had answered so well to the idea He had sent into his heart, so He rewarded him by making something happen, which was the next bit of His plan, so to speak.

Martin's father was a soldier, and had risen from the ranks to the position of Colonel in the Roman Army. To repay him for his good services he was given a farm in Italy. And so, when Martin was ten years old, his father and mother moved to this farm, and Martin found himself living in a country where the Christian Faith was openly practised and people loved and served "the God of the Christians," Whom Martin had so much longed to know more about.

You can imagine how pleased the boy was; and before long he had discovered the house of the priests who taught young pagans all about the Christian faith, and had begun to go to them regularly to learn. His father did not take much notice of this, and thought his small son would soon forget all about it when he got old enough to enter the life his father had decided he should follow—the exciting life of a soldier.

But Martin was not dreaming of battles and the adventures of a soldier's life, for he had discovered that among Christians there was such a thing as specially giving yourself to God, and bravely breaking away from all the things you love by nature—like riches and fine clothes, and nice food, and friends, and adventures in the world,

so as to love Christ only, and follow the adventures of the spirit to which He will lead His loyal soldiers. While still a boy Martin decided that this was the life for him, and he began to long to leave his comfortable home and go and join the hermits who lived in caves. So you can imagine that when his father began to talk about his starting his military training he was very much dismayed. Being a frank and honest kind of boy, he looked his father bravely in the face, and told him straight out that he wanted to be a Christian and give up his whole life to it.

Martin's father was very angry indeed. He stormed at the boy, and when he found that was no good, he thrashed him. But nothing could make Martin change his mind, and at last he decided the only way was to run away from home.

But I told you God meant Martin to become a leader. To have run away and lived with the hermits would not have given him just the kind of training he needed, and the chance of showing he could stick to God through real difficulties. So God let the next bit of His plan happen.

Martin's father told the Roman officials that his son had come to the age at which all boys had to undergo their military training (though he hadn't, really). And as Martin would not go and "join up," a kind of press-gang lay in ambush one day and captured him, and he was led away in chains and forced to take the oath of military allegiance.

His father being a Colonel, Martin was given a good position in the army straight off, and had his own horse and his own servant. Of course, nearly all his companions were pagans, and the life of the army was of a pretty low standard. But Martin stuck faithfully to the kind of life he knew was pleasing to God, and tried in his dealings with his fellow-men to do things in the brave, kind, generous, unselfish way Christ would have done them. Of course, this made all the soldiers and his fellow-officers love him, and they must often have wondered why he never got angry, or cheated, or grumbled and swore at unpleasant things; and why he was so very kind to his servant, and always ready to give up his place or any little privilege to other people. Though no one knew it, even his pay he gave away to the poor. And yet he was not yet a baptized Christian, for in those days people used to wait a long time and prepare themselves very carefully for the great honour of being made one of the children of God; and during this time of waiting they were called catechumens.

It was at this time, while Martin's regiment was stationed in France, that a very wonderful thing happened to him—for God was still planning his life and giving him chances; and, if he took them, rewarding him with special graces which should turn him gradually into a brave "soldier of Jesus Christ."

One cold wintry day, as the wind whistled down the narrow streets of Amiens, Martin's troop came clattering through the old gateway, the soldiers wrapping their great military cloaks close round them, for the bitter French winter seemed to freeze their Southern blood. By the gate of the city they noticed, as they swung by, an old, ragged man. The wind fluttered his tattered rags about, and he stretched out his thin hands, all blue with cold, hoping for a few pence to buy himself some food. The soldiers, however, passed him by and gave him nothing. But when Martin reached the corner and saw the piteous sight his heart was touched, and he reined in his horse. He felt in his pockets, but, alas! they were empty, for he had given away all he had to some other poor person. He was very sad, because he always felt the poor were a kind of chance given him by God of showing his love for the Lord Christ, Who had said that if you served the poor and naked and hungry and unhappy you really served Him. Well, Martin felt he simply couldn't pass on and give the old man nothing. And suddenly the idea came to him that he was warm in his big cloak, and

the old man very cold. What if he gave his cloak? But it was his uniform, and he knew that he must not ride out without it altogether, so he took it off, drew his sword, slashed it in half, and then, bending down with a smile, put the warm folds about the old man's cowering shoulders.

Of course, the soldiers and other officers laughed; but Martin didn't care—he was willing to be what St. Paul calls "a fool for Christ's sake."

And now comes the wonderful thing. That night as Martin lay in bed, asleep; a wonderful vision came to him. Suddenly his room seemed full of angels, and in the midst of them was Christ. And—on His shoulders was Martin's half-cloak! Then Our Lord spoke. "Martin," He said, "dost thou know this mantle?" And then He turned to the angels, and He said: "Martin, yet a catechumen, hath clothed me with this garment."

You can imagine what St. Martin felt! But besides the joy in him, there was a feeling that Our Lord was a little disappointed because he was only a catechumen still, and not yet baptized and made a real part of His Church, a real child of God. And so, feeling that God wished him to have the great honour of Baptism, he went to the priests, and started on the long, hard preparation that they used to have in those days. No meat might he have, nor wine, and he must pray a lot, and often watch in the church the whole night, and in many other ways practise not giving in to himself. Only at Easter and Whitsun were the catechumens baptized; and then they were clothed in white garments, which they wore for a week. These were meant to show the perfect purity of their souls, from which all stain of sin had been washed away by the waters of Baptism.

At last the great day came, and Martin received the wonderful Sacrament with great love and humility. But now he felt that he simply couldn't let his hands be stained with the blood of his fellow-men, and that the soldier's life was not for him. And so, when the Emperor came one day and inspected his regiment, which was shortly to go into battle, he asked him if he might leave the army. "Until now I have fought for you," he said; "let me henceforth fight for God. . . . I am a soldier of Christ, and it is not lawful for me to take part in a bloody battle." The Emperor was very angry. "Coward!" he cried. "It is not religion that causes you to refuse to fight—you are afraid."

So, to show them he was not afraid, Martin offered to go into battle in the very front rank, but to go unarmed (since he would not shed human blood). And, to show that he trusted in Christ as his protector, he said he would go without armour or helmet.

His challenge was accepted, and he was put under arrest, lest he might try to escape.

Of course, he spent the night praying, and the next day everyone was astonished by some strange news. The enemy had sent a despatch to sue for peace, and to say they would agree to the Emperor's terms. So there was no battle; and not only was Martin's life saved, but the lives of many other brave men. Probably the Emperor saw God's hand in the unexpected action of his powerful enemy, for he at once gave Martin leave to go free.

At last Martin found himself at liberty to follow the life he had always felt called to; and once again God sent him where things should happen to him which would finally lead to the accomplishment of God's great plan.

After making a pilgrimage to Rome, which was now not only the head of the worldwide Empire, but the kind of headquarters of the Christians, he returned to France, so as to put himself under the guidance of a very holy man, called St. Hilary, the Bishop of Poitiers.

St. Hilary soon saw that Martin was no ordinary young soldier, but was a very promising "soldier of Jesus Christ," and that his services would be very valuable. He saw, also, that he had received a special call from God, so he proposed to ordain him deacon. But Martin was very humble, and he refused the honour. In the end he let St. Hilary ordain him exorcist. But directly after this he was ordered by God in a dream to go back to his native land and visit his relations and bring them into the Christian Faith. St. Hilary was disappointed, but he let him go, making him promise, however, that he would return to the Diocese of Poitiers, to which he now belonged.

After many adventures, including falling into the hands of robbers and escaping in a marvellous way, which must have been through God's help, Martin reached his old home, and had the joy of seeing his mother received into the Church, as well as seven of his cousins and his two great-uncles.

At this time the Church was being persecuted by a very strong party called the Arians. They were heretics, who taught that Our Lord was only a man and not God, and as the Church turned them out on account of their false teaching, they did nothing but fight against her. Of course, Martin, the brave soldier of Christ, stood up for what he believed, so that one day he was seized by the Arians, beaten, and banished from his own country. He began to make his way back to St. Hilary, but when he reached Milan he learned that his friend had been banished from Poitiers, and that an Arian Bishop ruled in his place. So Martin stayed at Milan; and this, too, was a part of God's plan, because it was his stay here which started him on an idea which in the end developed into one of the most important things in his life.

This idea was to form a kind of little monastery outside the city, where he and a handful of other young men lived, and tried to do good and to live in a way specially pleasing to God, and more perfect than they could do in the busy rush of the ordinary world. But after a while the Arians got strong in Milan, and drove out Martin and his followers. For a while Martin and a friend of his lived as hermits on a wild little island off the coast of Spain. But, hearing that St. Hilary had been restored to his see, Martin went to Poitiers so as to fulfil his solemn promise. But once more St. Hilary was to be disappointed, for this time Martin begged to be allowed to continue his hermit's life. St. Hilary gave him leave, and Martin now withdrew to a forest about eight miles from Poitiers. Here he built himself a hut, and was soon surrounded by men who wished to lead the same kind of holy life. This was the beginning of all the wonderful monasteries of France, which civilized the whole country in time and taught it to be Christian.

That Martin's new life was really pleasing to God was soon shown, for God gave him the gift of doing miracles, and twice he even raised the dead to life. You will remember how Our Lord specially promised that His faithful followers, in the years to come, should do miracles like He had done, and even greater ones. Well, St. Martin was one of the men who showed that Our Lord's promise was fulfilled. All the men to whom the Church has given the title "Saint" have done wonderful miracles that God's name might be glorified and people see that "with God all things are possible." St. Martin now lived in very close communion with God, and his miracles showed that he was not just an ordinary good man.

Besides training his monks, St. Martin was working very hard among the heathen Gauls. He would press forward through the forests and preach in the little villages, and do miracles, and, after instructing the people in the true Faith, baptize them all, and leave a happy Christian village where he had found a miserable, frightened, heathen one.

St. Martin's tender pity for all suffering things is shown by this little story. One day, as he walked in the country, he saw a poor, terrified hare dashing along with starting eyes, and nearly exhausted, for a party of huntsmen and their hounds were close upon it. St. Martin saw that in a few minutes it must be torn to bits by the hounds, for there was no cover for it. His tender heart longed to help it to escape, because it was weak and small and frightened. So he called out to the hounds to stop! And, strange to say, they pulled up short in their mad rush, and all stood still as if frozen to the ground, and the poor little hare scurried away into safety.

Now, this kind of life was just what suited St. Martin, and he was very happy. He lived apart with God, and yet had work to do in training his monks in the way of perfection and teaching the Faith to the ignorant pagans. But he had not yet arrived at the end of God's great plan for him. And if God now called him away from the life he loved to a life he did not want at all, we must not be surprised, for Christ said that those who would be His disciples must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Him, and that is what all good Christians must be ready to do—that is, live according to the way God wants instead of according to the way they want themselves.

Well, the change came when St. Hilary died; for of course the people wanted St. Martin to become Bishop in his place. To be Bishop was a very great honour, and one that many men would have been glad to accept. But St. Martin was humble, like all Saints; and he also felt that if he was to remain pure of heart and close to God he must live in the quiet solitude and silence of his monastery, so he refused to become Bishop. But that he should be Bishop was God's will, and also the people were quite determined to have him. They got him by making him think there was a poor sick woman who wanted him to come to her. He came out of his monastery, all unsuspecting, and the people carried him off by force to Poitiers, and he had to consent to be consecrated Bishop.

He did not look very like a Bishop as he was brought into the city. He was clad in a poor, thin old habit, and his head was closely shaved, as the monks were accustomed to do, and he was thin and pale with fasting and his hard life. But even his humble appearance made the people cheer him all the more; and the church was absolutely packed at the solemn service of his consecration as Bishop.

Now began a life in which his own will was altogether given up to that of God. He lived in a poor little hut adjoining the church—the poorness of it pleased him; but all day he was at it, doing things for people—now visiting a sick man to pray over him, now making peace between quarrelsome people, now blessing oils, that they might bring healing to the sick; preaching sermons, talking to people, and explaining Holy Scripture in the way he could do so wonderfully; visiting his priests, or listening to the worries and troubles they came to tell him; and when there was nothing else, there was always a crowd of people waiting just to see their beloved Bishop's holy face and go away cheered with a patient smile from him.

But just sometimes he slipped away for a little peace alone with God, at a beautiful monastery called Marmontier, which he formed near the city, and which later became very famous, and kept the Rule of St. Benedict I told you about before.

There were many things that were serious worries and very bitter sorrows and trials to St. Martin at this time, but I can't tell you all about these now. But there were also joys; and one of these I will tell you about, because it was the companionship of a little boy. He was nearly ten when St. Martin baptized him and then adopted him. As they travelled together soon after the boy's Baptism, and while he still had on the beautiful white robe I told you about, which showed outwardly the new purity of his soul, they came to the River Loire. A little way ahead of them they saw a poor blind beggar waiting for someone to help him across.

"Son," said St. Martin to the boy, Victorius, "go to that man; wash his face and eyes with water from the river; then bring him to me."

So the boy went and did as St. Martin had told him; and as soon as he had washed the poor man's eyes, the man opened them and found he could see! With joy he looked about at the blue sky and the river; and when he heard that it was the holy Bishop who had sent the white-robed boy to him, he praised God for what had happened, and ran and fell down at St. Martin's feet. The poor beggar was very excited about it all, and didn't know how to thank St. Martin and the boy. So St. Martin said:

"Calm thyself, cease talking, and come; for with me in this boat thou shalt cross the river."

So the beggar stayed with them three days, and Victorius was allowed to look after him, and, as the old book says, "Eagerly brought him everything to eat that he liked best."

Victorius stayed always with St. Martin, and went about everywhere with him, scarcely ever leaving his side. Even to the church he would go with him for the night offices; or on his tours visiting the churches or preaching to the heathen. St. Martin taught Victorius, and in return the boy waited on him; also, I think, he must have cheered up the old Bishop, and often made him feel a boy again. But don't you think Victorius was a very lucky boy? He saw a great many wonderful miracles of the Saint, and was even allowed to have a hand in the doing of some of them, as in the case of the blind beggar. When Victorius was old enough, St. Martin made him a priest, and himself cut off the young man's hair in the way priests used to have it cut.

There are a great many more wonderful stories about St. Martin which I haven't time to tell you now; but gradually, gradually he was establishing the Christian Faith very firmly in France. God's great plan was being fully worked out, for, you see, St. Martin had never resisted God's will in any point; always he had done just what he felt God was gently leading him to do, never mind what it cost him at the time. And so he took each step that God arranged for him, and each one led on to the next, and all led on to the wonderful life of building up the Church of Christ, and making it bigger, stronger, purer, more healthy; and the great work, too, of turning a heathen land into a powerful Christian country.

SAINT MARTIN, VICTORIUS AND THE BLIND BEGGAR.

At last came the day when the tired old Bishop felt, with unspeakable joy, that he was to go and receive his reward at the hands of Christ, Whom he had loved so faithfully and so long, and was to enter into his rest.

One day, after a long journey, St. Martin was thinking of returning to his beloved Marmontier, when a great weakness came over him.

"The moment of my deliverance is at hand," he said.

His monks and other faithful companions were nearly broken-hearted.

"Oh, Father, will you then leave us?" they cried. "Ravening wolves will fall on your flock, and who will protect it when the shepherd is struck? We know your longing to depart and to be with Christ, but your reward is assured and will be greater by delay. Have pity on us who must remain."

So St. Martin prayed a beautiful prayer, because he loved his children more than himself, and he was even willing to put off his reward and his longed-for rest for love of them.

"Lord," he said, "if indeed I still be necessary to Thy people, I refuse not the labour. Let only Thy will be done."

But it was not Our Lord's will that His faithful soldier should fight any longer. Christ was waiting for him, all ready to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

And so, lying humbly upon a bed of sackcloth, St. Martin, Apostle of France, finished the work that God had given him to do, and passed into the glory and eternal rest of the Blessed.

THE FOURTH DAY

A gorgeous day of steady, hot sun that made the sea sparkle like a million diamonds scattered on a great stretch of blue, blue satin. The tide was very far out, leaving a golden stretch of sand that simply asked to be tunnelled into and dug into holes and trenches and castles. The Cubs all got into their bathing-costumes (the Cubs' "costumes" were mostly bare Cub!), and spent the whole morning burrowing like moles into the sand, and getting cool in the sea when they felt like it. Akela tried to write something "very important," but the Cubs didn't seem to think it nearly as important as Akela did, and not much writing got done.

After dinner and rest, when the tide had come up, like a great green monster swallowing up the shore, and clutching with foamy fingers at the rocks, Akela hired a boat and took half the Cubs at a time for a row, while the other half ran along the shore ready to scramble in, when their turn came.

The wind had got up, and out to sea there were no end of "white horses" shaking their manes and galloping after each other. Do you know what "white horses" are? They are the white crests of the waves that break out all over the sea on windy days.

Some of the "white horses" came galloping close in to shore, and the Cubs had a very exciting time landing to give the others a turn. This is how they did it. One large Cub rolled up his shorts as far as they would go, and stood ready in the bow. Akela then turned the boat shorewards suddenly, and pulled at the oars for dear life, and all the Cubs helped by cheering. "Crash—scrunch," the boat went ashore; the Cub in the bow leapt out, and held her nose steady while everyone else scrambled out. A few "white horses" jumped over the stern and made things a bit wet, but nobody minded. In scrambled the next boatful of Cubs, and, with a good shove, the boat was out again.

A very little make-believe and you were lifeboat-men landing survivors from a wreck.

There was to be a long and very exciting story to-night, so the Cubs bustled down to the Stable extra early, and were undressed before you could say "Jack Robinson." In fact, Terry began to undress in the street, and was out in the Stable-yard in his night-shirt before Akela and the last Cub had got through the gate.

"Tell us a long, long, long one," begged the Cubs; "we aren't a bit sleepy. Let it last till midnight."

"I'll tell as long as the candle lasts," said Akela, sticking a stump of candle on the ledge.

The Cubs curled up, and the candle-light fell in a golden flicker on their ruddy, sunburnt faces. Fifteen pairs of eyes were fixed on Akela. You couldn't hear a straw rustle. Only the faint "Swish-sh-sh—Sha-a-a-ah" of the "white horses" breaking on the shore broke the stillness.

"Now we are going back, back, back into a thousand years ago," began Akela, and the Cubs gave a wriggle of satisfaction, and prepared to take that mighty journey with the greatest ease.

THE STORY OF SAINT EDMUND, KING AND MARTYR

Now we are going back, back, back into a thousand years ago, and more. We shall stay in England, but it is a strange, wild England, covered with deep, mysterious green forests, where speckled deer roam about, and on moonlight nights you can hear the wolves howling. The Englishmen of these days are nearly as fierce as the wolves. If you met one coming down a forest path I believe you'd be a bit afraid of him, with his fierce eyes and shaggy head of hair, his round shield and sharp spear. A good many of these Englishmen are still heathens. But St. Benedict's monks have been hard at work for the last few hundred years turning the wild country into the beautiful England we know, and the fierce, cruel Saxons into brave Christian knights, with kindly, noble hearts as well as fearless spirits.

Well, in a part of the country called East Anglia there lived an old King called Offa. He was a Christian, and descended from a line of brave and noble Kings called the Uffings. Poor old Offa was very sad, because he felt he was getting old, and he

thought that when he died the royal line of Uffings would end, for he had no son to succeed him.

As a matter of fact he had got a son, but many years before God had called this boy to give up all thoughts of worldly glory and become a holy hermit, giving up his life to prayer. When God calls a man to serve Him and Him alone, He does not let the world suffer by his loss. God had a plan of His own for replacing Offa's hermit son by one of the most glorious Kings that ever reigned in England, and it is the wonderful story of how he was found, and of his thrilling adventures as the young King of East Anglia, that I'm going to tell you to-night.

Well, something—perhaps it was a whisper from the Holy Spirit—made old King Offa feel that if he prayed very hard he might in some wonderful way obtain an heir to his throne.

In those days, when people wanted to pray very hard and show God they really wanted a thing, and really believed He would give it them, they used to do what was called "going on a pilgrimage." It was like doing instead of only saying a great prayer, for the whole, long, dangerous journey was one act of faith and devotion or of thanksgiving.

So old Offa set out on a pilgrimage to the very best place you could pilgrimage to—the land where Our Blessed Lord lived and died, where there are still the very same rocky paths His Blessed Feet touched, the same mountains and lakes His Eyes rested on, the very hill where His Precious Blood poured down from the Cross, dyeing the grass and the little white daisies red. Somehow the King felt that if he could go and pray where Our Lord had prayed he would get some wonderful answer. So he started off, crossed the blue sea and landed on the opposite coast. Now, God is so ready to grant the prayers of people who have so much love and faith that He sometimes answers almost before they have asked. That's what happened with the old King. His way lay through Saxony, the kingdom of his cousin Acmund. One day he rode up with his men-at-arms to the Court, and decided to spend a few days there. Acmund, of course, welcomed his cousin, and received him joyfully to the palace.

Well, as King Offa sat resting on one of the low couches covered with the skins of wild beasts that Acmund had killed in the chase, there was a light footfall outside the chamber, the heavy curtain was drawn back from the doorway, and there stood before him a tall, slim boy of thirteen, with fair hair, truthful blue eyes, and a face tanned with the sun and wind of his open-air life. Something seemed to jump up in the old King's sad heart. Oh, if only that noble boy were his son, his heir! He was a true Uffing. What a King he would make for East Anglia!

In the next few days Offa and the King's son, Edmund, became great friends. Edmund took upon himself the job of looking after his old cousin, and seeing that he had all he needed and enjoyed his visit at the Court. And Offa watched Edmund with a feeling of love and interest such as he would have had for his own son. He saw that the boy was brave and clever, a good shot with his bow, able to throw a spear straight and ride a horse. He saw that he was loved by all, and always ready to do good turns and put the wishes of others before his own. But he saw something that pleased him more—that Edmund was a true, loyal Christian. In all the excitement of the chase and the gaiety of the Court, his first thought was of God—to serve Him and please Him, to keep from all sin for His sake.

The more Offa saw of Edmund, the more sure he felt that God had led him to this Court that he might find his heir. Still, though it seemed as if his request was already granted, he did not give up his pilgrimage, but decided to press on, if only as an act of thanksgiving to God.

Before starting once more on his way, the King called Edmund aside. Taking a gold ring from his finger, he put it on Edmund's hand, and told him that if it were God's will this might some day mean great things for him. Then he said good-bye, and rode away towards the East.

Young Edmund must often have wondered what it was that God held in store for him, and as he looked at the gold ring on his finger I feel sure he used to promise God that whatever it was he would do his best to fulfil His Holy Will.

Well, old Offa reached Palestine all right. His heart thrilled with joy and love as he saw the very village where Jesus was born, and where the shepherds came that early Christmas morning to adore the little new-born King. He remembered the three Kings of the East, who came plodding along on their camels, bearing gifts for Mary's little Son.

Then he went on to Mount Calvary, and the tears ran down his old face as he saw the hill where Our Blessed Lord suffered such agony, with such glorious courage, for our sakes. He prayed and gave thanks, and then, with a confident heart, left all the future in God's Hands and started homewards.

But he had not got very far before he fell ill, and soon his men saw that he was dying. Calling them about him, he told them that it was God's will that young Edmund, Acmund's son, should be their King. Taking from his finger the signet-ring that had been placed upon it by the Bishop at his coronation; he commanded that when he was dead it should be carried as quickly as possible to the boy. Then, heaving a last sigh of peace and gratitude, he closed his eyes on the world, and his faithful soul went to God.

THE COMING OF SAINT EDMUND

Now we will go back to England. The people have heard of the death of their King, and they are not at all sure that they want a strange young Prince from Saxony to come and rule over them. They have collected in a great crowd on the shore, for the galleys from across the sea have come in sight, bearing down before the wind.

The ships draw every moment nearer, and the people wait. As long as most of them can remember they have been ruled over by King Offa; and for many generations their Kings have been Uffings—tall, fair, blue-eyed men, with noble, fearless hearts. What will this strange boy be like?

And on the ship young Edmund pushed his way forward to the prow. He could see the green, tree-covered cliffs of his new kingdom, and the crowd of people on the shore. His heart beat fast, and he fingered the ring old Offa had put on his hand. Oh, if only these people knew that he came to them ready to do his best to be to them a good King—to do his best for them, for the love of God!

Splash, splash!—the big anchors go overboard and the chains rattle as they run out over the bows. Soon Edmund and his men are in small boats, being rowed swiftly to the shore. Edmund's boat is the foremost and he himself stands up on the prow, ready to leap ashore. As the men of England look at him they see that he is no

stranger, but one of themselves, a true Uffing, and then and there a sense of loyalty springs up in their rough hearts.

The nose of the boat grates on the shore. With a leap Edmund has cleared the water, and is standing on the land of which he is to be King. His first act is to fall on his knees and ask God's blessing on himself and his people. His short prayer ended, he gets up and turns to greet his new friends; but to his surprise they are all falling on their knees, murmuring to one another, "A miracle, a miracle!" For a spring of clear water has bubbled up where Edmund's knees touched the ground—a sign from Heaven that he is the true King, a symbol of the power of the Holy Ghost that will well up like a spring in his heart.

THE CROWNING OF SAINT EDMUND

After a time of study and preparation under a holy man, called Bishop Humbert, who became a true father to the boy and his lifelong friend, the time of St. Edmund's coronation drew near. It took place on Christmas Day, and the old books tell us of the gorgeous procession and the wonderful service. St. Edmund had to make a solemn promise of loyalty to God and his people, and after being anointed with holy oil he was clothed in certain royal garments by the Bishop, while a thane stepped forward and put sandals on his feet, a purple cloak was put upon his shoulders, and in his hand a sceptre of mercy and an iron rod of justice. After that a naked sword was presented to him, and a helmet put on his head. Then, laying aside all these, St. Edmund stepped forward, and standing before the altar declared solemnly that by the grace of God he would fulfil all the duties of a good King. The Bishop placed the crown upon his head, saying, "Live the King for ever," and the people all cried, "Amen, amen, amen."

After that there was a solemn service of praise and thanksgiving to God, and the new King received Holy Communion. You can imagine how happy it made the holy young King that this should be the very first act of his reign, and what confidence it gave him that Christ would stay with him through all the difficult years to come.

WAR

For a long time there was peace in St. Edmund's kingdom, though the people in other parts of the country were suffering terribly from their enemies, the Danes, who came over in wild hordes from the North in their low, black-sailed boats, and, landing on the coast, went through the country burning and plundering and killing.

St. Edmund knew they would sooner or later invade his kingdom too. So he set to work to prepare for them. His chief way of doing this was to win the loyalty of all his subjects, so that if there was war he knew they would all rally round him. He made wise laws, and he was so fair to all, and so ready to listen to the poor and oppressed and help them, that soon everyone in the kingdom loved the young King and would do anything for him. They could see that God was with him, and they could not help feeling that in serving the humblest of his subjects he felt that it was Christ Himself that he served.

St. Edmund had, of course, prepared his army and had thrown up defences to try and keep the enemy out as long as possible. You can still see one of his great earthworks running from Newmarket to the Fen country. For hundreds of years it was called "Edmund's Dyke." He placed scouts and outposts all round his borders, and prepared in every way he could.

At last the day came when the country people came running into the towns in terror. They had seen along the borders huge, fierce men, with flashing eyes and long red hair and beards. Their leather tunics were stained dark with blood. Huge round shields were slung across their backs; they were armed with spears, bows, clubs, and knives, and they shouted to one another in a strange language.

St. Edmund's scouts came running in to say that the Danes were collecting in great crowds on the frontiers.

Soon they began creeping in at every point, burning houses and churches, and killing people, especially the Christians. Though it was an almost hopeless job, St. Edmund led his brave army forward, and whenever it was possible he engaged the enemy in battles and drove them out. The Danes had never before been so powerfully resisted, and thousands of them were killed. There's not time now to tell you all of the thrilling adventures St. Edmund had at this time, and of his wonderful escapes from the Danes. Anyhow, the Danes were so much weakened that they asked for peace, and after spending the winter in a great camp at Thetford, they sailed away, full of rage and hatred and desire for revenge.

A COWARDLY PLOT

For a time there was peace, and then a sad thing happened.

One stormy day when the waves dashed and foamed up the shingly beach, and the sea and sky were a leaden grey, the fisher-folk who lived down by the shore saw a small boat, with tattered sails and broken mast, being driven before the wind. There seemed to be a man in it, but he was evidently weak and exhausted, and was doing nothing to help himself. Presently the boat was thrown up on the shore, and the fishermen ran down and collected in a little crowd round it. Looking down at the helpless man, still clinging to a spar and drenched with foam and sea-water, they soon saw he was not one of their people. "A Dane, a Dane!" they murmured with sullen hate. Then one who had served in St. Edmund's army suddenly gave a wild exclamation. "By Heaven," he said, "it's Lothparch!" Lothparch was the leader of the Danish army who had done such awful harm to East Anglia only a few years before. "Kill him!" growled one man. "Throw him back on the mercy of the sea!" hissed another. But the man who had fought under St. Edmund would have nothing of the kind. The King never allowed a helpless man, even a cruel enemy, to be killed. So Lothparch was carried up to the royal palace.

To the surprise of the fierce Angles, St. Edmund not only made the stranger welcome, but showed him every kindness. "Love your enemies," said Our Lord, and sure enough St. Edmund seemed truly to be obeying that command. Everything the King did seemed right to his loyal subjects; but there was one man—Berne, the King's huntsman—whose jealousy was so bitter at St. Edmund's showing favour to a Dane that he waited till he had an opportunity, and then he murdered Lothparch.

The King was very angry, of course; but he said that, though Berne deserved to die for the crime, he would give him a faint chance of escape; he should be put in an open boat, and pushed out to sea and left to the mercy of the waves.

After tossing for many days, Berne was washed up on a strange coast.

During those lonely days of tossing on the waves, instead of repenting of his crime, Berne's wicked heart had been full of hatred for the King. So when he heard that the land he had come to was Lothparch's own kingdom, and that his two sons, Inguar

and Hubba, were reigning in his place, a horrible idea came into his mind. Asking to be taken before the Princes, he made up and told them an awful lie, saying that when their father, Lothparch, had been washed up, helpless, on the coast of England, Edmund the King had caused him to be cruelly put to death.

Of course, this enraged Inguar and Hubba, and they at once collected a huge and fierce army, and set out once more for East Anglia.

A FIGHT TO THE DEATH

Landing in the North, and marching from York southward, the Danes plundered every city they passed through. They burned the monastery that had been built at Croyland (St. Guthlac's isle), and also those at Peterborough, Ramsey, Soham, and Ely. Meeting St. Edmund's army, they defeated it completely, killed the brave General who commanded it, and took Thetford by storm. Then they sent St. Edmund a message to say that he must give up half his kingdom and pay heavy taxes, or they would do the most terrible "frightfulness" throughout the land.

But St. Edmund and his men decided to make one great effort to keep their land in liberty and true to the Christian Faith. At the head of his gallant army, St. Edmund marched on Inguar's army, and a ghastly battle began.

Arrows flew thick; swords clashed on shields; great spears tore men open and left them to bleed to death. All day the battle raged, but at night the Danes fell back exhausted, and St. Edmund held the field, victorious. But as he stood in the moonlight and looked upon the scene his heart sank.

Before him stretched the great battlefield, its trampled grass all soaked in blood; and around him, silent for ever, lay his great army—an army of dead men. With a heavy heart he led back his little handful of tired and wounded soldiers to the camp.

The next day came terrible news. Hubba, with ten thousand men, had marched up and joined his brother.

THE MARTYR

It was hopeless to try and resist any more—the King knew it, and his people knew it, and they shuddered to think of their fate. Then a great idea came to the King.

It was he himself the Danes hated so. If only they had him in their power, perhaps they would leave his beloved country in peace! The more he thought of this, the more certain he felt that, by giving himself up, he could buy the peace and happiness and safety of his people. Christ, his Captain, had done this—He had not feared to face the most cruel death to save mankind, and St. Edmund's heart suddenly leapt with the thought that he would follow Christ and do the same!

At first his old friend the Bishop, St. Humbert, tried to hold him back. But after a while he saw that St. Edmund was quite resolved. He spoke of it with such courage and joy that the aged Bishop knew the Holy Spirit must be in his heart leading him to this glorious sacrifice of himself, this giving of his very life for his God and his friends, this quest for the martyr's crown. And so he gave him his blessing and bade him do as his brave heart prompted him. So, calling together his people, St. Edmund told them what he was going to do. You can imagine what they felt—how they begged him with tears not to do it. But nothing would make him change his mind—he knew it was God's Will.

Bravely he gave his last order to his men. It was that all the gates of the fortress should be thrown open, all the defences left unguarded, nothing done to stop the Danes entering it. Then he made his way to the chapel. Unbuckling his faithful sword, he laid it on the steps of the altar, and knelt down, with no protection save God's mercy.

The little chapel was very dim, and full of a holy feeling. All was still. It seemed to the young King as if he were far, far away from the rest of the world, from all the horror of bloodshed and crashing battle-axes that had filled the last few weeks like some horrible dream. He let his mind just rest on the thought of God and His love, and a wonderful peace came over him.

Near him knelt the old Bishop, and his heart was near to breaking, for he loved St. Edmund very much. The tears ran down his furrowed cheeks, and fell silently on the steps of the altar, but he spoke no word. Silently the moments passed, and then, suddenly, a sound broke the stillness that sent a cold shiver through St. Humbert. Wild shouts, coarse laughter, the clash and clatter of armed men rushing in wild triumph through the fortress. It was the King they were seeking. Where was he? They cared for nothing but to find him and wreak their revenge.

The shouts came nearer . . . the tramp of feet . . . the clang and scrape of spears against the wall. Nearer, nearer, until the chapel door burst open and a crowd of cruel faces peered in. Then a wild oath rang through the quiet of the chapel. They had found the King! Rushing in, they seized him and dragged him out.

"FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

In a field beyond the town the Danes tied St. Edmund to a tree. They were determined to have a full revenge. With long whips they began to scourge his naked body. Each lash was like the touch of a red-hot iron, and left a long, bleeding wound in the bare flesh. But St. Edmund only rejoiced that, at last, he could share truly what Christ had suffered from the Roman soldiers. No cry escaped him, except now and then the name of Jesus.

Then, throwing down their whips, the Danes took up their bows. The arrows fell thickly round St. Edmund, piercing him in every part, until, as the old book says, he was as covered with arrows as a porcupine with quills.

Inguar, the Danish Prince, looked on with a horrible smile of cruel enjoyment. Hearing the Holy Name break like a sob from the mouth of the martyr, he began to taunt him, telling him to give up his faith in Christ, since it had only brought him to this. But St. Edmund was "faithful unto death." Soon, soon he would receive the "crown of life," the welcome of the King of kings.

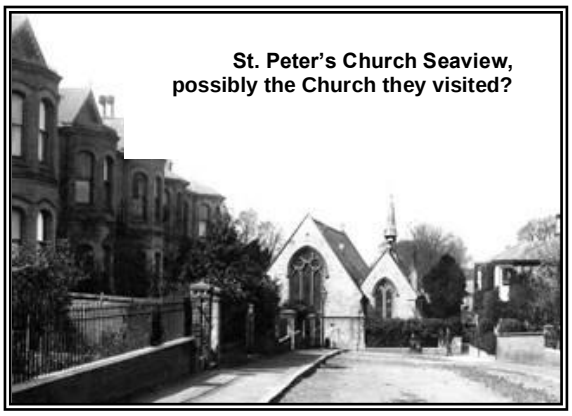
Seeing that nothing could make St. Edmund cry for mercy or give up his faith in God, Inguar drew his long sword, and, with a hoarse laugh of triumph, cut the martyr's head from his body.

Free and glorious the soul of King Edmund rose from his bloodstained body into the sunlight of heaven.

St. Edmund had not sacrificed himself in vain. The Danes, so greatly weakened by the bloody battles they had fought, gave up the idea of ruling East Anglia, and sailed away to their country, leaving St. Edmund's people in peace, and free to practise the Christian Faith.

THE FIFTH DAY (SUNDAY)

Everyone dressed quickly and quietly, found his Prayer-Book somewhere in the far depths of his kit-bag, and ran down to sit on the sea wall and wait for Akela and the last Cub or two (the ones whose boots had got lost, or who were so fussy about parting their hair, etc., that dressing took rather a long time).



St. Peter's Church Seaview, possibly the Church they visited?

Very reverently they went into church, and very quietly came out again and up to the field.

Breakfast, a run round the field to let off steam, and then down to the shore for a bathe.

In the afternoon every Cub got hold of a piece of paper and a pencil, and sat, lay, knelt, or squatted in some corner, his tongue well out and his brow furrowed with thought, to write home.

Some wrote very private letters, all on their own, and didn't give the show away even to ask how to spell the hardest words, like "library" (which might just as well be "lybary," or "librurry," or "lieberry"). Of course, library, in some form or other, came into all their letters, because they all wanted to tell about the adventure of going to Quarr Abbey. Some Cubs, sacrificing the privateness of their letters, decided that if Akela or Godmother did the writing, while they did the saying what, it would be much quicker, and much more could be told to "mother and all at home." So they brought their paper and pencils, and asked Akela to do it in "proper, quick writing." They told everything—even what they had had for dinner each day, and one said his bed at camp was much "comfortabler" than his bed at home.

After tea there was a little cricket practice and some tree-climbing, and then supper and, of course, night prayers. And then, feeling as if they had lived in camp all their lives, instead of only five days, the Cubs walked contentedly down the hill to bed.

Patsy, as usual, was having a free ride on Akela's back, and he was certainly quite a lot heavier than the first day.

Before long everyone was established in the Coach-house and the candle lighted.

"To-night," said Akela, "I'm going to tell you about a very Cubby Saint. I know he would have loved Cubs, because he loved small boys and wild animals; in fact, a certain wolf was a great friend of his; and he thought it worth while, once, to preach a beautiful sermon to a flock of birds. He was always laughing or singing or doing something Cubby, and he had ideas he used to teach his followers, very much like our Cub Law and Motto. His name was St. Francis of Assisi. Now listen, for I specially want you to make friends with St. Francis, because I love him very much."

THE STORY OF ST. FRANCIS—1

There was once a boy called Francis, who lived in a curious old town in the mountains of Italy. The town was called Assisi. It was all funny little up-and-down streets and flights of long, crooked stone steps; and there was a wall all round (to keep enemies out), and big gates in the wall that were closed at night. The purple hills and mountains spread away as far as you could see beneath a blue, blue sky, and all round the city there were vineyards, and lovely little rocky paths winding about among the silvery olive-trees.

Francis was the son of a rich merchant called Peter Bernardone. He was a regular Cubby boy—always laughing and singing, ready for mischief, but still more ready to do anyone a good turn. He was Peter Bernardone's only son, and he had a jolly good time of it, because his father had made up his mind that young Francis should make a success of life, and end by being a great man in the town. He used to smile to himself and rub his hands together as he saw what a clever, handsome boy Francis was growing up into, and how everybody loved him, and how he was always the ringleader in all the fun. As Francis grew to be a young man his father would encourage him to give lots of feasts to his friends, not minding how much they cost, and it pleased him to see that it was always Francis who was the life of these feasts, making jokes, leading cheerful singsongs, enjoying himself no end, and making everyone else enjoy themselves. But while Peter Bernardone chuckled to see young Francis so gay and popular, Francis' mother, Pica, used to notice little things that made her happy too, only in a different way. She noticed that Francis never really gave in to himself, like his wild friends; never overate himself in a greedy way or drank enough wine to make him drunk; never thought it funny to tell nasty stories or swear; and if ever God's name was mentioned, it seemed to make him serious for a moment. "One day," she said, "he will become a son of God." But her friends thought it a silly remark to make, for Francis seemed to be living just to please himself and have a jolly time. But mothers are generally right in what they prophesy about their sons, and Pica's remark was really a very true one. This story is all about how Francis gave up being a rich merchant's son and became a poor man who found all his joy and his riches in calling God his Father. The change did not come easily, and a great many wonderful adventures befell him, which I am going to tell you now.

It all began with a war between Assisi and another city. Of course, Francis and his pals joined in the fray and thought it great sport, till they got captured and carried off prisoners. It was not sport at all being shut up in stuffy old houses with only a little food and nothing to do. Francis used to cheer them up with troubadour songs and stories. But although he always seemed so cheerful, it was doing great harm to his health, and when, after a year, the prisoners were freed and returned to Assisi, Francis became very ill indeed. So ill was he that he came near dying, and this experience of nearly passing out into the next life made him begin to think seriously. When he was well enough to go out, walking slowly with a stick because of his weakness, he felt that life could never be quite the same; he must do something, take a man's place in the world.

Well, the chance soon came, for all the young Christian men were called out to fight in a Crusade. A certain nobleman of Assisi started getting up a party, and Francis decided to join him. He soon had all his kit—armour, a bright sword, a good horse,

and all complete; and with a gay heart, full of a thirst for adventure and a determination to do great things, he waited impatiently for the start. He had been rather puzzled as to what to do with himself, and now he felt he had hit on the right plan. So it was a bit of a surprise when, his very first night away, something happened which unsettled his mind altogether and made him feel it was not God's will that he should go to the Crusades.

The night before the party set out Francis had had a very curious dream, about a beautiful palace, all hung round with knightly arms, which a mysterious voice told him was for him and his followers. This made him so happy that the next day, when someone asked him what good fortune he had had, he replied that now he knew for certain he was to be a great prince and leader of men. But the next night, as he lay in the hostelry on the first halt along the road, something still more strange happened. He was not asleep, and yet, through the still darkness, he heard the mysterious voice of his dream, and it said: "Francis, whom is it better to serve, the lord or the servant?" "Surely it is better to serve the lord," replied Francis, softly, into the dark. And the voice answered: "Why, then, dost thou make a lord of the servant?" Then it all seemed to flash on Francis, and he felt sure this was a Voice from heaven, and he replied very humbly: "Lord, what dost Thou wish me to do?" And the Voice said: "Return to the land of thy birth, and there it will be told thee what thou shalt do; for it may behove thee to give another meaning to thy dream." He felt so positive that the Voice was from heaven, that he felt he simply could not disobey it. So, although it cost him a lot to do it, he turned his horse's head northwards and rode home.

There was nothing to do now but wait for God to show him His Will. He tried to settle down again to his old life of feasting and gaiety, but somehow he couldn't throw himself into it. There was something he was feeling after, but he didn't know what.

One day something happened which was the beginning of great things.

Francis had been out for a ride beyond the city. As he turned his horse's head homewards and rode slowly back towards the golden sunset, he suddenly saw, a little way ahead, something that made him shudder and almost turn aside on to another path. It was a poor leper, his filthy rags only half covering his wretched body, with its horrible running sores. His face was swollen and disfigured, and his eyes full of the frightened misery of a hunted animal. Now, seeing lepers always made Francis feel quite sick. He hated horrible sights. But somehow, to-night, a new feeling woke up in him—a sudden feeling of brotherhood with this poor man, almost of love for him. It was such terribly bad luck that he had caught leprosy and become a ghastly sight, so that he could not earn any money nor come near the town. Francis felt in his wallet for a silver piece to give him, and then he thought how sad it must be to have money flung at you by strangers, who passed by with head turned away because they loathed the very sight of you. How the lepers must long for just a friendly look, a smile! A great idea suddenly leapt up in Francis's mind, and it took all his courage not to give in to himself. As he came up with the leper, he jumped off his horse, took a silver piece from his pocket, and held it out to the man. The leper, full of surprise, held out his poor swollen stump of a hand, with several fingers already rotted away, to take the coin. But meeting the man's eyes, and seeing in them the look of hunger for friendship, Francis took the poor hand in his, as he would the hand of his friend, pressed the coin into it, and then, stooping, pressed his lips upon it in a kiss. Then, with his heart full of joy, he remounted his horse and rode home.

With that kiss a wonderful new idea had sprung up in Francis's heart—a sense of love for the poor, of longing not only to help them, but to share their very lives, to be one of them. At first he tried to satisfy his longing to help them by making great feasts

and serving his poor guests with his own hands. One day he went on a pilgrimage to Rome, and as he saw the crowd of beggars clustering round a certain shrine in hope that the pilgrims would give them money, he longed to become just one of them. So, taking one of them aside, he exchanged his fine clothes with the beggar for his dirty rags, and spent the whole day with his poor brothers in the dust and the scorching sun, enjoying the sense of being a mere outcast to whom rich men threw ha'pence.

Still, when he returned to his home he was as puzzled as ever as to what he should do. He took to spending long hours at prayer in a certain cave begging God to make known His Will; and at last God answered his prayer, and I will tell you how.

Francis had been for a long walk outside the city, and as he returned along the stony little mountain paths, the evening sunlight dazzling his eyes, and the olive-trees whispering to each other in the soft evening air, he noticed a tumble-down little wayside church. Something made him stop and turn in.

It was very dim and cool and quiet. There was no one there—except God. A lamp burned with a feeble flicker in the sanctuary. Francis knelt down and began to pray. Then, out of the stillness a strange, wonderful Voice spoke his name—"Francis." He knew directly Whose Voice it was—Our Blessed Lord's. "Yes, Lord," he answered, his heart beating rather fast, though he felt very happy. "Francis, go and repair My church, which thou seest falling," said the Voice. Then all was still.

The tones of that Voice seemed to vibrate through and through Francis. He was filled with a great desire to obey—to do anything, anything Our Lord wanted. "Repair My church," He had said. He must mean this poor little tumble-down house of His, that was certainly on the point of falling. So Francis jumped up from his knees and went out into the sunlight very happy. He found the old priest, who lived in a poor little house near by, and, telling him the wonderful thing that had happened, gave him all the money he had, and promised to return soon with enough to rebuild the church. Then he hurried home.

His father was away on a journey. So Francis went down to the warehouse and picked out the most costly bale of rich stuff he could find. Then he took a good horse, and, putting the bale of stuff on his back, set out for the town of Foligno. Here he sold both the stuff and the horse, and returned with a good sum of money. Full of joy, he hurried along the little mountain path to the old priest's house, and held out the heavy purse of gold to him. But the priest was afraid to accept it, for he was not at all sure that Francis's father would be pleased about it. Francis was disappointed. He had got the money for the church, and certainly wasn't going to carry it home again; so he threw it into the deep recess of one of the windows of the little church, and left it there. Then he told the priest he meant to stay, for here Our Lord had spoken to him, and he must stay and see to the building of the church.

The old priest was very kind and let Francis share his little house and his poor fare, and Francis began to feel like a kind of hermit, living a life of prayer.

Meanwhile Peter Bernardone returned from his journey. When he heard what Francis had done, and his new, mad idea of living like a hermit on the mountain-side, he was furiously angry. Taking a stick in his hand, he set out, saying he would teach the young fool a good lesson and bring him home. But one of the servants ran ahead by a short cut and warned Francis. Francis had no wish to meet his angry father armed with a stout stick, so he fled and hid himself in a cave, and Peter Bernardone had to go home again, even angrier than he set out. For about ten days Francis stayed in hiding, the servant bringing him food. He spent this time in prayer. This made him

braver and he began to think that he had been a "funk" to run away and hide and not face the music, so he decided to make up for it by being braver.

His time of hiding in the dark, dirty cave, with little food, had made him look thin, untidy, and a bit of a scarecrow. The people of Assisi had heard what he had done, and they decided he must have gone mad. So when he appeared in the city the boys began throwing stones and rubbish at him, and calling after him. Francis bore it all patiently, and felt rather a hero. But presently Peter Bernardone discovered that his son was being insulted in the streets. It filled him with rage, and he rushed out, dragged Francis indoors, gave him a good flogging and shut him up in a little cell. Here he had to stay for some time, until his father went on another journey and his mother let him out. Of course, he went straight back to the little church on the hill-side, and here, when his father came back, he found him. Peter Bernardone stormed at him and demanded the money back, but Francis would not give it, saying he had given it to God. So Peter Bernardone went to the Bishop about it. The matter came up at the Bishop's Court, and the Bishop had to tell Francis to give back the money. Bernardone was so angry with his son that he then and there disinherited him, and said he would not own him as his son any more. So Francis took off his very clothes and gave them back to his father, saying, "Now will I say no more Peter Bernardone is my father, but only 'Our Father Who art in heaven.'" So, taking the bundle of clothes, old Bernardone stalked out of the Court.

Someone fetched Francis a rough habit, such as was worn by the farm-hands. On this Francis chalked a big cross, and, putting it on, stepped out joyfully, feeling that at last he was free to serve God, in whatever way He wanted him to, and share the life of the poor.

He felt somehow that he must get right away, alone; so he started walking up over the mountains, not caring where he went. Soon he was right up among the pines, and as night fell he found it was pretty cold, for the winter's snow still lay in the deep shade of the trees. But he was so happy that he did not care for anything, and as he went he sang aloud for joy.

Then, suddenly, out of the dark wood a band of robbers pounced on him. "Who are you?" they cried. "I am the herald of the great King!" answered Francis. So they stripped him of his habit, and threw him in a ditch full of snow.

Luckily, the next day he found a friend in a town the other side of the mountains, who gave him a pilgrim's cloak, a pair of shoes, and a staff. Then, after a bit more wandering, St. Francis returned to the little church and settled down with the old priest, meaning now in good earnest to build up the church.

Since he had no money to buy what was needed, the only thing was to beg. So he went out in the streets begging for stones to build up the little church. The poor people were very kind, and gave him stones, and some of them came and helped, and soon they and Francis together had begun rebuilding the walls. Every day Francis went begging, and sometimes it was very hard not to give in to himself and go skulking down a side-street when he saw a group of his old friends ahead. But he went bravely on, and faced their stares and laughter.

One day it struck Francis that he ought not to be eating the old priest's scanty store of food, which he noticed his kind old friend used to cook and try and prepare as nicely as possible for him. This was not what a true lover of poverty should do. "Rise up, thou lazy one," he said to himself, "and go begging from door to door the leavings of the table." So, taking a big dish, he went round the houses of the townspeople

asking for scraps. They gave him broken bits of messy old food, and he returned with his dish full. But when he sat down to supper he didn't feel at all like eating from that pile of scraps—the very thought made him feel quite sick. But he was learning to conquer himself, and by the time the meal was done he felt he had really accomplished something, and was at last really a poor man and ready to live on what God's mercy would give him from day to day.

All this time he had been praying a great deal, and learning to know God very much better. More and more he felt that God meant to use him for something special—what he did not know.

At last the little grey church was all built up new and strong, and Francis felt the job Our Lord had given him was done. But as God had not shown him anything else to do, he set out and found another tumble-down little church to build up, and started on that. When that, too, was finished, he started on a third one. The third one had been restored, and a service was being held in it for the first time since its restoration, and Francis was assisting at this service, when something happened which sent him on a new adventure, and which proved to be the beginning of the great adventure which filled all the rest of his life.

"That's a good stop," said Akela. "If we started on St. Francis's next adventure, we could not finish it before you all fell asleep. So we will keep it for to-morrow night. To-morrow you will hear how the boy Francis turns into the man St. Francis, and what a wonderful life of service and suffering for God he begins to have, and how he ends in becoming a great Saint, and one of the greatest leaders of men."

THE SIXTH DAY

The splashing sound of Cubs making good use of soap and water; snatches of cheerful song; the lamentation of someone who had lost the "relation" of his left sand-shoe; the sound of a Sixer trying to make a sleepy-head turn out—all these sounds filled the sunny morning. Presently there fell on the ears of Akela (who was still in her "den") the sound of an argument.
"I say its dirt," cried one; "he's a dirty-neck, who doesn't know how to wash himself. ."

"'Taint!" squealed a small Cub; "it's the sun what's made my neck brown."

"Garn! It’s not using soap what's made your neck that colour, dirty little. . . ."

Splosh! Somebody got a wet flannel in the eye that time.

"Now, then, what's up?" cries a Sixer, coming up to the group. Quite a little crowd collects.

"He says my neck's dirty," wails the small Cub, "and really it's the sun. . . ."

Someone has a bright idea: "Let's ask Miss."

So Akela comes out, and scrubs the neck in question with soap and flannel. It turns out to be nearly all sunburn, with just a little dirt.

The sun is shining, and the sky is full of "flocks of sheep"—those tiny, steady white clouds that stretch in close rows across the sky in fine weather. The dew on the grass is nearly dry already when the Cubs get to the field.

"Prayers!" calls Akela, and the Cubs come up quietly and form a kneeling circle.

I haven't told you what the morning prayers of the Cubs were, so I will tell you now.

A Prayer that we may pray well

Our Father.
V. Incline unto mine aid, O God.
R. O Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn.
The star of morn to night succeeds,
We therefore meekly pray:
May God in all our words and deeds
Keep us from harm this day.

May He in love restrain us still
From tones of strife and words of ill;
And may earth's beauties that we see
Remind us always, Lord, of Thee. Amen.

Confession.
I confess to Almighty God that I have sinned against Him in thought, word, and deed. (Pause a moment and think of your sins.) May Almighty God have mercy upon us, and forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting.

Let us pray.
A Prayer that this Day may be Pleasing to God.
O Lord God Almighty, Who hast brought us to the beginning of this day, defend us in the same by Thy power, that we may not fall this day into any sin, but that all our thoughts, words, and works may be directed to the fulfilment of Thy Will. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son. Amen.

Our Father.
A Prayer that we may be Forgiven any Wandering Thoughts we have had while Reciting these Prayers.

Breakfast over, and orderly jobs finished, the Pack went down to the shore and had a splendid bathe. Several of the Cubs had really begun to swim; while Bill, Dick, and Mac, who could swim already, were getting good practice. Mac meant to get his Swimmer's Badge as soon as he got back to London, so he practised floating and duck's diving and the other things you have to do.

After dinner and rest Father took some cricket practice, because to-morrow there was to be a match.

"No one must talk to me," said Akela, settling down in a sunny corner with some papers; "I'm doing something very important." Cubs always want to know everything, so of course they said, What was the important thing?

"Reading proof," said Akela.

"What's 'proof'?" said the Cubs.

"This is proof," said Akela, holding out a long narrow strip of printed paper. "It's the way they print stories at first, and it has mistakes in it. I have to read it through and correct the mistakes. Now, if you don't shut up and go away, the next instalment in the Wolf Cub will have mistakes in it—see?"

"Is it the next bit of the 'Mysterious Tramp'?" cried the Cubs.

"Yes."

That did it. A Cub sat down each side of Akela and read over her shoulder, and one jumped up and down in front, saying: "Miss, is it good?"

Every now and then Akela made strange little squiggles in the margin—secret signs only the printer-man could understand.

"Coo! what silly mistakes he makes!" said one of the Cubs in derision. "I wouldn't have done that in dictation even when I was in Standard I.!"

"I think he makes very few mistakes," said Akela; "other printer-men make lots more. You see, this one is printing the Wolf Cub, so he has to do his best."

The cricket people had been "doing their best" at cricket to such good purpose that they had succeeded in splitting one of the bats.

So after tea Akela and some of them went down to the man who sells bats and golf-balls, down by the tennis-courts. The road where his shop is runs between the seashore and a big stretch of grassy land, called the Duver.

"That," said Akela, "is the very place where Billy got carried up by the giant kite."

It was a favourite story of the Cubs, so they were pleased to see the place.

"Is that the fierce bull?" said one.

"No," said Akela, "that's a sleepy old cow."

The man said he would mend the bat in time for to-morrow's match.

THE STORY OF ST. FRANCIS—2

The little church St. Francis had last restored was very wee, but it had a very long name. It was called the Portiuncola, which meant "the little portion." It was built all among the trees and long grass, and mossy, fern-covered rocks; and the birds sang around it. St. Francis loved the spot very much—it was like home to him—and he spent a lot of time there. Besides, it was not far from the leper settlement, and he had now taken on himself the rather horrible job of serving the poor lepers—a job that was very pleasing to Our Lord, specially as He saw St. Francis did it all for love of Him, and served each wretched man as if he was Jesus Christ. Then, too, the Portiuncola was not very far from the town where Francis begged his food.

Well, early one morning, while the sun shone outside on the dewy world, and the birds sang their morning hymns of praise, a priest said Mass in the little chapel, and St. Francis knelt praying with all his heart. Presently the priest read out the Gospel, and, as usual, St. Francis listened with great attention. And suddenly, as he listened, he felt that those words of Our Lord which the priest was reading out were a

message from heaven for him—the very "orders" he had been waiting for! These were the words:

"Going forth, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . Possess not gold, nor silver, nor money in your houses, nor scrip for your journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff; for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till you go hence. And when you come into a house, salute it, saying: Peace be to this house. . . Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents, but simple as doves. . . . But when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what to speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak" (Matt. x. 7-19).

Here were clear orders. Something in St. Francis answered to that call, and this something was the Holy Spirit of God speaking in his heart, as He always does in those who really wait and listen and mean to obey should God speak.

When the Mass was finished, St. Francis got the priest to read the words over to him again. And then, feeling quite sure he had discovered God's Holy Will, he began to obey it at once. He took off his shoes; he laid aside his second garment, making himself a rough brown habit; he put down his staff, and he exchanged his belt for a bit of rope. Then, feeling full of joy, he set out along the stony road on his bare feet, towards the town—not to beg this time, but to give the greeting of "Peace," and to tell the people to make up their quarrels and forgive each other, and turn with all their hearts to the Lord Christ.

The people of the town did not laugh now, and jeer; they saw that St. Francis was speaking to them from the bottom of his pure heart—a heart on fire with the love of God—and that the grace of Jesus Christ, his Master, was upon him. And before long two men of Assisi had joined him as the first of the great company who were to follow him—for you remember how he was to be a leader, and that the palace of his dream had been promised to him and his followers.

This is the story of St. Francis's first recruit. His name was Bernard de Quintavalle, and he was a rich merchant, serious and God-fearing, and not a bit like the gay, eager St. Francis. But seeing how unselfish and hard-working a life St. Francis led, and that God's Holy Spirit was with him, he began to visit the young preacher, and to receive him in his house. St. Francis willingly gave his friendship to such a good man.

Bernard used to like St. Francis to sleep on a bed in his own room. Often at night he would lie awake, thinking; and he would notice that after a short sleep St. Francis got out of bed and knelt down, and spent the rest of the night praying to God. The only words Bernard could hear were just "My God and my All, my God and my All," which St. Francis repeated over and over again, as if his soul was really seeing God, and his heart was so full of love for Him that he could say nothing else. And Bernard understood the secret of St. Francis's holiness and purity, for to one who prays like that God pours out very much grace, so that he can begin to be all that he knows he ought to be if he is really to please the Lord Christ, his Master.

So one day Bernard told St. Francis that he wanted to give back to God all his riches and become his poor brother. So St. Francis said what they ought to do would be to go to the church and read in the Gospel, where the words of Jesus Christ would show them what to do.

Before going to the church, however, they called for another friend of theirs—a learned man called Peter Cathanii, who also wanted to serve God perfectly, and had been trying humbly to learn how from St. Francis.

But St. Francis, though holy, and Bernard, though rich, and Peter, though clever at his books, did not any of them know their way about in the big Bible that was kept open in the church for all to read (for there were no printed books in those days, and a Bible was very costly, so that few people had a copy of their own).

So St. Francis prayed that he might come on the right place, and then he opened the book. This was what he read out: "If thou wouldst be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Matt. xix. 21).

That seemed just right! But perhaps Our Lord had still another message. So he shut the big book, and opened it again, just anywhere, and it said: "Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money; neither have two coats" (Luke ix. 3).

Splendid! "Just one more, please, Lord," he said in his heart, as he opened the book for the third time. And Our Lord told him something very wonderful and hard to follow, which was really the explanation of all the others:

"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. xvi. 24).

So the three friends left the church very happy. And Bernard sold all his rich stuffs and his house and his land; and Peter sold all his precious books; and they carried all the gold to a square in front of the old church of St. George, and St. Francis sat on the steps with his lap full of money, and gave away great glittering handfuls to all the poor people who crowded round.

When none was left, the three poor brothers, smiling with delight at being really poor and true followers of Christ, went off to the dear little chapel in the woods and began the life of the Friars.

Not long after, a third recruit turned up, and I must tell you about him. He was a simple working-man called Giles. When he heard about St. Francis and his two Friars, and of this new way of learning to serve God perfectly, he laid down his tools, and left the vineyards and tramped into the town. He went to an early Mass at St. George's Church, hoping to find St. Francis there, as it was St. George's Day; but not doing so, he set out for the Portiuncola. He didn't know where that was, so when he came to the crossroads he stopped and began to ask God somehow to show him the way. And just then St. Francis came out of the wood. Giles was delighted that God answered his prayer so quickly, and, kneeling down at St. Francis's feet, "Brother Francis," he said, "I want to be with you for the love of God."

St. Francis saw at once that this was a true brother, so he said: "Knowest thou how great a favour the Lord has given thee? If, my brother, the Emperor came to Assisi and wished to choose one of the citizens to be his knight or chamberlain, many are they who would come forward to claim the honour. How much more highly, then, shouldest thou esteem it to be chosen by the Lord from out of so many, and to be called to His Court!"

Then St. Francis took him back and showed him to Bernard and Peter, and said: "See what a good brother the Lord hath sent us!"

Soon after this the four Friars set out, St. Francis and Brother Giles going together, and Bernard and Peter, to tramp the roads from place to place, and preach to the little knots of country or town people who collected round them in the market-places. So strange did they look, and so full of joy and love did they seem to be, that the people wondered at them very much, and though some believed them to be servants of God, others thought them mad.

When they returned to the Portiuncola three more men joined them. It was then that the townspeople began to get angry, and say that St. Francis was turning rich men into beggars. Even the Bishop spoke seriously to him. Now, if St. Francis had not been so sure that what he was doing was God's plan, and not his own, he might have got discouraged and given up trying to carry it out; but, relying on God's grace, he listened humbly while people spoke angrily, or scoffed, or argued, or pleaded, and then he bravely "carried on."

For the first few months the brothers lived in their little hut at the Portiuncola, and prepared themselves (by prayer and the studying of the perfect way of life and the correction of their faults) for the great work God held for them. Part of the day was spent serving the lepers and doing simple work in the fields. One more journey they went, and then, four more brethren having joined them, and St. Francis having had a wonderful vision which showed him that hundreds would soon be flocking to join his Order from France and Germany and England and all the countries, he set out for Rome, to get the Pope's approval of his work. At first the Pope would not listen to this poor, unknown beggar-man, full of eager new ideas, but in the end he received him kindly and, after hearing all he had to tell, said: "My son, go and pray to Jesus Christ that He may show us His will; and when we know His will more certainly, we shall the more safely sanction your pious purpose."

So the brethren all prayed hard.

When St. Francis went again, the Pope was even more kind, for he recognized St. Francis as the man he had seen in a dream. In his dream he saw a church nearly falling and being held up by a small man in a poor habit, and he knew it meant the Church of Christ was in trouble, and that this man was going to make it strong again through all the earth.

So the Pope gave the Friars his blessing, saying: "Go forth in the Lord, brothers." And he gave them leave to preach penance, and told them to come back to him later and he would do even more for them.

So the Friars went back to Assisi full of joy. For a time they lived in a kind of wayside shelter called Rivo Torto; but later on the monks on whose land was the Portiuncola gave the little chapel and the bit of land to St. Francis (or rather rented it to him, the payment being one basket of fish per year, caught in the river—for St. Francis did not wish the Friars to own anything).

Some more men joined the brothers, and now they lived as a very happy family in their little huts, built of branches, around their beloved chapel. St. Francis was like the loving Father of this family, always kind, patient, cheery, ready to comfort the sad or nurse the sick, or explain things to those who felt worried and did not understand how to get rid of their faults and serve Christ in perfect purity of heart. You Cubs would have loved St. Francis, for he was just like a boy himself. I wish I had time to

tell you all the lovely little stories about him and the Friars at this time while his family was still small, but we must keep them for another time, and go on now to the time when the Order had grown so large that the Friars could no longer all live at the Portiuncola, and began to have their poor, simple houses all over the place, while hundreds of brothers set forth, tramping the world over, preaching the Gospel of Christ, not only to the poor, but to the heathen in barbarous countries. Some of the brothers were cruelly martyred, and all had to suffer a lot of hardships, for often people would drive them away, so that they had to go hungry and cold, with nowhere to lay their heads for the night.

We cannot follow all the brothers and hear all their adventures, so I will just tell you one or two which show what kind of men St. Francis and his Friars were. Here is one which shows you their obedience and humility. I daresay it will make you laugh!

The Friars had by now become quite noted for their preaching, and would often go up into the pulpits of the churches, where large crowds gathered to hear them, the Bishop even inviting St. Francis to preach in the cathedral. Now, among the brethren there was one called Ruffino, who was very shy and nervous and felt he simply couldn't preach and face a great crowd of people, all staring at him and waiting for his words. Now, St. Francis hated that any of his Friars should give in to themselves about anything. He also loved them to obey quickly, and do everything they were told at once, without a murmur. So one day he told Brother Ruffino to go to a big church in the city and preach. But Brother Ruffino, instead of obeying at once, begged St. Francis not to command him this, as he had not the gift of preaching. St. Francis was not pleased at this, and he said that, as Brother Ruffino had not obeyed quickly, he must now take off his habit and go to the city and preach, clad only in his breeches, and otherwise naked! So Brother Ruffino stripped, and went off humble and obedient. But, of course, when he went into the church and up into the pulpit dressed like that the men and children of Assisi began to laugh and say the Friars had gone mad. Meanwhile St. Francis presently began to be sorry he had sent off poor Brother Ruffino clad only in breeches, especially considering he had once been one of the noblest men in Assisi. He began to call himself names for having been so hard on him; and, saying he would do himself what he had told his poor brother to do; he stripped himself of his habit and also set out, half naked, for the town! When he got to the church, of course everyone laughed all the more to see another Friar in his breeches. Poor Brother Ruffino was in the pulpit struggling bravely to preach in simple words. Then St. Francis mounted the pulpit, and, standing by Brother Ruffino, preached a most wonderful sermon, so that all the people of Assisi were touched to the heart, and many wept to think of their sins and of the Passion of Christ. Then St. Francis gave Brother Ruffino his habit and put on his own (for Brother Leo had brought them to the church), and they returned home rejoicing.

Once when St. Francis was walking along the road he saw a great crowd of birds in a field, and saying he must go and preach to his "little sisters, the birds," he went among them and preached a wonderful sermon to them, telling them how they ought to praise God for all he had given them. And the birds didn't fly away, but all crowded round to listen. At the end St. Francis gave them his blessing and told them to fly away, and they rose up in the air and flew away in the form of a great cross, to north, south, east, and west. St. Francis loved all animals, even earthworms, which he would pick up tenderly from the path and put into safety. And he would never allow people to cut trees quite down, but made them leave the roots, so that they might grow up all green and beautiful once more. Little children he loved, too. Some day I will tell you the story of a little boy who joined his Order and became a little Friar, and had the great joy of seeing St. Francis at prayer one night out on the mountain-side, with a wonderful gold light all round him, and heavenly visions comforting him. But

the little boy had to promise St. Francis he would never tell anyone what he had seen as long as St. Francis was living.

I must leave, too, the story of how St. Francis tamed a huge, fierce wolf; and of how he went right into the Saracen camp during a Crusade and preached to the Sultan of Turkey, and told him to be a Christian; and how he called a great gathering of the Friars at the Portiuncola, to which five thousand brothers came, and how the people of the cities round came with carts full of food and fed the Friars for more than a week's time, freely. All these stories and many more I must leave, and go on now to tell you of the wonderful, beautiful, and holy end of St. Francis's life, and of the mysterious thing that happened to him. I want you to remember that this mysterious thing is perfectly true, and really did happen to St. Francis, and is a sign of how very closely his soul had become united to Jesus Christ and His Passion on the Cross—for he had never forgotten the heavenly message he had found in the book of the Gospels: "He that will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

St. Francis's Order was now established, and his Friars were renewing the life of the Church by their wonderful preaching, their holy example, and their pure lives. St. Francis himself, though not really old at all, was almost worn out. His life of hardships; his great worries (for his enormous family gave him much trouble as well as joy); his burning zeal and passionate love of God and his fellow-men—all this had nearly used up his strength, and now he was in constant pain, and very nearly blind. He was always patient and happy—even merry, as of old. But at last came a day when he felt he must go away and be alone a little with God. So, taking a few chosen brothers with him, he retired to the top of a beautiful mountain, called Mount Alverna, which belonged to a nobleman who was a friend of St. Francis.

On this mountain, with only the sky and the rocks and the trees for company, with the lovely peaks of other mountains stretching away as far as eye could see, the six Friars made themselves a little camp of huts; but St. Francis had his hut right away from the other Friars, and across a little rocky ravine which was crossed by a plank. Here he could feel quite alone with God. Looking up, there was just the blue, blue sky and the steady clouds; and looking down, there was a steep rock falling away below him to a great depth, with little ferns and flowers clinging to it. In this rocky solitude lived a falcon who became a very dear friend of St. Francis, and for whom he had a great love. It knew the time he liked to rise and pray in the night, and it would come and flap against his hut and wake him at the right time, and then stay near him while he prayed.

The Friars were not allowed to come near the spot; only Brother Leo came with a little bread and water each day, and to join at midnight with St. Francis in the Divine Office.

At times St. Francis was very happy, and the joy that fills the Blessed in heaven seemed to glow in his heart, so that he understood the secrets of God; and wonderful visions he had too. But sometimes he was filled with sorrow and pain and temptation, for the Devil would torment him and try in every way he could to separate the heart of St. Francis from God.

One day, after he had had a very wonderful vision, he went with Brother Leo to the little chapel the Friars had made, and, casting himself on the ground before the Altar, he prayed to God to make known to him the mystery which He would teach him—for he felt there was some mysterious reason why God had made him come up this mountain and dwell apart. Then he told Leo to open the book of the Gospels three

times, and see what it said. And each place Leo opened on was about Christ's Passion.

Then St. Francis felt quite sure that it was God's will that somehow he should share his Lord's pain, and reach the kingdom of God through suffering. And he longed very much for this, and also to have in his heart the love which made Christ so willing to suffer for men.

It was a few days after this that the strange and wonderful thing happened. St. Francis was kneeling; absorbed in prayer, when suddenly a wonderful Form came towards him, and stood on a stone a little above him. Bright and shining was the Form, with the most beautiful, beautiful face; and His arms were stretched out upon a cross, and feet joined together. And He had two great wings with which He flew, and two stretched up above His head, and two covered His body. And as St. Francis gazed upon this crucified Seraph with the beautiful face full of pain, a great throb of intense agony shot through his soul and his body, so that he had never felt such pain or sorrow before. And then the Seraph spoke to him as to a friend and revealed many mysteries. When He had gone St. Francis rose from his knees and wondered what it could mean; and then he saw what it meant. For in his own hands and feet had come the marks of the crucified Christ: his hands and his feet were pierced right through with red wounds, and in the palms of the hands and on the instep of his feet were the round black heads of the nails, and their points came out the other side, bent back. And in his side was a big wound, as if made by a spear. And the pain of them all was very great. And St. Francis understood that he had been allowed by God to share in Our Lord's Passion.

At first he said nothing to the Friars; but after a while he told them, but he did not show them the wounds, but kept his hands hidden in his big sleeves. Only to Leo did he show them, so that he might wash and bandage them because of the pain and the bleeding.

Then, leaving the Friars on the holy mountain, St. Francis went down with Leo; but he rode on a donkey, because of the nails in his feet.

He scarcely noticed the places he passed through or the people he saw, though he did several wonderful miracles. And at last he came home to his beloved Portiuncola.

St. Francis's body was almost worn out, and greatly weakened, too, by the bleeding from his wounds, but his soul seemed full of new life and joy and energy. So, riding upon a donkey, he set out for a last journey through the country he had loved so much, and along the familiar roads he had so often tramped. I cannot now tell you of all that happened on this journey and of the miracles that St. Francis performed; but it was a wonderful last journey, and already the people had begun to speak of him as "the Saint."

But towards the end of his journey St. Francis became so ill that he had to be carried in a litter; and so it was that at last he came back to the little Portiuncola chapel to die. As you can imagine, he was not only brave in the face of death, but gay and cheerful. Many Friars had gathered round their beloved Father, and he spoke comforting words to them and blessed them; but he gave a very special blessing to Bernard, who had been the first man to come and join him in those early days when he was still alone. And he made the brothers sing, joyful and loud, the song he had himself made up on his last journey, called "The Canticle of Brother Sun"—a beautiful song all about Brother Sun and Sister Moon, and the stars, and flowers, and birds, and grass, and Brother Wind, and how they must all praise God Who made

them. And when he knew he must very soon die, he cried, "Welcome, Sister Death!" And he made them lay him on the ground, without even his habit, and spread sackcloth over him and sprinkle ashes upon him, and read to him the story of Our Blessed Lord's Passion and Death from the Gospel of St. John.

All was still, and outside in the twilight the larks had gathered, and were soaring up into the evening sky, singing with all their hearts, as if rejoicing that in a few minutes the soul of their brother Francis would be free to soar up with them, and away beyond even the reach of their swift wings, to the beautiful garden of God.

And in the house all was of a sudden marvellously still. And the brothers, bending down over the form on the floor, saw, through their tears, that their friend and father had gone. Only for themselves they wept, for they knew that St. Francis, beautiful and young and strong and gay once more, was already with his Friend and Master, the Lord Christ, Who with smile and outstretched hand would welcome him to his glorious reward. And the Divine Hand outstretched, and the hand of St. Francis, would bear the same print of nails, and St. Francis would understand the great and wonderful thing that God had granted him.

THE SEVENTH DAY

When Akela woke up she could hear the roar of the sea dashing up on the rocks. There was a regular gale blowing, and every now and then the wind brought a lash of rain out of the grey sky. So she decided to let the Cubs sleep as late as possible. It was 8.30 before the first one woke up.

Arriving at the field, they found that Father and Mother and the two orderlies had succeeded in getting the fire to burn (though the rain was coming down pretty fast now), and hot porridge and tea were all ready. Prayers and breakfast both had to be in the store tent—a bit of a squash, but everyone was as cheery as usual.

After breakfast it cleared up—luckily, for a party of choirboys from Portsmouth were coming over for the day.

They arrived about 1.0, and were quite ready for dinner, after the tossing they had had on the boat. Dinner consisted of large beef and ham sandwiches, and "spuds," and jam roly-poly. There was a real hurricane blowing; the beef and ham and bread got blown off the plates as the orderlies handed it round!

When everyone had eaten as much as they could hold, the Cubs collected in the lee of the tent for their rest, and the choirboys, not being Cubs, thought it a suitable moment to go in the swings and hammocks.

After that there was a cricket match, and then the Cubs and some of the choirboys bathed.

A big London scout, who had met the Cubs in the street and claimed brotherhood, also spent the day in camp. No one knew his name, and he was just called "Kangaroo," because that was his patrol. When the choirboys had gone, Kangaroo and the Cubs had a good rag.

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That night in the Coach-house the big doors had to be shut, or the candle would never have kept alight. You could hear the wind whipping up the white horses all over the great black sea, and laughing to see the way they jumped up over the rocks.

But it was nice and cosy in the Coach-house. The Cubs had got out some extra blankets, and sat wrapped up in them like so many Indian chiefs.

"You promised to tell us St. Antony to-night," said Sam.

"Yes," said Akela; "I know you will like the story of his life. Well, he was one of St. Francis's Friars—the most famous one of all. But when you have heard his story you will see that with the Saints it was possible for a man to be a "wonder-worker," as St. Antony was called, and yet think nothing of himself at all, and expect no one else to pay him honour and respect. So much did St. Antony hate swank and love humility that he let no one know what wonderful powers he had, until one day God made an adventure happen which showed everybody what he really was."

"Tell us—tell us," said the Cubs.

So Akela squatted down in the middle of the listening Cubs, and began.

THE STORY OF SAINT ANTONY

To understand the story of St. Antony you must picture yourselves in the beautiful, sunny land of Portugal. Oranges and purple grapes and all kinds of lovely fruits ripen in the old gardens. Galleys full of rich merchandise come sailing across the blue, blue sea and touch at the port of Lisbon. All along the banks of the River Tagus are the big houses of the nobility. It is in one of these houses that there lives a boy called Fernando.

Fernando is one of those boys who will always have a good time. He is very clever and quick, handsome, and full of life. He gets on wonderfully well at school, and he has a fine time in the holidays, for his people lead a gay life—feasts, sports, the chase, grand parties of every sort. Fernando has the chance of seeing a good deal of life, for he is the kind of boy the grown-ups are always ready to take out. He gets a lot of admiration, and he enjoys everything to the full.

But, do you know, when he is alone there is a certain idea that often comes to him, and he sits on his window-sill and gazes away across the purple hills, and thinks and thinks and thinks. The idea is this: that, after all, this pleasure and gaiety is not worth much; it's all rather selfish and greedy and stupid. There must be something more worth while in life. For one thing, there's God. How little we know of God! And yet there is a lot to be learnt and understood about Him if only there was time and quiet and books, and not all this bustle of parties and grand people. Surely God wants men to get to know Him, and not be so busy pleasing themselves that they quite forget all about Him. Then, again, how rotten it would be to die and feel you had done nothing in life but please yourself! After all, there's no end of things to be done to make the world a better, holier, wiser place. Fancy going out of the world knowing you were leaving it no better than when you came—or perhaps a little worse. Surely a man must feel rather nervous about dying, and about the Judgment Day, when he knows

he hasn't ever done anything useful or kind. Why should God give such men the reward of heaven? Rewards are for people who have worked hard; and so is rest. And then, again, when God came to earth and lived among men, He didn't just spend His time seeking for pleasures; in fact, He seemed never to think of Himself at all, but always of other people. That thought held the boy Fernando more than all the others—the thought of Christ, Who could have made Himself a King if He had liked, spending His days for others, preaching[86] and doing miracles, and the whole long night out under the stars, under the whispering olive-trees talking to God.

These thoughts used to come to Fernando when he was quite a little chap, and he had a kind of idea that when he was a man he would give himself to God. But when he began to grow up a bit, and got about thirteen or fourteen, he found that if he didn't look out he would get so keen on the life of pleasure that he would become like the gay young men about him, and quite forget all about God. He began to see that if he meant to stick to his good ideas he must do something about it before it was too late. So, after a very hard struggle, he promised God the whole of himself, with all his love and all the keen, strong desire within him to do great things. He knew it would mean giving up all the pleasures that filled his life, and all the riches and glory that would some day be his. But somehow nothing mattered so long as he obeyed this sense that God was calling.

Of course, his people told him he was a young fool, and did all they could to stop him; but he stuck to his idea, and at the age of fifteen he was admitted to a monastery of Canons, just outside the city, and exchanged his rich clothes for the white habit.

It was a beautiful monastery, full of holy men and hundreds of wonderful books, and in the quiet and peace young Fernando was very happy. He felt he had really got near to God. He worked so hard at his studies that by the time he had become a young man he was admired by all the Canons, who thought him very clever and gifted, and told each other that some day he would be a famous scholar and do great things. Fernando himself felt that God had given him the gift of preaching; and that if he went out and preached he would be able to attract great crowds to listen, and win souls for God; so he worked and worked to learn all he could, so as to be ready to stand up and defend the Christian Faith against heretics.

Fernando had gone to another great monastery at Coimbra, and had been there eight years, when something happened which was the beginning of a great change in his life—the beginning of a great adventure.

One day five dusty wayfarers tramped into the town and stopped at the little house of the Franciscans, not far from the monastery of the White Canons. The five strangers were really five heroes, for they were five of St. Francis's Friars, bound on a quest so thrilling and so dangerous that they felt quite sure they would never come back. They were going to Morocco, in Africa, to preach to the heathen, and with shining eyes they spoke of dying there, for the love of Christ, and winning the martyr's crown! Full of joy they went on their way; but without knowing it they had set on fire the heart of the young Canon, Fernando. In the quiet of his peaceful monastery he could think of nothing but Africa, the heathen, the chance of sharing Christ's suffering, and dying for His sake. It was really the Holy Spirit Who was stirring up those thoughts in Fernando's heart.

Well, some months later news came that the five brave Friars had been put to a most horrible death by the Saracens. They were first scourged till the whiplashes had almost cut their bodies to pieces. Boiling oil and vinegar was then poured over them,

and they were rolled on the ground, over fragments of broken glass and pottery. They were then promised their lives if they would give up Christ; but as, of course, they wouldn't, they were beheaded. These were the first martyrs of St. Francis's Order.

Can you imagine what Fernando felt when one day a solemn procession stopped outside the church of his own monastery, and the coffins containing the bodies of the martyrs were laid within it for a while on their way to Spain?

Fernando now felt more sure than ever that God was calling him to be a poor Friar, and to set out barefoot for some hot, dusty land away beyond the seas, where cruel hands would torture him to death. Once again he offered himself to God, but this time it took an even harder struggle than it had before, for he loved his quiet life of prayer and study in the beautiful monastery even more than he had loved the gay life of his boyhood. Still, he did not give in to himself.

Next time the poor Friars came, in their old, patched habits, to beg at the rich monastery, can you imagine their surprise when one of the most learned and famous young Canons came out to them, in his stately white habit, his beautiful face lighted up with a great resolve, and asked them if they would give him a brown habit, and make him a Friar, and send him to the Saracen country to win a martyr's crown?

Of course, they were delighted, and promised to bring him a habit the very next day.

Fernando had a hard job to persuade the Canons to let him go. But at last they did; and once more he turned his back on a happy home and set out on an unknown adventure. As he left the monastery, one of the Canons, a great friend of his, called after him: "Go—go! You will doubtless become a Saint!" And Fernando called back to him: "When you hear that I am a Saint give glory to God!" for he knew very well that it is only God Who can make a man into a Saint, and that the man's own efforts can never do it.

It must have been a great change for Fernando to find himself in the poor little huts belonging to the Friars, and obliged to go barefoot, dressed in a rough habit and cord, with only scraps of food to eat, begged from the houses of the rich. These Friars were only poor, ignorant men—very holy, but with no learning or refinement. They did not know Fernando was a very clever man, a scholar. Of course, he did not tell them, but humbly took his place as the newest and least important of the brothers, never letting them see that he missed the wonderful library, or the beautiful music of the monastery, or the quiet cell where he had been able to pray and work in peace. So as to start life quite fresh, he even gave up his noble name, Fernando, and took the name of "Antony." So now we will begin to call him St. Antony.

SAINT FRANCIS RECEIVES THE MARKS OF THE PASSION

Of course, the one thing he kept thinking about was the quest of the martyr's crown, and at last he got his Superiors to send him, with one companion, to the Saracen country. But now came the greatest disappointment of his life, for no sooner had he got there than he fell ill. All the winter he lay between life and death, with a terrible fever, so ill that he could do nothing. He knew that he was now so weak that he would never be able to go and preach to the Saracens and be martyred. He would have to go home again, a failure. This was much harder to him than any danger or suffering, and the way he bore it, cheerfully and patiently for the love of Christ, made him much more pleasing to God than anything else. For God loves humble people, who are willing to do His Will, instead of choosing for themselves.

Seeing that God wanted his life rather than his death, St. Antony decided to go back to his own country and become as strong and well as possible. So he set sail. But when God sees that a man has altogether given up his own will, He takes full control of his journey through life, and makes things happen to show the man what to do. In this case God made St. Antony's ship get driven ashore on the island of Sicily. Here there happened to be a small house belonging to the Franciscans. It was while St. Antony was resting there that he heard that there was going to be a great chapter (or general meeting) of the Friars, at Assisi, and that St. Francis would be there; so he asked leave to go, and then set forth. This was to be the beginning of a new adventure.

When he got to Assisi he found two thousand Friars collected there for the chapter. The country people were providing all their food free.

You can imagine what St. Antony felt when he saw St. Francis! But when St. Francis called for volunteers to go on a dangerous mission to the fierce Germans, it must have cost him an awful lot to keep quiet. But he had learnt his lesson—God did not want of him a glorious death, only a patient life.

When the chapter came to an end all the Friars dispersed, some going gladly off on their dangerous quests, others collecting in little bands under their "ministers," as the head ones were called, and starting to tramp back to their friaries.

But St. Antony stood all alone. He had no brave quest to follow; no minister looked for him to go home with a party of cheerful Friars; no one cared what became of the young Portuguese stranger.

So St. Antony asked one of the ministers to take him and "form him in the practice of religious discipline." The minister little knew the wonderful gifts of this pale young stranger, with the beautiful, sad face, and sent him to a humble friary on the top of a steep, rocky mountain. There were only a few simple Friars there. One of them had hewed out a little cave in the rock. This he gave to St. Antony, who made it his cell. There he spent most of his day in prayer. But one job he specially made his own. What do you think it was? Why, washing up the plates and greasy dishes.

He didn't tell the Friars anything about himself, and of course they never guessed that their new brother, who always chose the meanest jobs, was a nobleman's son and a famous scholar of one of the greatest monasteries in Portugal.

For a whole year St. Antony lived like this. Do you think he wished himself back in the beautiful monastery in Portugal, with his books and his clever, interesting friends? No; for he loved what was God's Will for him above all things. People should not pine for the past, nor be impatient for the future; they should live heart and soul in the present, because the present is always what has just been provided by God, and so it is the best possible thing.

But God meant His faithful servant to be made known, and I will tell you, now, the wonderful way in which He made it happen.

In the town, not far from St. Antony's little friary, there was one day a meeting of Franciscan and Dominican Friars for an important ceremony. After the service the Superior asked the Dominicans, who were clever men and good preachers, to preach a sermon. But they all said they were not prepared; and so did the Franciscans. So the Superior turned to St. Antony, who had come as a companion of his Minister, and ordered him to preach. St. Antony tried to get out of it, but, finding he must obey, he walked slowly up into the pulpit.

The Friars did not expect much of a sermon. This was only poor Brother Antony, whose chief job was washing dishes.

St. Antony, ready to do his best for God, did not think of himself a bit. He just turned over in his mind what would be the best thing to preach on so as to help his brothers and bring honour and glory to his God. By the time he was in the pulpit the Holy Spirit had put a text into his mind. He gave it out in his clear, ringing voice: "For us Christ became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Then he began to preach.

The Friars sat up and stared. The young, unknown Friar was pouring forth a wonderful flood of eloquence, full of the deepest thought, and showing such learning as none of them possessed. Only a scholar could preach like that; and only a scholar who was full of the fire of the Holy Ghost could move the hearts of his hearers as this man did! The Friars and their Superiors sat spellbound. They quite forgot the preacher, and were carried away by his words into a greater love of God. When at last he ceased, and walked quietly down from the pulpit, his eyes on the ground, deep humility in his heart, his hearers turned to each other in wonder and delight, and all said they had never heard such a preacher in their lives.

Of course, the Superiors hurried off and told St. Francis all about it, and you can imagine how delighted St. Francis was to hear he had such a wonderful man among his Friars. It ended in St. Francis sending St. Antony to do what many years ago he had longed to do—that is, preach to the heretics who were teaching wrong things about the Christian Faith.

Still as humble as ever, St. Antony set out to tramp along the roads to the places at which he was to preach. Through Italy he went, and then France, and then Spain, and back to Italy, and on these journeys the most wonderful things happened. Not only did God give him the power of preaching such marvellous sermons that the people crowded in thousands to hear him, but He gave him the power to do miracles, like He once gave to His Apostles. As to the heretics, they simply couldn't stand up against St. Antony, and thousands of them either had to stop their false teaching and

keep quiet, or else were converted and came over to St. Antony's side. Because of this he got the name, "Hammer of Heretics."

But it wasn't only to the heretics he preached. The ordinary people used to come in such crowds that there simply wasn't room in the churches for them, and St. Antony had to preach out in the fields and plains. Rich and poor used to come, clergy and ignorant peasants. The shopkeepers used to shut up their shops. The people were so much moved by his sermons that enemies forgave each other, men paid their debts, or creditors forgave their debtors; wicked[93] people gave up their sinful life, and started trying to do their best to become pleasing to God.

One day a band of twelve brigands who lived in the forest and robbed passers-by heard about the famous preacher. So they disguised themselves, and went to see if what was said of him was true. When he began to preach he completely won their hearts, and they repented of their sinful life. After the sermon they spoke to St. Antony, and confessed what wicked men they had been. He told them they must never go back to their robber life, and he said that those who gave it up would go some day to heaven, but that if any went back to it they would have miserable ends. And, sure enough, some who went back soon died horrible deaths. St. Antony told them to try and do something to make up for having been so wicked. One of them, he said, was to go twelve times in pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome. Years and years after, when this robber was an old, old man, he met a Friar on the road, and he told him how when he was young he had heard St. Antony preach, and how he had told him to go to Rome twelve times. "And now I am on my way back from Rome for the twelfth time," he said. That shows you what power St. Antony had.

There's no time now to tell you of all the miracles he did; but they were so wonderful that he came to be called the "Wonder-worker," and it showed everyone that God was with him.

And do you think all this honour and glory, and big crowds running after him, and great men praising him, made St. Antony proud or even the least bit pleased with himself? No; he stayed just as humble and retiring as he was in the days when he used to wash dishes in the mountain friary.

But St. Antony's hard life was beginning to tell on his health. For a long time he had secretly suffered from a very painful disease. It was now about nine years since the day he preached his first sermon and was sent forth by St. Francis on his great mission. As the summer drew on St. Antony ceased to preach, so as not to hinder the people's work in the vineyards. Also, he knew the end of his life was near. He longed for a little peace and solitude and silence; he longed to be alone with God to prepare for his great journey into the next world.

There was a nobleman called Count Tiso, who had a beautiful estate not far from Padua, a city St. Antony loved very much. Here St. Antony went for a time of rest. There was no rocky hill-side to make a cave which he might use as his cell, so he got Count Tiso to make him a cell in the great branches of a walnut-tree. These branches spread out not far above the ground, and between them Count Tiso wove reeds and willow twigs, and made a lovely little house for St. Antony. The thick, leafy branches above sheltered him from the hot sun; a few rough steps led up to it; and here St. Antony could spend his days in complete solitude.

But one evening when he had come down to have his evening meal with his companions, in the little friary near by, he was taken very ill, and his pain was so great that he could no longer sit upright.

He knew he was soon to die, and he longed to die at his beloved city, Padua. He was really much too ill to be moved, but when his companions saw how much he wanted this, they fetched a rough ox-cart and laid St. Antony in it.

I told you how St. Antony had longed to share Christ's sufferings and die a martyr's death—well, now was his chance. He was in such frightful pain that any tiny movement hurt him, and now he had to go mile after mile in a rough cart with no springs, jolting over the stony roads, the broiling Italian sun beating down upon him, the thick white dust choking his parched throat, the flies tormenting him. You can't imagine the agony he must have suffered. And yet he never grumbled—he was glad of this chance of suffering; he felt he was really taking up his cross and following his beloved Master along the painful way to Calvary.

When the cart had nearly reached Padua, a Friar who had been sent to inquire after St. Antony met the little procession. He saw at once that St. Antony would not live to reach the city, so he made the Friars lift him from the cart and carry him to a little house of the Friars near by. It had been St. Antony's last great wish to die at Padua; but even this he gave up patiently and gladly and without a murmur.

In the little cell he lay, his pain getting worse and worse, and his weakness greater and greater. The Friars gave him the last rites of religion. "Then, raising his eyes," the old book says, "he looked fixedly on high. As he continued to gaze steadfastly towards heaven, the Friars asked him what he saw. He answered: 'I see my Lord.'"

Not long after, like one falling quietly asleep, he breathed out his last breath. "His loving, holy soul quitted the body, and, conducted by the good Jesus, entered into the joy of his Lord."

The little cell where St. Antony died still stands, and people can go in and look on the very walls his eyes looked on, the very floor on which his body lay. It is such a holy spot that a church has been built over it, and the little square cell stands inside the church.

That is the story of one of the holiest and humblest men who ever lived.

Very quietly the Cubs lay down on their palliasses, and fell asleep thinking of their new friend, St. Antony.

THE EIGHTH DAY

A pouring day! Luckily the Cubs remained in the sunny land of dreams till eight. Meals had to be in the bell-tent. This was great fun! There was just room for a council circle, only you had to be careful not to put your feet in other people's porridge, or let your head rub against the tent. If you did, a stream of water soon began to run down your neck, and Akela said it served you right.

Every now and then the rain nearly stopped, and everybody dashed out for a few minutes; but no sooner were you out, than the weather-fairy seemed to say, "Yah! Sold again!" and down came another sheet of rain that sent everyone scuttling for shelter.

The Cubs decided that it would be a good day to have a concert, and that there might be a rehearsal in the morning and the grand performance later on. So they sat round and made a lovely row; and some people sang some very pretty solos—but I will tell you about them when I tell you about the grand performance.

It cleared up for a little while before dinner, and the Cubs went out for a search for dry wood. Some of them went down to the shore, and there they found some boys with donkeys and ponies for hire, so they had some lovely rides up and down the sand, and no one fell off. Just as they got home the rain started again in torrents.

In the tent they found two visitors—old friends who had once known them in London. This made them think how lucky it was they had had a rehearsal, for now they would be able to give the visitors a concert, and then they would not be disappointed because of the rain. So after dinner the concert began.

First the whole Pack shouted the camp chorus—the same one which I told you they sang in the train. They then sang "John Peel." Then Bunny sang a solo called "Hush thee, my Baby." This was followed by a very pretty duet by Patsy and Mac—"'Tis the Last Rose of Summer" (Mac sang the alto very well). Then the whole Pack sang a song called "Robin Hood," which Akela had once made up for them. After that Bunny recited Brutus' speech from Shakespeare's play, "Julius Cæsar"—he made you feel he really was Brutus, and everyone clapped him. Then four Cubs sang "Annie Laurie," in parts. Then they all made Spongey sing a song. Spongey was very shy, and said he couldn't. But in the end he sang a very short song, in a very deep voice, called, "Oh-oh-oh, it's a Loverly War." Of course, everyone cheered themselves hoarse.

Then the Pack sang "The Golden Vanity" right through all its many verses. This was followed by a solo from Mac—a sad little Irish song—and another duet by Mac and Patsy, "When Irish Eyes are Smiling," followed by "Oh Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast," sung in parts by Jack, Patsy, and Mac. Then everyone sang choruses.

The visitors enjoyed it very much.

By the end of the programme it was quite impossible for the Cubs to sit still for another moment. You can't get much exercise in a wet bell-tent. So Akela had a bright idea. If you were in the sea the rain couldn't wet you—what about a bathe? Everyone cheered, and got into their coats and macs, and ran down to the Stable, where they changed into their bathing things. The sea felt awfully warm, and everyone shrieked and splashed and made such a row that the visitors, all shut up stuffy and cross in their lodgings, looked out of their windows and wondered who could be so cheerful on such a day.

Coming back to tea, the Cubs were delighted to find their Scoutmaster sitting on the floor of the bell-tent, a large bun in one hand and a mug of tea in the other. He had tramped all the way over from Quarr to see how far the whole camp had been drowned. In case there were any survivors, he brought two enormous bags of sweets.

That night all the Cubs prayed very hard for a real, proper, hot day for their last in camp. It certainly did not look possible. But Spongey put the matter in a nutshell when he stood in his long night-shirt, one eye shut as usual, and remarked: "I think it'll sunshine to-morrer, 'cos I've prayed very hard it will."

The Cubs had turned in early, to get out of the wet world into their dry, cosy beds. There was plenty of time for a good long story, and they settled down with wriggles of satisfaction and waited for Akela to begin.

THE STORY OF SAINT PATRICK

Nearly four hundred years after Our Lord had gone up to heaven, and left His disciples and their followers to carry on, a boy was born who was destined to be one of God's greatest Saints, and to bring thousands and thousands of pagans into the Christian Faith. This boy was St. Patrick, called the Apostle of Ireland, because he turned the whole of Ireland Christian. For many hundreds of years after St. Patrick had died, Ireland was like a fruitful garden in which sprang up hundreds of Saints and holy and learned men, who helped to spread the knowledge and love of Christ all over the world. So St. Patrick was truly an Apostle, and, like St. John and St. Andrew and the others, one of the foundation-stones of Christ's great Church.

But though he ended in being so very important, and doing things that made a great difference to the whole world, he began as an ordinary boy—and rather a naughty one, as he tells us himself. We know a great deal about St. Patrick, and we know it is quite true, because when he was over one hundred years old he wrote it all down himself. He called the book his "Confession," and though he told us such a lot about himself, beginning with the adventures of his boyhood, there is one thing he did not put down in the book. Can you guess what? Well, he did not put down how good he was. For, you see, the Saints never thought themselves good, because, instead of comparing themselves with people less good than themselves, as we are all so fond of doing, they kept on comparing themselves with Our Blessed Lord, and of course, that made them seem very, very far from perfect.

When St. Patrick was a boy he did not love God or believe all his Christian teachers told him, nor was he obedient or ready to do his best. One day some fierce pirates raided the land where he lived with his father and mother, and carried him off captive with lots of other boys. Sailing across the sea to Ireland, the pirates sold the boys as slaves.

St. Patrick was bought by a great chief called Milcho, and sent out on to the hill-sides to watch the sheep. Do you think he was lonely and afraid? No. For, when torn away from his home, from the friends who loved him, he had discovered that there is one Friend that you can't be dragged away from, and Who can be with you even in the midst of the tossing green sea, on a pirate ship. For, though Patrick had forgotten God, God had not forgotten Patrick. "The Lord," he says, "showed me my unbelief, and had pity on my youth and ignorance."

So when he trudged out on to the mountain-side, he was not sad and alone, but glad in the knowledge that his unseen Friend was with him.

"Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ above me, Christ beneath me,
Christ in the chariot, Christ in the fort, Christ in the ship."

That is a prayer St. Patrick made up himself. There, on the rough mountain-side, the boy St. Patrick spent all his lonely days talking to God, so that, he says, "more and more the love of God and His faith and fear grew in me, and my spirit was stirred." He tells us that he would recite one hundred prayers in one day, and nearly as many in the night.

He had to sleep out with the sheep in some rough cave or hut. "Before the dawn," he says, "I was called to pray by the snow, the ice, and the rain." But he did not mind this outward cold, because of the burning heart within him.

St. Patrick had learnt his lesson—the lesson of where to find the only comfort and friendship and help worth having. God wanted him, now, for the great work he was to do. One night a mysterious voice told him that if he went to a certain place he would find a ship ready to take him home. The place was about two hundred miles away, and St. Patrick had never been there. However, trusting in God's help, he started off. At last, after a long tramp, he reached the town, and, sure enough, there was a ship at the quay about to set sail. St. Patrick asked to be taken on board, but when the sailors heard he had no money they refused him a passage. St. Patrick went sadly away, but as he went he prayed. Before long he heard someone coming after him. Turning round, he found it was one of the sailors, who said after all they would take him.

I can't tell you now of the adventures St. Patrick had on his way home, but after being shipwrecked and nearly starved, and each time wonderfully saved by God, he reached his father's house. But though he was home again with those he loved, he did not forget the Friend Who had been his all in those cold, hard days in Ireland. He thought of Him all day, and of how best to please Him. He had already begun studying for a life in God's service, when he had a wonderful vision of the people of Ireland calling him to come to their help, and he knew it was a sign from God that this was the work he was to do. You can imagine how impatient he must have been to get a ship and go sailing back to Ireland to tell the people about the true God, and how Christ had died on the Cross for them, and all the rest; but for such a difficult and dangerous job he needed a lot of training—not only in learning, but in the strength and holiness and obedience to God which should make him able to face the task before him. How long do you think God kept him at his training? Thirty-eight years!

At the end of this time a holy man who was his friend and guide was sent to preach in Britain. St. Patrick went with him. This was the first step, and it ended in his being made a Bishop and sent—at last—to the lifework he had so long waited for, the conversion of Ireland.

When St. Patrick's ship came to shore, the wild men of Leinster would not let him land. So, trusting as usual to God, he sailed out again to sea, and landed a little farther to the south. There seemed to be nobody about, to stop him; and, tired out, I suppose, with a day of exploring in the strange land, St. Patrick lay down and fell asleep. A little Irish boy chanced to come along, and, seeing a stranger asleep, crept up on tip-toe to look at him. What a lovely, kind face he had! The boy thought to himself that he had never before seen anybody who looked so nice, and he longed to do him some good turn. He couldn't think of anything to do for someone who was

asleep, but at last he got an idea. Picking all the best flowers he could find, he put them round St. Patrick for a surprise for him.

When St. Patrick woke up you can imagine how pleased he was with the flowers, and still more pleased to see a little Irish boy smiling at him shyly from among the bushes. Before long St. Patrick and the boy had become great friends, and the boy simply wouldn't go away, but stuck to St. Patrick. Then God made known a secret of the future to St. Patrick, and he said: "Some day he will be the heir to my kingdom." And, sure enough, the boy, whose name was Benignus, succeeded St. Patrick as Bishop of Armagh. Don't you wish you were that boy, always to stay with St. Patrick?

After this the most wonderful adventures began to befall St. Patrick; but even more wonderful than the adventures were the miracles by which he managed to escape out of them, not only alive, but victorious.

Getting into his ship again, St. Patrick landed farther north. Once more the fierce Irish set on him and his little band, and their chief, Dichu, raised his sword to bring it crashing down on St. Patrick's head. But, somehow, his arm stayed stiff in mid-air, and he could not strike the blow. Dichu was an honest man, and soon understood that such a miracle must be a sign from the true God. If once you believe in God—well, the only possible thing is to serve Him. So Dichu became a Christian, and humbly learned from St. Patrick how he should serve God.

Then St. Patrick went to the house of the very chief who had kept him as a slave, and converted his children to the true Faith. But it was at Easter that something very thrilling happened, and was the beginning of St. Patrick's real triumphs.

The Chief-King of Erin (as Ireland was called) was just going to hold his solemn festival at Tara. All the Irish princes and all the priests of the pagan religion had collected together. One of their ceremonies was the lighting of fire at dawn, with magic rites and ceremonies. It happened to be Holy Saturday, and on that day the Christians used to light a beacon. St. Patrick lit his holy fire, as usual. The King saw it blazing on a hill-top, and was very angry. One of his priests (or Druids, as they were called) said: "If that fire is not put out before morning, it never will be put out," and he meant the Christian Faith. So the King sent for St. Patrick.

Surrounded by his Druids and bards, and all the Irish princes, the King sat, fierce and proud, and awaited the strangers. It was Easter morning, so, as St. Patrick and his little band advanced, they chanted the Easter litanies. So noble and holy did St. Patrick look that one of the bards rose as he drew near. This little act of politeness on the part of the bard brought him special grace from heaven, and he accepted the Christian Faith.

Standing quietly in the midst of the circle of priests and princes, St. Patrick looked around him. He met countless pairs of fierce eyes fixed upon him, as the princes sat in silence, "with the rims of their shields against their chins"; and as he looked at them he longed to win them all for God, and he prayed for grace and power to do what was needed. Then he told them why he had come to Ireland.

The King left his Druids to reply. They did so by doing all sorts of horrible magic. And certainly they made things happen, much as people called "spiritists" do nowadays; but it was not by God's power, so it must have been the Devil who helped them. Whatever the Druids did, St. Patrick undid, and then did something more wonderful. The Druids were furious, and no one knows what might have happened had not St. Patrick caused an earthquake to happen, by God's power. So terrified were the Irish

that they went half mad and began killing each other, and St. Patrick and his men escaped.

But the next day St. Patrick boldly came back, though he knew the King meant to kill him. He was given a cup of poisoned wine to drink. Well, what of that? Did not Our Lord say to His disciples, when He sent them out to convert the world, "If you drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt you"? St. Patrick made the sign of the cross over the cup and drank it, and nothing happened.

Then the Druids arranged a horrible test. They laid two great fires, one of dry faggots and the other of wet, green wood. On the dry wood they laid the boy Benignus, dressed in a Druid's white robe. On the green they put a Druid, clad in St. Patrick's cloak. Then they said they would set fire to both piles. St. Patrick accepted the challenge. (If you had been the boy, would you have "got the wind up," do you think, or would you have trusted St. Patrick?)

Well, they set fire to the two piles of wood. Strange to say, the green wood blazed up, with many sizzlings and cracklings and much smoke, but the dry wood simply wouldn't light. There was, however, a sudden flame, and the Druid's robe on the boy flared up and was soon burnt to ashes, leaving Benignus quite all right, and, I expect, very pleased with himself! Meanwhile, horrible noises had been coming from the other pile, and when the smoke and flames died down there were only charred cinders where there had once been a Druid. But St. Patrick's cloak had not been burnt at all.

As the King still would not believe, St. Patrick had to make another earthquake happen, which swallowed up so many of the King's subjects that he gave in, and said St. Patrick might preach, though he himself never accepted the Faith.

So, on the green plains of Tara, St. Patrick preached a wonderful sermon to the Irish, who by this time had come crowding round to see the stranger who could beat the Druids at their own game. During this sermon St. Patrick stooped down and picked a leaf of shamrock, and, holding it up, showed the people how the little green leaf was three and yet one. He said that would help them to understand how the Blessed Trinity is three—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost—and yet is really only one God. That is why the Irish wear shamrock on St. Patrick's Day (March 17th).

SAINT PATRICK AND THE LITTLE BOY BENIGNUS

Many more miracles did St. Patrick which I can't tell you about now; and he went from place to place, winning thousands of men for Christ, and giving spiritual life to their souls by baptizing them.

One Shrove Tuesday St. Patrick went up on to the top of a lonely, rugged mountain above the sea, and there he stayed without any food all through Lent till Easter. And all the time he prayed and prayed and prayed for the men of Ireland and their fate on the Judgment Day. At the end of his long and painful time of prayer God sent an angel to tell him his request was granted. So, with his heart full of joy, St. Patrick knelt and blessed Ireland, and as he gave his blessing hundreds of

poisonous snakes came out of their holes and went slithering away into the sea, where they were all drowned. (That is why you see pictures of St. Patrick with snakes.) And now, every year, thousands of Irish people go on pilgrimage up that mountain.

Before I end I must just tell you one little story about a young Irish Prince who didn't give in to himself. This Prince and his followers, after hearing St. Patrick preach, decided to become followers of Christ and be baptized. St. Patrick, being a Bishop, carried a thing called a crozier—a kind of long staff, like a shepherd's crook, because Bishop means shepherd. St. Patrick's crozier had rather a sharp point at the end, and during the ceremony of Baptism, somehow, by accident, he pierced the Prince's bare foot with it, but did not notice what he had done. The Prince said nothing, and did not wince or seem surprised. Afterwards, when St. Patrick found out what he had done, and asked the Prince why he had said nothing, the Prince replied: "I thought it was the rule of faith." A bit of poetry has been written about it, which puts it rather nicely. The Prince says, in it:

"I thought, thus called to follow Him Whose Feet
Were pierced with nails, haply the blissful rite
Some little pain included."

Everywhere St. Patrick went he was loved, and soon the fame of him had spread through the whole country. The superstitious religion of the Druids altogether died down, and Ireland became a Christian country. St. Patrick made a set of wise laws, and by these the Irish were governed for a thousand years.

At last came the time when his great work was finished. The little boy, Benignus, had grown up and taken over St. Patrick's work. St. Patrick had written his "Confession." And now, at one hundred and twenty, he was quite ready for the rest and the reward of heaven. He was very happy; his great work had been accomplished. God had been very good to him. And so, satisfied, he lay down to die, knowing that all the men of Ireland were praying for their beloved father.

So, on March 17th, in the year 493, St. Patrick passed from this world into the glory of Heaven.

THE NINTH DAY

As the Cubs one by one opened their eyes on the last day at camp, the first thing they saw was that their prayers of last night had been fully, wonderfully answered. The sun shone with that clear golden radiance of early morning sun. The sky was a misty blue, with just a few small "flocks of sheep." The wind had dropped, and the world, washed clean by the rain, was going to enjoy itself to-day.

Quickly the Cubs washed themselves and scrambled into their old clothes, and were away up to the field in record time. The smell of wood smoke; the cry of the sea-gulls; the bigness of God's beautiful world—only one more day of it all!

Porridge out in the sunshine, and lots and lots of bread-and-jam. Then down to the shore.

On the way shorewards the Cubs met a kind lady who lived in the little house at the end of the sea-wall. She had often seen them run past, and now she stopped and asked Akela what they were. When she heard it was their last day she said they might have her boat for the whole morning!

So the Cubs and Akela all got into their bathing things, and the boat was rowed round from where it was anchored to the bit of the shore where they always played. When everyone had been out and had learnt to row, first with one oar and then with two; and when the tide had gone down, down, down, as far as it could, Akela anchored the boat in shallow water, and took away all the oars but one. Then the Cubs had a gorgeous time, rowing by themselves, as far as the long rope would allow. I don't know what that boat turned into—pirate vessels, the Golden Hind, and everything else you can imagine, while the gallant crew had many an adventure.

Meanwhile, another kind lady had appeared on the scene. She lived in a nice house, with a very sloping lawn in front, and her garden steps came right down on to the bit of sand where the Cubs always played. She came down and offered a prize for the best little house or model village or garden the Cubs could make. Four couples set to work, and by dinner-time there were some splendid models ready. Then "Big Andy and Little Andy," clad only in their bathing-drawers, walked demurely up to the front-door of the house, and asked the lady to come and see. She came out carrying two lovely spades, two splendid shrimping-nets, and two very nice rubber balls.

She decided the "Andies" had got first prize; they had made a model of Quarr Abbey; Sam and Dick were second, with a church; while Bert and Bunny came in a good third, with a very nice house standing in a large and luxurious garden. After giving the prizes, this fairy godmother invited the whole Pack to tea in her garden, at four o'clock, after the afternoon bathe!

So, after dinner, they went to the Stable and made themselves a little bit respectable, and then down to the shore and bathed, and afterwards went up the smooth, steep lawn to the fairy godmother's house.

Soon a maid brought out tea; and it was some tea—cake of all sorts, and real bread-and-butter (not "marg."), and little jam-sandwiches (but, as one Cub remarked, "it didn't fill you up, like camp-tea").

After tea, during which the Cubs were wonderfully quiet and well-behaved, they entertained their hostess with various kinds of somersaults and cart-wheels, and then went through a large part of the famous concert for her benefit. Before going they gave her a Grand Howl, and then all shook hands with her.

After that they played on the shore, and then ended up with a last bathe, about seven.

Back to supper. Camp prayers for the last time in the soft evening light. Good-night to Father and Mother and Godmother; and then to the Stable, for the last story.

But as they squatted round waiting for the story, someone made a remark that was the beginning of quite a long pow-wow. "Miss," he said, "shall we be Cubs in Heaven, and will you be our Cubmaster?"

Everyone had questions to ask about Heaven—more than Akela knew how to answer! And then they grew serious as someone mentioned two Cubs who had died a year before. "Do you think Frank and Bob have found each other in heaven?" "Yes," said Akela, "I'm sure they have; and I expect they've found those two Cubs from two other Westminster Packs, who died of 'flu, last winter."

And that is why this book is dedicated to Frank and Bob, for they were two of the most faithful Cubs who ever lived. They died brave and unselfish—Bob after a long and very painful illness, in which he never gave in to himself, but was always thinking of other people and his "little 'uns." At last, as he lay delirious, he used to think he was in camp again, and say: "Oh, mother, look at the green fields—aren't they lovely?" And as Akela knelt by his bed, holding his poor little hot hand, she felt sure that soon he would be playing in the green fields of Heaven—the best camp of all, where the Good Shepherd was already waiting to carry him in His strong, kind arms.

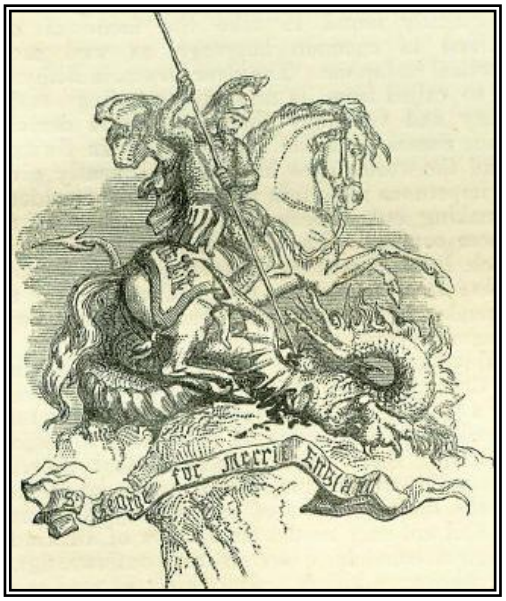
And now someone else had a splendid idea: "Perhaps they've talked to the Saints!"

"We shall know a lot of the Saints when we go to Heaven," said another Cub; "I shall look out for St. Antony first."

And so they decided to try and get to know as many Saints as possible before they died, and to try and copy them, so that some day they would find lots of friends in Heaven, who would not be ashamed to receive the salutes of their little brothers, and to return them with kind smiles of welcome.

Then the Cubs settled down for a last story.

THE STORY OF SAINT GEORGE



"And now," said the Cubs, "a last story! Go on, Miss—make it an extra good one, exciting and full of adventures, and the best of all, because it's the last night."

"Very well," said Akela, "I'll tell you the story of the Patron Saint of all Cubs and Scouts, and of England. Who's that?"

"St. George!" cried the Cubs in chorus. And although many of them knew the story very well, they snuggled down in their blankets and prepared to enjoy themselves.

Well (said Akela), I'm going to tell you the story of the Saint who was more thought about and honoured in the old days than, perhaps, any other Saint who ever lived. He was from the very earliest times—in fact, from directly after his death—called "the Great Martyr." He became the patron of many countries and orders of knighthood, but specially in England was he loved, and his feast was kept as a great holiday, equal to Christmas. Already, before William the Conqueror came to England, our forefathers had begun to build churches in honour of St. George. But it was King Richard Cœur de Lion who specially spread devotion to St. George in England, because he took him as his own patron, and used his name as his battle-cry. "For God and St. George!" he would shout, as he swung his mighty battle-axe in the air and charged at the head of his knights toward the Saracen lines.

St. George several times appeared on a white horse, and led the Crusaders to victory when it seemed as if the enemy were going to put them to flight and come off victorious.

Many people think of St. George as a knight on a prancing horse, who killed a dragon and rescued a maiden in distress. But this is only a kind of parable or picture of the real St. George and what he did. The dragon is a picture of the wicked, heathen religion that tried to kill the beautiful young Church that Our Lord had made. St. George fought this dragon, and gave his life in the battle, but he rescued the maiden (who represents the Church); for his death seems to have rallied the Christians and filled them with new courage to fight bravely and stick to it, until at last the heathen dragon was overcome, and the Church of Christ was able to fill all the world with joy and truth and light.

Well, now I will tell you what the old books say about St. George; but we have not many details about his life, as we have about St. Francis's.

St. George lived a bit more than three hundred years after Christ. He was the son of a Roman soldier, a Christian, stationed in Palestine, which was a Roman colony. St. George was one of those brave, straightforward boys who are afraid of nothing—neither of themselves and their weakness, nor of other people and their unkindness. He practised "not giving in to himself," like a good Cub; and he thought a great deal of his honour, like a good Scout. And he knew that everything brave or good that he ever did was by the grace of his Captain, Christ, and not because he was any better himself than anybody else. He could ride well, shoot an arrow straight, and use a spear or a broadsword as well as any Roman boy. But it was not so much this as his way of obeying quickly, and keeping his word, and never giving in to himself, which made him rise from promotion to promotion when he joined the Roman army.

He was still very young when he was made what we should now call a Colonel, and given a great deal of responsibility. In fact, the Emperor thought no end of him, and people whispered that some day he would be head of the army and one of the most important men in the Roman Empire. This was rather wonderful, because the Emperor, Diocletian, was a heathen and hated Christians, and, as I told you, St. George was a very good Christian.

In those days the Christian Church was no longer hiding in the Catacombs, but had come out into the open, and nearly half Diocletian's Empire was Christian. But something—probably pride—made Diocletian hate the Christians, and he decided to do all he could to destroy the Church of Christ, and force the people back into the old religion, and worship a god that was really not very different from Cæsar, the Emperor, himself.

So he first tried burning down the churches, and then imprisoning the priests and bishops. But one day he suddenly got mad, and gave an order that if the people would not worship the Roman gods and offer incense to them, and swear that they no longer believed in Christ, his soldiers would kill them like beasts and leave them in the streets, as a ghastly warning to any other fools who refused to obey.

So the soldiers went forth, sword in hand, and every man, woman, and child who refused to give up Christ was killed, or wounded and left to bleed to death.

Now, no one had thought that Diocletian would ever go as far as this, and when the horrible news was brought to St. George he was filled with rage. The Emperor was, of course, his master, but there and then he vowed that he would not stay in the service of a vile murderer, a coward who could stain his sword with the blood of women and little children; and he prepared at once to go to the Emperor, and say straight out all that was burning in his heart.

Now, his friends knew that nothing would more enrage the Emperor than this, because he thought a lot of St. George, and yet he was proud and obstinate, and nothing would make him stop persecuting the Christians. If St. George spoke as he said he would, it would certainly mean no chance of promotion, no becoming head of the army; perhaps, even, it would mean imprisonment; possibly death. So they simply begged St. George not to go. But do you think he was that sort? Not much! The last thing he wanted was promotion in the army of a man who was the cruel enemy of Christ and the murderer of his fellow-Christians. So he set spurs to his horse, and rode off for the Emperor's Court.

Diocletian was surprised to see him arrive suddenly, travel-stained and apparently in a great hurry; and still more was he surprised when, instead of speaking with reverence and respect, he let the words almost burst forth from his full heart, and told the Emperor that it would be better if he paid honour to the God from Whom he had received his sceptre, instead of murdering the faithful servants of that God.

Diocletian was first surprised and then angry. But he tried to laugh it off, because he was really fond of St. George. Then he tried reasoning with the young soldier, and explaining that he had to keep the Christians in good discipline in case they might revolt or get proud and rebellious. But St. George would listen to no reasons or excuses, and, unbuckling his sword, he laid it down, resigning his commission in the army of a man who could act so dishonourably.

Then Diocletian got very angry indeed. He gave orders that St. George should be put in a dark dungeon, and loaded with chains until his pride should be broken, and he should be willing to humble himself before the Emperor. So angry was he that he made up his cruel mind that now he would even force St. George to give up the Christian religion himself, and that no pains should be spared to make him do this.

Alone in the dark, dank, icy-cold dungeon, St. George lay in his heavy chains, and wondered what was going to happen next. It was very horrible, down there, and he ached in every limb, and he was very hungry; but somehow he felt kind of glad inside, because he knew he was suffering all this for Christ's sake.

One day, when his gaoler brought him his ration of hard bread, he told him that he had heard a rumour that the executioner was coming to the dungeon and that if St. George did not give a satisfactory answer he would be put to torture. The gaoler said it would, he thought, be a very painful kind of torture, and St. George had better be reasonable.

When he had gone St. George sat in the darkness with his heart beating rather fast. He wondered what sort of torture it would be, and if he would be able to stick it. Then he remembered that Our Lord had suffered awful tortures, and had foretold that His friends would have to, as well. So he asked Our Lord to give him grace to be able to stick anything the Emperor should do, and then he felt quite happy again.

Well, the hours dragged by, and at last St. George heard the tramp of feet on the stone stairs. Then there was a creak as the great key was turned in the lock, and bolts were shot back. The door opened, and there stood the executioner and two soldiers, one carrying a lantern.

The executioner, who had known St. George as a Colonel in the army, spoke respectfully. He gave St. George a message from the Emperor, saying that if he would come back and offer incense to the gods, and apologize for his proud words, he would get his liberty and be given back his commission. St. George laughed, and

said he certainly wouldn't. Then the executioner said that in that case the Emperor had commanded that he should be tortured till he agreed to do all he was told.

The soldiers loosened his chains, and he was led out and up the stairs. The blazing, blinding sun dazzled his eyes after the dimness of the dungeon. The pavement of the courtyard seemed burning to his cold, bare feet. Soldiers looked curiously at him as he passed, but of course didn't salute, now. He was taken away to the horrible place of execution, and there a new form of torture was applied to him—a great wheel full of spikes into which he was thrust. When he was dragged out his body was one mass of wounds, and his blood dripped down on to the floor. He was carried on a stretcher back to the dungeon; and the executioner felt quite sure that when he was well enough to answer he would agree to do anything the Emperor wanted.

St. George was dazed with pain and loss of blood. His body seemed to burn all over. The darkness made his eyes ache, and he lay hour after hour, wondering how soon he would die. He had got to the point when he thought he simply couldn't bear another moment, when he heard a Voice in the darkness, and It said: "Fear not, George, for I am with thee."

His heart seemed to leap up, for he knew for certain that it was Our Lord's Voice—he could not possibly mistake it. And suddenly all the pain seemed a thousand times worth while, and he was glad he had had it; and he didn't feel lonely any more; and he just lay in the darkness and talked to Our Lord, knowing that He was near. And he forgot his pain.

Well, when a Roman officer came to receive his message to the Emperor St. George was able to laugh—rather weakly this time—and say he had no message for the Emperor, except that he had better stop murdering Christians, and beg God's mercy before it was too late.

The officer thought St. George was rather a fool, and a very brave man, and he went back to the Emperor.

A few days later the executioner arrived once more, and again led St. George across the sunny courtyard. St. George remembered the Voice of Christ saying, "I am with thee," and he was not afraid. This time they rolled a great heavy stone over his body, so that his bones were crushed and bruised, and then they carried him back to the dungeon.

When the officer came for his answer he could hardly believe that St. George dared still to refuse. He told the Emperor what St. George had said. The Emperor was surprised and sorry, for he saw that St. George must be a very brave man. He also saw that it was no good waiting any longer, or trying to force him, so he sent the executioner once again.

This time the executioner told St. George that his last chance had come. Either he must give up Christ, or he must face death. The words sent a kind of thrill through St. George—a thrill of horror at the thought of death, which turned into a thrill of joy at the thought of going into the presence of Christ, and hearing His wonderful Voice again, only this time seeing Him, too. And he rejoiced, also, to think he would really be a martyr. So he whispered faintly—for he could hardly speak now—that nothing in all the world would make him give up Christ.

So the soldiers took off his chains and dragged him up to his feet, and he walked slowly, with weak, swaying steps, into the sun.

"Fear not." He said the words over to himself. No, he wouldn't fear! "I am with thee." How wonderful! "And soon," he said in his heart, "I shall be with Thee!" And so he knelt down and waited.

And the executioner's great axe flashed in the sun as he swung it aloft, and the next instant the blood of "the Great Martyr" was streaming across the white pavement, as St. George's Cross streams scarlet across the white ground of his flag.

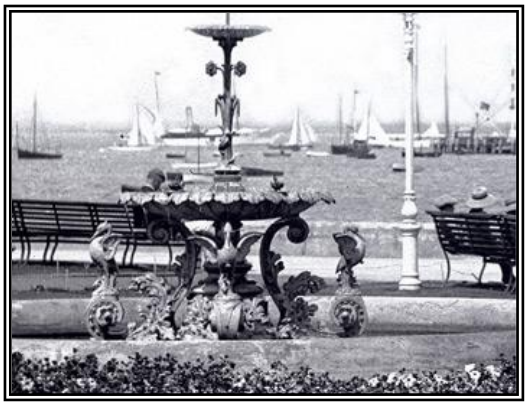
The soul of "the Great Martyr" had entered Heaven, where the angels rejoiced at his coming, when the Christians picked up his poor, broken body and carried it away. It was buried in a beautiful tomb, and before long a great church had been built over it. On every hand people talked of "the Great Martyr," and the Christians rejoiced at his courage, and cheered each other on to resist bravely. Many of the heathen, seeing that St. George could suffer tortures and die for his faith, began to believe in the Christ he loved, and were baptized. Diocletian himself began to fear a little, and the butchering stopped.

And so it was that the maiden in distress, the persecuted Church of Christ, was saved by her brave knight, St. George.

GOOD-BYE

A grey morning, but quite fine. Some of the Cubs went off to bathe after breakfast, others to do final shopping and buying of presents to take home, while some stayed in the field to help with the packing. The tent was struck and rolled up, swings and hammocks taken down, palliasses emptied and done up in bales, and by twelve o'clock all was finished, and the time came to change out of the comfy old camp clothes into full uniform. How tight and hot boots and stockings seemed!

After dinner the Cubs gathered round into the council circle. Everyone was feeling rather quiet. Akela had a short pow-wow, and then the Cubs squatted and let off a mighty Grand Howl, as a "thank you" to everyone concerned for the glorious time they had had, and as a sign that they were going back to London meaning to do their best as never before.



Then they fell in, two deep, and, with a last look at the field, marched away.

There was plenty of time before the boat was due to sail from Ryde, so, after marching smartly through the village, they fell out and strolled along the wall or the seashore. On reaching Ryde they fell in again, and halted near the fountain, two at a time falling out for drinks. At Smith's bookstall Akela bought a supply of "comics" to read in the train.

On board the ship an adventure happened. Big Andy of course dropped his cap overboard. The sea was rather rough and it seemed as if the cap must be lost, two stars and all. It was too far down to reach with the ship's mop or any stick. But luckily some thoughtful Cub had brought a long piece of string with an open safety-pin on the end, in hopes of catching a fish on the crossing. With this the cap was fished for, while the people on the pier and the first-class passengers on the upper deck looked on with eager interest. Akela thought there was no hope of ever seeing the cap again

on Andy's head. She little knew that two pious Cubs were busy praying! Presently the cap was triumphantly pulled up, amidst cheers from the pier and the upper deck.

"I prayed he'd get it!" cried a Cub.

"And so did I!" exclaimed another.

At Portsmouth there was a terrible crush for the train, but, as usual, the Cubs did well, for the kind guard gave them two first-class compartments and locked them in.

And so they travelled back to dear, smoky old London, very much browner and a good deal fatter than when they set out.

THE END