

Scouting is a Game, not a Science

Yes, Scouting is a game. But sometimes I wonder whether, with all our pamphlets, rules, disquisitions in the *Scouter*, conferences, and training classes for Commissioners and other Scouters, etc., we may not appear to be making of it too *serious* a game. It is true that these things are all necessary and helpful to men for getting the hang of the thing, and for securing results. But they are apt to grow into big proportions (like one's own children or one's own mannerisms) without our noticing it, when all the time it is very patent to those who come suddenly upon it from outside.

Thus this phalanx of instructional aids appears terribly formidable to many a Scouter, while to outsiders having a look before they leap into our vortex it must in many cases be directly deterring. When you come to look on it as something formidable, then you miss the whole spirit and the whole joy of it; your boys catch the depression from you, and Scouting, having lost its spirit, is no longer a game for them.

It becomes like the game of polo which was suggested to me by a General under whom I served. A melancholy occasion had arisen when the Troops in the garrison were ordered to go into mourning. This happened on the very day that an important polo match was to be played. So I was sent as a deputation to the General to ask whether the match would have to be cancelled. The General, with a twinkle in his eye, replied: "I think if you played very slowly and used a black ball it might meet the occasion."



SCOUTING IS NOT A SCIENCE

Scouting, as I have said above, is not a science to be solemnly studied, nor is it a collection of doctrines and texts. Nor again is it a military code for drilling discipline into boys and repressing their individuality and initiative. No -- it is a jolly game in the out of doors, where boy-men and boys can go adventuring together as older and younger brother, picking up health and happiness, handicraft and helpfulness.

Many young men are put off Scoutmastering by the fear that they have got to be Admirable Crichtons and capable of teaching their boys all the details for the different Badge tests; whereas their job is to enthuse the boys and to get experts to teach them. The collection of rules is merely to give guiding lines to help them in a difficulty; the training courses are merely to show them the more readily the best ways of applying our methods and of gaining results.

So may I urge upon Scouters that the more important quest for 1931 is to ginger up the *joyous* spirit of Scouting through camping and hiking, not as an occasional treat in intervals of parlour or parade Scouting, but as the *habitual form of training* for their boys -- and incidentally for themselves.

January, 1931.

Health

SIR GEORGE NEWMAN said recently: "National health is not dependent on doctors and nurses, but on the people themselves." This impels me to remind Scouters that that is what we believe in our Movement, and, seeing the lamentable state of health of the nation as revealed by last year's reports, let us press on with our effort to strengthen some portion at least of the oncoming generation:

1. By encouraging open-air activities and fresh-air "fiendishness";
2. By making the boys wise on questions of feeding, clothing, teeth, diet, personal hygiene, continence, temperance, etc.;
3. By encouraging development of body and training in physical fitness through games and athletics;
4. By making each boy feel that he is a *responsible* being, and responsible therefore for the care of his body and health; that it is part of his duty to God to develop his body to the best extent.

By so doing we have it in our power to do a work of national value.

January, 1931.

International Scouting

UP here among the Swiss mountains, in the green valley of Kandersteg, one is very remote from the fuss and hurry of the world. Yet, from where I sit in the flower-decked balcony of this Châlet, I can see the flags of twenty nations waving above the tents, and the camp fires of some three thousand young men gathered there.

Rover Scouts they are: a brigade, as it were, of storm-troops of the larger army of over two million Boy Scouts. Their arms are alpenstocks, their discipline that of goodwill from within; their service consists not so much in fitting themselves for war as in developing the spirit of universal peace.

The days are long over when Scouting was looked upon as a useful game for keeping English boys out of mischief; parents and public have come to see in it a practical process of education for the use of both sexes; with the wider growth of its Brotherhood abroad, its possibilities in the direction of human fellowship for developing the spirit of international goodwill are now becoming generally recognised.

To those who witnessed the Scout Jamboree at Birkenhead in 1929 the coming together of some fifty thousand boys of various nationalities was something of a revelation. But the Rover Moot, if it included smaller numbers, was not a whit less impressive, seeing that it showed not merely a mass of boys linked in friendly comradeship but a growing band of young men who, within the next few years, will be the men of affairs in their respective countries.

Here they were gathered in conference devoting their hard-earned time and money to considering ways and means of developing Scouting generally, and their service for the community in particular. This they did in no spirit of unctuous priggishness or youthful superiority. Far from it; they discussed their subjects in all earnestness in the great conference pavilion every day, but in the huge Camp Fire circle at night they were the jolliest specimens of jovial boyhood that one could wish to see. Never, during the whole fortnight in camp, was there a suspicion of trouble or anything but cheery brotherly feeling among the many and varied elements which went to compose the gathering: Scandinavians, Romanians, Japanese, Hungarians, Australians, Siamese, West Indians, East Indians, French, Cingalese, Poles, Armenians, etc. -- a polyglot lot, of good friends for all that.

To myself, possibly, the most inspiring part of their varied programme was when one saw the endless succession of these splendid specimens of the young manhood of all nations setting out in comradeship together with heavy packs on their backs and ice-axe in hand to tackle the neighbouring mountains. The Moot might have been held with greater convenience in any large city, but this valuable side of it, namely the breeding of mutual friendship in healthy sport, would have been lost.

Aye, and something more and above all price, namely, the higher tone of thought which could not fail to have inspired the least imaginative among them in those wonderful surroundings of mountain scenery. Here, among the eternal snows, face to face with Nature in its grandest and most sublime form, they must have felt themselves in closer touch with the Almighty Creator, and in a new atmosphere, far above the man-made jazz and vulgar squalor of the town.

Yes, a wide and promising field lies yet before the Scout Movement.

September, 1931.

Bad Camping

I HAVE been GLAD to see a good many reports of bad camping by Groups who should by this time know better. I say I am glad because it means to me that Commissioners are now really looking into the camping that goes on in then districts, where formerly such inspections were more sketchy and indulgent. The fact that the efforts of Scout-masters to have their camps well organised are appreciated by Commissioners cannot fail to encourage them, and I am glad to note that these form the very large majority. I have every hope that the reports at the end of next season will show very few unsatisfactory camps among the many hundreds which will have been held.

At the same time it is a little disappointing to find that several Scoutmasters are still ignorant of the first principles of camping. The reports received too often speak of "unsuitable sites," "bad condition of latrines," "bad food storage," "untidy uniforms in the town," etc.

All this means, either that we are getting a big lot of new hands among the Scouters, willing but as yet ignorant, or that we have still a number of them who have not made use of the Gilwell training or our handbooks on camping. In either case such Scouters should realise that we are not pernickety, nor do we want for our own amusement to see clean camps; they should understand the fact that they have a big responsibility to the parents on their shoulders for keeping the boys healthy in camp, as well as instructed in cleanliness and good order.

October, 1931.

A New Honour for the Movement

LAST month I went to Cambridge University at the invitation of the Vice-Chancellor, to receive the award of Honorary Doctorship of Law, which had been conferred upon me by the Senate.

A Banquet was the first item I had to face, at which some two hundred and thirty Rover Scouts were present. It was to me a very cheering and inspiring affair, since not only did it provide me with a very good free meal in very good company, but also it gave me a "close-up" impression of the cheery spirit of keenness and brotherhood which possesses the University Rovers.

Immediately after the Dinner and the inevitable "few remarks" from me, I was surprised to learn that the investiture would take place then and there. It proved to be a most touching and impressive ceremony.

I was handed a handsome green-and-white gown of superfine tussore cremona material which I donned, together with a hat, rather of the Scout style, but dyed a deep royal red and decorated with two outsize Wood Badges. Two bedells, gorgeously apparelled in evening dress, coats, and tall hats, carried each a great mace, which, between ourselves, looked like a petrol pump, surmounted as it was by a globe and the superscription "B-P Spirit." The Vice-Chancellor, the Rev. Gresford Jones, was garbed in a gown similar to mine. He was, however, almost unrecognisable through having cultivated since I had last seen him a bushy black beard of the true beaver breed.

I was then introduced by the Public Orator in a Latin Speech of exquisite artistry. His eloquent, but all-too-flattering remarks gave me-- well, you know, that greasy feeling all down the spine that caused me to perspire like a bull (not that I have noticed exactly how a bull carries out this operation, but my condition was like that). This was the address:

OYEZ, OYEZ, OYEZ, O YEAH ?

O Baden-Powell Gilwellensis, et vos O Magister Scoutorum, et vos O Roveri Exploralores ! Balbus murum aedificavit, or as the poet puts it with more felicity:

"Sanatogen radox ellimans embrocation for bruises,

Kolynos veet vapex; vita-wheat varicose veins,

Cascara sagrada zox, enos zambuk ryvita,

Pepsodent euthymol, ellimans also for sprains."

But to the point. There was a famous prophecy which was found in a bog near Fen Ditton concerning our guest to-night. Not long ago, when St. Michael of Cambridge was striding up Market Hill, he saw some naughty little boys playing marbles, and was heard to remark, punning cleverly in a foreign tongue, "Unus dies, sez I, hi pueri habebunt non rolum or bolum but polum," which I will translate, in case what I have said is all Greek to some of you. Unus dies, one day. Now the next word "sez" has puzzled many commentators and experts, but I think we shall be correct in following Professor Edgar Wallace who translates "sez I" by the old English "methinks." "One day, methinks, these boys will have non rolum or bolum but polum ; not a rod or a birch but a powell." Well, I will tell you privately, on the K.P. in fact, this prophecy has now come true.

For inasmuch, as we were gazing round the world, seeing it whole but not very steadily, we found everywhere a spirit, a spirit of energy and strength that takes the knock from a carbonised world. And we asked: What is this strange spirit to which all roads crooked and straight come alike, which makes every hill less steep and every load less heavy, and yet always has something over to tow a less fortunate friend ? For we saw the spirit spreading, not only through the peoples, the nations and the languages, but even penetrating the Councils of the Senate, the Satraps, Governors and Deputies. And on all channels by which it spread were emblazoned just two letters B.P. So we enquired further and found many of its secrets based on that sound method so pithily expressed in an epigram, tentatively attributed to the sage Wodehouse "to curl the grey matter round Mother Nature." And further, that it was no transient spirit, no one-day-in-the-week spirit that peters out on Monday morning, for in the words of that great benefactor of his fellows, grand- father Kruschen, "It is the little daily dose that does it." It is an ever-active spirit such as made us build a (Cam)bridge whilst our sister University was content with a (Ox)ford. It is a spirit which always answers the question "when ?" with the words of that great Latin poet Horace, "nunc, nunc." So we said we will honour the fountain-head of this spirit, for it spreads in ever-widening circles yet with its potency unimpaired, we will therefore call it B.P. Plus. But "tempus fugit," as the Roman barmaid said to Caesar. If I may be allowed, one last quotation from the writings of that great saint of the early Church, Pope Gregory Ist, "Alleluia."

DUCO AD VOS EXPLORATORUM PRINCIPEM.

How would you like to have such sonorous periods thrown at your head, especially when after the speech one was hailed with the Japanese Greeting-- BENZINE ?

But I survived, and revived, when the Vice-Chancellor conferred on me the dignity of DOCTORUM SCOUTORUM PELARGONIUM (or some such title), and hung round my neck the badge of that exalted rank in the shape of a gigantic coupon card. Unfortunately he added some cryptic remark about my enjoying "long ears," which I thought rather uncalled-for at the moment. In the procession which was then formed, I walked with such dignity as I could command, and as much humility as I could assume, which, under the circumstances, was, perhaps excusably, not much. (See illustration.)

The following day I was made aware of the fact that, great as had been the ceremony I had gone through, it was not, after all, the final nor the most exalted one. For the real Vice-Chancellor of the University conferred upon me, with all the quaint traditional ceremonial in the Senate House, the dignity of Doctor of Laws. This was in recognition of the work of the Boy Scout Movement generally, and therefore was an honour done to the Scouters of all degrees who have brought our Movement and its training to its present standard of effectiveness.



I would like to congratulate one and all on this new appreciation of our work by the heads of our great University. I hope that the consciousness of work well done, which must be yours, will give you all an extra touch of the happiness which I heartily wish you for Christmas.

December, 1931.

Put Yourself in His Place

THIS is always a useful practice.

As a fisherman you learn to do this when you see a fish rise to your lure and then dart away from it. You realise that there is something wrong about the lure, so you change it and substitute something more to his taste.

When a trout is rising to catch tiny gnats, you don't try a big fly on him; if you did, you would put him off altogether.

Well, I find that when fishing for Scouters, we have in more than one place been using the wrong lure.

Of course you want your S.M. to be in earnest about joining us, and to show that he realises what he is undertaking and really grasps our ideals and something of our methods. You find that unfortunately I.H.Q. has not so far devised a questionnaire for a candidate to answer which would give you all the information you could wish. So you make up your own questionnaire, and send it to him to answer in writing. (I have one before me now containing twelve questions, asking *inter alia* the candidate's reasons for wishing to take up Scout work, which out of a list of some sixteen books he has read, and other equally important points.) I.H.Q. has, however, published a pretty complete book of Policy, Organisation and Rules, so you send him this in order to inform him fully of the responsibilities he is undertaking in becoming a Scouter. If the candidate then replies satisfactorily, you feel that you have got the serious-minded type of man you want-- that is, I repeat, IF he replies.

But what of the dozens that fail to respond? Look at it from the point of view of one of them. He says, "I'm a bit of a boy myself still, and I'd like to get a Troop of cheery youngsters round me whom I could teach to play games, and incidentally to play the game, and to gather health and happiness in the out of doors. I'll join the Scouts." But when he finds he has to fill up stereotyped forms and examination papers, and has to master this comprehensive mass of rules for regulating his doings, he is deterred-- the fly is not the kind he is after and it puts him down.

Red tape and failure to look at things from the subject's point of view have killed many an enterprise before now. But it is not going to kill our Movement, as we are having none of it.

Because I realise the necessity for exercising the greatest care in the selection of Scouters, I would add that no amount of questionnaireing will be half so effective for getting your subject's point of view as a personal friendly talk with him.

March, 1932.

St. George's Day

I FEEL rather like the mouse who has been at the leaking whisky cask and comes out of the cellar shouting, "Now, where's that damned cat?"

Usually I look back on the past year's work at the end of December, but I do so rather from a limited point of view.

By the time that St. George's Day comes round, I have seen the many annual reports from various centres at home and overseas and am then really able better to judge of our progress and condition.

Fortified by these I am now able to shout, "Now where's that damned dragon?" I don't really see any very formidable one in sight, though in my elated condition I might be excused for seeing two. But, such as I do see, the one to be attacked is the unemployedness among the youth of the nation. If we in the Scouts can do something, however small, towards overcoming this awful canker in our midst, we shall be doing a genuine national and Christian service.



St. Georges Opportunity The Mouse and the Monster

The present depression in industry should, we may hope, pass away before long, but the ill-effects of unemployedness will be lifelong on its victims-- they have before them, as

unemployables, an appalling existence as waste human material open only to bad influences around them.

Most of our Troops have unemployed lads among their members and many have taken on others as "younger brothers." In either case we can do something for them to save them from the fate of unemployableness, if we aim to put into them:

Character, to make them self-reliant and able to make their own way in the world;

Handcraft, so that they may have some ability;

Health, that they may stand the strain; and

Happiness, through enjoyment of life among good pals.

Thereby can we do something at any rate to rescue them from the slough of despond in which, *through no fault* of their own, they are involved.

April, 1932.

Camping and Hiking

SPRING is here, though to-day, with a bitter east wind blowing, you might not know it!

Now is the time for overhauling your camp gear, for planning where and when you are going to give the boys their heart's desire in a jolly and healthy camp life. But above all it is the time when, through having his boys directly under him for days on end in camp, the Scout-master has his real opportunity for studying each boy's individual mind and temperament, and for drawing out-- expanding-- educating-- the good that he finds therein.

I am anxious about this Summer.

I am hoping to see a big development in camping. There has, in the past, been too little of regular and frequent camping, and too much indifferent amateur camping.

There has been a very promising improvement this last year or two and I am hoping, now that the large proportion of Scoutmasters know their job, and that Commissioners have taken to visiting all camps in their districts, that camping reports this season will show a big step forward in what is after all the method of training which distinguishes us from all other Movements.

For Rover Scouts here comes their opportunity-- if only they plan their holiday aright beforehand. My goodness! How I wish I were a Rover again, and able to go on a hike with a good pal or two of the same way of thinking-- and with the same length of stride!



— and with the same length of stride

There should be an object for your hike, but not too over-strict a time-table. The object of course depends on the tastes of the hiker; he may be out to render service as a Brenter, or he may want to improve his mind or develop his tastes while developing his health.

Great Britain offers such wonderful hikes, whether the Rover be an artist, or keen on cathedrals or castles, or Roman remains.

May, 1932.

Jollifying Scouting

I'M not satisfied, although one might think I ought to be.

Our numbers are steadily growing-- training centres increasing; Scout spirit good; and so on. But there is too much leakage, and also too little character-growth-- as yet. Leakage of Cubs not going up to Scouts; of Scouts not going up to Rovers, etc.-- this comes from various causes. In some cases it is difficult to remedy, but in many cases the reason is that

the boys have become tired of Scouting. With an understanding Group Scoutmaster this seldom happens. But where the same old programme, or want of programme, goes on week after week, and month after month, boredom is only natural.

Where the Scouter is himself a bit of a boy, and can see it all from the boy's point of view, he can, if he is imaginative, invent new activities, with frequent variations to meet the boys' thirst for novelty. Note the theatres in London. If they find that a play does not appeal to the public, they don't go on hammering away with it in the hope that it will in the end do so; they take it off and put on some new attraction.

Boys can see adventure in a dirty old duck-pond, and if the Scoutmaster is a boy-man he can see it too. It does not require great expense or apparatus to devise new ideas: the boys themselves can often help with suggestions.

Where a Troop resounds with jolly laughter, and enjoys success in competitions, and the fresh excitements of new adventures, there won't be any loss of members through boredom. Then outdoor camping-- not merely occasional sips of it-- but frequent practice so that the boys become experienced campaigners-- will hold those of the best type and will give a healthy tone to their thoughts and talks.

I have little use for a cut-and-dried routine system in a Scout Headquarters building, with its temptation to softer living and parlour Scouting.

June, 1932

Jamborees

I RECOGNISE more fully than before the great value of Jamborees, provided that they are only indulged in at wide intervals of time. The average Scout life of a boy is a comparatively short one, and it is good for each generation of Scouts to see at least one big Rally, since it enables the boy to realise his membership of a really great brotherhood, and at the same time brings him into personal acquaintance with brother Scouts of other districts and other countries. He learns new Scouting ideas and camping gadgets, and comes out a better Scout for the experience.

Furthermore, such a Rally is of infinite value in developing teamwork and organising qualities on the part of the Scouters, and gives them the opportunity of meeting their fellows and exchanging experiences. Thereby the standard of Scouting is raised generally, and its right methods are more widely understood and adopted. To the public, the parents, pastors, teachers, employers and others these exhibitions of the results, as well as of the methods, of our training give an invaluable object-lesson such as brings almost invariably increased understanding and practical sympathy with our work.

But, above all, the international spirit of comradeship and goodwill that is bred in these camps is already becoming a force in the world, a thing which but ten years ago nobody could have foreseen. These various national jamborees are doing valuable work in that direction as well as in their more local development. I look forward, therefore, with all the greater confidence and hope to our world Jamboree in Hungary, in August next year, as marking another big step forward in the promotion of that new and much-needed spirit of broadminded goodwill in place of the old-time narrow prejudices and jealousies.

September, 1932.

Books

I HAVE said in *Rovering to Success* that travel and reading and Nature study are all part of self-education, and as such should be commended to Scouts. Take reading. With your books around you you have a magic power; when others are fussing and losing their hair over political hopes and disappointments, you are sitting content with what you have got. You can at any moment remove yourself and travel through far-off lands, dip into the history of other times, command the wonders of science, amuse yourself with good stories, and see beauty in thought through poetry.

Books are the best friends a man can have. You choose those that you like; you can rely on them at all times; they can help you in your work, in your leisure, and in your sorrow. You have them always around you at your beck and call in your home. They are not nowadays very expensive if you only buy one now and then to make up your collection. At any rate, the nearest public library will bring almost any book to your hand without expense.

If you can hand on something of the love of books to your Scouts, you will be giving them friends which will never fail them.

October, 1932.

Adventure

WHETHER the ordinary school education is really preparing them for *life*, rather than for scholastic standards, is a question that people are inclined to argue about, but the fact stands out that for the numbers leaving school, of whatever class, there is not enough employment to go round, and, unless a boy has developed character and habits of energy and self-reliance he is going to be left in the slough of unemployment which leads directly to unemployability, wastage and crime. The less spirited sink under it; the more spirited, enthused no doubt by the exploits of gun-men, as shown on the films, take to the adventure of burglary and highway robbery. Nor do I blame them, for I should be the first to do it myself were I in their case.

The spirit of adventure is inherent in almost every boy, but adventure is hard for him to find in the crowded city.

One reads of gangs of boys of all ages, self-organised for crime, boarding lorries for systematic robbery, stealing motor cars, holding up wayfarers, etc. Stout lads! What Scouts they would make, if we had the men to handle them! But what sort of citizens are they going to make, if left to drift?

At a session of the British Association last month it was pointed out that scientific invention, with its development of labour-saving machinery, of intensive production, of super-rapid transport, etc., is going too fast for the existing human race. These developments over-produce commodities, and at the same time reduce employment and the power to purchase. The tendency to migrate from the country to crowded town life is developing a quickened, if not a hectic, herd instinct among the people, with its craving for pleasure, gambling, etc. The conditions under which the next generation will live will be very different from those of twenty years ago.

We in the Boy Scouts want to prepare our lads for the future that lies before them. No--not merely those who are Scouts, but all boys, especially those who have the worst chances of becoming good citizens. Our best step is to give them all the joyous adventure that we can

through Scouting activities, camping. Sea Scouting, etc., and to develop above all their character, their bodies, and their sense of higher things.

October, 1932.

Our Twenty-fifth Anniversary

Retrospect

STOCKTAKING.-- It doesn't seem like a quarter of a century since we started on Brownsea Island-- but there it is ! In business a periodical stocktaking is the necessary gauge of one's standing and progress; so, in the life of a movement, or equally of an individual, occasional stocktaking is valuable as showing us where we stand and where we can yet go ahead. So let us "stocktake" of Scouting.

I won't go into the detailed history of the growth of our Movement in its twenty-five years; this is recorded very fully elsewhere. But here we stand on a firm and accepted footing, not only at home but in practically every civilised country in the world.

OUR aims and methods are becoming understood and approved by educationists and others outside the Movement . . . (only "becoming," for without a precious lot of pushing it takes a long time for such knowledge to sink in). One feels encouraged at any rate when one realises that in spite of the upset of the war in our early days, and of the unlooked-for whirl of evolution since then, the elasticity of our organisation and the whole-hearted team-work of our members have enabled us, not only to meet the everchanging social conditions, but to render useful services to the community while making steady internal progress ourselves. It would be interesting to trace in detail some of the minor points which denote our progress, as, for instance, the badges won for proficiency in various handicrafts and in Scout efficiency. I may, however, quote one little item, namely that, since the Movement started, the Scouts have been the means of saving some 1,200 lives, 1,120 of which rescues were effected at the risk of the rescuers' lives.



Scouting is developing steadily.

Our numbers keep going up (853,206 in the Empire, 2 1/2 millions in the world); our methods are well grasped; our training for Scouters is on a healthy footing; and the

satisfactory effects of Scouting on our boys are proving themselves as these are arriving at manhood. Foreign countries took up our training, possibly a little light-heartedly at first, but they have stuck to it ever since. With unexpected broadmindedness they have accepted it on our lines, and fostered it, although it was not an indigenous plant in their own countries to begin with. Scoutcraft as a common activity has brought the leaders, and subsequently the boys, of the different nations into mutual touch and understanding, in spite of the differences of race and creed and tradition. In this connection, side by side with the Scout movement, the sister international organisation of the Girl Guides is growing apace, and spreading the same ideals among the women of the different countries. Their membership now amounts to 1,142,170.

If these numbers continue to grow-- and they are growing rapidly-- and if that comradeship continues to spread itself among the future men and women of the world, a very potent leaven will have been established of that spirit of goodwill which is the first essential to the foundation of universal peace. Altogether, we may justly look back with thankful satisfaction on our past, and, what is more, we can look forward with high hope to the future.

Prospect

It is scarcely yet realised among us how fully the conditions of life have changed from those of a very few years back-- especially for the less-endowed boy. These changes are still going on apace. It is up to us Scouters to recognise this, to study the solution, and to plan our steps for dealing with it. (What is more, it is important also to let the boys know that we recognise it, and are doing our best to prepare them for what lies before them. We shall thereby get their more hearty co-operation and response to our effort.)

But it is a tough proposition. This year, of the thousands of young people coming out of school at the age of 14, it is estimated that some 200,000 will be unable to get employment. It isn't that they find it difficult to get jobs, but impossible. There are no jobs for them. This happens at a time when the boy population is abnormally low owing to the diminished birth-rate during the war and in 1923. But the increased birth-rate after the war means that from now on these numbers will rapidly increase, and it is computed that by 1937-- here will be 600,000 unemployed of these boys and girls.

What is to become of them? They are not at school, and they are not receiving unemployment benefit until 16. At present the juvenile instruction centres nominally cater for those between 16 and 18, but in practice they do not take more than one in six, so the authorities are only too glad to get the help of voluntary societies. And that is where the Scout Movement could, and should, and will come in.

There is yet another disturbing feature in the present evolution-- the situation of the young men when they have reached the age of 18, and are dismissed from training centres. They then find themselves adrift in the world with nothing to do, with no one to guide them, and too young as yet to mingle with the older men. What more natural than that, bored with idleness and disgruntled with fate, they should seek diversion in crime or fall to the persuasive eloquence of disruptive agents?

A saving point is that the English character innate in these lads still remains in them in spite of depressed conditions. They still possess the spirit of adventure-- although, unless directed aright, it tends to lead them into crimes of violence. Also they still have something of the stolid English common sense which, before they commit themselves to extremist movements, causes them to ask-- "Where is it going to help us? What is the next step after

the Revolution?" It is this very spirit of adventure that gives us Scouts a handle whereby to attract and hold the boys.

Even those who are fortunate enough to have employment find it difficult in these days of mass production and repetition work to get in love with their task. Repetition work is not creative work, and is apt to weary and discourage young workers. They need a good antidote in their leisure time in the shape of some change of occupation-- but it should be occupation, not idleness-- and creative occupation at that, where possible. Allotment gardening caught on and did untold good as a hobby in the Great War, and it could do so again, Hence comes the need for Scoutmasters to use their imagination and keenness in constantly devising new hobbies and activities-- to get the boy to see beyond his bench or desk, and to realise the larger results of the work he is doing.

The creative instinct should be encouraged in every possible way, especially if it can be the means of producing objects that will help others to enjoy life. With such an aim brought to his work the lad would overcome to some extent the prevailing temptation to gratify his own desires, which as a rule yields but unsatisfying temporary pleasure.

So, whether a lad is at work or in the ranks of the unemployed. Scouting, if properly applied, can hold out to him the means of making his life something better than a mere dreary existence. It can give him healthy occupation and happiness-- first by providing lots of outdoor activities, games, hiking, camping, boating, etc., for health and adventure, and, secondly, by giving hobbies and handcrafts to develop technical skill for employment, or for occupying leisure time usefully.

To effect results we must:

Increase our membership to take in more boys including the poorest. Increase the number of Troops to this end. This would need an increase in the number of our Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters.

Increase the number of Rovers and Rover Crews.

Increase the number of Troop nights in the week (to be run by A.S.M.'s and Rovers).

Form special Training Camps for unemployed in permanent camps of instruction with allotments, etc. Start in shacks and allotments of their own those who cannot get employment.

If we co-operate locally, and dovetail in with the Juvenile unemployed instructional centres, parish councils and other local authorities, I am convinced that we can do a valuable work in this way.

So much for our possibilities at home and in the British Overseas Dominions, but in addition to these we have the further prospect before us of the World Development. The unlooked-for spread of the Movement abroad in the first twenty-four years of its existence, and the firm footing upon which, in spite of endless local difficulties, it has established itself, gives heartening promise of what it will effect in the next quarter of a century-- provided that the broad-minded spirit on which it has been started is fully maintained in all countries. The aim of bringing up the oncoming generation in mutual understanding and comradeship, with an eye to future goodwill and co-operation, is a far higher one than that of instilling into them hatreds and differences of their forebears under false ideas of patriotism. Such development, carried out side by side with that of the Girl Guides in the same direction, cannot fail eventually to influence the general spirit of the peoples of the different countries in the direction of mutual friendship and peace.

But charity starts at home to begin with. So here lies our opportunity-- truly a big field for patriotic effort! It is one well worth working since it means helping in the salvation of our own people.

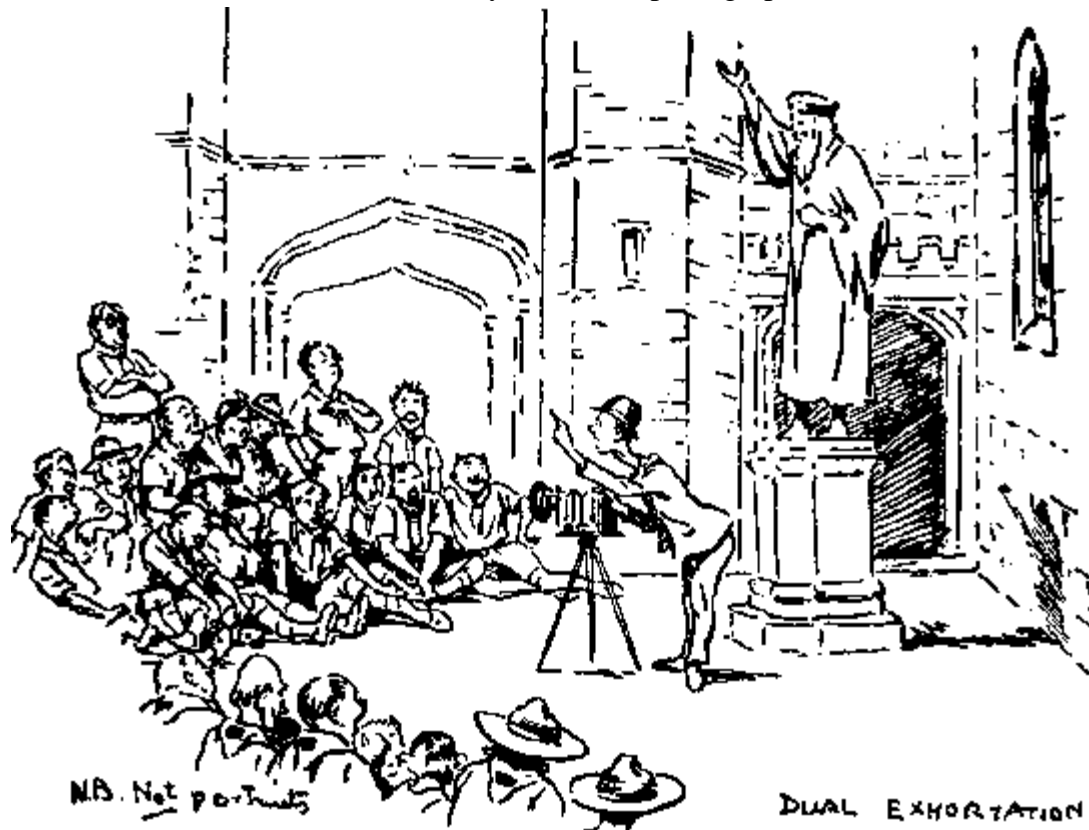
We are only alive for a time on this earth and through not "looking wide" we are apt to fritter away those few short years in a round of things that don't seriously matter.

But here is a job to our hand that is really worthwhile. Let us seize it and do our best, with God's help, to make a success of it.

July, 1933.

At a Conference

Among other humorous touches which cropped up at the Edinburgh Conference, one which struck me was on the important occasion of our being photographed in the Courtyard of the Church Assembly Buildings, where the statue of John Knox appeared to be addressing us with an earnestness that was rivaled by that of the photographer beside him.



November, 1933.

Rip Van Winkle

IN the words of the Pantomime Clown of old times-- here we are again!

Thanks to wonderful surgery, most capable nursing, and to the buck-up messages from Scouts of all degrees, I have come back to Scouting all the better for a very unpleasant experience. I return with deep gratitude to those who have so helped me and with thankfulness to God for granting me renewed life.

I would thank more particularly those on whose shoulders fell the work which I ought to have been doing. I come back, like Rip Van Winkle, to find that in my absence the Movement has gone on all the better for it in the hands of the different responsible heads. This has been the case overseas as well as at home.

One thing has not come off to the full extent that I had hoped for, and that is a big accession of Scoutmasters.

We urgently need to extend the Movement in these days of out-of-work lads and world unrest, so as to bring the very poorest under good influences and healthy training. To this end we must exert ourselves to bring in more men as Scouters.

I am confident that we can do it. There are thousands of them available, but they are ignorant of our aims and methods, nor do they realise the vital need of our training for the oncoming nation. Our best advertisement is the sight of our boys at work; our best recruiting agents are our Scouters. With the camping season now on, every Scouter can, if he will, act as spider, with his camp as the parlour into which to lure possible converts.

Only to-day I heard of a case where a man had been an interested spectator of certain boys at play, and one day they met him on the road and announced that they had made up their minds and were all ready.

"Ready for what?"

"To be Scouts, sir."

"Very good. And who is going to be your leader?"

"You, sir; we elected you *anonymously*."

"But, damn it all-- Oh well, I suppose one mustn't swear if one is going to be a Scoutmaster-- well, you see, I've got a lot of other things to do-- and-- oh, all right, I'll have a try." (To-day nothing would induce him to give it up.)

There are loads of men who would join us if they only knew how valuable their assistance would be, and how natural and attractive our work is. You might put it somewhat in this way to your fly when you have got him into your parlour, but wording it according to the requirements of the particular case:

"Up till now you have been a busy or an idle man all your life. Any doctor will tell you that to knock off all work suddenly in the one case or to continue to vegetate in the other is the sure and short cut to the grave. I want to suggest to you a remedy. It is to take on a job of work; such a job is not only lying open to you but is eagerly awaiting you. It beats monkey gland in bringing you a renewal of your youth; it lands you into a cheery company of 'good companions'; and it enables you to do a valuable bit of service for your country and your fellow-men.

"I mean, of course, taking part in the Boy Scout Movement." Some men appear to imagine that to take on this job means being either a saint or an Admirable Crichton, or both; that you may not smoke or laugh or swear; that you must be either a pacifist, a faddist, a Fascist, or some other 'ist'; and that in the Movement we are governed by rules and regulations. This is all wrong. All that we want is a human man, who can revive his boyhood in the comradeship of boys, and who can play the game of Scouting with them in its simplest common-sense form, as given in *Scouting for Boys*."

Tell your fly that he has only to get into the boy's skin, and to look at things with the boy's eyes and use his own common sense and imagination. He will find it a fascinating game, bringing results that are very well worthwhile from the national point of view as well as being satisfying to the soul.

As to common-sense education, I was amused to read an article this week eulogising one of our schools because the boys there are *trusted*, and work is to some extent regulated from the boy's point of view. The author seems to regard this as a novel idea. It has, of course, been the basis of our training of Scouts for twenty-five years.

Yesterday I was talking with our village schoolmaster, a true educationist, by the way. He was explaining some of his methods which had rather raised the hair of an old-time school inspector, but which, in principle, are much in accord with our methods in Scout training.

Take one of his cases as an example. A girl was hopeless at arithmetic, so he had a talk with her, and asked her which of the school subjects she liked best. "Oh, cooking." And which she liked least. "Arithmetic."

"Well,"-- very confidentially-- "don't tell anyone, but it is just the same with me. I don't like arithmetic, either. And now, talking of cooking, how would it be if instead of the arithmetic lesson today you cooked a tea for two, with some good scones and a cake, and we can have it together. You order the necessary ingredients, but don't make it too expensive."

This idea she joyfully carried out. The following day he said-- "That tea was a huge success. Can you manage to cook another, on a larger scale, say for five, to which we can ask some pals?" It was duly and enthusiastically done.

The result was that in working out her quantities, prices, etc., the girl had all unconsciously had her arithmetic lesson. Interested in her job, and proud of being trusted with the responsibility put upon her, she was not only learning arithmetic but was realising its practical use at the same time.

It is on this same principle that the Scoutmaster, through the medium of Scouting items which interest the boy, inculcates such qualities as he wants. He educates the boy by encouraging his self -- expression instead of disciplining him by police methods of repression.

August, 1934.

Synthetic Scouting

PERSONALLY I fear there is the danger that a kind of synthetic Scouting may creep into our training in place of the natural article described in *Scouting for Boys*. I would urge District Commissioners to watch out for this in the course of their inspections and correct the tendency where they spot it.

By "synthetic scouting" I mean the Scout system obscured by overclothing the natural form with rules and instructive literature, tending to make what originally was, and should be, an open-air game into a science for the Scouter and a school curriculum for the boy.

August, 1936.

First Principles

IT is all very well to give the oncoming generation a good time, but if we look around, and if we look forward, we cannot fail to see that there is something more needed than accustoming the boys to enjoy themselves without responsibility and with everything found for them. If "we look around," what do we see? Battle, murder, and sudden death, with all the savagery of primitive times; and religion totally disregarded by peoples nominally civilised but

entirely lacking in self-control, swayed by mass suggestion, and only amenable to the rule of force at the hands of dictators.

We have in all conscience enough object-lessons going on around us in the world to show us that what is needed is the right *character* in a people if it is to be a free, peaceful, and happy nation.

We "have been warned," but are we doing anything about it? Insidious powers of evil are already at work even among our own people. Fortunately the British lethargy is hard to move; there is a leaven of stolid common sense in the average Briton's make-up. But modern developments of rush and unrest and the increased intercommunication between nations in the world bring about a sense of restlessness and with it the danger of contagion, where minds have become at all subject to mass hypnotism.

There are some signs today of an increasing lack among our people of that self-control which has been in the past the attribute of our nation. The number of murders and suicides, the craving for notoriety, the morbid or hysterical motion that sends crowds to a tragic funeral or to the arrival of a film star, all are straws that point that way. Those are bad traits in a people which may, indeed, be bound to, meet grave national crises in the near future, where self-restraint and united loyalty will be vitally essential.

It is up to us in the Scouts, therefore, to carry on the lines we have set before ourselves, to educate the CHARACTER of our oncoming generation so that it maintains and develops that personal self-control and sense of service to the community which mark the good citizen. We want to educate the lad in a practical way to make the best of his life. "Where contentment lives, communism dies."

I have used the word "educate" rather than "teach," by which I mean that we must inspire each individual boy to develop these qualities for himself rather than impose mere instruction upon him.

It is scarcely necessary for me to go over the old ground of our principles; they have been the same ever since the Movement started. But when it started it was on a very simple scheme, and with the growth of years many new interpretations and many new side lines have been added to it, so that there is the risk of its becoming over-clothed with these and of the original ideal and method being lost sight of.

The danger has crept in of the Movement becoming too academical, demanding high standards of efficiency, testings, and all that. We have to beware of this.

For Scouters I would urge the serious consideration of plans for developing our two main issues, namely *Physical Health* and *Character*. For *Physical Health*, not by physical drill, but rather through activities and games such as really appeal to the boys' enthusiasm; and also by practical suggestion of their own responsibility for their health, through proper diet, rest, and exercise. For *Character*, largely through the attraction of the Camp and the Patrol. In Camp the Scoutmaster has his great opportunity for watching and getting to know the individual characteristics of each of his boys, and then applying the necessary direction to their development; while the boys themselves pick up the character-forming qualities incident to life in camp, where discipline, resourcefulness, ingenuity, self-reliance, handcraft, woodcraft, boat-craft, team sense, Nature lore, etc., can all be imbibed under cheery and sympathetic direction of the understanding Scoutmaster.

The Patrol is the character school for the individual. To the Patrol Leader it gives practice in Responsibility and in the qualities of Leadership. To the Scouts it gives

subordination of self to the interests of the whole, the elements of self-denial and self-control involved in the team spirit of co-operation and good comradeship.

We have hundreds of thousands of boys and girls under our hands at the moment, and there are many hundreds of thousands more of them needing the training if we can only find leaders enough to deal with them, and can hold out sufficient attractions to bring them into our fold.

There is an immense field open to us, in which we can lead the way to greater developments. No need for us to get depressed over temporary set-backs or disappointments; these are bound to come from time to time. They are the salt that savours our progress; let us rise above them and look to the big import of what we are at. We have set ourselves a noble task which only needs a spot of courage and persistence to carry it through to success. Let us tackle it, with all the joy of the adventure in these dangerous times, to build up with the help of God a valuable breed of young citizens for the future safety, honour, and welfare of our nation.

October, 1936.

Leadership

LEADERSHIP is the keynote to success-- but leadership is difficult to define, and leaders are difficult to find. I have frequently stated that "any ass can be a commander, and a trained man may often make an instructor; but a leader is more like the poet-- born, not manufactured."

I could tell you of leaders whom I have found and how I found them-- but that is another story.

One can say, however, that there are four essential points to look for in a leader:

1. *He must have whole-hearted faith and belief in the rightness of his cause* so that his followers catch the contagion, and share his fanaticism.
2. *He must have a cheery, energetic personality, with sympathy and friendly understanding of his followers*, and so to secure their enthusiastic co-operation.
3. *He must have confidence in himself through knowing his job*. He thus gains the confidence of his men.
4. *What he preaches he must himself-practise*, thereby giving personal example to his team.

The essentials of leadership might, in telegraphic brevity, be summed up as "Comradeship and Competence." These principles apply whether the leader is a County Commissioner or a Sixer, but with none is it of greater importance than in the District Commissioner-- not even excepting the Scoutmaster, great fellow though he is !

The District Commissioner has the most important as well as the most interesting job in our organisation. He is the liaison officer, the link between the administrative chiefs and the executive Scouters. Leadership through personal touch is the keynote to our success in the Movement. The County Commissioner is appointed by and deputises for the Chief Scout, representing him in the County and representing *to* him the County's needs. The County Commissioner selects and appoints his District Commissioners to continue the chain of touch from the Chief Scout to the Scoutmaster. So, too, the Scoutmaster (Cubber or Rover Leader) passes on the touch to his Patrol Leaders, and these in their turn, through competence and comradeship, give the right line to their Scouts.

But it is the District Commissioner who is the powerful link in the chain and who must possess those four essential qualities to the full if he is to be a successful leader. It is through the personal touch that he "an inspire his followers to devoted service.

The Scouting standard of a District exactly reflects the standard of leadership of its District Commissioner. "By their results shall ye know them."

A curate's-egg District would imply a "curate's egg" of a District Commissioner!

The District Commissioner, if he is truly a leader, has his finger on the pulse of his whole District. He can see where a Scouter needs help or a timely word of encouragement or warning. He knows directly he has got his team on a competent footing to take up fresh enterprises. Just as a Scoutmaster continually seeks new adventures for his Troop, or the Patrol Leader for his Patrol, so the District Commissioner is constantly on the look out to see where a new step in development, training, or policy is desirable, and he wheels his pack of Scouters on to the line, and gives them a definite point to aim for. If he has really inspired them with his enthusiasm they will go to it like a pack of hounds and make a success of the run.

I have dilated rather largely on the District Commissioner because his is the important executive position of liaison between the County Commissioner and the Scoutmaster. But it must obviously rest with the County Commissioner to select only the right man for this job, and to put himself into close personal relationship with him.

And again, it rests with the District Commissioner to be very careful in the selection of each Scoutmaster and to take him fully into his confidence.

It is then the duty of the Scouters to play up to the District Commissioner loyally and whole-heartedly even though it involves extra work and give-and-take on their part for a time.

This way success lies.

November, 1936.
