



AMONG THE BOY SCOUTS—

By Ricardo de la Cruz*

School Opening



The coming of June ends the vacation and starts the school year. To Scouts, it means a departure from camps, a return to books and pads.

Let us make this a really good school year. The School serves as the everyday citizenship-laboratory of the Scout. In school, he has a great deal of opportunities to put into practice the Scout Oath and Law. Let us not permit those opportunities to pass away unheeded. Let

us prove to the world that a Scout is "physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight." Above all, let us show that a Scout is "PREPARED."

"Well begun," 'tis said, "is half done." This is an old, old saying, but it is always true. Let us begin the school year as best as we can. It may be difficult to start the "grind," after such a happy vacation. Yet, let us not forget that the vacation is but to prepare us for a new school year. Are we "PREPARED"?

The Patrol Method

"The Patrol Method is not *one* method in which Scouting can be carried on. It is the *ONLY* method!"—*Roland Phillips*.

This is a statement of fact. The Patrol Method is the foundation of Scouting.

Select a group of thirty boys, give them three projects to do, and in three minutes, you will notice smaller groups emerging from that group. Each boy has his own opinions, and when two or three boys concur, a gang is formed.

The Patrol is nothing but a gang. Unlike other gangs, however, it is orderly organized, and is under only one leader—the Patrol Leader.

Years and years of the existence of Scouting have proven that a Troop can be run successfully only by availing ourselves of the opportunities and benefits of the Patrol method.

The very first matter that should be given attention as soon as a new Troop is formed, is the organization of Patrols. Each Patrol has eight boys as its maximum membership. Of these eight, one is the Patrol Leader and another is the Assistant Patrol Leader.

In cases when the Scoutmaster is new and, therefore, is not acquainted with his boys and is

ignorant of their characteristics, it is advisable that the Patrol Leaders be appointed. The Scoutmaster may appoint anybody whom, he feels, is capable of handling a group of seven boys. (Of course, if, at a future date, he finds the boy incapable, he will have to change him. By that time, he will have become acquainted with the others.)

In cases, however, when a re-organization is going on, and the Scoutmaster knows his Scouts, the wise path to follow is to let the boys elect their leaders. No one but the boys know better the best man to lead them. Only in very few cases (exceptionally few) are the boys' decisions wrong, in which instances, the Scoutmaster should make use of his veto power and select another Patrol Leader.

As soon as the Patrol Leader is selected, it falls upon him to appoint his Assistant. From then on, the troop's success depends mostly upon the proper application of the Patrol Method.

In troops meetings, contests, hikes, and camps, the Patrol Method is always the basic system of operation. It is an excellent example of "multiplying one's self through others." Give the Patrol Leaders real responsibility. Make them

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