

Reading -9

In our schools only a superficial attention is paid to scouting. Scout-masters concentrate more upon the bright uniform, the parade, the salute, in short the outward show than upon the essential and basic principles upon which scouting was founded. In other words Indian schools possess only the form but not the spirit of scouting. And yet, in India more than anywhere else we need that sense of universal brotherhood which scout fosters and develop. The communal and sectarian institutions existing in our country are opposed to the very spirit of scouting and therefore, scouting show and parades are little more than a farce here.

The fundamental principles and the scout promise and law are in every country identical with those of the parent movement and the details of training differing slightly here and there to suit climatic and temperamental differences. In many countries coming into civilizations such for instances as Ghana and Nigeria, scouting is being utilized with satisfactory results by educational authorities and in Asian countries scouting has made equal strides with marked good effect on the youth.

It is for the educationalists in Indian to recognize the supreme importance and value of scouting. Just as public schools in England have taken up scouting as a means of developing, among th boys, the spirit of service to the community so we in India could give similar moral instruction to our boys by taking up scouting seriously. Already Indian boy's scouts perform very useful social services such as controlling crowds at fairs, arranging drinking water during

summer months, arranging lost children to parents and so on. But most important is the inculcation among them of a non- communal and nationalistic outlook. Scouting has, in fact a unique power of bringing together in a common citizenship, the different elements that go to make our Indian nation. Scouting can contribute towards national integrations.

Let us hope that scouting will help greatly in bringing about the spirit essential for the maintenance of peace, the spirit without which suggestion for disarmament and arbitrations can only be futile. The movement has spread even to school girls. Girl guides are now as common in English schools as boy scouts. This is a welcome extension of the movement although in India the Girl Guide movement has as yet made very little progress. Every effort should be made to promote this movement among girls as well as boys.