

What was the remedy? No sooner were green recruits landed than they were divided into groups of twos and threes and sent into the open country to forage for themselves. Thus thrown upon their resources, they acquired a sort of education highly necessary and useful—one that cultivated independence, alertness, and fortitude. To facilitate this training they were made to practice games and certain prescribed activities such as stalking, tracking, and primitive cooking. In this manner they gradually acquired powers of observation, deduction, and the ability to care for themselves. So fruitful of good were his efforts in this direction that he published a text-book for recruits on "Scouting," in which he outlined the kind of preparation desired and the methods to be followed in obtaining it.

THE APPLICATION

When General Baden-Powell returned to England after the Boer War, he found the same kind of degeneracy among the boys and young men at home. There was an army of what he called "wasters," who had little or no incentive to "make good" at anything. Many were entering "blind-alley" occupations, which offered ready pocket-money but no future, ultimately creating a class of unemployed and unemployables. Others were listlessly taking up work for which they were unfitted; and still others, not needing to work for a living, were drifting and, for want of some elevating purpose in life, going to the bad. Greatly to his surprise he found that the ideas advanced in his text-book on "Scouting" had been appropriated by schoolmasters and men interested in programmes of education for adolescent boys, and were being used by them to correct the evils he had noticed. Prompted by a desire to make whatever