

BADEN-POWELL'S LAST MESSAGE TO SCOUT LEADERS

To my BROTHER SCOUTERS AND GUIDES:

Cecil Rhodes said at the end of his life (and I, in my turn, feel the truth of it), "So much to do and so little time to do it." No one can hope to see the consummation, as well as the start, of a big venture within the short span of one life-time. I have had an extraordinary experience in seeing the development of Scouting from its beginning up to its present stage. But there is a vast job before it. The Movement is only now getting into its stride. (When I speak of Scouting I include in it Guiding also.) The one part which I can claim as mine towards promoting the Movement is that I have been lucky enough to find you men and women to form a group of the right stamp who can be relied upon to carry it on to its goal. You will do well to keep your eyes open, in your turn, for worthy successors to who you can, with confidence, hand on the torch. Don't let it become a salaried organization: keep it a voluntary movement of patriotic service. The Movement has already, in the comparatively short period of its existence, established itself onto a wide and so strong a footing as to show most encouraging promise of what may be possible to it in the coming years. Its aim is to produce healthy, happy, helpful citizens, of both sexes, to eradicate the prevailing narrow self-interest; personal, political, sectarian and national, and to substitute for it a broader spirit of self-sacrifice and service in the cause of humanity; and thus to develop mutual goodwill and cooperation not only within our own country but abroad, between all countries. Experience shows that this consummation is no idle or fantastic dream, but is a practicable possibility - if we work for it; and it means, when attained, peace, prosperity and happiness for all. The "encouraging promise" lies in the fact that the hundreds of thousands of boys and girls who are learning our ideals today will be the fathers and mothers of millions in the near future, in whom they will in turn inculcate the same ideals - provided that these are really and unmistakably impressed upon them by the leaders of today. Therefore you, who are Scouters and Guiders, are not only doing a great work for your neighbor's children, but are also helping in practical fashion to bring to pass God's Kingdom of peace and goodwill upon earth. So, from my heart, I wish you God-speed in your effort.

Baden-Powell