



THE ROVER SQUIRE

BY
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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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NOTE

All the articles contained in this booklet were written at the request of *The Rover World* and published in that magazine

THE ROVER SQUIRE

I

SCOUTING FOR BOYS

THE training of the Rover Squire is dealt with in chapter XI of Gilcraft's *Rover Scouts*, but that book is meant mainly for Scouters and Rover Mates. The intention of this series of talks is to suggest to Rover Squires themselves ways and means by which they can fit themselves for the Rover trail.

Chapter XI of *Rover Scouts* is headed by a quotation from *Rovering to Success*, which may well be used as a signpost to this present trail:

The Rover's business is to learn to be ready and how to be able to do the right thing in an emergency for the good of the rest (p. 217).

The conditions which a Rover Squire has to fulfil before Investiture, as set out in Rule 264, are:

- Have read and studied *Scouting for Boys* and *Rovering to Success*.
- Have studied and understood the Scout Promise and Scout Law as they concern Rovers, and be applying them in a spirit of unselfish service to life in general.
- Have sufficient knowledge to train a boy of Scout age in the tenderfoot tests.
- Have undergone such period of probation as the G.S.M., R.S.L. and Crew may require.

At first sight all this seems very theoretical and somewhat boring, but it need not necessarily be either. It is, however, up to every Rover Squire to realise from the very beginning that Rovering is a part of the Brotherhood of Scouts throughout the world, and that the Scout Promise and Scout Law are the conditions of entry to that Brotherhood, and the foundations on which it builds.

Scouting for Boys is the foundation book of Scouting. As a result of reading it when it was first published in 1908, many men and women, boys and girls, were inspired to put some of its suggestions into practice and to found their own Troops and Patrols.

Part I of the original edition, which was published in six fortnightly parts, contains a "Foreword for Instructor" over the initials R.S.S.B.-P., which commences with the sentences:

By the term "Instructor" I mean any man or lad who takes up the training of either a Patrol (*i.e.*, six to eight boys) or a Troop (*i.e.*, several Patrols joined together).

By means of this book I hope that anyone, even without previous knowledge of scouting, may be able to teach it to boys in town just as well as in the country.

Similarly, anyone without previous knowledge of Scouting can teach it to himself.

Scouting for Boys is valuable, therefore, either to a fellow who has been a Scout previously or to one who has not.

The Squire will find the Boys' Edition (1s.) sufficient for his purposes, although from the point of view of possible subsequent leadership he would do well to arm himself with a complete copy (2s. 6d.). The difference between the two is that all "Hints to Instructors" at the end of the various Camp Fire Yarns and chapters IX and X, "Patriotism" and "Notes to Instructors," are omitted from the former.

Whichever edition is available, it is a mistake to attempt to read the book through as one would read a novel or a tale of adventure. There is plenty of novelty and adventure in it, but it has to be taken slowly in order to appreciate it. The Squire would be well advised to take it Yarn by Yarn, and possibly in smaller instalments than that at times. The very fact that the book is divided up into Camp Fire Yarns points to this, and suggests that a Yarn is read and then its hearers set out to put some of the suggestions contained therein into execution. In this way they can “learn to be ready and how to be able to do the right thing.” This was the procedure followed by the Chief Scout at the experimental Scout camp held on Brownsea Island in August, 1907.

There are some who say that *Scouting for Boys* must be out of date since it was written over thirty years ago and conditions have changed since then. These would probably say also that the Bible is out of date. Herein lies the difference between reading and study. Study will show that the purpose of *Scouting for Boys* is to continue to get men and boys to do things for themselves, to strengthen their characters by encouraging them to emulate the designs and activities of men in the past, more especially of those men who ventured into places where comforts and companions did not exist. Modern science could not fly the Atlantic or voyage to the Antarctic without men of resolute character. It is not the machines that do these things so much as the men who rule them.

A study of *Scouting for Boys* should prove to the Squire that he is asked by Scouting not so much to keep up to date with modern changing conditions as to preserve himself as a man of character by the exercise of his own self-control and self-reliance.

His study must, therefore, include some attempt to put the suggestions he has read into actual practice, or otherwise he will not be in a position to grasp the purport and meaning of what he reads.

For instance, Camp Fire Yarn No. 11 deals with the “Observation of ‘Sign,’” and gives various examples of the value of the observation of details and of using one’s eyes. The reading of that yarn is not sufficient to make anyone able to observe details and use his eyes. It is incumbent on the Squire to do what he can to put into practice the various hints and suggestions contained in the yarn so that he can make himself a more proficient observer. There are many suggestions that he can put into practice for himself; there are others which the Crew can work out for his benefit.

Again, a study of the yarn will lead him on to other trails. The story of *Kim* is mentioned. Let the Squire get hold of a copy of Rudyard Kipling’s book and read the chapter which deals with Kim’s training by Lurgan Sahib in the Simla Bazaar. He will find there both the origin of Kim’s game and a complete progressive programme of training in observation and character study.

Again, take Camp Fire Yarn No. 8, “Pioneering.” Here very obviously study must produce practice. It is quite useless merely to glance at the diagram of a knot. No one can keep that diagram in his memory for any length of time. If, however, the actual knot illustrated is tied several times. Almost anyone can acquire the ability to tie the knot and to remember how to do it over a long period of time. There are many other activities suggested in this yarn that can be developed and worked out individually or collectively as the case may be.

Obviously a Squire cannot be expected to be able to carry out all the suggestions contained in *Scouting for Boys*. That would be asking too much of anyone. He should, however, study it to such purpose that he can select several activities that appeal to him or that he thinks would benefit him particularly. Once his selection has been made he should set himself the task of following out the particular line or lines so that he is “able to do the right thing,” and has sufficient knowledge and ability in regard to Scouting generally to be able to set an example to others.

All Rovers have not sufficiently grasped the importance of the living example of Rovering pictured by the Chief Scout on page 208 of *Rovering to Success*:

He is a hefty Rover Scout, about eighteen years of age, that is a fellow training to be a man. He has tramped from a distance with his pack, in which were his light tent, his blanket, cooking pot and food.

He carries on him his axe and lariat. In his hand a serviceable staff with a weirdly carved head, his own handiwork.

In addition to this load he carries a still more important thing – a happy smile on his weather-tanned face.

The whole picture is one of competence, self-reliance, and the joy of living.

II

ROVERING TO SUCCESS

IN the first condition required of a Rover Squire the reading and study of *Rovering to Success* is coupled with that of *Scouting for Boys*. There is, however, a great deal of difference between the two books, entirely apart from their contents. The latter is addressed primarily to those who are taking up the training of others in Scouting; the former is written for the individual young man who is setting out on his journey through life, as its sub-title, “A Book of Life-Sport for Young Men,” indicates. This to a certain extent marks the difference that lies in the application of this particular condition to the Rover Squire himself.

The reading and study of *Rovering to Success* is an individual and personal matter. The Squire should possess his own copy (a paper-covered edition is now available at 1s.) and not be dependent on borrowing someone else’s. He should not attempt to read through the book at a sitting. There is more than enough for him to digest in each separate chapter. It is a book for him to look at from time to time so that he has sufficient leisure to think out for himself the various points discussed. If, after he has thought about some of these points, he talks them over with one of his friends – his Sponsor, Rover Mate, Rover Scout Leader, or another – he will be the better able to arrive at a more complete understanding of what is required of him as a Rover.

It is a common practice, and one to be greatly encouraged, for Sponsors to be appointed from the Crew to pay special attention to each Rover Squire. It is the duty of these Sponsors to help Squires as much as they possibly can during their period of probation. In their turn, however, Squires should seek for help from their Sponsors and not sit idly by waiting to be approached. Sponsors, like Squires, may be shy and find it difficult to help unless their guidance is sought.

In his actual reading a Squire will be greatly helped by a study of the summary which the Chief gives before each chapter. These summaries give him a better idea of the lesson the Chief is trying to convey, of the temptations he is asked to avoid, and of the qualities he is expected to acquire.

Although the examples contained in it are worldwide, *Rovering to Success* applies primarily to British conditions, outlook, and traditions. This makes it more difficult for men of other nationalities to understand and appreciate. Despite this disadvantage – a disadvantage that is implicit by the personal appeal it is intended to convey – the translations into other languages have proved valuable, and men in other countries have derived benefit from it. I mention this because the Squire should endeavour to realize from the outset that he is a member of a world-wide Movement, and should undertake his study with that in mind.

So far as the fulfilment of the condition required of each Squire to read and study *Scouting for Boys* and *Rovering to Success* is concerned, there is no definite test that can be applied. It is not intended that a Squire should obtain a complete knowledge of these two books on an examination basis. What is intended is that he should acquire a knowledge of their general trend and grasp the

spirit that lies behind them, and that he should be making some attempt to put that trend and spirit into action.

A Squire has really to test himself and convince himself that he can subscribe to the gospel that these two books preach, and that he is able to tread the path through life that they indicate. He must apply his own standards to his reading and study, being guided in this by the standards that the older members of the Crew have in their turn applied, and are continuing to apply, to their Rover Scouting. The Crew as a whole has an obligation in this respect which in the interests both of good Scouting and of themselves they cannot afford to ignore.

It may be that the Squire, as a result of his reading and study, feels that he is taking on more than he can deal with or that he is out of sympathy with the teaching of these two books. If that is the case, there is no obligation on him remaining in the Crew. His Squiredom is a testing period, and the tests – as I have already indicated – should be applied more by himself than by others. This being so, he is at perfect liberty, and will be following the wiser course, if he transfers his energies and leisure to some other movement that better suits his abilities and point of view. No one should think any the less of him for being honest in his opinions, and it is a truism to state that Scouting as such is not suited to everyone.

III

THE SCOUT PROMISE AND THE SCOUT LAW

“SIDE by side with the study of *Scouting for Boys* and *Rovering to Success* as the ‘two volumes of his “seamanship manual”’ comes the study and understanding of the *Scout Promise* and the *Scout Law* as they concern Rovers. Before the introduction of the mariner’s compass in the fourteenth century the only practical means amongst Western nations of navigating ships was to keep within sight of land, or to steer for short distances out of sight of land by reference to the sun and stars, particularly the Pole Star. The Rover in his voyage through life must derive his inspiration and guidance from above if he is to reach the Port to which Scouting directs him. The Scout Promise and Law are there, like the sun and stars, to enable him to direct his course, more particularly the first part of the Promise, which enjoins on him Duty to God” (*Rover Scouts*, p. 73).

This part of a Squire’s training is still more of a personal nature. The repetition of the Scout Promise as a man and a Rover will bind him in the future to take a definite stand in life on the side of God and of his fellow-men. This cannot be lightly undertaken, and hence it is that as a Squire he is asked to understand this Promise and the Law which is included in it. Not only this; he is asked to go further than mere study and to do what he can to apply the principles of the Promise and Law to his ordinary everyday life.

This is no light undertaking, but it can be done. We have the examples given us by many Rovers and Scouts in the past to show that they can be helped and strengthened to live straight and square by the Promise and Law and by the knowledge that others all over the world are making a similar attempt.

The Squire can be helped to an understanding of the Law by the Chief’s interpretation on pages 220 to 222 of *Rovering to Success* and by the interpretation given by Dr. Griffin in chapter

X of *The Quest of the Boy*, but in addition he must make his own interpretation for himself and translate that interpretation into action.

He would do well, however, to discuss these several interpretations with his R.S.L., R.M., or Sponsor, and ask them, as they can easily do, to advance illustrations out of their own personal experiences.

This done, he should then start in to analyse his own position. There may, fortunately, be some points which he can cross off in the certain knowledge that he is sound in his attitude and standing in regard to them. There may be other points which he will require to underline in the knowledge that he is not up to standard in these matters. This facing up to things must not be shirked. Some form of self-examination is required of a Squire before Investiture, but there is no need, and it is a mistake, for him to wait till the evening of that ceremony before facing up to this particular question of his own character and his own behaviour.

Another point emerges which needs mentioning. A moment's thought should be sufficient to enable all of us in the Scout world to realise that there are many men and women who do not subscribe to the Scout Law and Scout Promise and are yet living their lives as we would wish all Scouts to do. Some of us are apt to imagine that we are different from others; some of us are apt to adopt the attitude of the Pharisee and to thank God that we are not as other men are; some of us fail to credit our fellow-men with the qualities that they possess.

We are helped by our Promise and Law because they summarise in a concrete form the code of behaviour and ethics which governs all sincere and God-loving men and women. The Promise and Law are definite and positive and enjoin on us the *performance* of certain virtues. Herein lies a lesson for Leader, Mate, Rover, and Squire. We must not continue to voice abstract theories, but get down to concrete facts. If we are taking up the search for cleanliness, let us start by getting down to the washing of our bodies and the cleaning of the Den.

A Squire can help himself if he gets down to things in some such way as this: "I am not very tidy in my habits; what am I going to do about it? First, I must see that my clothes are worn in a tidy kind of way. Then I must see that my tools are always put away and kept in good order when work ceases. What am I doing about keeping things in order in my own place at home? What am I doing about the letters I receive? Do I stuff them away in a pocket or drawer on receipt and forget about them, or do I put them in a special place until they are answered? Do I answer them as soon as I can? What happens to the money I get? Do I keep an account of it, or does it just get frittered away?"

Simple things these, but life is built up of simple things, and it is just these simple things that count. The Squire must realise for himself that, if he is careful over little details, the harder and more difficult things demanded of him by the Promise and Law will be easier of fulfilment.

Again, the Squire will realise the corporate help given him by the Crew, which should provide him with a solid rock of opinion on which he can lean. This brings me out of the immediate environment of the Squire and his obligations to the most important question of the atmosphere radiated by Scouting in general and the Rover Crew in particular. We all know how the right kind of atmosphere can be endangered or ruined by the actions or words of one individual. We all know that at times we fail to live up to what is asked of us because we funk making a stand against such actions or words for fear of being miscalled "pi" or "goody-goody" or "mother's darling." Yet we know full well that if the atmosphere that exists in our Crew or our Den, in camp or on hike, at work or at home is straightforward and above-board, we ourselves and all our companions are helped. It is the privilege and duty of all Rover Scouts to maintain the high tone of Scouting as well as its reputation in the eyes of other people.

I have, unfortunately, heard of Rovers who used their uniform in order to gain privileges which they would not otherwise have obtained. I have heard of others who discarded their uniform because they did not want to be fettered by the standards it demanded of them. These latter are more honest and sincere than the former. But the atmosphere that the fulfillment of this

condition for a Rover Squire creates should not change by reason of change of place or change of clothes; it should be constant.

Our uniform is a recognised aid to the proper performance of Scouting and of the Scout Promise and Law. When we are in “civvies” the continued wearing of our Scout badge does help to act as a reminder of the necessity of continuing to live up to that Promise and Law. I would encourage every Squire, just as I would encourage every Scout, to wear the Scout badge as a reminder and as a strength. If as a Brotherhood we maintained this healthy practice we would gain in quantity as well as quality.

IV

TENDERFOOT TESTS

THE possession of sufficient knowledge to train a boy of Scout age in the Tenderfoot tests is not necessarily the childish business some would suppose it to be. Obviously it is easy for a fellow of Squire’s age to possess or acquire sufficient knowledge to pass the tests asked of a boy of eleven. This alone is not what is required; the Squire is expected to have the ability to pass his knowledge on to others.

First it would be as well, however, for the Rover Squire – no matter what his previous Scout experience – to test his own ability and satisfy himself that he still retains a knowledge of the Tenderfoot tests. Perhaps he may consider this to be beneath his dignity, but only if he has forgotten about these things. If he possesses the knowledge, he will not object to testing himself in regard to it. If he has forgotten, it is high time he recovered his knowledge if he is to set an example to others younger than himself.

The fellow who has not previously been a Scout will realise that such simple tests merely lead on to more important things. Under Rule 265 (ii) he cannot wear Scout uniform until he passes the Tenderfoot tests as the minimum performance expected of him. These tests comprise, as we all know, a knowledge of the Scout Law and Promise, Signs and Salute, Union Jack, certain uses of the Scout staff, six knots, and whipping the end of a rope. With the exception of the Law and Promise, they can be learnt in company with other Squires, and a certain amount of friendly rivalry can be introduced in the shape of competitions in the uses of the Scout staff and knot tying, more especially, perhaps, in knotting speed contests. Manual dexterity in these matters is of some importance. A Rover who fails to tie a correct bowline is not a good advertisement of the values of Rovering in the eyes of Scouts or other people.

As *Rover Scouts* expresses it:

This part of the Squire’s training is not so much an individual and personal matter, and so the different Squires in a Crew (or in different Crews for that matter) can, and should, be brought together for the purpose. The reason for this condition and the need for all – no matter if they have been Scouts before – to go through the test thoroughly and conscientiously should be pointed out. Thereafter each part of the Tenderfoot test should be taken separately and discussed thoroughly. This alone is not sufficient; each particular part of the test should be done in actual practice, not once but several times, so as to ensure that each Squire possesses the necessary ability, for each must be able to train another by means of demonstration as well as precept. The difference between knowing a subject and being able to impart a knowledge of that subject to other people has to be felt to be appreciated, and actual practice in the imparting of knowledge will have to be given (p. 74).

Roland Philipps' *Letters to a Patrol Leader* will be found of value as indicating the way in which knowledge can be imparted to a boy of Scout age. The first series deals with the Scout Law, and the second series with the Tenderfoot and Second Class tests. Each series costs 6d. only. A perusal of these letters will enable the Squire to grasp the importance of giving a boy the reasons why he is asked to do these things. It will be remembered that Lurgan Sahib would explain to Kim "by the half-hour together how such-and-such a caste talked, or walked, or coughed, or spat, or sneezed, and, since 'hows' matter little in this world, the 'why' of everything."

This particular condition fits in with the other conditions required of a Squire. If he has to think out how he should explain the Scout Law to a boy, he has to clarify his own mind about it and reduce his own ideas to plain, straightforward, and understandable language. This will help him to get down to facts as opposed to fancies and to concrete practices as opposed to abstract theories. He will have to search his own experience for examples that can appeal to a boy. He will be able to assess his own performance in the past. Gilcraft's *Yarns on Scout Promise and Law* (again 6d.) may be found helpful as suggesting ideas.

The reading and study of *Scouting for Boys* will furnish him with several suggestions for bringing a knowledge of other Tenderfoot work into actual practice, and will provide him with examples that he can quote. In fact, it would be worth his while to extract from *Scouting for Boys* all the references to the performance of Tenderfoot work of one kind or another that that book contains. He will also find therein various reasons advanced for the use of the Scout salute, the flying of the Union Jack, and so on. In fact, by applying this simple and childish (?) condition to his reading, he will be able to get still more interest and value out of the latter.

Again, as is pointed out in *Rover Scouts*:

The matter does not rest there. In the beginning it is advisable to point out how each one of the small points contained in the Tenderfoot tests can be developed on to wider and more manly issues. For instance, from the Scout signs can be developed the progressive study of various kinds of signs, sign languages, codes, means of communication between various peoples, signalling, trails, and tracking; the composition of the Union Jack expands into the history and development of the British Commonwealth and questions of citizenship; the knots lay the foundations of further practice in pioneering and engineering, which are real men's work, and so on. This aspect of the case will also have to be presented to the Crew as a whole and can be discussed and developed at Crew meetings (P. 75).

There is one last point that each Squire must realise, and that is that this condition does not imply that he has to go round looking for some poor "victim" whom he can actually train in practice. To do so in the case of boys of Scout age who are already recruits might do a P.L. or would-be First-Class Scout out of a job which is also part of their ordinary training. In some cases, more especially in connection with Troops of a special nature, this could be done, but only under the direction and supervision of the Scoutmaster concerned. It would be permissible for a Squire to take in hand the training of a boy who is in no way connected with a Scout Group, with the object of interesting him in Scouting and recruiting him to the Brotherhood, but in such a case the Squire must be sure that he can get the boy attached to some existing Group or to a new Group that is being started. In the main, however, the Squire will have to prove his ability on his Sponsor, R.M., R.S.L., or other member of his Crew!

V

PROBATION

THE period of probation serves as a proof or test of character and ability, and, therefore, varies according to the particular individual concerned. The Squire himself, as well as the G.S.M., R.S.L., and Crew, has some say in the matter. The period of probation so far as the Movement is concerned is to prove that the fellow is of the right type to respond to the continued influence of Scouting and that he is acceptable to the other fellows in the Crew. The period of probation so far as the Squire is concerned is to prove that Roving is something to which he can give his time and energies. I have already alluded to this point in the talk on *Roving to Success*, but it is worth repeating that the Squire is at full liberty to withdraw at any time if he feels himself unequal to the task before him or out of sympathy with the aims, principles, and methods of Roving or unable to work in with the existing members of the Crew. It is better that he should do so at this stage, before investiture, than let the Crew down later on by faintheartedness.

Apart from the various questions that have already been dealt with, some consideration should be paid to the Open Air side of Roving. The emphasis that Scouting lays on the Open Air is not now so peculiar as it used to be, but the Open Air of Scouting may be regarded as somewhat different from that of other movements or organisations.

“By the word ‘Scouting’ is meant the work and attributes of backwoodsmen, explorers, and frontiersmen” (*Scouting for Boys*, p. 13). Roving “provides Scouting for young men with its joys of Backwoodsmanship and Nature-craft” (*Roving to Success*, p. 218). It is this atmosphere of the backwoods that the Open Air of Roving stands for. This point must be realised by the Squire, and he must be prepared to subscribe to it and to realise that Roving continues to illustrate the art of fending for one’s self in the open air. Luxury camping, pleasant picnics, afternoons on the river may be all very well in their way, but they do not come under the heading of Roving.

His study of *Scouting for Boys* and of *Roving to Success* should have left no doubt in the Squire’s mind as to what Scouting means by the Open Air. In his period of probation he is required by implication to prove that he is prepared to practise the work and attributes of the backwoodsman and others of that ilk. Roving is not just a matter for indoors; it is not just a social club; it is not just a social service organisation; it is not just a world-wide fraternity; it is not just an open-air movement. Roving seeks to link all these together into one comprehensive whole and at the same time to preserve manliness and self-reliance amongst all its members.

It would be as well, too, for the Squire to understand during his period of probation what is meant by the other half of the Rover motto of Open Air and Service.

The Scout Movement is not a social service organisation. It does not profess, or desire, to associate all its members in any form of social service that may appear popular, or even necessary, at any time. From its start it has laid stress on the duty that a man owes his neighbour and has asked its members to do what good lies in their power to others round about them. The emphasis on the Good Turn won for Scouting much of its popularity in the eyes of the general public in the early days. Scouting does not aim, therefore, to render social service in the present – although it does frequently organise such service on special occasions. It does aim, however, at encouraging and training all its members, from the latest joined Tenderpad, to render service when they have sufficient strength, knowledge and experience to be able to render such service efficiently, and are of an age to make their own selection. Scouting deals mainly with minors and it may not employ those minors on any work that may render them liable to risk or danger, physically or morally. The obligation to parents and guardians is sometimes overlooked by those who criticise Scouting for not taking part as an organization in some temporarily popular social service campaign.

Rovers are of an age to be able to choose for themselves, and so it is that the service side of their activities is emphasised, but that service should come from the heart, and be an illustration of their general attitude of mind. It should be effective as a result of the previous and present training they have received

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and are receiving. It should be continued and not of a temporary nature born of the excitement of the moment. (Extracted from a Report by the Camp Chief on his Tour in India, 1933-34.)

This combination of Open Air and Service calls for an appreciation on the part of both the Squire and the Crew of what might be called the companionship of the backwoods. The realisation that they are all like-minded in their aims and in the methods by which they hope to attain these aims should induce in every Rover – Scouter and Scout – the knowledge that they can be frank and candid with each other. This understanding will make for mutual helpfulness. I can only repeat Kipling's oft-quoted verse:

“When Crew and Captain understand each other to the core,
It takes a gale and more than a gale
To put the ship ashore.
For the one will do what the other commands
Although they are chilled to the bone,
And both together can live through weather
That neither could face alone.”

It is to this end that the Squire is required to undergo a period of probation before he can be accepted as a regular and permanent member of the Rover Scout Crew.

VI

SELF-EXAMINATION AND INVESTITURE

SOME process of self-examination (in the form of a vigil or otherwise) and an investiture, during which he will make or reaffirm the Scout Promise, are essential to emphasise the fact that as a Rover he is undertaking certain definite responsibilities. The degree of ceremony used in the vigil and the investiture will vary, and this must depend on the wishes of the Crew and of the individual to be invested” (Rule 267).

The process of self-examination, like the greater part of the conditions which the Squire is asked to fulfil, is in the main a matter of personal conscience. The rule purposely refrains from dictating any definite line of conduct. The freedom of the individual must be preserved, and I would impress upon all Squires and all Crews the real need for the preservation of this freedom if the real purpose of the self-examination is to be realised.

Some are helped by formality, but the process of self-examination must never be reduced to mere form. In the dictionary the word “process” is defined, among other things, as “a natural series of continuous actions; a progressive movement or state of activity.” Stress may rightly be laid on this natural, continued, and progressive change. The Squire's self-examination is not just a question of a few minutes or a few hours at the end of his period of probation, although some small and simple ceremony might serve to mark the culmination of the decisions he has arrived at in regard to his own personal conduct of life as a result of the continued thought he has given to that subject while he has been a Squire.

When discussing the Scout Promise and Law something was said about the need for the Squire to square up to things and ask himself questions of a definite nature. We are all quite ready

to accept a certain code of conduct in theory without giving much thought to the practical application of that code to our own present and future conduct. The pamphlet *Rover Scouts: What They Are* contains a suggestion for the investiture and self-examination drawn up by the Chief Scout. Certain questions are given therein so as to help the Squire to come to a decision in regard to where he stands and what he is aiming at. These questions are divided into three distinct parts – spiritual, application, self-analysis.

In many Crews it has become a habit to hand these questions to a Squire just before he embarks on the final ceremony of a vigil. To my mind this is a mistake, and I would urge every Squire to ask his Sponsor, R.M., or R.S.L. early on for these questions, and for any others that they consider might be helpful to him, so that he can give them thought and gradually arrive at his decisions in regard to them. If this is done he is not so likely to be carried away by the emotions of the moment, and will be the better able to think out their practical application to his own life and conduct.

In addition to this self-examination on matters of conduct and behaviour, a Squire would do well to examine himself in regard to his own ability to put into action the decisions he has made. The will to do a thing and the ability to perform it should be so grafted together, because that is the principle on which Scouting works. The Squire should, therefore, satisfy himself that he has learned “to be ready and how to be able to do the right thing in an emergency for the good of the rest.”

“There is a distinction between self-examination and vigil which it would be well to appreciate. A vigil was the watch kept on the night before a feast, and gradually came to be applied to devotions on the eve of a festival, and to what amounted to a ceremony of self-dedication” (Rover Scouts, p. 78). The degree of ceremony used to mark the final completion of the process of self-examination must be left more to the individual concerned than to the Crew. It is not a condition of his final admission to the Crew, but something devised so as to help him to stick to the decisions he has made. Each Squire should discuss the matter with his R.S.L. and agree with him whether any little formal ceremony will be helpful or not. Various suggestions are made in the pamphlet already mentioned.

This pamphlet also gives two variant suggestions for the investiture ceremony, the essential part of which is the making or reaffirming of the Scout Promise. Many Crews have adopted a particular form of ceremony, but this should not be regarded as constant and fixed, and the Squire is at liberty to say what will help him most in his future work as a Rover. His attitude should be that he desires to carry with him an ever-present picture of the ceremony which will be a continued strength to him. This entails for most of us a certain amount of simplicity, which leaves the repetition of the Scout Promise, as a man, clear-cut in our minds.

With his investiture as a Rover Scout the Squire enters on another stage of his progress through Scouting and Life. He still continues to learn and to prepare himself to meet whatever task may confront him, but he leaves the shipyard and is launched on a wider sea of adventure and good purpose. If the building has been good, then the voyage on which he embarks on his own will be successful and the port reached in God’s good time.