



service he may render his community and his nation.

He must feel free of fear. There must be no spying of neighbor upon neighbor or of police or volunteer vigilante. Well-meaning citizens must be able to go about their personal affairs with a minimum of questioning.

And there should be individual recognition of personal achievement. When a man does an unusual service to the community or to the nation, when he has a useful idea, he should be given due honor. His own achievements should not be lost sight of in an organization.

The Army has long realized this human need for individual recognition. There are many honors, citations, badges, stripes and so on for various types of distinction.

Civilian life has all too little of this. Communities might well offer more in this way. Mention in local publications, city citations, honor rolls might be provided for the living as well as for those who have died in the nation's service.

We can't all be key men, dollar-a-year experts, generals, or defense executives. But even the John Does of America can be important by belonging to an organization which is important.

The boy who joins the Army or the Navy adds in this way to his feeling of importance. When he puts on the uniform of Uncle Sam, he becomes more than he was before—he is now a soldier or a sailor in the nation's service, and as such very important to the welfare of his country.

Civilians have this feeling of important service if the groups to which they belong receive general public recognition

as important and really valued agencies.

The member of a labor union, manufacturer's association, citizen's association, lodge, fraternity, Red Cross, church, volunteer fire department, Boy or Girl Scouts, or any other civic or community organization adds to his own self-respect through the respect accorded to his organization.

In a time of emergency it is important that every individual in the nation—man, woman and child—should be encouraged to belong to some organization that is playing an active and important part in the nation's defense.

As many as possible should be leaders in some sort of work. Local committees for the care of various defense duties, neighborhood committees, small groups for occupations or for certain age levels multiply the opportunities for leadership in important phases of work for the national welfare.

Students in colleges, high schools, and even grade schools can be given much broader opportunities to take an actual part in national and community service. This would be a much better preparation for citizenship in a democracy than can be obtained from any amount of reading in the most carefully selected textbooks.

It has been proposed that students take and then later give first-aid courses. Girl students might form organizations that would be responsible for the care of children of defense workers. College students, particularly graduate students, might devote some of their spare time to giving instruction in evening defense training courses. They can aid in adult education classes, Americanization

classes. Girl students might contribute lectures in the community on newer knowledge of nutrition, chemistry for the home, and so on.

Students of all ages can learn to contribute to community music and recreation programs.

Activity in the nation's service and personal contributions of time, work, and thought to build up America's defenses serves thus a double purpose. Not only does it make the whole fabric of democracy stronger, but it lifts the spirits of those taking part in this united endeavor.

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#### MEDICINE

### Ask Trial of Tannic Acid Treatment for Poison Ivy

**T**RIAL, under medical supervision, of a tannic acid treatment for poison ivy is urged by the U. S. Public Health Service on the basis of experiments by its scientists reported in detail in Public Health Reports. (May 16.)

Tests on a limited number of persons at the close of last year's poison ivy season were most encouraging. Itching and discomfort stopped within one or two days after beginning of the treatment and all symptoms disappeared at the end of a week.

A 10% solution of tannic acid in water is used. This solution is applied to the inflamed area after previous cleansing with alcohol. The treatment should not be attempted by laymen, it is stated, because, among other reasons, it might do more harm than good if it were used on some skin inflammation that was not due to ivy poisoning. The treatment was developed by Dr. Louis Schwartz and Dr. Leon H. Warren.

To prevent ivy poisoning, these same scientists working at the National Institute of Health developed a vanishing cream containing 10% sodium perborate. The cream is to be rubbed into the skin before going into woods or fields where there may be poison ivy plants. Directions are to wash off the cream with soap and water and put on fresh cream every four hours if you are going to be in the fields or woods all day. The vanishing cream should be made up fresh every two weeks.

Both the protective vanishing cream and tannic acid treatment are effective against both poison ivy and poison sumac.

*Science News Letter, May 24, 1941*

In some parts of the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California average *snowfall* for a year totals 25 feet.