



National Commissioner's Minute

Years ago, I happily acquired an original of *The Note Book of Elbert Hubbard*—a collection of his most influential writings. Included in that book is what can be considered a tribute to each of you who serve so diligently as commissioners. That piece was written in 1899 and is titled “A Message to Garcia.” As an expression of thanks to each of you serving as a commissioner, irrespective of whether you are a unit commissioner, a roundtable commissioner, or an administrative commissioner, I share the following tribute:

Excerpts from “A Message to Garcia”

By Elbert Hubbard

In all this Cuban business there is one man stands out on the horizon of my memory like Mars at perihelion. When war broke out between Spain and the United States, it was very necessary to communicate quickly with the leader of the Insurgents. Garcia was somewhere in the mountain vastness of Cuba—no one knew where. No mail nor telegraph message could reach him. The President must secure his co-operation, and quickly.

What to do!

Some one said to the President, “There’s a fellow by the name of Rowan will find Garcia for you, if anybody can.”

Rowan was sent for and given a letter to be delivered to Garcia. How the “fellow by the name of Rowan” took the letter, sealed it up in an oilskin pouch, strapped it over his heart, in four days landed by night off the coast of Cuba from an open boat, disappeared into the jungle, and in three weeks came out on the other side of the Island, having traversed a hostile country on foot, and delivered his letter to Garcia—are things I have no special desire now to tell in detail.

The point I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia; Rowan took the letter and did not ask, “Where is he at?” By the Eternal! there is a man whose form should be cast in deathless bronze and the statue placed in every college of the land. It is not book-learning young men need, nor instruction about this and that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, concentrate their energies: do the thing—“Carry a message to Garcia!” ...



Charles W. Dahlquist II
National Commissioner



... My heart goes out to the man who does his work when the “boss” is away, as well as when he is at home. And the man who, when given a letter for Garcia, quietly takes the missive, without asking any idiotic questions, and with no lurking intention of chucking it into the nearest sewer, or of doing aught else but deliver it, never gets “laid off,” nor has to go on a strike for higher wages. Civilization is one long anxious search for just such individuals. Anything such a man asks shall be granted; his kind is so rare that no employer can afford to let him go. He is wanted in every city, town and village—in every office, shop, store and factory. The world cries out for such: he is needed and needed badly—the man who can “Carry a message to Garcia.”

Bless you for your goodness, your vision, and your tireless service to strengthen the units under your charge. I have watched you in your roundtables and your colleges of commissioner science, as you have served in your councils and districts, as you have participated as staff on Wood Badge courses, and, most recently, at the 2017 National Scout Jamboree. I am honored to serve with you.

Best wishes and Good Scouting!