

rocks." He worked his way through public high school by helping the janitor, sleeping in the building, and doing odd jobs for the teachers who shared their lunches with him. He finished with the second honor of his class, without owning any textbooks to speak of — he borrowed them from his friends.

The principal wrote us to ask if we could help a boy like that, and we answered, "That is the kind of boy we want to help." So Herminio came on registration day, thin, sallow, and sunken-cheeked, and we remembered that it had been three months since school was out in the spring and the teachers had divided their lunches. We assigned him to work in the botany laboratory, for we were afraid to have him work on the farm in his emaciated condition. By the end of the month he had gained fully ten pounds, and Dr. Velez reported that he was the best worker he had ever had as an assistant — so good, indeed, that he did five afternoons of work in three afternoons, "and what should he do with him the other two afternoons?"

Then he was assigned to cut grass on the terraces two afternoons a week; he asked for two *machetes* and proceeded to use them simultaneously, for he was ambidextrous, and accomplished almost twice the work of the average man. The first afternoon he cut grass right through the dinner hour, forgetful of time. For the first time in his life, Herminio had a regular abundance of food and all the books he could read. There were over ten thousand books in the college library, all of

which he could read, for he understands English just as well as Spanish.

After a year at the Polytechnic Herminio became an active professing Christian. After two years he decided to become a minister. He will be graduated in May 1942, and will enter the seminary in the fall. His dream is to go back to his hills and serve his people.

All this is why we are willing to wait for the heifer to become a cow, and why we are proud of Herminio.

Time and space limit us so that we cannot tell of Nito, who became a surgeon; Ismael, who became a professor; Elena, a director of nurses; Alvaro, a minister; Inocencia, a teacher; Hipolito, a lawyer, and many others who are taking places of moral leadership in the three Americas. And no man can measure the influence for good of one little Christian college among two million descendants of the *conquistadores*. — JARVIS S. MORRIS

Would you like to help such worthy students as these by giving to the Student Rotary Loan Fund? We need \$5,000 at least, but no gift is too small to be appreciated. Loans are paid back after graduation and the money will be used over and over again to help students like Juan and Herminio.

Make checks payable to the *Polytechnic Institute of Puerto Rico* and send to San German, Puerto Rico



## The Upward Climb



## The Upward Climb

THE REPRESENTATIVE from Aguadilla who had made possible the beautiful park at one of the places where Columbus is purported to have landed in Puerto Rico in 1493 saw the boy studying his lessons under the street light between sales of penny candies and chewing gum. And then later he found that the boy was leading his class (he was graduated with first honors in a class of well over a hundred) and that his name was John Columbus (Juan Colon, in Spanish). He helped Juan to get a small scholarship from the Junior Red Cross and the boy came to the

Borinquen Hall, girl's dormitory. Below, dining hall, Polytechnic Institute



Polytechnic Institute. Here he worked from three to five hours a day, first as a laborer and later as assistant in the chemistry department. For two summers he stayed on the campus and worked on the farm. He finished with a debt of about \$75 at the Institute. The day after his graduation he went to the air base near Aguadilla and got a job as a carpenter as a result of what he had learned in the shops at the Polytechnic; the first check he drew he sent to his Alma Mater. At the end of six weeks his debt was paid.

Because of his brilliant record, he won an Insular Government scholarship to study medicine, and the Presbyterian Board has advanced him additional funds to make possible his medical studies at Syracuse. His purpose is to return to Puerto Rico to serve his internship in the Presbyterian Hospital and be a medical missionary among his people. His brother, just a little older, a young minister in one of the larger rural churches in the Presbytery of Puerto Rico, is also a graduate of the Polytechnic.

Juan may be an actual descendant of Christopher, for we know that Columbus' son, Diego, made a settlement in Puerto Rico in 1514. But whether he is or is not, it matters most that he is a spiritual descendant of Abraham, of Luke, the beloved physician, and of the founding fathers of the Polytechnic.

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"I must remember you also of the heifer which I have, and which my father opposed



A Y.M.C.A. group around a campfire. At the left is Dr. Morris; Herminio is at the right

to sell because it was 'half-blood' and he counseled me to wait till it became a cow and see the results. . . . I know that I am so indebted and obliged to you that I do not dare to ask you for any more favors, but you have afforded me a college education which otherwise I would have not been able to receive, and this I expect to finish not only for my own sake, but to serve God and mankind as I have learned and dreamed in this Institution."

Thus writes Herminio requesting permission to finish his course, even though he has no money now to pay his board and tuition. Our answer was, of course, "We will be glad to wait until the heifer becomes a cow, and we are proud of you, Herminio."

Herminio comes from a large family which subsists on a farm miles away from any road, a farm which he describes as "seven acres of