

MAKING A SOLDIER

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649345250

Making a Soldier by A. C. Sharpe

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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A. C. SHARPE

**MAKING A
SOLDIER**



W. S. Hooper

Making a Soldier

— BY —

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THE ACME PUBLISHING CO.
1413 WILLIAMSON BLDG.
CLEVELAND
1908

DEDICATION.

To all patriotic citizens who are proud to live under the protection of the United States Flag and who believe in "backing it up" with an adequate system of National Defense these pages are respectfully dedicated.

CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	7
INTRODUCTION	14
I DISCIPLINE	19
II DRILL	28
III HEALTH	36
IV HABITS	44
V RECORDS	47
VI CONCLUSION	50
VII QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	57

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"Today the question is not so much whether a nation is strong enough to make war as whether its government is powerful enough to prevent war. It is the sword alone which keeps the sword in the scabbard."

—Von Moltke.



PREFACE

The creation of an effective Army Reserve is one of the most perplexing questions with which the statesman has to deal. In Germany, Switzerland, France and other European countries the problem is solved by a system of conscription or compulsory service. Every young man on arriving at proper age, unless exempted for certain cause, is required to pass thru a prescribed period of military training. In England and the United States, on the contrary, no such system exists, as compulsory service, even for a short period, would be regarded by the people with extreme aversion. Reliance is therefore placed on volunteers. Neither of these methods, however, has been found entirely satisfactory. Conscription, being generally obnoxious, and especially so in time of peace, the term of service is reduced below a safe minimum and many exemptions are obtained. The volunteer system, on the other hand, is found equally defective. In peace it fails to secure sufficient men, and in war it has to be kept alive by the payment of enormous bounties. This has been the experience of the United States since the earliest days, and in the great civil war of 1861 even the bounty system finally broke down and gave place to the draft. If, however,

in spite of its defects, we are resolved to adhere to the volunteer system, it is all the more important that our preparation should be sufficient to make our wars short and decisive, for a protracted struggle wearies the people, who then cease to enlist even for large bounties, and we are thus forced back to the obnoxious conscription.

It is the theory of a republic that every citizen must become a soldier if need be. A government by all and for all is entitled to the services of all. But to be of any value as a soldier in modern war a man must have considerable preliminary training, and this training in turn requires a certain irreducible amount of time. It is manifestly too late to begin such training after war is declared. Therefore, if we are to have any training at all the people, or, at least, such portion of them as may be needed, must submit to it in time of peace. This was the idea of the fathers when they enacted the old Militia Law of 1795. Under that law every able bodied male citizen between 18 and 45 was required to be enrolled and to appear for drill on certain muster days each year. But while this plan was reasonable and just, and in exact accord with the theory of a government by the people, its requirements were found to be exceedingly irksome.