

**EDUCATIONAL PLANS
FOR THE AMERICAN
ARMY ABROAD**

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Educational Plans for the American Army Abroad by Anson Phelps Stokes

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ANSON PHELPS STOKES

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FOR THE AMERICAN
ARMY ABROAD**

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for the
AMERICAN ARMY ABROAD

ANSON PHELPS STOKES
Secretary of Yale University

Being the Reports presented to and approved by General Pershing, with Supplementary Reports showing progress of the work, by Professor John Erskine of Columbia University and Professor Reginald Aldworth Daly of Harvard University.

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*Pres. C. W. Eliot
Cambridge.*

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INTRODUCTION

During the last week in August, 1918, the following cable was received from Edward C. Carter (B.A., Harvard, 1900), the far-sighted Chief Secretary, Y.M.C.A., A.E.F.:

“Recruit 600 men teachers as well as organizers in all educational fields, especially History, American and European Institutions, Technical Subjects.”

The number of men asked for from our colleges and public schools is very moderate in view of the fact that the Army Educational Commission has to provide for the immediate educational needs of an army of 2,000,000 men. The proportion of these eager to pursue some studies in evening hours when at training camps and other places back of the lines, both as a change from military routine and in preparation for life's work on return to America, is much larger than our people at home realize. Army Headquarters in France firmly believes, as will appear in this volume, that an educational program can do much to maintain and stimulate the morale of these men today and that it will be essential to prevent the long period of demobilization from being a period of demoralization. The demand for classes and lectures will, of course, increase enormously when peace comes, but whether this be near or far off, the need of supplying both teachers and textbooks is immediate. The former will be drawn mainly from the Army itself—those sent from this country being employed as supervisors, administrators, and normal teachers.

This message, indicating that the time has come for an intensive campaign to secure educational leaders for the American Army abroad, the frequent requests for information from various sources, and the appearance in the daily and periodical press of many inaccurate, incomplete, and unauthorized statements of the Y.M.C.A.'s overseas educational plans have made the publication of this little volume necessary at the present time.

The winter—now only two months off—almost always supplies a better educational opportunity than the summer. This general rule holds good in the armies abroad. Weather conditions greatly reduce military operations during the

colder months, and the shorter days make the soldier who is not actually at the front turn to the Y.M.C.A hut for recreation, and a mental change from military routine. So the present seems an opportune time to bring these reports on educational work in our Army abroad to public attention, especially as the recent announcement by the Chief of our General Staff that the war can be won by the Allies in the year 1919, carries with it a twofold challenge to educational leaders. In the first place, education must render the largest possible service to fit the American soldier for the supreme military test of the coming year, and in the second place, it must be prepared to provide instruction on a large scale in our overseas army just as soon as demobilization sets in, so that our soldiers may return home more adequately trained for the business of life. The first is the more immediate problem, the second the more difficult and the more significant educationally. The two tasks are intimately connected. The emphases will differ in the two periods, but mental discipline, Americanization, the understanding of current events, and training for unselfish service should mark the instruction at all times. The Allied nations are all grappling with these questions of education for soldiers on a large scale, especially Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, whose troops far from home face conditions not dissimilar to our own. An abstract of the Canadian plan for the "Khaki University" is published in an appendix. It is of special interest, as, like the plans outlined in this report, its foundations are already being firmly laid.

That the right kind of education makes of any man a better soldier and a better citizen can hardly be denied by any thoughtful person. And yet few people have realized the entirely new and extensive educational opportunity placed before our country by our entrance into the European War. The United States Government has already over one and a half million soldiers in Europe, and if transportation proceeds at the same rate, and if the war continues, twice this number will be overseas next spring. Now it must be remembered that the overwhelming majority of these men are in their youth and early manhood, and con-

sequently of an age when the training of faculties and the acquisition of facts, ideals, and capacities, are still relatively easy. Here, then, is a wide field for educational effort, involving one of the heaviest responsibilities ever placed upon educational leaders. To supplement the disciplinary value of military life and the quickening and broadening influence of living abroad, there are evidently two necessities: the first and more pressing is to provide instruction, supplementary to military requirements, which will make soldiers better fighters; the second is to prepare for the period of demobilization by organizing educational facilities on a large scale in the Army, so as to fit its members during the long period of demobilization abroad better to take their places on returning as workers in a modern democracy.

In both periods those responsible for the work should bear specially in mind the driving home of lessons which the life of the French people themselves suggests. Their courtesy, their thrift, their love of the soil, their thoroughness, their appreciation of the beautiful—these and other characteristics should all be pointed out to our soldiers, both so as to make them appreciative of their allies, and to teach them truths of permanent educational value.

The problem is beset with many difficulties, but the need is so great that they can and will be met, so that the Army may reverse the general experience of history by returning its men to their homes with an improved mental and moral equipment and with technical training to assume the responsibilities of life in such a way as to advance the common welfare. The movement, in keeping with the spirit of the time, will be largely judged by the social values it produces, by the capacity of the education afforded to make the citizen-soldier of larger value to the State. In other words, we must provide not only individual training but a socialized education. The opportunity is a challenge to the imagination and resources of the American nation, confronted by a task of rare complexity—that of putting to school in a foreign country a body of young men about twenty times as large as was enrolled prior to the war in all the colleges of America, and about four times as large as the enrolment of boys last year in all of our high schools.