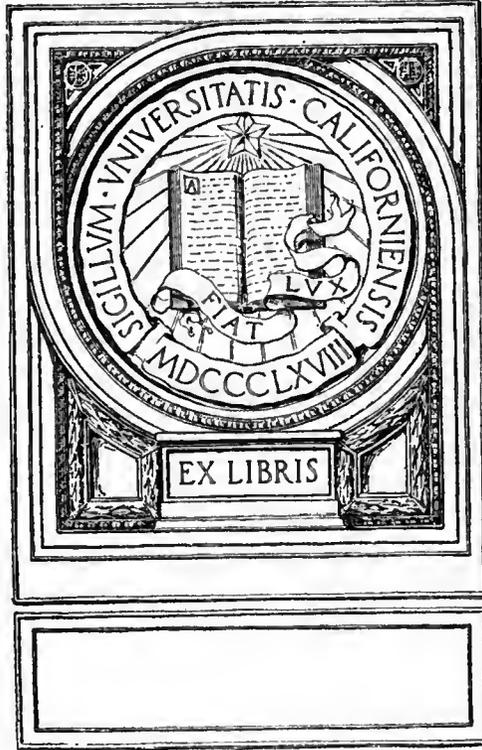


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Provision for the Re-education of Belgian War Cripples

The outstanding fact about re-education for Belgian war cripples is that it is absolutely compulsory. According to a decision taken by the Minister of War in November, 1914, Belgian soldiers who are incapacitated by their wounds from following their former trade or occupation are not discharged and sent home at the end of their hospital treatment, but are declared 'candidates for discharge' and sent to a re-educational school. They remain nominally soldiers, under army control and subject to all military laws and regulations.¹

Compulsory re-education has been accepted without dispute by Belgians because the majority of the soldiers have no home to which they can return. With the larger part of the country occupied by the enemy, it is impossible for them to go back to their old way of life. There is no counter-attraction to make re-education distasteful.

In the early days of the war, before re-education had been decreed by the authorities, many disabled soldiers were discharged from the hospitals and from the army and left to shift for themselves. Those who were strong enough and had ambition readily found work in France or England, but many were so shattered in body, or so demoralized by their experiences, that they wandered from place to place, bewailing their lot and begging for charity. In order to rescue these men from their distress, the decree which made re-education compulsory for men still in the army was extended to all discharged Belgian soldiers. All discharge papers were revoked, and all discharged soldiers were required to undergo a new physical examination. Some were discovered to be still capable of military service and were taken back into the army; of the others, those that had found steady work were allowed to remain where they were, on leave of absence

¹ De Paeuw, Léon, *La rééducation professionnelle des soldats mutilés et estropiés*. Paris, 1917, p. 13.

without pay; those that were drifting about the country were sent to the military hospitals and to the *Dépôt des Invalides* at Sainte-Adresse, which had just been founded by private charity as a refuge for disabled and destitute veterans.² It was now seen that the condition of some of these men could be greatly improved by functional re-education—the name given by the French to the treatment which is designed to restore to injured joints, nerves, and muscles their power to function—and that others would require vocational training before they would be able to earn a living. Measures to provide the needed treatment and training were, accordingly, soon inaugurated by the government.

FUNCTIONAL RE-EDUCATION

An *Institut de physiothérapie et d'orthopédie*, which has received the name of the *Hôpital Anglo-Belge* in recognition of the aid furnished by the English Red Cross, was opened in Rouen in December, 1914. The first patients received at this institution were men who had been previously discharged from the army without having received the treatment which would put them in the best possible physical condition, but later patients came directly from the *ambulances* at the front. As their numbers increased, annexes were organized at Orival and Saint-Aubin les Elbeuf, and in 1916 a new model hospital was built at Bon Secours.

Functional re-education, as it was carried on first at the *Hôpital Anglo-Belge* and later at Bon Secours, makes use of the different curative methods included under the term 'physiotherapy'—namely, mecano-therapy, thermo-therapy, electro-therapy, massage, and curative gymnastics. The machines used in the department of mecano-therapy resemble in principle the Zander machines, but are somewhat different

² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

in detail. No machines which allow the patient to remain passive are used, but only those which demand active muscular effort. Since it was practically impossible to buy the apparatus, most of it has been made by the patients themselves in the shops of the technical school which was taken over for the hospital. Under thermotherapy are included hot air baths, hot water baths, and local hot air applications. The electrical service makes use of X-rays, sinusoidal and faradic currents, and hydro-electrical baths.³

ARTIFICIAL LIMBS

The orthopedic service of the *Institut de physiothérapie et d'orthopédie* at Rouen includes orthopedic surgery and the making and fitting of artificial limbs. As Belgium had no facilities for making artificial limbs, having before the war received her entire supply from Germany, shops had to be created by the medical authorities, and mechanics, woodworkers, and shoemakers had to be drawn from men unfit for military service and from the *mutilés* themselves and trained for the work. The artificial legs furnished are of two kinds: a leg of moulded leather similar to the French models, and a leg of hollowed wood called the American type. The dress arm of moulded leather has a rigid hand with an articulated thumb, which hand can be exchanged for a hook or ring when desired. The working arm furnished is the old Gripouilleau model formed of graduated hooks, but improved by a universal joint at the wrist.⁴

VOCATIONAL RE-EDUCATION

There are in Belgium—that is to say, in exiled Belgium, on French soil—two large schools which provide vocational training for disabled soldiers.

The *École nationale belge des mutilés de la guerre* at Port-Villez was organized by the Minister of War and is entirely supported by him. The *Dépôt des Invalides* at Sainte-Adresse is a private institution, founded by M. Schollaert, the president of the Belgian House of Representatives. In addition to these two large schools, shops for readapting men to work have been or-

ganized in connection with the hospital of Bon Secours at Rouen.

THE SCHOOL AT PORT-VILLEZ

The school at Port-Villez was built by the Ministry of War on land presented to the government for the purpose by a Belgian gentleman. It is situated on a plateau overlooking the Seine, about half-way between Paris and Rouen, in the midst of a beautiful and fertile country. The nearest town is Vernon in the department of the Eure.

On July 12, 1915, a detachment of auxiliary engineers of the Belgian army began to clear the ground of stumps and copses in preparation for the erection of buildings. On August 21, when only about a tenth of the construction had been completed, the first group of pupils arrived from the hospitals. In a year from that time 1,200 men were being re-educated there.⁵

The school has the appearance of a vast camp with its ninety-two wooden barracks arranged in three rows, each barrack being of the type of the portable field hospital huts with double walls and cement foundations. At one end of the row of barracks is the large meeting hall, and beyond that the officers' quarters and the infirmary. At the other end are a steam sawmill and joinery which were already on the place and a shed which has been transformed into a shop for hand carpentry. Beyond are the garage and repair shops for trucks and automobiles, and farther still the stables and the poultry yard. In front of the barracks is a large garden. Buildings have been put up as there was a demand for them, and greater additions are being planned for the future. It is hoped that the shops can soon be transferred to large new halls so that the existing barracks can all be used for dormitories.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL

The work of the school is divided among three departments: the medical service, the academic department, and the department of technical training. When the school was first organized, the chief physician of the medical service was made the administrative head, but now the

³ Deltrenre, Dr. Armand, *L'Hôpital Anglo-Belge*. Port-Villez, 1916, pp. 10-20.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-28.

⁵ De Paeuw, Léon, *La rééducation professionnelle des soldats mutilés et estropiés*. Paris, 1917, p. 63.

three departments have been placed on an equal footing and an army colonel has been made the general superintendent.

THE MEDICAL SERVICE

The first duty of the medical service is to provide functional re-education for those that need it. As at Rouen, the means employed here are exercising apparatus, electricity, heat, massage, curative gymnastics and fencing, games, and sports. The treatment appropriate to each man's condition is given to him at certain hours of the day during the course of his apprenticeship at a trade.

A second duty of the medical service is to watch over the vocational training of the men for the purpose of observing the effect of work upon their physical condition and the influence of their handicap upon their efficiency. In the experience of the school the improvement effected through physiotherapy and regular gymnastics is greatly augmented by the beneficial exercise which the pupil gets in the workshop. It has even happened that a man's condition has been improved through work after another institution had declared that nothing more could be done for him by physiotherapy. Pupils in the commercial courses who get no exercise in their work take special gymnastics and exercises.

In addition to these responsibilities, the medical service is charged with the manufacture of any needed orthopedic or prosthetic appliances. Men sent to Port-Villez from the hospitals at Rouen have been provided with artificial limbs, but special appliances which make it easier for crippled men to work at certain trades are manufactured and supplied at the school. The cooperation of the shoemakers and saddlers, the mechanics, and the woodworkers is enlisted in this work.⁶

THE ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT

The academic department provides general schooling for men learning trades, theoretical instruction in the trades, and special courses for men who wish to fit themselves to be clerks with business concerns or with the government.

Men in the trades are divided into three groups—the illiterate, the men who have had only the rudiments of a schooling, and those who have gone through a grammar school. These groups are again divided into classes, which receive two hours of instruction a day in school subjects. Each class is made up of men speaking the same language, and the instruction is given, naturally, in that language. Out of twenty-eight classes, eleven were conducted in French and seventeen in Flemish. Men in the higher classes have passed excellent examinations in writing the two languages and in solving arithmetical problems of real difficulty. A special course for men who have passed through the higher class is given one hour a day. It includes bookkeeping adapted to the needs of artisans and simplified contemporary history.

The plan of the theoretical instruction is the same for all the trades. It includes the study of tools and machinery, of raw materials—their physical and chemical properties, their source, conditions of purchase, etc.—the processes of the trade, how to determine the sale price of the articles made, and how to place them on sale. The director of this department has aided the shop foremen by suggesting to them good teaching methods and by sketching lesson plans. Once a week he and the technical director hold a meeting of all the shop foremen and instructors to discuss methods and technical questions. Everything is done which can help to make the theoretical instruction a real aid to the practical work. Wood and metal workers attend special classes in draughting, not to become draughtsmen but so that they may with facility read and make working-drawings.⁷

The commercial courses are for men who on account of their previous education and circumstances wish rather to obtain an office position than to learn a trade. They were originally organized by the Belgian government in a special school at Mortain (Manche), but before the school had been running a year, through some conflict of interests or some misunderstanding, the old abbey which housed it was ordered transformed into a hospital. Arrangements were then made to transfer the school to Port-Villez and to

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-80.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-93.

incorporate it in that institution. It is known now as the 'school of clerks of commerce, industry, and administration' (*École des auxiliaires du commerce, de l'industrie, et de l'administration*).

In this school there are four departments: a primary department, a department preparing for civil service positions, a commercial department, and a normal department for the training of teachers. Pupils in the primary department are taught French, Flemish, arithmetic, geometrical forms, elementary principles of business, history, geography, and elements of social economics. Many of these men are former railroad employees whom the railroads, being government concerns, are in honor bound to take back into service. Since they are unable owing to their wounds to resume their old work as engineers, brakemen, or porters, they are being trained for ticket-sellers, station agents, and office employees. A few are learning telegraphy. Other men in this department are being trained for clerks, cashiers, and shop salesmen with private concerns. All together 170 men were enrolled in this department at the end of 1916. The courses are divided into two terms of six months each.

Courses of the department preparing for civil service positions include the two national languages, a third language, writing, history, geography, business, constitutional law, arithmetic, elements of algebra, plane and solid geometry, elements of physics, social economics, stenography, and typewriting. Fifty pupils were in this department at the end of 1916. The work is divided into three terms of four months each.

The commercial department is divided into two terms of six months each. During the first term all pupils study the elements of bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic, four languages, commercial geography, and stenography and typewriting. During the second term they specialize as expert bookkeepers, commercial correspondents, or wireless operators. There were thirty-five men in this department.

Of the fifteen men in the normal department at the end of 1916 the majority were non-commissioned officers obliged to give up the careers they had planned for themselves because of their reduced physical powers. They receive their training as teachers during two terms of six

months each. For practice teaching they conduct a class for the children of officers and married teachers whose families have established themselves in the vicinity of the school.

The teachers in the four departments of the 'school of clerks' have been borrowed from the stretcher-bearers' corps and other auxiliary branches of the service. Before the war they were school and college teachers, expert accountants in the large banks, and men holding important administrative posts.⁸

THE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL TRAINING

Over forty trades are taught in the shops managed by the department of technical training. The length of time necessary for learning a trade is not definitely fixed, so greatly does it depend on a man's native aptitude, and his handiness in overcoming his disability, but the management of the school has found that good teaching methods can greatly reduce the time supposedly required for an apprenticeship in a given trade. By beginning with simple operations and following them with more difficult ones in well-ordered gradation, by avoiding the repetition of processes that have been perfectly mastered, and by constantly stimulating the pupil's interest, the shop foremen have obtained excellent results in a comparatively short time. In the experience of the management, lessons in school subjects and theoretical instruction also quicken the progress of an apprentice.

The shops are operated for production as well as for teaching, but good teaching is never sacrificed for the sake of increasing production. A large part of the product of the shop fills orders from the Belgian government, but when these orders do not provide the variety necessary for a thorough apprenticeship, the school takes orders from private firms.

What might be an obstacle to good apprenticeship—the continual arrival of new men—is overcome by grouping the new-comers together and starting them at work under the careful supervision of a monitor. Later new groupings are made in accordance with the man's ability and progress. All work is carefully supervised by monitors, foremen, and doctors, and a man is

⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 164-176.

never allowed to become discouraged. In some trades there is a monitor for every four men.⁹

The following brief account of the different shops describes the work they were doing in the latter part of 1916.¹⁰

Machine work in carpentry—the use of circular saws, band saws, power planes, turning machines, rotary moulding cutters, etc.—was being taught to five apprentices, all former carpenters prevented by injuries to their arms from taking up their old work.

Hand carpentry and cabinet-making was being taught to eighteen apprentices from all sorts of former occupations. Among them were boatmen, truckmen, butchers and agricultural workers, the majority of whom had an injured leg. They were making doors, windows, desks, boxes, cupboards and other interior fittings. Two men unable to mount ladders were learning to make carpenter's tools.

In the section for makers of patterns for casters were three men who had been moulders in a foundry and who were no longer able to lift the heavy frames. Two had an ankylosis of the elbow and shoulder respectively, the third a crippled foot.

In the section for toys and knick-knacks were ten men who had been cartmen, farm hands, bricklayers, miners, and weavers.

In the wood-carving section a wood-carver by trade was overcoming the handicap of three paralyzed fingers; a cabinet-maker with a badly crippled foot was learning the trade.

A miner, a farm worker, and a factory hand, all injured in the leg, were learning to make wooden shoes.

Wood polishing is considered a good trade for men who have completely lost the use of one arm or who have had an arm amputated. Apprenticeship is rapid and easy, and the only secret of the trade is in the mixture of ingredients. Twenty-four men with arm injuries or amputations were in this section. It is expected that after the war they can be placed in furniture factories, piano factories, and factories for automobile bodies. Pyrography and brass and leather repoussé work are taught with polishing.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-134.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-124.

The section for mechanics is extremely popular with the *mutilés*. Among forty-five apprentices there were former moulders, laborers, plasterers, chauffeurs, founders, forge workers, glass-blowers and weavers. Their injuries were partial paralysis of a hand, paralysis of the radial nerve, ankylosis of an elbow, and various leg injuries. Forty men had finished their apprenticeship and secured positions outside in which they were earning from five to eight francs a day.

Oxy-acetylene welding is considered within the powers of men who have had a leg amputated and even of men with a badly crippled arm if they have some use of the hand. Former iron-workers with a sufficiently developed intelligence to be able to acquire the knowledge of physics and chemistry necessary in the trade are advised to take up this apprenticeship.

Fifty pupils were taking the course for chauffeurs and automobile mechanics. They were of all trades and had various lesser injuries of the arms and legs.

The section for plumbers and zinc-workers contained four pupils who were working on the installation of a water system for the school and learning to manufacture kitchen utensils of all sorts.

The section for clock-makers contained four pupils.

The electricians' class had sixteen pupils and was growing rapidly. Apprentices were required to have agility for climbing ladders and stringing wires, and a certain amount of intellectual training. Men with no use of a forearm, with an ankylosed elbow or shoulder, and with paralysis of a hand were taking up the work. A former electrician who had had his left arm disarticulated at the shoulder was studying electrical theory and hoped to obtain a position as a foreman.

The shoemaking class here, as in French schools, was the largest of all the manual trades. It contained 114 pupils. There were men of practically all occupations and with all kind of leg injuries, even amputations. One man had had both legs amputated. The course is divided into repair work and the making of new shoes. Some men who intend to set up a shop in the city specialize in repair work, but the majority wish

to be able to make shoes and boots to measure. Apprentices entirely new to the trade have learned to assemble and finish a pair of army shoes in five and a half months. Orthopedic shoes for pupils in the school are made in this shop; other appliances are made by the saddlers and mechanics.

In the saddlers' shop were thirty apprentices, the majority with injured legs but some with ankylosis of the shoulder or elbow or partial loss of use of one hand. A six months' apprenticeship enables a man to earn a living in it. As a side-line all saddlers are taught to make fly nets for horses.

Tailoring attracts many men with leg injuries and some with injuries to their arms which prevent them from doing heavy work. The thumb and index finger of the injured arm must be able to hold the cloth. Men with a leg amputated use a small electric motor to run the sewing-machine. Fifty-two pupils were in this section.

The furriers were fewer in number, partly because of a lack of raw materials and partly because few men have a taste for the trade. Among the five apprentices were a miner, two carpenters, and an agricultural laborer. The same disabilities are compatible with this trade as with tailoring.

The upholstery class was only in its infancy. A few apprentices were at work repairing the school mattresses and were in hopes of obtaining some pieces of furniture which they could upholster.

In the basketry class forty-six apprentices were learning to make coarse and fine baskets and willow furniture. In addition to the regular apprentices, men in the horticultural class were learning basketry on rainy days. The majority of those who expected to make a living from basketry had leg injuries. Men with certain functional injuries of the hands had their condition greatly improved by the work. The average length of apprenticeship is from six to seven months.

Typesetting, by hand and by means of the linotype, and press work were being taught in the printing shop to twenty-one men, variously afflicted with paralysis of the hand, inability to open the fingers, and ankylosis of the elbow and

knee. Six of the linotypists after less than a year's work were fitted for positions in large printing establishments. They were capable of deciphering manuscripts and setting them correctly; their knowledge of grammar and spelling was entirely adequate for good work, although their previous education had been of the most rudimentary sort. They had moreover a perfect understanding of the linotype machine and could take it apart and set it up as well as any mechanic. Pupils became competent pressmen after an apprenticeship of six months.

The engraving and lithography section had seven pupils. Their former occupations ranged from bookbinding to truck gardening.

The bookbindery contained seven men, each with a badly crippled hand. One-armed men had been directed to this trade, but they have become discouraged and turned to wood polishing and the painting which imitates grained wood and marbles. Four months is long enough to learn ordinary binding, but a much longer time is necessary for artistic binding.

Photogravure has been taken up successfully by one-armed men and by men with no use of one hand. The usefulness of the shop is, however, limited by lack of orders.

In the photography studio were eight pupils who had partially lost the use of one hand. They were at work on retouching after having learned how to prepare and develop plates. Since photography hardly affords a living to a man in a small village, the school intends to combine this trade with some other such as sign-painting.

Five men were learning to operate moving-picture machines.

Among the twelve pupils of the hair-dressing class were former hair-dressers learning to make wigs and hair pieces, and men learning to be barbers. Men with leg amputations, with three fingers of one hand amputated, and with ankylosed elbows were in this class.

Brushmaking, except the manufacture of the wooden parts of brushes, is reserved for blind men.

There are several classes of industrial design or draughting. One prepares men to be simple draughtsmen and estimators; a second teaches applied design to former cabinet-makers and

forge-workers with a talent for creative work; a third teaches draughting for machinery, not only to former machinists, but also to telegraphers, stone-cutters, boatmen, and even agriculturists. Almost all the draughtsmen had lost part of a hand or had an ankylosed shoulder or elbow.

Men in the building trades—carpenters, roofers, and masons—who have no longer the strength for their old work are directed toward a class which takes up the study of mathematics, topography, the elements of physics and mechanics, building materials, building laws and hygiene—in brief, of all subjects which prepare men to be foremen or superintendents of building construction. A higher class which includes surveying and draughting prepares men for the examination for the position of building inspector in the department of public works.

In the sculpture and modeling class the ten pupils were former plasterers, marble-cutters, or stone-carvers. Since they were engaged in a connected trade, they were making rapid progress.

Different branches of painting are taught in a number of classes, in many cases to one-armed men. One class learns to imitate grained wood and marbles; another takes up sign-painting; and a third, painting on china and porcelain. Pupils are required to pass through these three classes in order to be armed against the slack season. Decorative painting and painting on glass are also taught.

In the great bakery built to supply bread to the institution six pupils, among whom three had lost a leg, were learning to be bakers, although this is in the main a standing trade. In the connection with the supply of meat, men were learning to be butchers and sausage-makers.

Former agriculturists whose injuries have incapacitated them for the heavy work of a farm are taught a trade at Port-Villez if they express their desire to learn one. If not, they receive training in raising animals or poultry, in dairying, truck gardening, fruit and tree culture, or flower raising. Fields adjoining the school property and two small farms in the vicinity have been rented for the purpose of providing this instruction. Experienced farmers no longer fit for active service in the army have charge of

the work. Among ninety men in the sections for poultry raising, tree and fruit culture, and truck gardening, nine had lost an arm, one a leg, four had a crippled leg, one a serious abdominal wound, one had been trepanned, and twenty had a stiffened or paralyzed arm.¹¹

HOW A TRADE IS CHOSEN

When men arrive at Port-Villez, they undergo a thorough medical examination, which determines what kind of physiotherapeutic treatment will benefit them. They are next examined as to their previous general schooling and their mental qualifications. This is done not only for the purpose of grouping them in classes for further instruction, but also to help in directing them toward a suitable trade. Certain occupations are barred to men without a fairly good general education or a quick intelligence. A third examination is conducted by the technical director, Captain Haccour, an educator of unusual understanding and sympathy, with a gift for drawing out a man's real self and with a contagious enthusiasm. Captain Haccour accompanies the new men on an informal tour of the workshops, lets them talk with the men at work in the various trades, and tries to discover their latent aptitudes and tastes.

Each man is then brought separately before a committee consisting of the examining physician, the academic director, and the technical director. The members of the committee compare their individual notes as to the man's capacities, consult with him as to his inclinations, and finally decide that he shall make a trial of apprenticeship in a certain trade. If after a week it appears that a man has been misplaced, his case is reconsidered and he is directed toward another kind of work.¹²

DEPARTURE FROM THE SCHOOL

With regard to men who on the completion of their readaptation to work wish to leave the institution and to earn their living outside, the practice of the school during the first two years of its existence was to allow them a leave of absence from the army without pay if they fulfilled three conditions. They must (1) be per-

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 149-164.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 40-43.

manently incapacitated for military service; (2) have been readapted to their former trade, and (3) have in prospect work sufficiently remunerative to permit them to live in complete independence of public or private charity. A committee composed of the general staff of the school examined candidates for the first two requirements and verified the third by correspondence with the mayor of the commune in which the soldier intended to establish himself. After men left, they were expected to send every month to the committee a paper signed by the same mayor certifying that they were still in the locality.¹³

By the law of April 5, 1917, soldiers below the rank of officer, permanently incapacitated for military service, can obtain their discharge from the army as soon as their departure from an institution of functional or vocational re-education will not injure their own interests. After their discharge they receive instead of a pension an annual allowance proportioned to the degree of their disability, provided that their disability has reduced their capacity for work at least ten per cent. and that it will probably continue for at least one year. If the disability is considered permanent, the allowance will be granted until a new pension law is passed; if it is considered temporary, the allowance will be granted for one year, at the end of which time it can be renewed for the same amount, reduced, or increased. A committee appointed by the Minister of the Interior is charged with deciding whether the interests of a *mutilé* will be better served by his retention in an institution or by his discharge. For a common soldier the annual allowance for a ten per cent. disability is 120 francs; for a sixty per cent. disability, 720 francs; and for 100 per cent. disability, 1,200 francs.¹⁴

FINANCES

Since the entire cost of the school is borne by the Belgian government, every effort has been made to reduce the charges of construction and

¹³ De Paeuw, Léon, *La rééducation professionnelle des grands blessés de guerre et l'Institut Militaire belge de rééducation professionnelle de Port-Villez-les-Vernon* (Eure). Port-Villez, 1916, p. 43.

¹⁴ *Revue Interallié pour l'étude des questions intéressant les mutilés de la guerre*. Paris, 1918, I, 86-92.

equipment and to manage the school in the most economical way. The portable barracks which are used as dormitories and shops will be used afterwards in the devastated regions. The permanent structures have been built out of materials furnished by the owner of the property. Heating has cost only the labor required for cutting out the woods on the place. The cost of food is reduced to a minimum by having the vegetables raised by the agriculturists, the bread baked by the bakers, and the animals killed and cut up by the butchers. Tools and machinery have cost between 180,000 and 200,000 francs, but it is expected that after the war the government can resell all the equipment to fit out factories pillaged by the enemy.

The government allots to the school for the maintenance of the men one franc ninety-seven centimes per man per day, of which forty-three centimes goes to the soldier as his pay. This is the regular cost of maintenance of a Belgian soldier, whether he is fighting at the front or attending a re-educational school. No pensions or allowances are paid to the inmates of Port-Villez, but men in the shops receive wages of from fifty centimes to two francs a day, which are paid out of the proceeds of articles made in the shops. These proceeds also largely defray the general expenses of production.¹⁵

THE SCHOOL AT SAINTE-ADRESSE

The *Dépôt des Invalides* at Sainte-Adresse, near Havre, as has been said, was founded by M. Schollaert, the president of the Belgian House of Representatives. Like many of the French schools organized by private persons, it receives financial support from the government, but the control of its policy remains in the hands of M. Schollaert. The school was organized in the early days of the war when Belgian war cripples were wandering through the country asking for charity. Two of them knocked at the door of M. Schollaert, who was so shocked by their condition that he asked leave of the Minister of War to provide a home and medical care for them and similar destitute men. The home was rapidly filled; an organization was formed; and arrange-

¹⁵ De Paeuw, Léon, *La rééducation professionnelle des soldats mutilés et estropiés*. Paris, 1917, pp. 182-190.

ments were made for providing both functional and vocational re-education.

Workshops for the latter were started on an extremely modest scale, wherever a place could be found for them in the vicinity of the manor-house which housed the patients. The brush-makers were installed in a stable; the turners in a kitchen; the carpenters in a hired shed; and the shoemakers in the parlor of a villa. Equipment was of the most elementary sort, and instruction was given by philanthropic artisans of Havre. Later, as the work grew in importance, all the shops and dormitories were gathered together in a cantonment in portable wooden barracks. At the present time the school teaches the trades of carpentry, toy-making, brush-making, wood-turning and pattern-making, sabot-making, cooperage, mechanics, metal-turning, electrical work, plumbing, upholstering, shoemaking, tailoring, paper-binding, printing, making of plaster casts, manufacture of orthopedic appliances and artificial limbs, and the manufacture of envelopes.

The organization of the school is practically the same as at Port-Villez, with a medical department, an academic department, and a technical department. Nominally the physician-in-chief is the director of the school, but actually M. Schollaert controls its activities and program. As at Port-Villez all pupils must study school subjects in addition to the work they do in the shops.

Since December, 1914, through agreement with the Minister of War, the *Dépôt* admits all disabled or invalided soldiers sent to it by the army. It receives from the government two francs fifty centimes a day for each man, out of which it pays twenty-five centimes to the man. The quartermaster furnishes clothing, and the Medical corps beds and bedding. Men of the oldest classes unfit for further active service and nurses and stretcher-bearers have been detached from the army to serve as instructors and to maintain

discipline. During the time that inmates of the home are classed as apprentices, they receive wages of from fifty centimes to one franc a day, but later when they have acquired the skill of normal workmen, they receive an average of two francs fifty centimes a day, or sixty francs a month. Ten francs of this is given to them for pocket money and the rest deposited in their savings account. Each workman possesses a complete set of tools, which he pays for gradually.

At the end of 1916, 1,699 men were present in the school.¹⁶

THE 'HOME UNIVERSITY' OF PARIS

The 'home university' of Paris completes the system of vocational instruction organized by the Belgian government for its disabled soldiers. When the school of clerks was at Mortain, it offered opportunities for higher education to young men whose studies had been interrupted by the mobilization summons, but after the school was moved to Port-Villez, the Minister of War thought it advisable to discontinue these courses and in their stead to provide opportunities for study in Paris. To this end he organized in Paris what is called a 'home university', an institution where disabled soldiers are boarded and lodged at the expense of the government while they pursue their studies in the great Paris schools. At the end of November, 1916, six young war cripples were in the 'home university' studying law; two, medicine; one, natural sciences; one was enrolled with the faculty of philosophy and studying to become a higher teacher; three were in a commercial college; four, in an electrical college; two were in the Lycée Saint-Louis, and one was in a catholic college. Their books and instruments are furnished them by the Ministry of Arts and Sciences.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 190-200.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-182.

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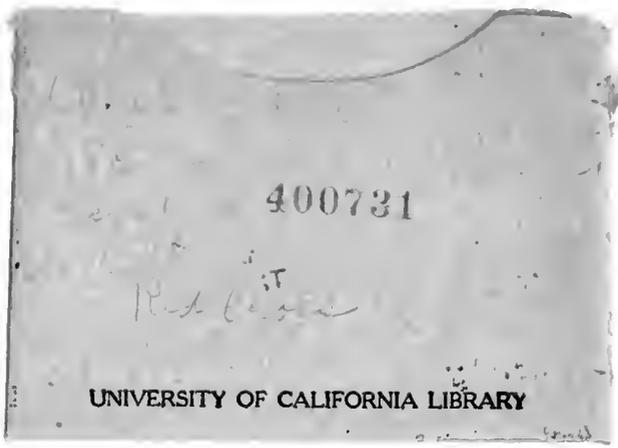
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