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EDUCATIONAL WORK
OF
THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

BY

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DIRECTOR OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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FOREWORD.

The Knights of Columbus is primarily and essentially a fraternal society, but the order has never permitted itself to be circumscribed within the narrow limits of insurance benefits and selfish social interests. It has from its very inception fostered and exercised that broader spirit of fraternity which signalizes the history of the Knights of Columbus as a record of service to God, to country, and to our fellow man. A new page of that history is being written. The story of the educational work in which the order has been engaged during the past four years is an interesting record of achievement. In the following report of the results that have been accomplished we do not profess to set forth completely their value to the order, to the Nation, and to the students who have participated in the educational opportunities that we have offered. These results can not now be appraised in all their fullness, for, though they are in some degree immediate and tangible, in a larger sense they are of the future, and time alone can be their measure and their test.

It is our purpose, therefore, in the following report, briefly to present the outstanding features of the development of our educational program, together with certain facts and figures that will indicate its scope and purpose and the extent of the undertaking. We are fairly launched upon one of the greatest works that the order has ever undertaken—an enterprise offering unlimited possibilities and beset with tremendous difficulties.

EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.

By MARK J. SWEANY,

Director of the Knights of Columbus Educational Activities.

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HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal and beneficent society of Catholic men, founded in New Haven, Conn., on February 2, 1882, and incorporated under the laws of the State of Connecticut on March 29, 1882.

On December 31, 1922, the total membership of the Knights of Columbus was 774,189. This membership was divided among 59 State councils, and the State councils were in turn divided into 2,290 subordinate councils. The membership is confined to the United States and its Territorial possessions, to Canada, Mexico, Cuba, and the Panama Canal Zone.

EARLY EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.

The purpose of the founders was to develop practical Catholicity among the members, to promote educational and charitable activities, and, by means of its insurance department to give financial assistance to the families of deceased members. From the very beginning of the organization, education has always occupied an important position in the activities of the Knights of Columbus, but in the earlier years of the existence of the order the educational activities were carried on almost entirely by the individual subordinate councils of the organization and were confined to lecture courses, the founding of scholarships in local institutions, the placing of books in libraries, and other matters of a similar nature.

In 1904 the order presented \$50,000 to the Catholic University of America at Washington, for the purpose of endowing a chair in American history. This work is still being carried on from this fund at the university.

In the years immediately following the endowment of the chair in American history at the Catholic University of America at Washington, \$500,000 was raised among the members of the organization to create an endowment in perpetuity for 50 scholarships at

the Catholic University. The campaign to raise this money was carried to a successful conclusion, and the scholarships were instituted and have been since maintained. These scholarships are confined exclusively to the Catholic University of America and are limited in their application to active members of the Knights of Columbus or to the sons of such members. Each year competitive examinations are held, and as a result of these examinations students are selected for these scholarships at the Catholic University. So far as is practicable, students are apportioned on a geographical basis. As an illustration of the manner in which examinations for these scholarships are handled, I give below a notice published in the Knights of Columbus monthly magazine "Columbia":

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS SCHOLARSHIPS.

A competitive examination for the graduate Scholarships established by the Knights of Columbus in the Catholic University will be held April 14, 1923.

Applications should be filed before March 15, 1923.

Eligible candidates.—The examination is open to men students who have received the Bachelor's degree in Arts, Science or Letters and to those who are now in the Senior class in college. Students who desire, as K. of C. Scholars, to enter the Law School of the University, must have received both the Bachelor's degree (in Arts, Science or Letters) and the degree Bachelor of Laws.

Subjects of examination.—All candidates are required to take examination in English, History, and Mathematics. Each is further required to take examination in Physics or Chemistry or Biology; and in Latin or Greek or one of the modern languages (French, German, Spanish). The candidate will select the science and the language in which he desires to take examination.

Tenure.—The Scholarship entitles the holder to board, lodging and tuition in the University during the academic year. It is available for the minimum period required for obtaining an advanced degree, viz, for the Mastership in Arts, one year; for the Mastership in Philosophy, two years; for the Doctorate in Philosophy, three years.

DIRECTOR OF STUDIES,

The Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.

EDUCATIONAL WORK FOR FORMER SERVICE MEN.

When the United States of America declared war against Germany in April, 1917, the Knights of Columbus, through their supreme board of directors, passed the following resolution:

The supreme board of directors of the Knights of Columbus at a regular meeting held on the 14th day of April, 1917, in the city of Washington, realizing that the crisis confronting our country calls for the active cooperation and patriotic zeal of 400,000 members of the order in this country to our Republic and its laws, pledge their continued and unconditional support to the President and the Congress of the Nation, in their determination to protect its honor and its ideals of humanity and right.

In accordance with the spirit of this resolution, the order at once undertook to raise for welfare purposes among the soldiers \$1,000,000.

This amount was raised by per capita tax on the membership. A few months later drives for raising money for Knights of Columbus welfare work among soldiers were carried on by the local councils in all parts of the country. The total amount raised by these drives was about \$14,000,000. At a later time, in November, 1918, just on the eve of the armistice, the Knights of Columbus participated with other welfare organizations in raising money for welfare work among the soldiers. The amount apportioned to the Knights of Columbus and the National Catholic War Council was \$30,000,000. As a result of the money raised in this drive and the earlier drives, the order was in a position to carry on systematic welfare work among the soldiers, both at home and abroad. Secretaries and chaplains were placed in all Army camps and cantonments. Knights of Columbus buildings were erected and community centers were established. A total of 260 buildings were erected, 1,134 secretaries placed in this country, and 309 units put in operation. Foreign headquarters were established in Paris and London. The number of secretaries sent overseas was 1,075. The motto adopted by the Knights of Columbus in its war work was, "Everybody welcome—everything free," and this slogan was literally adhered to throughout the war. At the close of the war the Knights of Columbus still continued their welfare work in the Army camps in this country and in certain places abroad until November, 1919, when the United States Government took full control of such matters. At this time the Knights of Columbus still had a fund of about \$19,000,000 in its possession. Since that time, still following its motto of war times—"Everybody welcome—everything free"—the Knights of Columbus has been conducting an educational system free to former service men which has been maintained not only out of the interest but out of the principal of the fund remaining at the close of the war.

The three outstanding features of our educational work since the war have been:

1. The evening schools.
2. The scholarships.
3. The correspondence school.

The educational work given in all of these subdivisions has been entirely free to former service men.

1. EVENING SCHOOLS.

(a) *Camp schools for service men.*—In June, 1919, the Knights of Columbus instituted educational courses at Camp Devens, Mass., for the men in service. By November 1, 1919, the date on which we were demobilized out of the camps, we were conducting educational courses in 25 camps and naval stations, with a total registration of

5,884 students. These courses were successful; so successful, in fact, that general regret was expressed by the enlisted men and by the respective officers in charge when we were ordered to withdraw. But our educational experience in the camps, brief though it was, brought home to us very forcibly the realization that there was need among the young men of draft age for training in vocational subjects and an eagerness on their part to take advantage of educational opportunities when these were presented to them.

If this was true of the men in service, it could be no less true of the men discharged from the service. In fact, the plight of the latter, confronted as many of them were with the necessity of seeking new employment upon their return to civil life, was even more acute and their eagerness to grasp educational opportunities was more intense than ever before.

(b) *Evening schools supported by war fund free to ex-service men.*—The Knights of Columbus was the first organization to offer to the able-bodied ex-service man, without cost to himself, evening courses in academic, commercial and trade, or technical subjects to assist him to remove the deficiencies in his educational training occasioned by the war and to fit him for more attractive occupations and greater usefulness. The first Knights of Columbus evening school was opened in Boston, Mass., on July 7, 1919. On September 6, 1919, it was decided that no more valuable service could be rendered than the institution of schools of this type in the larger cities throughout the country, to be supported out of the fund remaining in our hands. Arrangements were made for the carrying out of this plan, with the result that the work spread rapidly to all parts of the country, so that before the close of the school year 45 committee schools were established and 31,163 students were enrolled. Although provision was made for the admission of applicants who had not been in service, upon payment by them of a tuition fee, the number of pay students enrolled during this first school year was an inconsiderable part of the entire membership.

(c) *Council schools supported by fees paid by students.*—The action of the supreme council of the Knights of Columbus at Buffalo on August 7, 1919, authorizing the appointment of a committee on education to put into effect the institution of a system of council schools to be maintained by fees paid by students, and appropriating \$50,000 for administrative purposes, was not in its original intent in any way related to our efforts on behalf of the ex-service man, but it was no less practical in its aim and patriotic in its purpose. Courses were to be offered by councils to members and to others desiring occupational guidance and training under auspices that would inculcate clearer ideas of American life, to the end that the knowledge

gained in these schools would be used not only for the advancement of the individual but also for the greater good of the community.

In keeping also with the desire to provide under our auspices free opportunities for advancement to as many ex-service men as possible, we decided to pay out of the war fund the fees of ex-service men attending as students in council schools to be established in conformity with the plan and to be approved by the committee.

There were 21 council schools instituted and successfully conducted during the school year 1919-20, giving instruction to over 7,000 men and women.

As will be noted from the description above, the committee school is one that is under the direct control of the Knights of Columbus educational committee and one to which funds are supplied directly from the central office of the order at New Haven, for the maintenance of all school work. A council school, on the other hand, is one undertaken on the initiative of the local subordinate councils and assisted only by the central organization to the extent that the tuition fees of all service men are paid from the war fund. It will be noted further that, while service men are free to enter both committee and council schools without any payment of tuition or other charges, the evening schools are also open to civilians upon the payment of a moderate tuition fee. Both committee and council schools have been maintained up to the present time.

During the school year 1920-21 the number of committee schools increased from 48 to 87 and the number of council schools increased from 21 to 38. The enrollment in all committee schools increased from 31,163 in 1919-20 to a total of 79,843 for the year 1920-21. The enrollment in all council schools increased from 3,198 to 19,467, so that during this period the Knights of Columbus conducted a system comprising 125 evening schools, located in 31 States. The total enrollment in all schools was 99,310 students, distributed among 86 different courses.

During the school year 1921-22 the total number of evening schools in operation was 106, comprising 75 committee schools and 31 council schools. These schools were distributed among 37 States. The total enrollment in all courses in all schools was 89,931, comprising a total of 67,196 in committee schools and 22,735 in council schools. The total number of courses offered was 86. While the total number of students enrolled for the year 1921-22 was smaller to some extent than for the preceding year, yet the student body has shown a marked improvement from year to year. During the earlier period of the free evening schools a certain number of young men lacking stability and initiative were enrolled in our courses. They were attracted largely by curiosity and excitement for some-

thing new in educational work. This type of young man had no serious purpose in view and soon dropped out. As a consequence, our student body for 1921-22 was of a superior type. A second reason for this improvement in the student personnel was unquestionably the growing confidence in the Knights of Columbus evening school as an educational institution. Furthermore, the membership of the schools during the past year has to a large extent included students who were in attendance in earlier years and whose persistency was evidence of their appreciation of the opportunities offered and their seriousness in the pursuit of such opportunities.

As complete statistics for the school year 1922-23 can not be compiled until the close of the school year, it has been thought better not to insert incomplete statistics in regard to the current school year. The evening schools, however, are still being maintained in the same manner as they have been in previous years.

2. COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS.

The Knights of Columbus was not only the first organization to provide for able-bodied ex-service men opportunities for free instruction in evening vocational courses, but it was also the first to offer to them full scholarships in college courses leading to the degree of bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, or their equivalent. The first announcement of Knights of Columbus scholarships to ex-service men was made on August 17, 1919, when the following public statement was issued:

With a view to getting the men who return from Army and Navy service back to serious educational occupation, and to refitting them to take part in the most useful fields of reconstruction, the war activities committee of the Knights of Columbus offers 50 scholarships, including tuition, incidental fees, books, necessary equipment, board, and lodging, for a complete technical, scientific, mining, agricultural, or foreign service course; also 50 scholarships for a complete academic course.

It was stipulated, in addition, that applications would be accepted for scholarships only in certain institutions designated by the committee, and that no professional or postgraduate courses, such as law, medicine, and dentistry, would be given.

While it was the intent of the committee, as originally announced, to limit the number of scholarships to 100, to be awarded on a competitive basis, the comparative merit of applicants to be determined by examinations to be conducted by the board of entrance of the various institutions, the committee later decided that a scholarship would be awarded to every applicant who might be certified as eligible for admission to the institution for which he applied, and that the time limit for receiving applications would be extended to September 30, 1919.

Every candidate whose application, in proper form, was received within the time limit set by the committee, and who was certified as eligible for admission to the college for which he applied, was notified that he would be awarded a scholarship. In every instance the decision as to the eligibility of candidates was made by the college authorities.

The total number of applications received within the time limit set was 2,291. Of this number many could not be considered because applicants failed to specify the preferred college or course, or because application was made either for colleges or for courses that were not included in the offer.

The total number of applications submitted to the colleges was 1,002. Careful investigation of the qualifications of each of these applicants was conducted by the college authorities, with the result that, after final reports were received on all applicants, 440 students were certified as eligible for entrance. Of this number, 403 actually enrolled in the courses for which they were awarded scholarships.

As was announced in September, 1919, no more scholarships will be offered, and none of those now held by students will, under any condition, be transferred to other persons.

Action on applications.—The following tables show the number of complete applications, the number of applicants certified as eligible, and the number of scholarships awarded:

Institutions.	Number of applicants.	Number of eligible applicants.	Number scholarships awarded.
<i>Technical</i>			
University of California.....	23	12	11
The Catholic University.....	8	8	8
Colorado School of Mines.....	45	2	2
Georgetown University Foreign Service School.....	108	47	47
University of Illinois.....	71	50	44
Louisiana State University.....	16	11	11
Manhattan College.....	1	1	1
Massachusetts Institute of Technology.....	113	58	46
Michigan Agricultural College.....	25	5	5
University of Minnesota.....	35	20	20
University of Missouri.....	19	0	0
Montana State College of Agriculture.....	6	1	1
Ohio State University.....	24	5	5
Oregon Agricultural College.....	3	3	2
University of Pennsylvania.....	77	31	27
The Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn.....	37	6	5
Purdue University.....	5	5	5
Sheffield Scientific School.....	45	19	18
Stevens Institute of Technology.....	43	15	15
St. John's University of Toledo.....	0	0	0
West Virginia University.....	5	3	2
Worcester Polytechnic Institute.....	30	7	7
University of Notre Dame.....	32	17	15
Total.....	803	326	297

Institutions.	Number of applicants.	Number of eligible applicants.	Number of scholarships awarded.
<i>Academic.</i>			
The Catholic University.....	23	15	15
Croighton University.....	5	3	3
University of Dallas.....	2	2	1
DePaul University.....	2	0	0
University of Detroit.....	8	3	3
Dubuque College.....	3	0	0
Duquesne University.....	3	2	2
Fordham University.....	41	17	17
Gonzaga University.....	2	2	2
Holy Cross College.....	34	22	22
Loyola University (Chicago).....	1	0	0
Loyola University (New Orleans).....	2	2	2
Manhattan College.....	7	0	0
Mount Angel College.....	0	0	0
Mount St. Charles College.....	1	1	1
Niagara University.....	8	2	2
Notre Dame University.....	36	8	8
Santa Clara University.....	4	1	1
St. Louis University.....	5	2	2
College of St. Thomas (St. Paul).....	6	4	2
Villanova College.....	6	3	3
Total.....	199	89	86

In addition to the total of 383 scholarships mentioned above, 20 more free scholarships, on account of unavoidable delays, were later established upon the same general principles. This makes a total of 403 scholarships in all.

3. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES.

The outstanding feature of our educational work at the present time is the Knights of Columbus Correspondence School, which was instituted during the year. By reason of its intrinsic importance, the widespread interest that it has evoked throughout the country, and its rapid expansion since its inception in February, 1922, this new undertaking demands a rather more detailed and extended presentation.

The purpose underlying this extension of our educational program was briefly set forth in our report to the supreme council in August, 1921, as follows:

It is apparent that, through the scholarships awarded to students of advanced standing and through the evening schools conducted in the larger cities throughout the country, we have provided widespread educational opportunities of inestimable value to those who have taken advantage of them. In order to round out to its fullest possibilities the service that we are endeavoring to render, there still remains one important step to be taken—the extension to the ex-service men in the smaller communities and in the rural districts of the advantages of free educational opportunities through correspondence courses.

Preliminary to putting the project into actual operation, an intensive study of correspondence schools systems and methods was conducted by the Educational Bureau at New Haven, with the result

that definite plans for the institution and administration of home-study courses were formulated by the close of the year 1921, and the first formal announcements of them appeared in the February, 1922, issue of "Columbia."

Before entering upon a detailed recital of results to date, it appears advisable to present briefly the fundamental principles underlying the successful conduct of correspondence courses in general, together with such other information as is pertinent and necessary for a thorough understanding of the scope of our work and the method of administering it.

Exclusively for ex-service men and women.—It should be stated at the outset that our present plans contemplate the conduct of correspondence courses for ex-service men and women exclusively. Under no conditions will courses be issued to applicants who can not submit conclusive proof of honorable discharge from Army or Navy service during the World War. Necessarily, by reason of the nature of the trust that we are administering, only veterans of the United States service, together with those veterans of service in the forces of the Allies who are now residents of the United States, are eligible for enrollment under the terms of the offer.

The value of instruction by correspondence.—For those who are acquainted with the remarkable growth of the field of correspondence instruction during recent years it is unnecessary to state that the decision of the Knights of Columbus to undertake this extension of its educational program is in accord with the general tendency among educational institutions of recognized standing throughout the country. Correspondence instruction on an extended scale, distinctively an American development, is a significant phase of that democratic, liberal, all-inclusive American spirit of extending to the individual opportunities for self-improvement and advancement.

While it can not be rightly claimed that correspondence instruction possesses all the advantages of classroom instruction under the immediate supervision and guidance of the teacher, it is nevertheless true that the distinctive conditions attaching to the correspondence method are at least in some courses peculiarly conducive to a thorough mastery of the subject matter. Properly conducted home-study courses establish habits of concentration, accuracy, and perseverance. They develop initiative, resourcefulness, and self-reliance. They train the student to think for himself, to weigh evidence, and to form independent judgments.

Requisites for success.—The successful administration of home-study courses and their value to the students undertaking them depend upon a careful study of and attention to the peculiar diffi-

culties inherent in the work. The requisites for satisfactory service may be stated in general as follows:

Recognition of the limitations of the field in regard to subjects that may or may not be successfully conducted by this method.

Careful selection of text material and its division into well-balanced study units or assignments.

Organization of definite supplementary instruction and information for the direction and assistance of the student.

Preliminary proof of the student's qualifications to undertake the course for which he applies, and personal advice and guidance to him in this connection.

Arrangements for prompt examination and correction of students' reports by expert instructors.

Establishment of a personal relation, as far as possible, between student and examiner by the free interchange of question and comment.

It is upon these essential considerations that the plans of the Knights of Columbus for the institution and conduct of its correspondence courses have been based.

Cooperating agencies.—We are indebted to those directors of university extension departments in the many educational institutions throughout the country offering home-study courses who have assisted us by their guidance and cooperation in the initiation and development of our plans. In some instances we have even been permitted to use their home-study material without cost or at greatly reduced rates. As a further indication of the willingness of these departments to cooperate with us in the interests of the ex-service man, they have permitted us to engage the services of their own experts in the correction and criticism of students' papers.

It is to be understood, however, that these courses are conducted under the immediate direction of the Knights of Columbus, and that no other agency is directly concerned in or responsible for their administration.

In addition to these courses, it has been found necessary to have prepared under our own direction certain courses for which satisfactory material did not appear to be otherwise available. These and all other courses that may be offered will likewise provide students with the opportunity to benefit by the criticism and guidance of recognized experts in the respective subjects.

Application procedure.—Any ex-service man or woman desiring to enroll in a course is requested to write to the supreme secretary for an application blank, and to return it properly filled out and sworn to as required. If the information that he submits satisfies the educational bureau that he is properly qualified to pursue the course for which he makes application, and if there is a sufficient number of registrants for the course, he will be enrolled and he will receive the first instruction material. If the applicant is not enrolled he will receive notice to that effect, with the reasons therefor.

In case of an overwhelming demand for enrollment in any particular course it may be necessary to establish a waiting list. In this event, applications will be cared for in the order in which they are received, provided the applicant states that he desires to be placed on the waiting list.

Only one course will be issued to an applicant at a time. A student may be enrolled in an additional course after his satisfactory completion of the course in which he first enrolls, provided that the Knights of Columbus is in a position at that time to continue this service.

Method of instruction.—Text material: Text material for Knights of Columbus correspondence courses will be issued, depending upon the nature of the course, in one of three forms: As a complete text, covering the entire course, to be sent to the student when he enrolls; in pamphlet form, the successive pamphlets in the series constituting the complete text for the course to be issued in sequence to the student as he progresses; in typewritten or mimeographed form, to be issued in the same way as pamphlets.

Lesson assignments: Courses are divided into lessons or assignments, the number depending upon the nature and length of the course. Each assignment is accompanied by necessary instruction sheets supplementing the text and outlining the work to the student, and by blank forms for the student's report.

When a student enrolls he receives the first three assignments. After study of the text in accordance with instructions, he prepares his report upon the first assignment and mails it to the Knights of Columbus Educational Bureau at New Haven, Conn. This report is then referred to an examiner for correction and criticism, and it is returned to the student, together with the fourth assignment and supplementary material. In like manner the student receives the fifth assignment when his second corrected report is returned to him, and so on until he has completed the course. By this method the student is always in possession of material for study, and there is no break in the continuity of his work.

Grades and certificates.—Students' reports will be graded by examiners as excellent, very good, good, fair, or unsatisfactory, and a record of these grades will be kept in the office of the educational bureau. Certificates will be awarded to students upon satisfactory completion of courses.

Cost to the student.—No charges or fees will be required except as indicated below:

Postage: Every student will be required to pay the postage on his reports and other communications addressed by him to the New Haven office.

Texts: A student enrolled in a course for which it is necessary to issue a complete text at the outset will be required to make a deposit in advance covering the cost of the text. This deposit is returnable to him upon his completion of the course. In no event is a text so issued returnable to the Knights of Columbus, and in no case will a deposit be returned unless the student completes the course. No deposit will be required for text material issued in installments.

Equipment: A student in a course for which special technical equipment is required will be expected to furnish it himself. The educational bureau will, upon request, arrange to supply such equipment at the lowest possible price. A student desiring to take advantage of this opportunity will be expected to forward in advance an amount covering the cost of the equipment needed.

Time limit.—The maximum time allowance for the completion of any course will be one year. Most of the courses ought to be completed in a shorter period, and students are therefore urged to pursue their studies with regularity and with reasonable dispatch. If an enrolled student fails to submit lesson reports for a period of two months and does not reply to letters of inquiry from the educational bureau, he will be dropped from membership.

On December 31, 1922, the total number of students actually enrolled in our correspondence courses was 10,340. These students come from every State in the Union, and from the farm as well as from the small town and large city.

CONCLUSION.

From a reading of this report, it will be clear that the Knights of Columbus has for the past four years been conducting an educational system for former service men which is unique. The funds for the maintenance of these schools, as has been indicated before, formed the residue of the war fund.

Over 200,000 young men have been enrolled and have taken systematic instruction in some course in our evening schools; and 402 young men have taken advantage of our scholarship courses in representative American colleges and universities; and to date over 10,000 young men have enrolled and are taking instruction in our correspondence school. The order has felt all along that it is making a wise and judicious use of the money left in its hands at the close of the war, and it has received abundant testimonials from the American public at large that this plan has received indorsement and approval.