

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES INFANTRY
AND CAVALRY SCHOOL.

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, October 6, 1883.

SIR:

In obedience to instructions contained in your communication of the 19th ultimo, I have the honor to submit an annual report upon the proceedings of the United States Infantry and Cavalry School and affairs connected therewith. The report of last year --the first rendered--was made upon October 11. Since that date the school has progressed favorably. Many of the inconveniences and obstacles to efficient work, such as inadequate quarters, barracks and buildings for educational purposes, which existed during organization, and, in fact, until very recently, have been overcome in a great measure, and it is believed that by constant labor for a short period the actual necessities of the post and school in these particulars can be provided. The pressing need for books, maps, charts, mechanical appliances, and mathematical instruments has been partially met and supplied from the post school fund with very little assistance from extraneous sources. Two thousand dollars have been thus expended since last October, and probably a greater amount will be paid out in similar purchases during the coming winter and spring months. Still, hardly the nucleus of a desirable library has been obtained; mathematical instruments are extremely limited, and no attempt has been made to collect scientific or philosophical apparatus. The suggestion of the General of the Army, contained in his last annual report, that an annual

appropriation of \$5,000 could be yearly beneficial expended in the purchase of books and educational appliances, would, if favorably acted upon and carried into effect, soon relieve all temporary embarrassment, and enable instructors to impart much useful practical information on subjects which are of prime importance to officers of the Army.

The only change made during the past year in company organizations composing the garrison was the relief of Companies F and H of the Twentieth Infantry by Companies A and I of the same regiment during July last. A few weeks previous to this change I recommended the relief of one half of the companies of the garrison in memoranda transmitted to the Adjutant General, as follows:

Having in mind the interest of the school alone, I think that the companies, or a portion of them, should remain here for some time at least and be considered instruction companies. * * * They are now accustomed to methods of procedure, the result of months' experience, and will assist greatly in the rapid practical education of incoming officers. But it would not be necessary to retain all of them. Two companies of cavalry and two or three companies of infantry might be relieved without any great detriment; for those remaining would by example enable those arriving to acquire speedily the proficiency demanded for the proper education of officers. The companies of infantry and cavalry now here, and to be retained, to be replaced, after another period of two years, by other companies, when those to arrive this year will in turn become the instruction companies. * * * I am inclined to think that the relief of one half of the companies during the present summer, and of the remaining half at the termination of the next two years' course, will work well in practice (as far as the interest of the school is concerned) and for the benefit of the service.

It was considered impracticable to carry out this recommendation and the relief of the greater number of the lieutenants of the companies was then advocated, and was, to a great extent, effected. I am now more firmly convinced than formerly— that one half of the companies of the garrison should be relieved at the termination of every two years' course of instruction, that all regiments may have like op-

portunities to receive whatever benefits the school may confer, and that the good effected here may be as widely disseminated throughout the Army as possible. It will also be advantageous to the post to occasionally introduce new element into its organized garrison.

When my last report was submitted the officers here assembled for instruction had entered upon the second year of the course—the first having been of limited duration, covering a period of but four months, as it had been cut short by the length of time expended in the organization of the school. This second year of theoretical instruction extended from October 2 to the following July. Forty-two officers entered the classes—twenty-two in the first and twenty in the second class.” Of these seven were withdrawn for various causes and thirty-five remained, passed satisfactory examinations before the school staff and received graduating diplomas. Of most of these it may be said that they far exceeded expectations in close and continued application, and in the knowledge which they displayed at the final examination of all subjects of study pursued during the entire course. The success which the school has met with thus far must be attributed in a great measure to their cheerful obedience to orders and regulations and their willing labor. All, with scarcely an exception, seemed animated with the desire to acquit themselves creditably, both as soldiers and students of military science. Not a case requiring decided discipline manifested itself. Harmony and good fellowship constantly prevailed. These gentlemen were relieved from duty at the post and school in July, and early in September the new details arrived and were immediately assigned to companies of the garrison. On September 10 the staff was convened for the purpose of classifying them for theo-

retical study. It was directed to examine all officers "present and subject to instruction during the ensuing school year, with a view to their classification;" to confine examinations to the following subjects, VIZ:

English grammar, geography, descriptive and physical, arithmetic, algebra, plane geometry, general history, United States history, composition, and written correspondence, and to make them sufficiently exhaustive to test the general knowledge which the parties examined had of these subjects. The result showed the necessity of again forming two classes, as had been done with the previous detail of officers, and confirmed my impression, conveyed in a communication forwarded last spring, wherein I stated that 'in my opinion it would be necessary to maintain two classes at the school, each to have its own. prescribed theoretical course of study, for the reason that the lieutenants will differ greatly in regard to educational qualifications and mental capacity. Some who enter the school will be trained students of comparatively broad culture, and others will be deficient in a knowledge of even the rudiments of the English educational branches. We are now so circumstanced, and future details will undoubtedly exhibit the same wide diversity of preparation to take up professional or scientific subjects', x x x Both a first and second class should be maintained, and first and second grade diplomas awarded, upon graduation. Officers can be examined and classified when they report for duty, and opportunity given to those who fall into the second class to push forward into the first during the course, if they show the desire to do so and display the requisite ability.

The recommendations of the staff in regard to the classification, made after quite a protracted examination, were approved. Forty-five officers were examined, of whom twenty-eight were assigned to the first and seventeen to the second class. Each class was subdivided into two sections in order to secure the advantages of more frequent individual recitations. The course opened on Monday last, the 1st instant. The classification, the subjects to be pursued during the present year, and the time allotted to the consideration of each, also the instructors and their separate spheres of duty, are shown in Post Orders No. 233 and 235, which are herewith enclosed. That portion of the curriculum prescribed for the present term, or for the first half of the year, is

largely confined to subjects of the most practical nature to officers of the line, or to those which they should necessarily be acquainted with in order to fulfil actual requirements in the positions which they fill. All intimate knowledge of these is considered of the utmost importance, and it is possible that a part of the second year will be given up to them, - It depends entirely upon the proficiency displayed by the students at the next summer's examination. Therefore, the full scope of study for the entire course of two years cannot now be determined, Our intention is, however, to make it aid especially a development of the most essential professional attainments.

The classification above mentioned has been made only for purposes of theoretical instruction. For practice, officers join the companies to which they are temporarily attached, or they are united in one body under a competent instructor. The third paragraph of Post Orders No. 220, herewith transmitted, explains the nature of some of their present duties. In particular studies not pursued by both classes, all the members of the class by whom the subject has been or is being pursued unite when directed to make practical application of the theoretical knowledge acquired. Theory and practice, in so far as opportunities offer or appliances are at hand, are taught simultaneously. In my last report I remarked that

“In establishing the school considerably difficulty was experienced in so regulating the duties of the different organizations represented as to avoid conflict of action, and at the same time to have opportunity for necessary recitations and for the full performance of the necessary other duties devolving upon officers serving at a large garrison post. The bringing together of troops of the three arms, and of classes of officers separately identified with each, in order that all of the latter might be instructed in the various matters pertaining especially to each arm, as well as in those which are common to all, was an untried experiment. The process of uniting officers, having dissimilar duties of unequal duration to be executed within the same and also upon different portions

of the day, for purposes of instruction, is in itself quite troublesome, but especially so at this post, which is in a continued state of unrest, owing chiefly to its locality and the transient character of some part of its garrison.

The difficulties which were at first met with in these particulars are now scarcely apparent, Drills, recitations, ceremonies and hours for study follow each other in rapid succession throughout the day; and as for practical instruction not considered strictly of a military nature, when the presence of troops is unnecessary, it can, if required to extend over a considerable portion of the day, be deferred to those months of the year when class recitations are suspended. Incessant labor and energy are demanded on the part of officers in order to execute satisfactorily all duties, but the experience of last year proves conclusively the wisdom of constant employment and the results which can thereby be obtained. However, some of the officers of the last class were called upon not only to perform their ordinary post duties (and these at times become burdensome because especially of the numerous boards and courts convened, of which they are made members, and frequently recorders of proceedings), and also their obligations as students of the school, but they were also detailed as instructors of school classes. Still they found time to acquit themselves with great credit to themselves in all of these varied capacities, giving proof that to the zealous officer and trained student the course of study, unaccompanied by outside or unusual requirements, is not difficult to master. At present sufficient instructors are stationed here to avoid the necessity of detail of any of the students of the school, except it may be for temporary purposes. Three members of the last class are employed in that vocation. Two of them remained here to fill positions under War Department orders, and one is an officer of the permanent garrison:

Nearly all of the officers who gave class instruction last year are on duty at the post, and are again employed in those particular provinces of study which then occupied them. Their past experience has greatly increased their competency, and will enable them to show a greater degree of efficiency in those departments in which they have hitherto been very efficient.

The enlisted strength of the organizations composing the garrison has of late been much reduced. It is difficult to obtain desired results from tactical exercises without strong 'companies. Five or six officers cannot be advantageously employed at an infantry or cavalry drill when but two or three sets of fours participate. Unfortunately for the benefit of greater success of the school proper, the post was inadequate to accommodate the number of officers and military organizations sent here in November, 1881, and since that time a great amount of fatigue duty has been of necessity performed, and must still, for a period at least, be continued. Details, therefore, from the companies are sometimes very heavy, reducing them much below effectiveness for tactical purposes, and then instruction languishes. For that reason I, a short time since, made application for an increase of the enlisted strength of the infantry companies, mindful also of the fact that even when quarters, barracks, stables, etc., are constructed, there must still be large details to repair and preserve buildings, to care for and keep in order the extensive grounds, to furnish detachments occasionally called for by department headquarters, and to perform the multifarious duties devolving upon enlisted men at posts of the size of this one, and where, as in this case, a large concourse of officers are constantly present, and are periodically interchanging. To make tactical instruction effective it should be un-

interrupted. From forty to fifty officers must be thoroughly grounded in all that pertains to the artillery, cavalry and infantry tactical maneuvers. They must be passed methodically through the three arms of the service within a given space of time to acquire this knowledge, small detachments of officers serving in each arm at one and the same time. It cannot be satisfactorily accomplished if drills revert to farces on account of insufficient strength in organizations, or if they are not constantly progressing when the seasons permit.

Since October last five sets of barracks have been constructed, offices for the commanding officer and staff of the post have been put into very good repair, and now a large, commodious hospital is in process of erection and bids fair to be ready for occupancy within the present year., Additional quarters are still needed. Married officers detailed for instruction are not permitted to have their families with them, because of lack of accommodations. This appears unjust, even when viewed by the practices which here prevail; for officers assigned to company organizations serving at the post demand and receive quarters on the ground that they are permanent, as distinguished from those attached for instruction by War Department order, when, in fact, many of the first class have no more permanency than those of the second, if, as was the case last year, they are to be relieved from the post upon graduation from the school. A few brick cottages could be built, at an expense of not more than \$1500 each, for those students of the school who have families. As now situated they are obliged to maintain their families at some distant point and to defray quite a large expenditure here, which the income of a lieutenant, solely dependent upon his pay from the government, is scarcely able to meet. I believe there are quite a

large number of married officers in the army who would not only gladly accept the detail for a course of instruction in the school, but would seek it, could they be attended by their family and avoid the expense which, under present circumstances, they cannot afford.

A school for noncommissioned officers and such enlisted men as desire to take a course of theoretical instruction has not yet been organized; proper rooms for that purpose have not been available until very recently. We are now awaiting opportunity to put them in proper condition, and shall endeavor to do so very soon, so that a winter session may be held as an experiment to ascertain what benefits may be obtained in that direction, in order to establish a school of this character permanently if found to be practicable. Little has as yet been done for the advancement of enlisted men. They seek for the most part their amusements and pleasures in the city of Leavenworth, and, in most instances, the tendency has been towards demoralization. Some well directed effort should be made at once to neutralize this attraction, or at least to diminish it, but what means should be used to produce the desired results is a matter reserved for future study and trial when time and opportunity will permit.

No confirmed regulations for the government of the post and school have as yet been prepared. Post orders are issued to meet varying circumstances as they arise, which are modified from time to time as occasion requires. No definite program of instruction has yet been adopted, but the studies of each term are fixed upon and arranged after the capacity of the students are carefully estimated. The results of preceding terms determine the scope and character, to a great extent, of the instruction which is to follow. During the past summer I had concluded that a set of regulations, compact and well defined,

might be prepared to govern all duties at the post, and to prescribe the course of study and application for the school. Upon mature reflection, however, it appeared wise to defer action in this direction until a more extended experience or future developments should more clearly manifest what and how much substantial good might be accomplished and by what operations it could be best effected. All orders affecting government and general duties are compactly printed and freely issued. School circulars, in like form, to convey information regarding instruction, are furnished to all officers, but we are greatly hampered in not having the means to do all necessary printing. Thus far we have been obliged to depend upon a small regimental hand-press. Last winter carefully prepared estimates for a press adapted to the wants of the school were forwarded to superior authority, but a quantity of type, badly worn, and some other material, mostly worthless, were all that were obtained in response. Very little of it can be utilized. We find it impossible, therefore, to print a great deal of the manuscript prepared by officers upon subjects which they are engaged in teaching, and which would be of benefit to the students could they be furnished with printed copies of the same.

At no time since its organization has the school given more satisfactory promise of success than at present. The members of the new class have cheerfully taken up their labors, apparently impressed with the belief that the two years' course which they have undertaken *is* to be devoted to study and work. The conduct of most of them so far, and the energy which they display, also the interest manifested by the instructors, furnishes assurance that the expectations of the General of the Army in the establishment of the school will at least be partly realized.

Full proceedings of the staff upon the final examinations of the graduates during last summer were forwarded to the Adjutant General some time since. I have now the honor to transmit herewith post orders and circulars which indicate the methods of procedure which have governed duties here during the past year.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

E. S. OTIS,

Colonel Twentieth Infantry, Commanding.

The Adjutant General, U. S. A.,

Washington, D. C.

(Through Headquarters Department of the Missouri.)