

With this intention on the part of the Government they started for Arizona with Captain Dorst, visiting on their way the Indian school at Carlisle. They were stopped on their journey after leaving Carlisle and sent back to Fort Leavenworth. While they were there the Indians who were to be sent from the Fort Apache Reservation to Florida were secured and started on the way. It was thought best by the Lieutenant-General that the Indians at Fort Leavenworth, who had become turbulent and excited, should be sent direct from there to Fort Marion, and orders were issued to that effect, as it was not considered practicable for any of them to meet the other band on their journey east, as had been proposed. Captain Dorst and these Indians, thirteen in number, together with three interpreters, left Fort Leavenworth on the 13th of September, and on the 20th the Department was advised of their arrival at Fort Marion.

A summarized statement of all the Indian prisoners now at Fort Marion and Fort Pickens will be found in the appendix.

It is hoped that the Apache wars and raids that have devastated Arizona and New Mexico, and the adjacent States of Mexico, for so many years, are ended by the permanent removal of the fiercest and most dangerous of the Apache tribes.

The Lieutenant-General states that many officers are becoming disabled by reason of long service on the frontier and from wounds received or disease contracted during the war of the rebellion. He is of opinion that while those who are disabled are transferred to the retired list as fast as possible it would be a great benefit to the Army if Congress would increase the list and include upon it all officers found by duly constituted boards to be permanently incapacitated for active service. In this belief I concur, and I recommend such action by Congress. I also concur in the opinion expressed by the Lieutenant General that if the Army were increased five thousand men, and two companies were added to each of the infantry regiments, the Army would be enabled to creditably perform such service as the country might demand.

The reports of the commanding officers of the Artillery School and of the Infantry and Cavalry School are very satisfactory, and show that a high standard of military education has been established, which promises to lead to the best results. The instruction of the Army in the use of the rifle or carbine has been thoroughly prosecuted during the year; the returns from each department and the results of the regular competitions exhibit a decided advance in rifle firing. As the importance of company practice in skirmish firing is better recognized, it is believed that in the near future many of the soldiers will become expert skirmishers, and the effective fire of the mass of the Army will be greatly improved.

The discipline of the Army is reported to be good, and the efficiency of the various arms of the service well maintained. It has but little opportunity for active service, and what it has is not of the most agreeable or inspiring kind. The control and pursuit of Indians, difficult

and hazardous as it often is, and developing as it does the individual character and gallantry of officers and men, is yet war on a very limited scale, and bears but slight resemblance to the great contests which follow the collision between nations. In any war with a foreign power our regular forces would be the nucleus of the great muster of volunteers, which experience has taught us must be the natural resource in times of danger, and the discipline, guidance, and command of which must fall mainly upon the officers of the Regular Army.

The efficiency, therefore, of our small force should be at the highest point, and the officers should be instructed, competent, and accomplished in all knowledge that pertains to the art of war and the duties of the soldier. Without great additional expense it should be and can be made a model army, for it has the material in its officers and men to take this position. It should be borne in mind in this connection that it has been and still is the policy of the Government to rear and train at West Point young men from all portions of the Republic to be soldiers. No expense is spared to give them the best military education possible. Only those who succeed in passing the tests of rigid examinations are selected for the public service. So severe is the ordeal through which they pass that but one in three succeeds in graduating. Nor is expense spared in providing for these young men thus educated when they take their places in the Army, for the pay of our officers is higher through all its grades than that of any other army save the Anglo-Indian army. And yet, after thus preparing and providing for them, there are no special requirements, common to all, demanding their progress and growth in the profession of arms; and no inquiry is made, or examination had, as the years go by, and they advance grade after grade, whether as individuals they are worthy of promotion, and are equal to the higher rank and larger responsibilities they are forced to assume. When a second lieutenant enters the service, whether from civil life, the ranks of the Army, or from the Military Academy at West Point, the rigid examination above alluded to is made the necessary condition for the commission. But this once passed, under present regulations, the officer can, and but too frequently does, close his books and his studies; and if he does not overwork or expose himself, he knows that, with good health and life, he is certain, under the operation of compulsory retirement, to reach the highest grade open to seniority in his arm of the service.

I assume it to be true in the Army, as elsewhere, that no man should occupy a position for which he is not fitted; and it is equally true that there should be some way in the Army, as elsewhere, through which such fitness should be ascertained. It may also be assumed that no men are so well fitted to determine the capacity or incapacity of a candidate for a place as those who have already filled the place and are familiar with its requirements and its duties. It would seem, therefore, that no objection can reasonably be urged against an examination