of its field officers have never joined since it came to this coast, and seven of its captains are absent in the eastern States. Other regiments have been equally in want of officers during thepast year. Most of the troops on this coast are virtually in the field, and the presence of their officers is absolutely necessary to their discipline and efficiency.

Indian Scouts.

In this connection I respectfully call attention to the use of Indian scouts. The law authorizes the employment of one thousand, but of this number only two hundred were allotted to this division. Although these, equally divided between the two departments, are very few, their services have proved of the greatest value. The officers are unanimous in favor of greatly increasing the number. As guides and scouts, they are almost indispensable. On this subject I refer to the remarks of Generals McDowell and Steele, and the commanders who have used them in the field. I hope the number will be greatly increased. We could employ at least one thousand on this coast, with advantage and economy. They would save the more valuable lives of many white men.

Indian Prisoners Of War

Indian prisoners of war have become quite numerous at many of the interior posts, and are a matter of serious embarrassment. The agents of the Indian bureau will not, as a general rule, receive them on the reservations. If released, they return to their haunts and resume hostilities. If kept at military posts, they must be guarded by the soldiers and fed by the commissary department. This costs a large sum of money, and requires the services of many of our troops, who otherwise could operate in the field. To keep them in idleness, as simply prisoners, is demoralizing both to the Indians and the men who guard them. To employ them in cultivating land for their own support will require agricultural implements, seed, clothing, agents, and superintendents--in fine, a system of reservations and farms under military authority, precisely like that now under the Indian bureau. Again, some of the more friendly tribes have offered to remove to reservations, provided they are furnished with provisions the first year, and properly protected by the troops. But the military have no authority to feed Indians, other than those held as prisoners of war; nor can they establish and organize Indian reservations, as they have no appropriations of money which can be employed for such purposes.