The French Staff

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THE FRENCH STAFF.

By Colonel DELAVOYE, A.D.M.E.

THE Law concerning the Staff of the French Army, which was passed last year, and the Decrees fixing in detail its various provisions which have been lately published, draw one's attention to that enormous force which is quietly being brought to a state of efficiency within a few miles of our own shores.

On the Staff of an army very much depends, and it is absurd to suppose that its organization and its duties can be rigidly fixed by either Law or Decree. The recent proposals of the Minister for War, which have received the approval of the President of the French Republic, while settling even the most minute details, leave to those charged with their administration a liberty of action which is as necessary as beneficial.

The armies of Europe may be said to have been called into existence 100 years ago, whereas the Staffs of most European armies can only be said to have just attained their majority. Although, however, "the brain of an army" may be considered as a growth of recent date, still its necessity was recognized in France some centuries ago.

The first signs of a Staff, as now understood, in the French Army are noticed as far back as the sixteenth century. At that time mention is made of Officers being permanently employed, away from their regiments, as assistants to the General Officers in command, transmitting their orders, and charged besides with all details concerning the transport of troops, their drill formations, encampments, &c., &c. These Officers were the Aides-de-Camp, Sergents Généraux (Adjutant-Generals), Maréchaux des Logis d'Armée (Quartermaster-Generals), and others.

In 1678 the various Staffs were regularly organized, and as then arranged continued until the Revolution. Attached to each army was a Chief of the Staff, a Quartermaster-General of Infantry, and a Quartermaster-General of Cavalry. Each of these high Officers had a distinct Staff. There were thus three separate Staffs without counting those of the Artillery and Engineers, which, as well as the Intendance, were directly under the Commander-in-Chief.

In 1783 the French Staff was by regulation composed of 19 Colonels, 24 Lieut.-Colonels or Majors, and 25 Captains, who formed a separate and distinct Corps of Officers, which was, however, still subdivided into three separate Staffs, with no common bond, and with separate duties and interests.

The Military Committee of the Constituent Assembly considered this question, and came to the conclusion that to provide Commanding Officers with assistants capable of directing all the services of an

army and working together for one common end, it was necessary to form one single Staff by amalgamating those then existing. By the Law of the 5th October, 1790, the new Staff was composed of 30 Adjutant-Generals, of whom 17 were Colonels and 13 Lieut.-Colonels, and to each was attached a fixed number of assistants. The Adjutant-Generals were to be taken exclusively from the cavalry and infantry, and were not to receive promotion unless they returned for service to the arm with which they had originally served. The separate Staffs of the artillery and engineers were retained, as well as the corps of military geographical engineers.

This corps requires special mention. It was formed in 1696, up to which date the geographical engineers had been taken from the infantry. It was then styled the Corps of Engineers of Camps and Armies. In 1726 the name was altered to Geographical Engineers of Camps and Armies, and in 1760 the topographical section was taken from the fortification branch and placed in their charge. In 1791 they were abolished as a separate corps, and their duties were undertaken by the engineers. From 1793, however, it was considered that the extent of the military operations in which the Republic was engaged necessitated their reconstitution, and as geographical engineers the corps existed until 1814. In peace time they were attached to the Headquarter Office, and were employed in drawing up maps and plans. They drew up almost entirely the map of France. In time of war they were attached by small sections to the Staffs of armies and army corps, and carried out the reconnaissance and surveying duties, of which most of the Staff Officers of the time were ignorant. In 1831 the corps was included in the Staff.

The ideas which prevailed with the Military Committee of the National Assembly which drew up the Law of the 5th October, 1790, reorganizing the Staff, were briefly as follows:—That the Staff should no longer be separated from, but form an integral part of the Army from which it was to be recruited. Service on the Staff was to be granted to those who, after having acquired a thorough knowledge of military details and movements, would be enabled in their new career to so extend their knowledge that they might themselves become General Officers qualified to command troops in the field, from the fact that no part of the details connected with such command would be unknown to them, and they would have acquired a knowledge of which their predecessors were ignorant. These same views were adopted by the Parliamentary Commissions which have, since 1874, considered the difficult and delicate question of the organization of the Staff. In all their Decrees they desired to make the Staff the school for command, in which those selected for the higher ranks should obtain that general knowledge which is not to be acquired by service with one particular arm, and, to ensure its efficiency, in admitting none but the best educated and most capable Officers from the various regiments forming the Army.

These high aims were, it is stated, not realized for many reasons.

In 1805 Napoleon directed Generals Berthier and Dumas, who had

served on the Staff under the Monarchy, to reorganize the whole Staff of the Army. They naturally adopted the principles of the system under which they had formerly served, while, at the same time, they endeavoured to make them suit the requirements of the day. The General Staff was constituted as follows:—At its head as Chief of the Staff was a General Officer. He had under him three Officers, also of General's rank, whose duties closely resembled those of the former Adjutant- and Quartermaster-General, and who between them had the direction of all services. These high Officers were supported by a fixed number of Assistant and Deputy Assistant Adjutant-Generals.

The Headquarter Staff included the Inspector-General of Artillery, the Inspector-General of Engineers, the head of the Administrative Branch, and the Officer charged with inspections and reviews. The total number of Officers employed on the Headquarter Staff was 107. The Staffs of Army Corps were arranged in accordance with the General Staff, each having as Chief of the Staff a Divisional or a Brigadier-General supported by three or four Assistant Adjutant-Generals, between whom the duties were distributed. The Staff of a Division was similarly arranged. It was, however, only at Headquarters that the reorganization was satisfactorily completed. There Marshal Berthier, who proved himself a most efficient Chief of the Staff, gathered together some few distinguished Officers, and personally supplied any deficiencies.

The Army Corps and Divisional Staffs were made up haphazard of men with powerful interest, with the result that the Service suffered. Nepotism and caprice were rampant in the selection of the Officers who became the assistants to Generals in command. In consequence also of the long and frequent wars, the proper distribution of Staff duties was neglected, and the number of Officers employed at the same time increased to such an absurd extent that in 1817, when General Gouvion Saint-Cyr was Minister for War, he found that no one performed the duties for the execution of which ten were appointed, and for which, as was frequently the case, none of the ten were fitted. As a natural consequence, Staff employ was looked down upon. Capable Officers felt that in their own interests they must leave the Staff and re-enter the Line, or else get appointed as Aides-de-Camp to well-known Generals. So low had the Staff fallen towards the end of the Empire that it was said to be composed only of Officers who were either incapable or in disgrace, or of Aides-de-Camp without Generals.

The War Minister then decided that entrance to the Staff should no longer be left to arbitrary selection, but that Officers who might be admitted should show sufficient proof of instruction. General Thiébault, who reported on the state of the Staff, proposed the institution of a Staff school, to which should be admitted each year, after competition, thirty Lieutenants having served two years with their regiments. After a course of two years' study they were to return to their corps until appointed to the Staff. These Officers, on promotion, were to pass from the Staff to the Line, and *vice versa*. Other

schemes had been put forward by various General Officers, in some of which an open Staff was advocated; in others a closed and separate corps was recommended. The Council of State adopted the former, but the War Minister rejected their proposals. His reasons for so doing are stated to have been his determination to put an end to any possibility of Court influence whereby he would be compelled to appoint Officers to a cadre already overfull. By the Law of 1818 the Staff Corps became a separate body, the personnel of which was fixed according to the eventual requirements of the Service.

It appeared that to provide Officers for the various appointments on the General Staff, and as Aides-de-Camp for an army of 300,000 men, in 30 divisions of infantry or of cavalry, and 6 army corps, the cadre should be fixed as follows:—30 Colonels, 30 Lieut.-Colonels, 90 Majors of cavalry, 270 Captains, 125 Lieutenants, in all 540 Officers, plus 100 Aides-de-Camp and Subaltern Officers who might be called upon to serve on the Staff in time of war, and a number of unattached Sub-Lieutenants, selected annually, according to the requirements of the Service. A Staff school was established for the training of these unattached Officers. Of the Staff of the old Army, there were 73 Colonels or Lieut.-Colonels, 124 Majors, 278 Captains, and 68 Lieutenants, say 543 Officers on the Active List, and about double that number on half-pay.

Thus, in 1818, the Staff duties of the French Army were entrusted to Officers forming a separate Staff Corps. In 1822, however, Marshal Victor, Duke of Belluno, then War Minister, wished to reopen it. He permitted exchanges; but in the following year he gave up his appointment, and his views were not adopted by his successor. Under the direction of General Clermont Tonnerre, the question was again brought forward, and the orders issued on the 10th December, 1826, established a system made up of the two foregoing. The Staff Corps was, it might be said, thrown open to those only who wished to leave it, a concession which caused great discontent among the regimental Officers who considered themselves sacrificed for the advancement of the Staff Officers.

Some years later the question of throwing open the Staff was again considered by a Commission, presided over by General de Préval, which proposed certain radical modifications in the organization, such as to extend the recruitment of the corps, to increase the number of Officers qualified for Staff employ, and to place on a footing of greater similarity the constitution of the Staff and the general instruction and promotion in the Army. These proposals were, however, not received favourably by Marshal Soult, then Minister of War, who, by the Order of the 23rd February, 1833, again made the Staff a separate corps, allowing at the same time exchanges between Officers of the Staff and those of the infantry and cavalry. An Order of 1838 abolished exchanges, and only allowed Officers of the Staff Corps to leave it for service in the gendarmerie, or in newly formed corps. The Staff Corps was thus again completely isolated from the remainder of the Army.

The war in Spain, in 1823, that of Belgium in 1832, and the wars

in Africa were not of sufficient importance to show up the good or bad points of the system established by General Gouvion Saint-Cyr. It was not until the Crimean war that the capabilities of the Staff Corps were fairly tested. It was then found to be wanting in point of numbers, and a decree of the 7th March, 1855, had to be passed, raising its strength by fifty Officers. It was found that even with this augmentation it was barely able to provide for the many duties required by the war, at the end of which there remained a large excess above the authorized strength on a peace footing. To absorb these surplus Officers, it became necessary to restrict the number of pupils admitted to the College. During the campaign in Italy, in 1859, the plans adopted in 1855 were necessarily resumed. The new cadre was fixed at 610 Officers, and it was with great difficulty, and only by the sacrifice of preliminary education and training, that that number was obtained. The wars in the Crimea and in Italy proved that some more rapid way of filling up vacancies than that in vogue would have to be adopted in the event of a war of any duration.

When Marshal Niel became Minister of War, he took the matter in hand, and sought for a plan whereby he could, when passing from a peace to a war footing, obtain a sufficient Staff, by taking from their regiments Officers capable of becoming useful assistants. To ensure the presence of such Officers in the various corps, he maintained the Staff school at its full strength, sending those for whom there were no appointments to their regiments with the title of "Adjoint d'Etat-Major." By this means in a few years, from among the Captains and Lieutenants a sufficient number of qualified Officers would be found to raise the cadre of the Staff to a war footing. This system was sanctioned by a Decree of the 19th July, 1869, which also allowed of exchanges between Officers serving on the Staff and the Adjoints d'Etat-Major serving with their regiments, in order to bring on to the Staff Officers with a knowledge of regimental duties, and to send into the regiments Officers who had had a more varied training.

That this system was advantageous to the Service generally was evident. It was, however, received with so much dissatisfaction by all classes of Officers, including those on the Staff, that the Order promulgating it was withdrawn, and when the war of 1870 broke out, matters were in the same unsatisfactory state as in 1854 and 1859.

In this war, more than ever was it made evident that for the Staff to be a separate closed corps, unable in time of war to add to its strength by drawing recruits from the line, and unprovided with a reserve of any description, was prejudicial to the interests of the Service. The war was therefore no sooner over than the question was taken in hand, but it was not until 1877 that a discussion on the reorganization of the Staff was opened in the Senate. Their project was then referred to a Mixed Commission of the two Chambers, and was passed by both when it emerged from the Commission.

The new organization of the Staff remedied many of the defects inherent to a closed corps; it created a reserve for time of war, and allowed of all well-educated and hard-working Officers entering the

Staff, benefiting it by their intelligence and acquirements, and enabling them to obtain that general knowledge and insight into those larger questions of war which are so necessary to those called upon to exercise high command, and which are not likely to be acquired by Officers kept in any one special service. It enabled the War Minister to get rid of those who were of no value, either from fatigue or who, having started well in their career, failed to carry out those capabilities of which they had given promise.

The new Law referring to service on the Staff in the French Army was promulgated on the 20th March, 1880. It contained eleven articles, which were briefly as follows:—

Art. 1.—The Special Staff Corps created by the regulation of the 6th May, 1818, and modified by those of 1826 and 1833, is abolished.

The Staff Service will be performed:

1. By Officers of all arms holding the certificate qualifying them for service on the Staff temporarily on the condition set forth in this Law.

2. By clerks and secretaries of the various Staff offices.

Art. 2.—Staff Officers are the agents of those in command.¹ Their duties will be fixed by a Decree.

Art. 3.—The superior military school instituted by the Law of the 13th March, 1875, will be called the "Ecole Supérieure de la Guerre." Captains, Lieutenants, and Sub-Lieutenants of all arms who have completed five years' service as Officers, of which three years must have been passed with the colours, may compete for admission.

Officers who pass the final examinations of the war school are considered qualified for Staff employment.

Field Officers of all arms are also held to be qualified on certain conditions, and after passing certain tests fixed by a Ministerial regulation.

Art. 4.—In time of peace no Officer can be attached to the Staff for more than four years, after which he must serve for at least two years with troops before he can be reappointed.

Aides-de-Camp and orderly Officers of all arms, Officers employed at headquarters or on committees, whether they hold the Staff certificate or not, will be governed by the same rule.

A few Officers, however, who have devoted themselves to special scientific studies may be exempted from this rule on special recommendation.

This rule is not obligatory for General Officers and Colonels, and will cease for all ranks in time of war.

Art. 5.—In time of peace the number of Officers employed on the Staff shall not exceed 300, as follows:—

- 25 Colonels.
- 35 Lieutenant-Colonels.
- 100 Majors (Chefs d'Escadron).
- 140 Captains.

¹ The term agent was specially made use of to prevent any misconception to which the term assistant might have given rise. It was pointed out that an assistant might be considered as holding the second place in the command.

They will be seconded, and will continue to belong to their particular arm of the Service in which they will be promoted.

Art. 6.—Those Officers who hold certificates, but who are not included in the foregoing list, will form a reserve for the Staff.

They are at the disposal of the War Minister for employment on Staff duties. In peace time these Officers will not be seconded.

Art. 7.—The direction of the duties and of the personnel of the Staff is supervised by a General Officer under the Minister for War, who will be assisted by a permanent Consulting Staff Committee.

Art. 8.—A special geographical section is established at headquarters. It will consist of, at the most: 2 Colonels, 3 Lieutenant-Colonels, and 7 Majors.

This cadre will be chosen from among those Officers of all arms who may be specially qualified. They will be seconded, and will not be subject to the conditions of Art. 4.

The necessary number of Captains will be appointed as assistants.

Art. 9.—The personnel of the Staff offices is composed of:—

30 Principal Archivists.

30 1st Class "

40 2nd "

50 3rd "

These Archivists are charged under the orders of the Officers of the Staff with the clerical duties of the various offices, and with the care of the documents. They form a special corps, having no assimilation with the several ranks in the Army.

Art. 10.—From the promulgation of the present Law, those Officers now belonging to the Staff Corps will be granted certificates, and will be distributed among the various arms of the Service in proportion to the number of Officers of the same rank in each arm.

They will be promoted with them, either by selection or seniority, in the proportion of one for every two.

The Officers of the suppressed corps who are not selected to form part of the new service will be attached as supernumeraries to their arm. The Minister for War may, however, retain them, seconded, for Staff employ for four years from the promulgation of this Law.

During the same period Officers of all arms may be employed on the Staff without holding the qualifying certificate.

Officers who have passed the final examinations of the war school prior to the promulgation of this Law will be granted the certificate.

Art. 11.—All regulations contrary to the present Law are annulled.

The new Law regulating the Staff and the Decree fixing the details of the Service were allowed a trial of three years. In June, 1883, General Thibaudin, then Minister of War, presented a Decree further regulating the details, which was approved by the President of the Republic.

In December, 1886, another Decree was issued, which varied but in a slight degree from its predecessor. This Decree, however, with unimportant modifications is the one which now governs the French Staff, and is briefly as follows:—

CHAPTER I.—*Organization and Service.*

Art. 1.—In time of peace the General Staff comprises:—

1. The Military Household of the President of the Republic.
- The Special Staff of the Minister for War.
- The General Staff of the Minister for War.
- The Staffs of the Military Governments of Paris and Lyons.
- The Staffs of Army Corps, of Divisions, and Brigades of Infantry and Cavalry.
- The Staffs of Territorial Divisions and Sub-Divisions.
- The Staffs attached to the commands of fortified places.
- The Staffs of Marshals of France and of General Officers specially employed.

Military missions abroad.

2. The Staffs of the Artillery and Engineers.

Art. 2.—The Military Household of the President of the Republic and the Special Staff of the Minister for War are composed of Officers, certificated or not, who are detached from their arm of the Service. Their number is fixed according to the requirements of the Service.

Art. 3.—The General Staff of the Minister for War is composed of:—

1. Certificated Officers who are seconded for Staff employment according to Art. 5 of the Law of March, 1880.
2. Of the twelve Field Officers forming the cadre of the special geographical section instituted by Art. 8 of the Law of 1880.
3. Officers, certificated or not, who are chosen for their special qualifications, and who are detached from their regiments.
4. Of Archivists.

The Chief of the General Staff of the Minister shall be a General of Division; as Sub-Chiefs, Generals of Brigade or Colonels. These Officers are styled Chief or Sub-Chief of the General Staff of the Minister.

Art. 4.—The Staffs of Military Governments, of Army Corps, of Divisions, and Brigades of Cavalry or Infantry, and of territorial divisions and sub-divisions are composed of:—

1. Certificated Officers who are seconded for Staff employment.
2. Of certificated Officers who are going through the period of probation fixed by the following Articles 14 and 15, and who are detached from their regiments.
3. Of Orderly Officers, certificated, detached from their regiments.
4. Of Archivists.

The Artillery and Engineer Staff are composed of:—

1. Certificated Officers of the same arm, belonging to the special Staff, and who are detached from their arm.
2. Of Orderly Officers, certificated, serving under the same conditions.

3. Of *Gardes d'Artillerie et Adjoints du Génie*.

The Staff of Military Governments and of Army Corps have as

Chief a General of Brigade or a Colonel; as Sub-Chief a Colonel or a Lieutenant-Colonel.

The Staff of Divisions, and those of Artillery and Engineer commands have as Chief a Lieutenant-Colonel or a Major, who are styled Chief of the Staff¹ of such a Division, of such an Artillery or Engineer command, or of such brigade of Artillery.

Art. 5.—The Minister for War fixes the composition of the Staffs of fortified places.

Art. 6.—The Staffs of Permanent Inspector-Generals comprise two Orderly Officers of the rank of Captain and Lieutenant respectively.

General Officers not in command, but who may be temporarily appointed Inspector-Generals, are allowed to select from the regiments in their inspection a Captain or a Lieutenant, who is attached to them as Orderly Officer for the time of their appointment.

The Minister for War will fix the composition of the Staffs of General Officers appointed to special duties, or who may be sent on special missions. He also fixes the Staffs of the Marshals of France.

Art. 7.—The Staff certificate is not necessary for Officers attached to foreign Embassies and Legations.

These Officers are not seconded as belonging to the Staff.

Art. 8.—Clerks are attached to the different Staffs, in numbers fixed by the Minister for War.

CHAPTER II.—*Direction of the Personnel.*

Art. 9.—The personnel and the duties of the Staff are supervised, under the Minister for War, by the General Officer, Chief of the General Staff.

Art. 10.—The powers of the Chief of the General Staff are fixed by regulations issued by the Minister.

1. Concerning the personnel:—

Over all certificated Officers, either seconded or detached, and over all non-certificated Officers employed on the Staff, with the exception, however, of those belonging to the military household of the President of the Republic, and of the special Staff of the Minister, over certificated Officers serving with their arm, or detached to some other arm of the Service.

Over the Orderly Officers attached to General Officers of all arms.

Over Officers attached to Embassies and Legations abroad.

Over the Archivists.

Over the civil and military personnel of the topographical section, including the students of the school of drawing, who may be attached to the section.

Over the civil and military personnel of the superior war school, including the Officers studying in the school.

Over the Officers of Reserve and of the Territorial Army belonging

¹ The duties of these Officers correspond to those of Deputy Adjutant-Generals, Assistant Adjutant-Generals, Deputy Assistant Adjutant-Generals, and Brigade Majors, according to the force to which they may be attached.

to the Staff or who are liable to be employed on the Staff in the event of mobilization.

Over the Archivists of the Reserve or of the Territorial Army.

2. Concerning the duties:—

Over the different Staffs mentioned in Art. 3, in the 1st paragraph of Art. 4, and in Art. 5.

Over the geographical section at headquarters.

Over the military attachés and other Officers employed abroad.

Over the interior economy and the course of instruction at the superior war school.

CHAPTER III.—*Supply of Officers holding Staff Certificates—Superior War School—Probationary Staff Service.*

Art. 11.—Every year the Minister for War publishes, at least six months in advance, the date, the conditions, and the syllabus of the competition for admission to the superior war school.

When the result of the examination is known, the Minister settles the list of successful candidates, which is published according to seniority of rank and arm in the "*Journal Officiel de la République Française.*"

Art. 12.—The length of the course at the superior war school is for two years; this comprises practical instruction outside the school.

At the end of the second year the students have to pass a final examination to obtain the Staff certificate.

Every year, concurrently with the final examination at the superior war school, examinations are held, at which Officers are allowed to compete for the Staff certificate, without going through the school. The date and syllabus of these examinations are published six months in advance.

Art. 13.—A list, by seniority of arm and of rank, of the Officers who have passed these examinations, is published in the "*Journal Officiel.*"

These Officers receive the certificate, and all their names are entered in the list of certificated Officers kept by the Chief of the General Staff.

Art. 14.—A certain number of Officers of the several arms and of different ranks, in number according to the requirements of the Staff, are selected to be attached as probationers to the Staffs of Army Corps and Divisions, and if there are vacancies to the other Staffs.

Art. 15.—The period for probation is for one year.

During their period of probation the Officers receive, according to rank, the allowances granted to seconded Officers employed on the Staff.

The Officers selected for a probationary period of Staff employment are required to perform the duties of their rank, on two separate occasions, with arms different to those to which they belong.

These two periods of regimental service, each of two months'

duration; are included in the year's probation. Military Governors and General Officers commanding Army Corps fix the time, and select the regiments to which the Officers are to be attached.

Art. 16.—At the end of each Officer's probation a report is drawn up showing the opinion of the Chief of the Staff and of the Inspector-General as to their qualifications, as follows:—

1. Well-fitted for Staff employ.
2. Fitted for Staff employ.
3. Is not fitted for Staff employ.

These reports are entered against each Officer's name in the list kept by the Chief of the Staff.

CHAPTER IV.—*Officers Seconded for Staff Service—Detached Officers—Orderly Officers.*

Art. 17.—Every certificated Officer who has served regimentally for two years, and who has been reported as fit for Staff employment, is at the disposal of the Minister for War, either to be seconded for Staff employment, or to be detached temporarily from his regiment.

Art. 18.—Officers seconded for Staff employment are taken exclusively—

1. From the certificated Officers reported as fit for Staff service after their probation.
2. From among those certificated Officers who have already served on the Staff, either as seconded for the purpose, or as orderly Officers, and who have been reported as fit.

These Officers are selected from each arm, in proportion to the Officers of their rank. When by reason of the want of certificated Officers in any particular arm it may become necessary to deviate from this regulation, it must be reverted to as soon as possible.

Art. 19.—As a rule, the vacancies for seconded Officers occurring in the Staffs of Army Corps and Divisions are given by preference to certificated Officers belonging to the Army Corps or Division in which they occur.

Inversely, when a certificated Officer belonging to the Staff of an Army Corps or Division returns to regimental duty, he is sent by preference to a regiment belonging to the Army Corps or Division with which he has been serving.

Art. 20.—General Officers of all arms select their Orderly Officers from the regiments or departments serving in their commands, and exclusively from among the certificated Officers of the rank of Captain or Lieutenant.

In default of such, General Officers may select their Orderly Officers from other commands.

Art. 21.—Officers of the several arms, certificated or not, who are detached from their corps for service on the Staff, as also Orderly Officers, receive, according to their rank, the same allowances as are granted to Officers who are seconded for Staff service. On a peace footing, however, no Officer below the rank of Captain is allowed more than one horse.

Art. 22.—Except as mentioned in the third and fourth paragraphs of the 4th Article, and in the 8th Article of the Law of the 20th March, 1880, no Officer may be employed on the Staff for more than four years consecutively, nor can he be reappointed to the Staff until he has served satisfactorily for at least two years with a regiment of the arm to which he belonged.

These regulations do not apply to the Officers forming the military household of the President of the Republic, nor to those of the Special Staff of the Minister for War.

Art. 23.—The Chief of the General Staff submits to the Minister for War, after consulting with the Officers directing the arms concerned, the names of all Officers selected for employment on the Staff or as Orderly Officers, and also the names of those to be returned to regimental duty.

CHAPTER V.—*Inspection of the Staff generally.*

Art. 24.—The annual inspection of the Staff is made—

At Headquarters by the Chief of the General Staff of the Minister.
In each military government or Army Corps by the General Officer in command.

The Officers of the military household of the President of the Republic and those of the Special Staff of the Minister for War are not inspected.

Officers attached to Embassies and Legations of the French Republic, or employed on duties abroad, are reported upon by the Chief of the General Staff.

Officers employed on Staff duties other than those above mentioned are reported upon by General Officers selected by the Minister for War.

Art. 25.—Certificated Officers serving with their regiments are reported upon by the Inspector-Generals of the arm to which they belong.

General Officers, when reporting on the Staff generally, mention specially those certificated Officers who, having left the Staff for less than a year, seem to them to be deserving of promotion from the way in which they performed their Staff duties while serving in their districts.

Officers so mentioned may, on the recommendation of the Chief of the Staff, be added to the list of those selected for promotion in that arm.

CHAPTER VI.—*Rules for the Performance of Staff Duties in Time of Peace.*

1st Section.

Art. 26.—Special Regulations fix the duties of the military household of the President of the Republic, of the Special Staff of the Minister for War, of his General (Headquarter) Staff, and of the

Officers attached to Embassies and Legations of the Republic abroad.

2nd Section.

Art. 27. The greater part of the Regulations contained in this section refer particularly to the Staffs of Army Corps. They apply as much as possible, however, to the other Staffs.

Duties and Employment of the Personnel.

Art. 28.—The Chief of a Staff arranges its duties, and is responsible for them.

On taking up his appointment he is to visit all the military establishments in the command.

He holds, with respect to the personnel placed under his orders, the position of an Officer commanding a corps, having the same rights and duties.

The Officer commanding an Army Corps himself signs all despatches addressed to the Minister, except memoranda and forwarding minutes, those which contain either a decision or a favourable or unfavourable report on an Officer or subordinate, and those dealing with matters of special importance, no matter to whom sent.

He may direct the Chief of the Staff to sign, by order, the remainder of the correspondence.

When the Commander of an Army Corps is absent without being replaced by a substitute, the Chief of the Staff signs the correspondence, by order.

If the Commander of an Army is replaced by a substitute, he will sign in the same way as the Commander.

The Chief of the Staff keeps the records of the Officers and Archivists under his orders. In case of absence, these records are given over to the Officer commanding the Army Corps. The record of the Chief of the Staff is kept by the Officer commanding the Army Corps. These records are strictly confidential.

The Chief of the Staff arranges, under the orders of the Officer commanding the Army Corps, the details of the daily service.

He is responsible for the military training of the Officers under him, and is required to prepare them for the duties they would have to perform at the manœuvres and in the field.

He gives them military questions to study, and schemes to be worked out of doors; he employs them on all matters of general interest coming within his sphere, and he sees that they keep up their horsemanship.

He takes advantage of the manœuvres, where the duties have to be performed as in the field, to confirm their instruction.

In fact, he sees that his Officers are constantly preparing for war.

Art. 29.—The Sub-Chief assists the Chief of the Staff in all the details of the Service; he replaces him in case of absence, when he assumes his duties.

Art. 30.—A Field Officer is placed at the head of each of the two

sections instituted by Art. 16 of the Law of the 24th July, 1873, viz., 1. Active section; 2. Territorial section.

The other Officers and Archivists are distributed by the Minister, on the recommendation of the Officer commanding the Army Corps, between each section, according to the requirements of the Service.

The Archivists, under the orders of the Staff Officers, carry out the office work; they are specially charged with the registry of the correspondence coming in and going out, with the classification and preservation of documents, and with the supervision of the letters.

Art. 31.—The secretaries (clerks), under the direction of the Archivists, do all work of minor importance and write letters.

The senior Sub-Officer is appointed superintending clerk, and sees to the proper performance of the orders of the Chief of the Staff in all concerning the interior economy of the office and the discipline of the men serving under him.

Art. 32.—The Orderly Officers are specially attached to the General Officer commanding the Army Corps, who employs them on that part of the correspondence which he reserves to himself and on special duties.

A clerk is placed at the disposal of the Orderly Officers.

Distribution of Duties.

Art. 33.—The matters dealt with by the Staff of an Army Corps are distributed as follows:—

1. Active Section.

General correspondence; orders and military operations; personnel; military justice; administration.

2. Territorial Section.

Recruiting; organization; mobilization, and generally all matters belonging to the district; artillery and engineer establishments; military buildings and fortifications.

3rd Section—Special Regulations.

Art. 34.—General Officers commanding divisions and those commanding the artillery and engineers should cause their Orderly Officers to share in the office work of their Headquarter Staff.

Art. 35.—With the Staffs of territorial subdivisions the Archivists are under the orders of the Orderly Officers to the Generals commanding the subdivisions, whatever may be the relative ranks of the Archivists and Orderly Officers.

Art. 36.—With the Staffs of Artillery and Engineer commands, the duties of Archivist are performed by *gardes* or *adjoints* belonging to the respective corps if possible.

Art. 37.—With every Staff is kept a journal of mobilization, conformably to the special regulations on this matter.

The documents to be distributed or to be taken away in the event of mobilization, and all the field matériel should be complete at all times, in a good state of preservation, and fit for use at any moment, according to their destination.

PART II.—DUTIES OF THE STAFF IN TIME OF WAR.

CHAPTER I.—*Passage from a Peace to a War Footing and vice versa.*

Art. 38.—The Staffs to be formed in time of war comprise:—

1. Those for general Staff service—

(a.) In the field: The Staffs of General Officers commanding Armies.

The Staffs of Army Corps, divisions, brigades of infantry or of cavalry.

The Staffs of mixed brigades, or other temporary and special formations, such as reserves, cavalry corps, siege corps, &c.

The Staff for railways and lines of communication.

(b.) At home: Besides the Staffs mentioned in the first paragraph of the first Article of this Decree—

The Staffs of regional Commanders.

The Staffs of Commanders of dépôts.

2. The Staffs of Artillery and Engineer Commands, viz.:—

(c.) In the field: The Staffs of Artillery and Engineer commands with Armies.

The Staffs of Artillery and Engineer commands with Army Corps.

The Staffs of Artillery and Engineer commands with special and temporary formations, such as wings, centre reserves, siege corps, &c.

(d.) At home: The Staffs of Artillery and Engineers mentioned in the second paragraph of the first Article of this Decree.

Art. 39.—At the time of passing from a peace to a war footing, a certain number of Officers, Archivists, storekeepers, *adjoints du génie*, remain on the spot according to the regulations issued by the Minister for War to form the nucleus of the territorial Staffs, which take the place of the regular Staffs in time of war.

The remaining Officers and others proceed with the troops.

As a rule they form the nucleus of the Staffs of Army Corps, divisions, brigades of infantry and of cavalry, artillery, and engineer commands, each remaining, as much as possible, with the Staffs to which he belonged in time of peace. Some of them, however, may be taken to form those Staffs which do not exist in time of peace, such as the Headquarter Staffs of Armies, the Staffs of Artillery and Engineer commands with armies, &c.

Art. 40.—The personnel of the Staff is brought up to a war footing as follows:—

1. By seconding all certificated Officers belonging to the active Army.

2. By recalling all certificated Officers and Archivists belonging to the reserve or to the territorial Army.

Non-certificated Officers may, however, be selected in default of those holding certificates.

The personnel of the Staffs of Artillery and Engineer commands is brought up to a war footing by appointing to them Officers, certificated or not, belonging to those arms.

Art. 41.—The descriptions of the personnel required for those Staffs which are formed only on mobilization, or to raise to their required strength those Staffs already existing are kept prepared at all times.

Each of the Officers selected holds consequently a letter of service which enables him to proceed at once to his post in case of mobilization.

Art. 42.—Orderly Officers of all arms of the Service are seconded in time of war.

Each General Officer retains those which are allowed him in time of peace. As a rule the supplementary Orderly Officers of the rank of Lieutenant or Sub-Lieutenant are taken from the reserve and territorial Army.

These Officers are not required to hold the Staff certificate.

Art. 43.—At the end of the war the number of Officers seconded for Staff service is reduced to the strength fixed by Article 5 of the Law of the 20th March, 1880.

All Officers in excess, including Orderly Officers, are sent back to their regiments.

CHAPTER II.—*Rules for Staff Service in Time of War.*

Art. 44.—The rules for peace service are to be carried out in everything not contrary to the regulations contained in this chapter.

Duties of Chiefs and Sub-Chiefs of Staffs.

Art. 45.—The regulation for service in the field fixes the duties of the Chiefs of Staffs with Armies, and arranges the condition on which those duties are to be performed.

Art. 46.—The Sub-Chiefs assist the Chiefs, and take their places when necessary.

Division of Service.

Art. 47.—The duties to be performed are arranged in two parts :—

1. Duties in the field.

2. Duties in the offices.

Art. 48.—The particular duties to be performed in the field are laid down in the Regulations for service in the field.

All Officers belonging to a Staff share in the duties in the field.

Commandant at Headquarters.

Art. 49.—The duties of Commandant at headquarters are fixed by the Regulation for duties in the field.

Orderly Officers.

Art. 50.—As in time of peace, the Orderly Officers act immediately under their Generals.

Daily Report.

Art. 51.—This report is made by the Chief of the Staff.

The General Officers commanding Army Corps send an Officer to the headquarters of the Army for orders. This Officer is, as a rule, a Field Officer, and preferentially the Chief or Sub-Chief of the Staff. He collects all useful information, and takes the orders and decisions of the General Commanding-in-Chief.

The same procedure is observed by Divisions, Brigades, &c., and by regiments. The inferior unit taking its orders from the superior.

Special Regulations.

Art. 52.—With an Army the General Commanding-in-Chief alone corresponds with the Minister, except in the cases mentioned in the third and fifth paragraphs of the 9th Article of the Law of the 16th March, 1882, on the administration of the Army.¹

Art. 53.—The General Officer commanding an Army Corps which does not form part of an Army, corresponds in the same way directly with the Minister, to whom he sends a situation report every five days.

The Law of the 20th March, 1880, has been modified by the following Decrees:—

8th May, 1880.—Organizing the Corps of Archivists.

21st December, 1886.—Decree regulating the Articles of the Law of 20th March, 1880.

2nd April, 1889.—Regulating the classification of Officers selected for promotion.

6th May, 1890.—Decree relating to the organization of the Staff of the Army.

15th May, 1890.—Placing the geographical section under the Chief of the General Staff.

By the Law of the 24th June, 1890, Articles 4, 5, and 9 of the Law of the 20th March, 1880, referring to service on the Staff, are modified as follows:—

Art. 4.—Officers on leaving the superior war school, who have obtained the Staff certificate, are immediately required to serve a

¹ Art. 9.—Para. 3. The heads of departments are under the immediate orders of the General Officer commanding an Army Corps; they may only correspond with the Minister through the General, unless they have to reply to questions sent to them direct from the Minister; in which case they inform the General in command.

Para 5. The usual statistical documents, however, which only require a forwarding letter or minute, are sent to and from the Minister and heads of Departments direct, without being sent through the General Officer commanding.

probationary term of two years on the Staff, after which they may, according to the requirements of the Service and the reports which have been made concerning them, be either seconded for further service on the Staff, or be sent back to their arm of the Service until further orders.

During the two years' probation they are to serve with those arms, other than the one to which they originally belonged, for periods the length of which shall be fixed by the Minister for War. Captains, Majors, and Colonels who hold the Staff certificate are not to receive promotion until they shall have served in their present rank with the arm to which they originally belonged for a period of at least two years.

Those Officers, however, who have served, as above mentioned, before obtaining the Staff certificate, and Colonels who, as Lieutenant-Colonels, have for two years commanded a regiment, are exempted from the foregoing rule.

The terms of this Article are not applicable in time of war.

The terms stated in the third paragraph of this Article will be applicable to Colonels holding certificates now employed on the Staff in such proportion that in each arm the number of certificated Colonels having commanded a regiment for two years shall be sufficient to provide for their replacement.

Concerning Majors and Captains, the terms of the same paragraph (3) shall have been fully applied within four years from the promulgation of this Law.

Art. 5.—On a peace footing the number of Officers on the Staff should not exceed 640, as follows:—

30 Colonels.
40 Lieutenant-Colonels.
170 Majors.
400 Captains.

These Officers are seconded, but continue to belong to their respective regiments for formation.

The number of Officers to be seconded in each arm will be fixed periodically by the Minister in proportion to the number of certificated Officers in each arm.

Art. 6.—The personnel of the Staff offices should comprise as a maximum—

10 principal Archivists of the 1st class.
35 " " " 2nd "
40 Archivists of the 1st class.
45 " " 2nd "
50 " " 3rd "

These Archivists are, under the orders of the Staff Officers, in charge of the official correspondence and the care of all documents.

They form a corps having a precedence of their own, without reference to the several ranks in the Army; the terms of the Law of the 19th May, 1834, apply to them.

The recruiting and organization of this corps is fixed by Decree.

The last-mentioned Law raised the number of Officers (seconded) for service on the Staff from 300 (exclusive of the 12 employed in the topographical section) to 640.

It may, however, be taken that the Staff has been up to date organized according to the Law of 1880.

The President of the Republic has been lately informed by the Minister for War that this organization is no longer in accordance with recent legislative dispositions, and that its revision had become necessary.

Consequently the following Decree has been presented to the President, and approved by him. It arranges in detail the Staff of the French Army according to the Law of the 24th June, 1890.

The principal changes effected in the Law of 1880 are:—

Art. 3.—Places the topographical section under the chief of the General Staff, and also lays down that, exceptionally, Officers who have not qualified at the war school may be selected for Staff employ by virtue of their special aptitude.

Art. 9.—Gives in detail the various sections which are under the control of the Chief of the Staff. It would appear from this Article that he has now authority over all certificated Officers, whether attached to the Staff or not.

(As these Officers would, presumably, be serving with their regiments, and would, consequently, be under the orders of the General Officer under whom they were serving, it is difficult to understand how, without friction, this dual control can be exercised.)

Art. 11.—Continues to allow Officers of all arms, who have not passed through the school, to present themselves for the final examination.

Art. 13.—Lays down that all Officers leaving the superior war school with the certificate of qualification, shall be attached to the Staff on probation for two years, after which, according to the requirements of the Service and to the reports made of them, they may be seconded and retained on the Staff, or sent back to their regiments until further orders.

Art. 14.—At the end of the two years' probationary Staff service, on the report of the Inspector-General, mention is made as follows of each Officer:—

1. Well fitted for Staff service.
2. Fit for Staff service.
3. Not fitted for Staff service.

The remaining Articles are more detailed than those of 1886, but cause no radical changes in the Law of 1880.

On the 1st May, 1891, a Decree was published giving effect to the changes made in Art. 9 of the Decree of 1886 by the Law of June, 1890, affecting the Archivists.

The chief point which calls for notice with respect to this particular section of the French Staff is that the higher ranks are open to Officers, including those of the rank of Captain.

These Officers, as before mentioned, belong to a special corps, to which they are permanently attached. They perform the clerical duties of the several Staff Offices, and carry on their traditions from one Staff Officer to another. The lower ranks are recruited from among the non-commissioned officers of all arms, who may, however, be promoted into the higher ranks.

Before being admitted to the corps of Archivists, all candidates have to pass a severe competitive examination in such subjects as will have a special value in their future employment.

The chief points in the rules regulating the French Staff are :—

1. The rotation between service on the Staff and service with the colours.

2. The employment of a permanent corps of Archivists, which is, however, open to Officers and non-commissioned officers.

The first point may be said to necessitate the second.

In all European Armies it is now a recognized principle that Staff Officers should keep in touch with the Army generally by returning to their regiments after a period of Staff service. This rule is, as usual, proved by the many exceptions which are made to it, and, although the exceptions in the Decree before mentioned are said to have caused a great deal of discontent in the French Army, it is hard to believe that such is really the case.

The necessity for enabling the authorities to dispense in some cases with the rules which govern the majority is obvious. For example, it may be of great advantage to the Service to retain certain Officers in their appointments as well as to employ on the Staff others who in many ways have shown their aptitude for such employment, but who may not have cared to obtain a certificate.

It is urged by some writers that Officers who are retained on the Staff are unlikely ever to rise to be good Commanders. This argument is contradicted by the fact that in most Armies are to be found General Officers of proved ability who have previously never commanded a larger unit than a company. The stress which is set upon the necessity for a service with the colours shows how contradictory is the outcry raised against the employment of specially selected Officers because they do not hold the certificate, which they are, however, allowed to obtain by passing the final examination without having gone through the course of training at the school.

The idea with a certain class in every country seems to be that if an exception is made to a rule it is done to benefit an individual. They seem quite to forget that the reputations of Ministers and other high officials depend on the efficiency of the services they are called upon to administer, and that therefore the benefit of the service generally must be of more importance to them than the advancement of any particular person.

The new Decree, whilst maintaining the principles now generally adopted, very wisely allows the Minister for War a latitude without which both he and his predecessors must have found it difficult to work.

We have before said that the first point to which we drew attention necessitated the second. It is essential for the proper performance of the clerical duties of the Staff that they should be carried on with a due regard to tradition, and that, though the Officers in charge of the various offices may change frequently, there should be no change in the system on which these offices are worked. It stands to reason, therefore, that in every office there must be some permanent official responsible for system, who is also well acquainted with the office traditions, and who is able to steady, as it were, the confusion which would naturally result from the continual change of Staff Officers.

These permanent officials are the Archivists, who form a separate closed corps with special duties and special privileges. As before said, their ranks are, however, open to the Army. Captains, Subalterns, and non-commissioned officers may join the corps, to which they bring a knowledge of military life and matters which must be of great benefit, apart from the more technical knowledge of which they have to show proof before admission.

The careful arrangements which have been made for the guidance of the French Staff have had most beneficial results. The complaint which was made at the beginning of the century, that the Staff Officers were unable to carry out their duties from want of education, cannot be repeated now. It is not too much to say that a more talented body of Officers does not exist, and the results of their labours, which they publish for the benefit of others besides themselves, show from their variety and pertinency that a large proportion of the Officers of the French Staff are constantly very hard at work.

With the means now at his disposal, the French Minister for War should have no difficulty in providing under any circumstances a Staff worthy of the splendid Army of which he is the Chief.