

The Cadet Battalion.

That there is no better organized and drilled cadet battalion than ours outside of West Point is generally admitted by all army officers who have had occasion to visit us.

It has no glorious past in its history. In fact, it has very little history. In 1876, the government sent to the university of Nebraska Lieut. E. S. Dudley as the first instructor in military science. The first company consisted of most of the able-bodied men in the college, about fifty being enrolled.

For two years the company drilled in anything that came handy, in "plug" hats, in check trousers or shirt sleeves as the case might be.

The next instructor was Lieut. Webster, and under his administration two companies were formed and a band organized.

For the first eight years the battalion used any room that they could find, sometimes being in the attic, sometimes in the basement.

Lieut. Townley came in 1882. He was a naval officer and thus we became part of the navy for the time being.

Lieut. Dudley came back in 1884, and here began the real growth of the battalion. Students being required to drill three years, the enrollment was increased from 80 to 150. Hitherto, promotions were for merit, and any one from senior to prep could be captain. But in 1884 a rule was made appointing all commissioned officers from the Senior class, sergeants from the Juniors and corporals from the Sophomore class.

This rule is strictly adhered to at present, much to the disgust of the promising Freshman who has drilled three years. Under the last detail it was provided by law that students holding commissions during their



graduating year should receive appointments in the state militia.

The next instructor was Lieut. Griffith. Under him Grant Memorial Hall was completed, and four companies organized.

Then came the man who was needed, Lieut. John J. Pershing. He is a strict disciplinarian in everything, and especially in the smaller details.

More attention began to be given to the general build and setting up of the cadets; more to their personal appearance. The band was brought under control. The present systematic way of reporting delinquencies was adopted. After Lieut. Pershing had been here one year, Company "A," under his "coaching," went to Omaha and bore off all the honors in the national competitive drill held there. They also bore off the "Omaha cup" and \$1,500 in cash. The battalion to-day numbers 362 men. The battery has been increased to four 3-inch muzzle loading cannon, and four breech loaders are expected in a month. The cavalry company has fifty sabres, and there are about 300 rifles for the infantry drill.

At the beginning of the year both the old and new cadets are drilled in the setting up exercises. In a month the old cadets are divided into three detachments, one of which drills in artillery, one in the sabre drill, and the other in the English setting-up exercises. These change about every week until after Christmas, when the best men are selected for the permanent artillery and cavalry companies. The rest join the new men.

During the last week of May the competitive drills take place, when each company competes for the Omaha cup. Each company has an artillery detachment which tries for an elegant artillery guidon. There are also individual drills, the prizes being gold and silver medals. This is the great event of the year and one which is looked forward to by hard work on the part of all.

After Decoration day the annual encampment takes place when the cadets undergo the outdoor life of soldiers for a week. Here, practical work in guard duty, in skirmish drill and in getting up at 5:30 at "night" is experienced. This ends the work for the year.

In addition to the battalion is a cavalry troop of twenty men just organized, and also a military club composed of the officers.

