WAR DEPARTMENT, February 15, 1856.

Sir: The following is a copy of the letters addressed to Colonel E. V. Sumner, United States army, commanding at Fort Leavenworth, and to Brevet Colonel P. St. George Cooke, commanding at Fort Riley, and is furnished for your information.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JEFFERSON DAVIS,

Secretary of War.

Hon. Wilson Shannon,

Governor of Kansas Territory.

The Secretary of War to Colonels Sumner and Cooke.

War Department,
Washington, February 15, 1856.

SIR: The President has, by proclamation, warned all persons combined for insurrection or invasive aggression against the organized government of the Territory of Kansas, or associated to resist the due execution of the laws therein, to abstain from such revolutionary and lawless proceedings, and has commanded them to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes, on pain of being resisted by his whole constitutional power. If, therefore, the governor of the Territory, finding the ordinary course of judicial proceedings and the powers vested in United States marshals, inadequate for the suppression of insurrectionary combinations or armed resistance to the execution of the law, should make requisition upon you to furnish a military force to aid him in the performance of that official duty, you are hereby directed to employ for that purpose such part of your command as may in your judgment consistently be detached from their ordinary duty.

In executing this delicate function of the military power of the United States, you will exercise much caution, to avoid, if possible, collision with even insurgent citizens, and will endeavor to suppress resistance to the laws and constituted authorities by that moral force which, happily, in our country, is ordinarily sufficient to secure respect to the laws of the land and the regularly constituted authorities of the government. You will use a sound discretion, as to the moment at which the further employment of the military force may be discontinued, and avail yourself of the first opportunity to return with your command to the more grateful and prouder service of the soldier, that of the common defence.

For your guidance in the premises, you are referred to the acts of 28th of February, 1795, and 3d of March, 1807, (see Military Laws pages 301 and 123,) and to the proclamation of the President, a copy of which is herewith transmitted.

Should you need further or more specific instructions, or should, in the progress of events, doubts arise in your mind as to the course