

tors of our nation learn to carry their chins close to their necks with ease and military bearing.

To see another suffer, is one of the cruel enjoyments in life; but to see another undergo a trial through which the observer has passed, is a most pleasing recreation. The Roman emperor who spent his leisure in spearing flies with pins, experienced that cruel enjoyment; the old soldier, who has watched the new recruits as they were "set up," has enjoyed that pleasing recreation. In none but those, who have drilled, does the military manoeuvring of an awkward squad arouse a feeling in any way akin to real satisfaction. The casual observer is unable to see in the straggling lines of youths, the proud, gilt-bedecked officers of the future. Any one who is unable thus to stretch the imagination, will never derive true enjoyment from watching the awkward squad. But the majority of people are not seeking for true enjoyment. They desire fun; and fun there is, and plenty of it, in the vicinity of these aspirants for military honors.

An awkward squad consists of a number of raw recruits, and a proportionate number of nearly raw instructors. The whole squad is divided into smaller squads, to each of which is assigned one instructor. These instructors are under the supervision of the chief instructor or drill-master, whose duty it is to instruct, and whose especial pleasure seems to lie, in instructing the instructors. The equipment of each instructor consists of a faultless memory, a pair of gloves and a "tactic." The drill-master must be provided with an extra pair of gloves, two "tactics," and, if possible, a better memory, to lend to his subordinates if occasion require.

Thus provided, the squad separates into the smaller divisions and proceeds to the field. The band, if composed largely of new members, is also sent out under the command of the drum-major, who is inclined to be lenient with his men and to give them long rests so that he may have opportunity to think of his huge black bear skin hat and time to meditate over his loud yellow gold-foil uniform.

The first operations of the squad are the most interesting. With the tips of the little fingers pressed firmly upon the seams of the trousers, and with the thumbs vainly endeavoring to become disjointed, the squad tries to respond to the command "Forward march." Perhaps one-half remember which is their left foot and step off with their right, while the other half remember which is their right, and stand still. Thus matters are going on when the drill-master approaches. Now, the drill-master has a personality and a voice which must be respected, so, in sonorous tones, he commands a halt. His eyes are blind to the instructor's disappearing "tactics," for he has a heart, and remembers the volume reposing in his own hip pocket. "About, face!" He commands, and promptly the men turn to the left, conscious of performing the movement wrong, but frightened into so doing by the drill-

master's personality. Just at this moment another squad goes astray, so, with a cautious feel towards his hip-pocket, the drill-master leaves the squad in the competent hands of his superior, whom he sees approaching.

Rapidity in learning new movements is not characteristic of awkward squads. Much less apparent does their capacity in this direction appear, when the commanding officer is near. Just as the small boy behaves his worst before company, so the awkward squad behaves most awkwardly in the presence of the commandant. There is one consolation for the instructor, however. He knows that his own men are doing their best under existing circumstances. A similar feeling is held by the squad; so, the only bar to general good feeling is that the commandant is not of that opinion. There is, however, an excuse for his position. He has to make *pretty* articles out of exceedingly raw material, and is able to do so only by cutting away a good many rough edges.

The "setting up" exercises are most disliked by recruits, and yet, are very efficacious in wearing away the rough edges. Accordingly, as soon as the commandant takes the squad, he orders them to gyrate and to stretch themselves in seventeen different ways. The greatest charm lies in beholding the movements. Although, they are simply practical gymnastics, they are of such a nature that they test the endurance of the recruit and make him if not cry enough, at least think it so hard, that it is plainly visible in his face, long before the commanding officer sees fit to leave.

There is, however, an end to all things. At the recall, long but now wavering lines of men string into the armory and form companies again. "Dismissed" is a welcome command. The recruits depart, thankful that one more day of their three years time has been served.

ALUMNI AND FORMER STUDENTS.

'88—A modest little book bearing in gilt on its wine-colored cover the word "Nebraska," is attracting no small amount of notice. It treats of Nebraska and distinctly of nothing else but Nebraska. Its author is Mr. Jay A. Barrett, of the class of '88, and for the past three years instructor in Greek and civics at the Lincoln High school. The material for the book was prepared mainly during the school year of '91-'92, and the work finished and published in the latter part of August of the current year. The subject is presented in a simple condensed form and cannot fail to be understood and appreciated by all. Part first consists of a description of the physical features of the state, the elevation, drainage, soils, etc., and sets forth their influence on settlement and development. It speaks of the Indians of Nebraska and of the early explorers and missionaries; describes Nebraska as a territory, gives an account of the Kansas-Nebraska bill and traces carefully the de-