

exemplary ease and precision both with and without rifles (these replace the iron bar), and a march, in which the knee is lifted fairly high. No time has been grudged for marching exercises. In closed ranks, however, more importance seems to be attached to correct marching than to keeping line. Side by side with this drill, the bayonet fighting of the old Chinese troops, with an invisible foe, is still continued. Strange to say, firing-practice seems to have been neglected and to have been carried out much less frequently than in the southern part of the province. The first steps in tactical manoeuvres in the field can be recognised in the parody of a chain of skirmishers occasionally staged by the infantry. It is a close chain, or rather a long line than a chain, but taking cover and advancing in small groups for a dozen paces at a time. During the same exercises they are fond of forming squares, firing in four directions — the favourite manoeuvre of Chinese officers. In these manoeuvres great stress is laid on discipline in firing, but only to heighten the outward effect of the manoeuvre. It cannot be denied that a certain virtuosity has been achieved in the art of controlling fire. You see it simultaneously approach the centre from both wings of a long line and return again to the wings, or go in one direction along the rear line and in another along the front line and so on. — In the artillery, infantry exercises are carried out according to the above plan, in addition to drill in serving the guns. No firing is ever done. — The cavalry does gymnastics, fencing, and target shooting with pistols, with blank cartridges, on horseback.

To remedy the deficiencies in the officers' military training, a school, or rather a course, has been started. All officers of the new troops (including Shaoguans) have to attend this course daily from 7 a.m. to midday. Marching, manipulating arms, regulations and various other rudiments of military service are gone through under the guidance of a young instructor trained in Eastern China.

The authorities recognise that such half-measures cannot produce a really efficient set of officers and a cadet corps has been established under the name of »Ludziun hsiao tang». The teaching staff has arrived and work is to begin at once. The curriculum covers 3 years. Tuition is to be given in topography and probably other branches of military science, Chinese, English, Russian, gymnastics and drill. Pupils are admitted up to the number of 70 (per course in all probability) between the ages of 14 and 30. They receive 5 lan monthly (it should be 8) in pay, from which 3 l. 9 t. are deducted for board. Clothes are provided by the Government. Promising pupils are assigned special duties in the school and are given special pay. So far, about 30 pupils have been admitted and a couple have petitioned to be released, but their request has been refused. On completing the course the least satisfactory pupils are made officers of the lowest rank, but the better ones are sent for three years to a military school at Lanchow, whence they are sent for another two years to Peiping and may finally be ordered abroad. This lengthy preparation entitles them, at best, to the rank of captain. It is expected that similar schools will be established shortly at Ili, Kashgar and Aqsu. This would, however, imply a general increase in the fighting forces and in the Chinese population of this province of Western China, if 280 new officers are to find employment annually.

The arms are the same as among the old troops of the province, a number of breach-