

same signification far and away apart from its intrinsic value. It is in either case the reward of valour, and knowing this I looked with respect upon those Japanese officers bearing the emblems of their prowess upon their breasts. Moreover, when I learned more about the cold, privations and hard fighting that had fallen to the lot of the 3rd Regiment of the 1st Division in the Chinese war, I considered that they well deserved their medals and orders.

The uniform of the Japanese officer is plain and neat, much after the fashion of that of the French officer, the distinctions of rank being shewn chiefly by the interlacing of various rows of braid upon the sleeve below the elbow. This may be gold braid or plain braid according to the uniform, full dress or undress. The men are clothed in workman like cloth clothes of European pattern. They wear boots, unlike their country men and country women generally, who usually go barefoot or wear slippers or sandals; preferring however whenever possible to walk, even in the finest weather, on high clogs, held on by a strap between the big toe and the next one. For this purpose all the inhabitants of Japan wear a sock having a toe separate from the rest of the foot like a thumb to a glove. Very noisy horrible things these clogs are, as any body who has ever been in a Japanese railway station and heard them scraping and croaking like frogs over the asphalt flooring can testify. The Japanese military authorities have done well to abolish such cumbrous unsoldier like encumbrances, but there was considerable difficulty at first in getting the Japanese soldier to take to boots. However, the officers informed me that they now take to them quite kindly.

The soldiers wear a high round forage cap with a straight down peak. This cap is surrounded by a broad cloth band of a different colour to the cloth of the cap; being white, red or yellow according to the corps to which the soldier belongs.

There is one thing which strikes a foreigner as being particularly strange in the uniform of the Japanese soldier. This is that the numerals which he wears upon his shoulder straps, to denote the number of his regiment, are European numbers not Chinese or Japanese ideograph. For instance the soldiers of the 3rd Regiment just wore a 3 upon their shoulder straps. I found upon enquiry that this was because the European numbers were so much more quickly and easily distinguished from each other than the complicated Chinese characters. A truly practical nation the Japanese!