

old regiment, we embarked in our jinrickshas, and soon were being drawn splashing along through the puddles by our bare legged but waterproof clad human ponies, from whose mushroom shaped hats the water was dripping off in streams. The weather lightened a little as we splashed along, and after about half an hour's drive we found ourselves in a district of Tokio which seemed to consist wholly of fine brick barracks situated in magnificent drill grounds.

Here I was soon very glad that Yamada did not indeed know anything about the Japanese soldiers, for he directed, in error, our 'ricksha-men to enter some imposing looking gates, where the exhibition by him of the Royal Order was a signal to the sentries to let us pass.

Entering the drill ground I found to my surprise that in spite of the rain, several companies of very smart looking soldiers were being exercised by their own officers, and that neither officers nor men wore great coats.

The men instantly struck me as being of finer physique than the majority of those I was in the habit of meeting about the streets of Tokio and I was particularly struck by three things. These were: first the smartness of their drill, second their extreme steadiness in the ranks, and thirdly the great pains that the Japanese officers took to keep on repeating the same movement until it was perfectly accomplished. It was the firing exercise which they were practising on that wet April morning, and they were made to do the same thing over and over again in a way that would have soon tired out Tommy Atkins and made him growl.

By the time that Mr. Yamada had returned from an ineffectual search for the Commanding Officer, whom I expected to be waiting to meet me, I had found out that we were in the precincts of the wrong Barracks. The superior physique of the men was now easily understood when it was explained that the men drilling away so steadily in the rain were members of the Force of Imperial Guards, and I was very glad that, owing to our error, I was thus enabled to see how thoroughly the Officers of this Japanese Corps d'élite do their work. It struck me however as being rather a useless proceeding for both officers and men alike to be drilling out in the rain without great coats, which the men wore upon their packs on their backs all the while; for they were in, what we call in our army, heavy marching order.