

WINE, WOMEN AND SONG OFFER QUICK ACTION FOR WAR TIME WEALTH OF THE JAPANESE

Prosperity Brings Feasting, Drinking and Merrymaking With Geisha Girls

Seductive Tea House Habit Ruins Promising Young Business Men—
Ilico Wine and Beer Are Popular Beverages.

(By Hi Sibley.)

Staff Special.

Tokyo, Japan, July 24—Wine, women and song are offering quick action for war time riches in Japan.

In this heyday of unusual prosperity the Japanese, for a thrifty nation, are spending money with a prodigal hand.

Drinking is almost universal. With their light diet of fish and rice, the natives, however, cannot take as much intoxicant as meat-eating westerners and still retain equilibrium.

Four or five of the tiny cups of sake, or rice wine, which is the national stimulant and served hot, produce a potent effect. One or two bottles of beer, another popular beverage, bring like results.

The rich indulge freely at their sumptuous banquets and the poorer classes on their holidays. During the cherry blossom season there is much drunkenness in the public parks and numerous tea house districts. It is almost invariably good humored intoxication and one rarely sees a display of ugly nature.

The picturesque Geisha girl is the greatest extravagance in Nippon, for her entertainment involves much expense. Her position is peculiar, probably without parallel in any other country.

Primarily she is a public entertainer, trained from childhood to dance, sing and make herself generally agreeable to men. She is not necessarily virtuous, but this is no discredit from the Japanese viewpoint.

A man may go to a tea house for tiffin. After two or three cups of sake he will desire a vivacious companion. A Geisha girl is ordered from a nearby station, ready to display her accomplishments in the fine art of pleasing. Thus the money goes. The easy "tea house habit" is so seductive and convenient that it has caused the ruin of many promising young business men.

The Geisha range in age from ten to 20. Each has her particular accomplishments. The very young girls are limited to dancing and singing, but the older ones are versed in repartee and playing the koto and samisen.



Yoshiwara girl, at left, showing elaborate head dress and heavily embroidered kimono. The other picture shows the Japanese Geisha girl. These girls coat their faces with rice powder to get a clear, white skin effect. A little spot of rouge is placed on the lower lip.

At elaborate banquets, which figure so prominently in "Tokyo high collar" life, a Geisha girl is usually provided for the entertainment of each guest. The fees of the highest class Geishas from the Shimbashi district require a healthy purse to satisfy.

Then there are girls of the "Yoshiwara," who must not be confused with the Geishas, since they are registered officially. Every city has its Yoshiwara girls. In Tokyo are several hundreds of these women kept virtual prisoners in ornate quarters. The status of these unfortunate women is tragic. Obedience and filial

devotion are the Japanese woman's first duty, and she does what she is ordered to do without question.

If a father or brother, who assumes the head of the house upon the death of his father, should get into debt or desire to borrow money to set himself up in business, he may put his daughter or sister in the Yoshiwara as security for a loan.

The girl may stay there two or three years—or for life.

With much singing and dancing, with red-lipped beauties and virulent wine the war-wealthy Japanese is spending his vast profits with a prodigal hand.