

keep an exact account of every one who comes into them. They must register the names and addresses of all people connected with them, and any extravagances committed in the way of expenses or otherwise are at once reported to the police. If a young man of good family leads a very dissipated life his parents are notified. Similar reports are given to employers as to their clerks, and Japanese bank cashiers cannot carry on a continued life of dissipation without being suspected of something wrong. I looked over the records of one of the stations, in company with the police. It was that connected with the great Yoshiwara at Tokyo. The names entered on its books during one month amounted to 80,000, and the receipts of the establishment were, I was told, about \$73,000 per month, or nearly \$1,000,000 per year.

THE TOKYO YOSHIWARA.

Few travelers get to know much about the inside workings of things in Japan. My letters, however, to the chief of police gave me the assistance of private policemen, with whom I went through the great Yoshiwara, at Tokyo, which contains 3,500 maidens. It is the largest establishment of the kind in Japan, and its houses are among the finest of Tokyo. It embraces, in addition to the professional houses, hundreds of hairdressers, singers and dancers, and it is shut off entirely from the rest of the city. It has wide streets, through the middle of which are strips of flowers, and the streets are decorated with fountains, stone lanterns, bits of wax-works, and all kinds of all of quaint things to draw the sightseers. Nearly every other house is a tea house or restaurant. The houses in which the girls live are of immense size, and are of much the same nature and shape. The scene is, in fact, very like the animal show at a circus. The first story of each of these houses consists of cage-like parlors, facing the street, and running on each side of a hall, which leads into the house. At the side of this hall, in a little cage like that of a ticket office, a man sits and gives information to all who pass by. Each of these cages is about 100 feet long and twenty feet deep, and its floor is as high as your waist. This floor is covered with carpet or matting, and at the back of the room there is a line of girls ranging all the way from twenty to fifty, squatting on the floor, with little boxes charcoal before them. They smoke and they chat, and they make eyes at the men who pass along the streets. Some of them have samisens or the Japanese guitars, and now and then one will get up and waddle out to the bars of the cage and chat with the people outside. In some of the cages they sit upon cushions and chairs, and in others you will find perhaps fifty girls dressed all the same way, and looking like sisters. Some have dozens of pins in their hair, each of which is as long as a crochet needle, and which stands out about their waterfalls like the quills of a porcupine. They are all highly powdered. Some of them have lanterns in front of them, and many of the establishments are lighted by the electric lights, just as you would light up a shop window in which you had beautiful goods exposed for sale. Some have plate-glass windows between them and the streets. The girls all have their obis or belts

tied with a bow in front instead of behind as other Japanese women do. This I think, is provided for by law, and this finest part of the Japanese woman's dress known as the obis is the badge of the bad and the good.

AT THE COURTS.

I spent some time in the police courts or examination rooms, where all girls who wish to enter the Yoshiwara must first get their licenses. They are practically sold by their parents or guardians, who must come with them, and who, in company with the proprietors of the houses, then make a contract with the girl for three years. The judge carefully examines the girls, and they were asked as to whether they entered into contract of their own free will. They hung their heads down when they were questioned, but they replied almost automatically, and evidently uttered the words which their parents had put into their mouths. Some, I doubt not, are forced to this by their parents, and it is considered a good deed among some Japanese for a girl to go into a house of this kind in order to make money to pay her father's debts or to support her family. The girls have to be of a certain age, and every precaution is taken to protect them. They are usually sold to the keepers for from \$200 and upward. This cash is given to the parents, and the usual contract is for three years. The girl is also charged with the clothes which the proprietor of the house gives her, and he tries as much as possible to get her in his debt, as she will not be permitted to leave until everything is paid, though if a friend or her parent comes in and puts up all the money that she owes him he must let her go. Each girl has a book of her own, which is kept at the police office and which gives a full description of her. This book is about the shape of a magazine and about thirty or forty pages. It is much like a passport, and it contains a full description of the maiden. The dress allowed the young woman is according to the price paid for her. A \$200 girl is usually charged \$30 for her dress, and sometimes beautiful girls have given as much as \$200 for a dress. This is all put down in the book. Two pages of the book are given up to the laws and rules of the house, which must be signed by the girls. Each girl has a seal of her own, and with this she signs everything. At the end of six years the government usually declares the contract at an end and the girl is free.

"ALL HOPE ABANDONED YE WHO ENTER HERE."

The girl who once goes into the Yoshiwara, however, is like her sister who falls on this side of the world. She seldom comes out, and over the street which leads into this city of sin should be written the words which were over the gate of Dante's hell—"All hope abandoned ye who enter here." You will hear now and then well-informed travelers say that a life of this kind does not hurt the reputation of a Japanese woman, and that she may go from such places into the most refined society and be highly respected. This is not true. There are instances of men in Japan marrying women of questionable reputation, but it is no more respectable there than here. Such marriages sometimes take place between the Geisha girls and well-to-do men, but these are of a different class, and many of them are virtuous. The majority of the girls

who enter the Yoshiwara stay there. Many of them go in unwillingly; I might say, the majority. But once in they get into debt to their keepers, and their debts increase, and they stay. Sometimes they commit suicide on account of their lovers, and the Japanese stories are full of the quarrels which take place in these places on some account or other. Once in the Yoshiwara, the girl cannot go outside of the city of sin without permission. The police know all the girls that are in, and they have passports to go to other parts of the town. They are practically in slavery, and most horrible slavery at that.

THEY LOOK MODEST.

I was surprised at the modesty of such Japanese women. They have nothing of the boldness and brazen effrontery of their class in other countries, and there are some advantages in the Japanese method of treating the social evil. The wicked of the city are confined to one part of it, and those who wish temptation must go in search of it. The London streets are full of vice every night. Some parts of New York are not much better, and there are no dancing halls and empire theaters to tempt the young Japanese. It is not true that it is respectable for young men to frequent such places, and the Japanese whom I saw on their way to and from the Yoshiwara had in most cases handkerchiefs wrapped around their heads and over their faces, in order to keep the people from knowing who they were.

THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND THE WOMEN.

The laws concerning this matter have grown more strict in Japan from year to year, and there has recently sprung up a movement for the doing away entirely of the system. The Japanese government, in fact, is doing everything it can to protect its people and their reputation in respect to such matters. During the past few years numbers of girls have been carried out of the country. Sometimes almost against their will, and taken to the different seaports of the Pacific for improper purposes. A law has been recently passed preventing this, and no Japanese woman can now leave the country unless she can show exactly where she is going and why.

A foreign lady taking out a Japanese maid has to give information to the government as to just where she is going, and sign such passports and bonds as will insure the girl being properly cared for, and it is contrary to law for girls to leave the country alone. Systematic attempts have been made to evade the rules in this regard, and during my stay in Japan the authorities caught parties who were smuggling out girls in trunks. Two girls were put in tight boxes and were shipped on one of the steamers as baggage, but before the boat left there was a cry from one of the boxes, and upon its being opened a plump Japanese girl was found doubled up within it. She could scarcely breathe and her heavy clothes had gotten over the air holes. The other trunk contained another Japanese maiden, and it was found that this business had been going on for some time. The people concerned were arrested and the girls were taken back to Tokyo.

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