The Geisha Girl

Is Primarily An Entertainer

Her Office Is to Cheer the Disconsolate, Rejoice With the Joyful and
Sympathize With the Lonely. All of Which She Does for a Consideration.

The geisha first came into evidence about ten years ago. It was late in the summer.
She has little history. Her first regular home was in Fukugawa, in the pur-
poseless Koto-ku, in the neighborhood of the Kameido no man, situated on the River Sumida.
Tea-houses, of course, had long been in exist-
ence. In the town the geisha houses had to content themselves with meager entertainment. The centuries of Japanese civilization had made the samurai and daimio compelled to keep and maintain the peace, and the artisan, a burthen, was obliged to cut short their various ways unmo-
isted, brought a grateful relief to the na-

tion exhausted by internecine war. Previous to the time the lives of the samurai and
the daimio were full of action. Under the
new order of things, with no employment
sent for them at all, with no understanding that they must always be ready
to take up the sword and give their lives
happily and the geisha, in order to keep them in a lazy but deliberate fashion for new means
of entertainment and amusement. Then it

The geisha, writing of her in the
Woman's Home Companion, says: A popu-
lar geisha is called to several houses in the
course of a day or night. She must charge
only 20 yen for half an hour, but she gener-
ally receives three times this amount in tips and presents for the guests. Of the
regular tea and musical entertainment the
geisha pay her a certain salary, according to her ability.

Her chief duty to be to give the
guests a sight of some of the most ambitious
geisha must be highly accomplished. While
not by any means a harlot, she must be
able to perform on the samisen, the shakuhachi,
sumi (a drum), and other musical instru-
ments. She dances, and talks on the light-
time and social issues, and, above all, she
readiness to entertain her guests, according to their mood. A witty geisha, one who can tell a good story and is versatile enough to
not lack employment at any time and gen-
moments. While it is not expected that she should
mourn over her admirers, her object must be to beguile the
time that is irksome to its guests. Thus

It often happens that one feeling depressed
and not having anything to do to

This geisha girl. She is a practical
industrial enough to study the temper of her
patron. It might be necessary for her to

This is a personal and not a

The other hand, she need only talk very
gentlely and sympathetically to him or en-


canic her personality, the more likely is she
to succeed. She studies her roles thorough-
good applies. At the same time she

On these occasions she usually has a little pro-
gramme of her own, which her guest or

This is a natural actress. Her taste in

is exquisite and her movements in-

delicate. She has a real delight in

in the audience who watched an accomplished geisha as she

and few would suspect that every

The geisha has not her parallel world

over, for unlike other women of her class

But a geisha has the same ability to be

Grace. A successful geisha, besides her
good looks and graceful manners, must

The geisha girl differs in each dis-

She will teach you by any num-

ner of odd and pleasing games, and thus

beguile your time.

There are three classes of geisha, the

The geisha, or ordinary geisha girl,

poor, and enters service in a geisha-

house, where she earns her living ac-

tually and charmingly by her age and

and attractions. She is given her food,

and lodging and clothes and a little of her

as her master or mistress

and indeed, all classes of people. In a
short time her popularity was such that

and indeed all the comradery which

out her infectious gaiety and wit to rob

of its insipidity.

As soon as a young woman, writing of her in

After doing so the girl must apply in person for a
license to the gosho, or governor of the city, and if she is

is warned of the temptations of the new

life she wishes to enter. If she still persists

the gosho has the original examination and

and should she trip in the catastophism the

license is refused.

The class of geisha called the taki-wake is

completely unfamiliar with locality and rules pertaining
to the profession, she puts herself in charge of

that she should keep herself prude and best off of

all. The kakaye, or ordinary geisha girl,

population. For this reason the geisha personally

since in such cases she is better off to

It is not always an easy matter to enter

service in a geisha-house. Before doing so the

girl must apply in person for a license to the gosho, or
governor of the city. If she is

the firmest objections of the

patrons and directing her own life. She

Sometimes employ a couple of kakey in her

own house, and in such cases she is better

off to be a geisha.

The very young geisha are called the

Young geisha work only for a few
years, after which they are

summoned to charge but half that charged

by the older ones. They generally run

between the ages of 12 to 15 years, and are

in youth to enter the profession. They are,

in fact, but apprentices during the

time of service, and have to be instruc-

ted in all the geisha accomplishments.

the life of the hangaiko is very hard during

the term of service, as she is forced to per-

form the most menial work, particularly

is or is a "stay-at-home."

After being entertained by the geisha a

young man is usually invited to one of

the tea house, which he settles with

the head of the house, throwing in an extra

amount of money to the charge of the

The charge is usually 20 yen a half hour.

Time is measured by the burning of a

rushlight. During the early hours of the

evening the entertainment is usually a

full evening's entertainment four jeux-

sticks estimate the time.

The geisha is an extra-entertaining,

and delightful in admiring her exquisite

clothes and jewels. Beautiful combs, rings,
purses, hair pins, etc., all add to the

beauty and attractiveness of the

apparel, and are often presented to

their friends, in some cases being the

main or sole support of a large family.

During the late war with China they gave

largely of their earnings to the fund.