

Shinkyōgoku.

This is a narrow street running north and south from the Third Avenue to the Fourth Avenue. It is the most prosperous and thronged street in the city. Theatres, cinema-theatres, temples, and shops of every description stand by side, and the whole atmosphere is most oriental. This street was built in 1868 by Governor Makimura and was given the name of Shinkyōgoku or the New Capital Limit, as it was next to Teramachi, which was the east limit of the city, and was called Kyōgoku or the Capital Limit.

The theatres include the Kyōtoza, the Nakaza, etc.; the cinema theatres the Shōchikuzū, the Makino Kinema, the Kinemakurabu, the Kabukiza, the Teikōkukan, the Shintomiza, the Ebisuza etc.; the variety houses the Shōfukutei, the Fukitei, the Kagetsu, and the Fuku-shintei.

Other buildings comprise cafes, restaurants and shops of all kinds.

On the east side of the street there are numerous temples—the Seiganji, the Takoyakushi, the Empukuji, the Anyōji, the Kwankikōji, the Kinrenji, the Somedono, and a single shrine, that of Nishiki Tenjin.

The reason for the array of temples near by is that Hideyoshi gathered all the temples in the city to this site.

The tomb of the famous writer, Lady Izumishikibu, is in the temple called Seishinin, where she retired from the world and, shaving her head, became a nun.



Shijō-dori or the Fourth Avenue.

This is the main street of the city running east and west. At the east end stands the gaily coloured gate of Gion Shrine. A few blocks to the west the avenue crosses the River Kamo by a bridge called Ōhashi or the Big Bridge, built in 1913.

At the east edge of the Bridge, Minamiza, the only Japanese drama theatre in the city, stands with its imposing style.

The east side of the Bridge is called Gion District famed for Geisha girls.

From the eastern foot of the Bridge, the Keihan Electric Car Line runs for Osaka with quick service. From this place on the avenue is the most prosperous business centre of the city. At the west end of the avenue begin suburban car lines which lead to Arashiyama, a famous cherry park, and to Osaka.



River Kamo.

Our great poet Rai San'yō says: "In Kyoto, Mount green, and Water clean."

The phrase, "River Kamo and Mt. Hiei" is an antithesis and a quotation to introduce the natural beauty of Kyoto.

The River rises at the southern foot of Mt. Sūjōkigahke, piercing the boundary of two provinces—Yamashiro and Tamba.

Running to the east, the river joins the two streams of Kurama and Kibune, then flows through the eastern part of the city to the south, and receiving the tributary of Takano-gawa at the confluence of Tadasu-gawara, south of the Shimogamo Shrine, finally runs into River Katsura at the Shimotoba, after a course of 11.4 miles.

At present the amount of water is very little, but in ancient times the river often overflowed its banks, and so it is told that even Emperor Shirakawa suffered deeply from its flood.

In the river-bed pebbles and sand are abundant, and the amount of water is scanty. However, its quality is suitable for dyeing, and therefore the river is very useful for Kamegawa-zome or Yūzen-zome.

The dry river-bed near Shijō Bridge was in bygone days famous for actors' performances, but now is better known for cooling balconies in the summer season.



Fans.

The origin of fans in Japan is not definitely known.

It was in the middle of the 12th century that Yūkan Ajyari, a priest of the Miedō Temple, Kyoto, made a folding fan and presented it to the Emperor Gotoba, who greatly admired its elegant and neat form.

This seems to have been the beginning of the Kyoto folding fans.

Fans were at first used only at court and for religious ceremonies.

There were times when different kinds of fans were used by the common people, differing from those carried by officials.

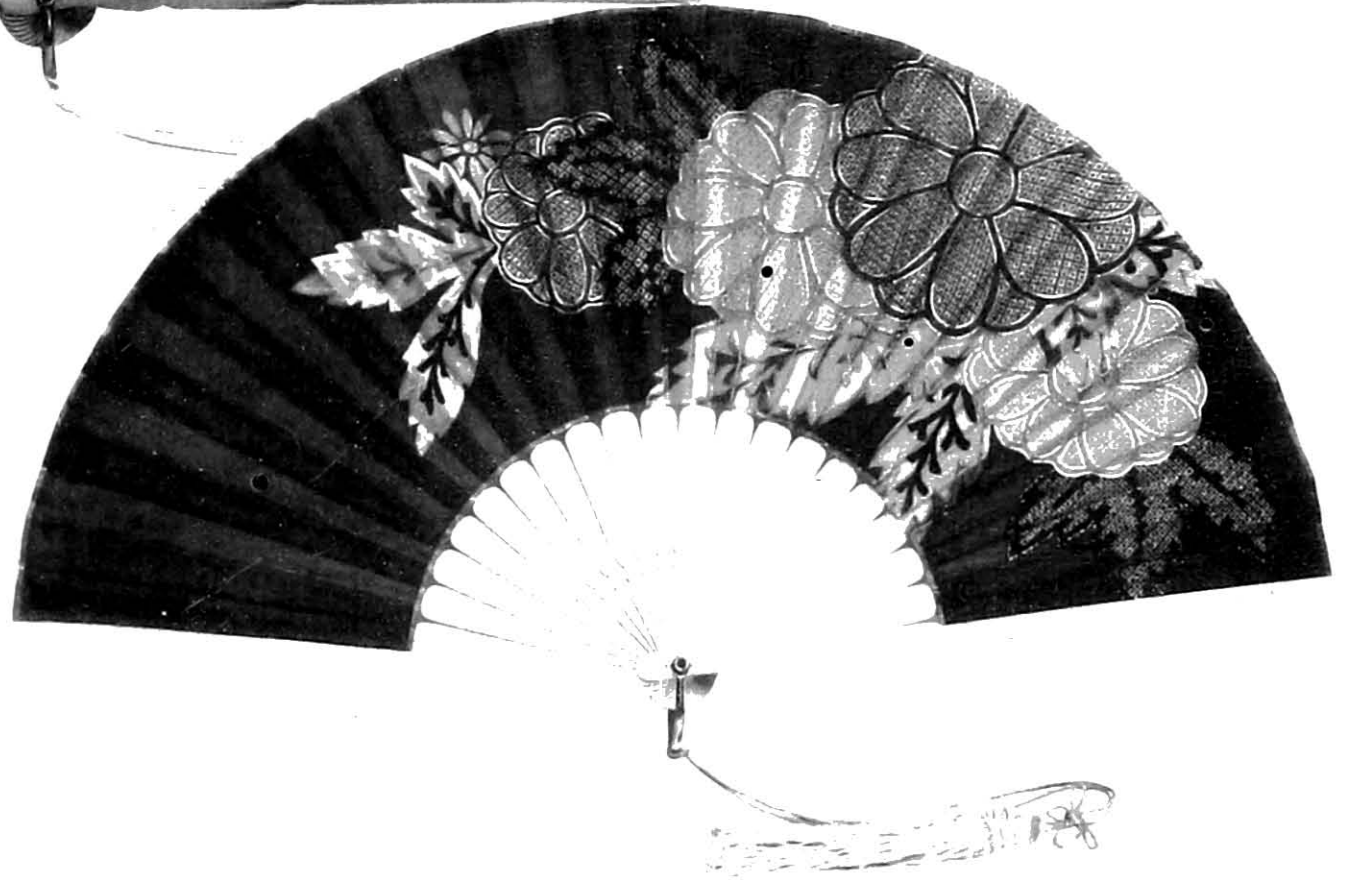
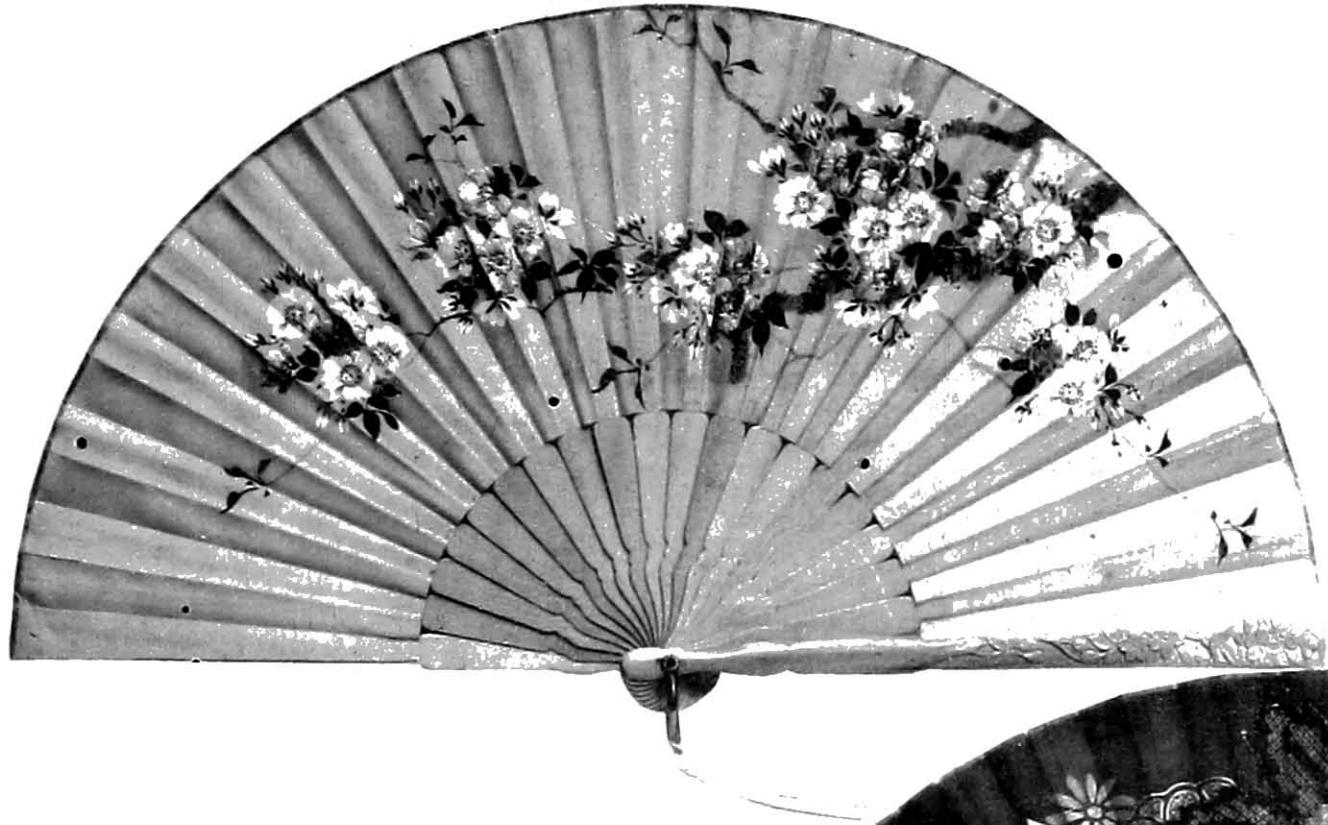
It was customary for the court nobles to carry fans decorated with designs corresponding to the month of the year in which they were used.

The most ancient fans were made from small pieces of juniper wood.

Fans made of paper with bamboo ribs are most common to-day although those made of wood, silk, and other materials are to be seen.

Silk embroidered or gold painted fans are much appreciated by foreign visitors.

The value of fans made yearly amounts to ¥ 1,800,000, of which ¥ 100,000 are exported.



Kamogawa Odori.

Needless to say, the Kamogawa Odori (the Dance of River Kamo) is the most prominent attraction in Kyoto and deeply appreciated by all foreigners.

The dance originated in March, 1871, at the Chigawa Ususama-dera, at the same time as the Miyako Odori was begun.

Since 1874, when the Kaburenjō (dancing hall) was established, it has become increasingly popular.

The original rooms were too small and inconvenient for performers and audience alike, and therefore in 1925 the construction of a new and modern building of oriental design was started; it was completed in March, 1927.

The world-famed dance is held yearly in May, and is performed by the most skilled geisha-girls of the Pontocho geisha district, which lies along the western bank of the River Kamo from Sanjō Street to Shijō Street.

The witnessing of the Dance will remain a very pleasant memory of one's stay in Kyoto.

This picture shows that ceremonial tea will be served by a beautiful geisha-girl before the performance.



Sanjō Ōhashi.

Sanjō Ōhashi is one of the three largest bridges of the city and was first built by Masuda Nagamori in 1590 A.D., by order of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

The Giboshi, head-shaped caps, surmounting the posts of the railing, are made of bronze. The bridge has been repaired many times, but the same Giboshi are used.

The bridge being the starting-point of the high-road that leads to Tōkaidō, Tōsandō and Hokurikudō, the three great, old divisions of the country, was always filled with wayfarers.

It is said that the sacred light of "Naijisho" in the Imperial Palace could be seen from the bridge, when the Palace was in ruins.

There stands by the bridge the bronze statue of the patriot, Takayama Hikokuro, bowing tearfully to the devastated Palace.

The eastern foot of Ōhashi is the starting-point of the Keihan Electric Railway for Ōsaka, Ōtsu and Uji.

The place is connected with the terminal of the Eizan Electric Railway by the city bus.

In summer, people are to be seen leaning on the railing of the bridge enjoying the cooling breeze.

