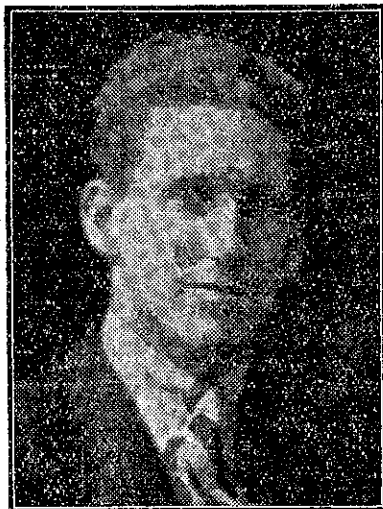




## The "Geisha"

A Japanese Musical Play to be Broadcast from  
2YA under the direction of

**N**EXT to the "Mikado," the "Geisha" is probably the best-known musical play with a Japanese setting. It contains many delightful airs and choruses, and is expressive of all that stands for youth and beauty in the land of the crocus. Its title is the class name for the educated woman of Japan who, although professionally, is the entertainer and the hostess. She dances, sings and talks; she is the life and soul of Japan, and must always be gay, always laughing and always young, even to the end of her life. The geisha begins her career at a very early age. When only two or three years old she is taught to sing and dance and talk, and above all to be able to listen sympathetically, which is the greatest art of all. The career of this tiny mite is carved out thus early because her mother foresees that she has the qualities that will develop, and the little butterfly child, so gay and so brilliant, will become a still more gorgeous butterfly woman. Nothing can be too brilliant for the geisha; she is the life and soul of Japan, the merry sparkling side of Japanese life; she must be always gay, always laughing and always young, even to the end of her life. But for the girl who is to become the ordinary domesticated wife it is different. Starting life as a bright, light-hearted little child, she becomes sadder and sadder in colour and in spirits with every passing year. Directly she becomes a wife her one ambition is to become old—in fact, it is almost a craze with her. She shows it in every possible way—in the way she ties her obi, the fashion in which she dresses her hair; everything that suggests the advance of the sere and yellow leaf she will eagerly adopt. When her husband gives a party he calls in the geisha; she herself, poor dear, sits upstairs on a mat and is not allowed to be seen. She is called the "honoured interior," and is far too precious and refined



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—S. P. Andrew, photo.

to figure in public life. But, mind you, this little married lady, the "honoured interior," does not ignore her personal appearance altogether; she too will never miss an opportunity to whip out the rouge-pot and mirror that always form part of every Japanese woman's attire in order to decorate her face. And although to our eyes she appears a nonentity as compared with the geisha, her position is in reality a very happy one and greatly to be envied. What if the geisha entertain her husband's guests? Hers is the greater privilege of attending upon him when he returns, tired out from the festivities; she is a rare jewel set in the background of her home, and the "honoured interior" is perfectly content.

But the idiotic idea so general in the West, that the geisha is a silly, giggling little girl with a fan, must really be corrected, although it can be quite understood how this opinion has been formed. The geisha in reality is a little genius, perfectly brilliant as a talker, and mistress of the art of dancing. But she knows that the Westerner does not appreciate or understand her fine classical dancing and singing, and she is so refined and so charming that she will not allow you to feel that you are ignorant and more or less vulgar, but will instantly begin to amuse you in some way that she thinks you will enjoy and understand.

**S**HE will perhaps unfold paper and draw rapid character-sketches of birds and fish, or dance a sort of spirited dance that she feels will entertain you. One never dines out or is entertained in Japan without the geisha forming a prominent part of the entertainment; in fact, she herself decorates the room where you are dining, just as a flower or a picture would decorate our dining-rooms at home, only better. And there is nothing more typical of the decorative sense (Concluded on page 4).