

drum is beat. There were some such houses near our abode, and I cannot remember that a single night passed without our hearing the drum: hence I conclude that these places are never without visitors. The Japanese told us, that at Yeddo, the capital of the temporal emperor, there are numbers of the largest buildings of this kind, which are nothing inferior in magnificence to the palaces of princes: in one of these temples, dedicated to

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He says, that these were commonly the handsomest houses in the place, and sometimes were even situated near their idols' temples. In one very small place, there were fifty of these unhappy votaries; in another, not larger, eighty; and in another place, *Mite-rai*, not very extensive, no less than four of these unhallowed receptacles. The females are generally called *Keise* or *Kese*, which signifies a castle turned upside down. These ladies are not only regulated by the Government, but, when engaged by foreigners, their husbands are paid a certain sum per day, independent of presents to the frail fair one, and the cost of her maintenance. Such is the want of common decorum in Japan, that these houses are indiscriminately used by male parties as taverns for drinking Sakki, or beer made from rice. The daughters of indigent parents, are even apprenticed out, or sold to the occupant of one of these houses; where having served a certain term, they regain their liberty, mix in general society without a stain, and are often advantageously married.

The number of the unhappy females who are attached to these places, is much augmented by the constant system of travelling pursued throughout the Japanese Empire. Charlevoix asserts, that the crowd which is always met upon the roads is inconceivable; for whenever travelling is practicable, a stranger