

THE 19th CENTURY — THE 20th



About a hundred years ago, Japan was trying her hardest to absorb the most vital parts of Western civilization at the quickest possible pace, throwing her doors wide open to the world, which had been tightly closed for some 300 years.

The Riki-sha is said to have borrowed its idea from the European coach. When it made its first appearance on the streets of Tokyo in 1870, it swiftly gained widespread popularity. It was soon exported to China and Europe, and established itself as a "celebrity" around the world.

European clothes were adopted as a business costume, but it took some time before it finally became home wear. Contrary to the trend of the Edo era, people preferred the quiet dress to gay costumes.



From HINO TODAY '66/'67

PRESENT

First-time visitors to Japan from abroad who have little or no background knowledge of the country are almost without exception surprised at what they discover.

Sleek, ultra-modern hotels and office buildings, with steel skeleton frameworks of high-rise edifices here and there, dominate the skyline. Japanese people from many walks of life scurry to and fro on the downtown streets, and nearly all are fashionably attired in Western clothes.

Times change. Tokyo has become the world's most heavily populated, and one of its most thriving, metropolises.

The Tokyo-wide transit system, with subways and trains and buses leaving every few minutes, and modern overhead, limited-access thoroughways and wide multi-laned streets, also are sources of mild amazement to visitors.

Most of the traffic on Tokyo streets is made up of automobiles. Hino Motors pioneered in Japanese motor vehicle manufacturing; its first vehicle was introduced only a few years after the first U.S. vehicle was introduced.

However, the traditional Japanese garment, the kimono, remains unaffected by the fast-changing, modern trends of living. The kimono, colorful and graceful, is enjoying even wider popularity today than ever before. It is used as a costume for formal occasions such as social events, weddings, and funerals. The splendor and tradition that has been retained in the design of the kimono has been re-discovered and the garment is seen in increasing numbers all over Japan.



HinoSamurai.org