

**Hokusei Jo Gakko-related Records in the Annual Reports of
the Women's Board of Foreign Missions of
the Presbyterian Church, New York, Part I (1880-1900)**

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Contents

- I. Abstract
- II. Introduction
- III. Historical Context
- IV. Format of Reports
- V. Overview of Contents
- VI. Analysis and Discussion
- VII. Conclusion
- VIII. References
- IX. Notes

[Abstract]

Missionaries active in the founding and development of Hokusei Jo Gakko in the 1880s–1890s belonged to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and to another national level organization within it, the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church. Each missionary was also attached to a regional Board, which provided various types of support for and received regular reports from her. Sarah C. Smith, Clara H. Rose, and Ida G. Pierson all served at Hokusei Jo Gakko and were assigned to the Women's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, New York. It was comprised of women's mission groups within individual churches and more localized associations of churches throughout New England, New York, New Jersey, and Kentucky. This article presents the annual reports it published from 1880 to 1900 which were related to Hokusei Jo Gakko. It provides an overview and discussion of the content, shedding light on events at Hokusei and the people who provided the backing to make the missionaries' work possible. The information supplied here allows interested readers to gain a more thorough understanding of the process of formation and development through which today's Hokusei Gakuen has passed.

Introduction

Of the numerous people connected with Hokusei Jo Gakko (北星女学校、Hokusei Girls' School) who lived through the years of its foundation and early development, many saw it from the viewpoint of their direct experience with the organization in Japan. There was, however, a separate group of indirectly related individuals who knew it through the lens of periodic reports from the missionaries serving at Hokusei. They were the members of women's overseas mission organizations within the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA) and its Board of Foreign Missions (BFM). They composed a network of the like-minded who provided spiritual, social, financial, and other support for their representatives in Sapporo and elsewhere around the world.

Key words : Hokusei Gakuen, Hokusei Jo Gakko, Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, Women's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, New York

The following is a presentation of the annual reports of the New York regional portion of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (shortened here to the New York Board), to which Hokusei-related missionaries Sarah C. Smith, Clara H. Rose, and Ida G. Pierson belonged. The accounts of happenings in these women's lives and work make possible a more complete understanding of the way the first school in today's Hokusei Gakuen system developed and the influences which have continued since that time. Though none of the annual updates is lengthy or comprehensive in nature, in combination they provide a discernible outline of the missionaries' work and the school as it was forming over the course of the 41 years from 1880 to 1920. After this it was absorbed into the larger national women's organization inside the BFM and stopped publishing its own detailed annual reports. Part I will be limited to the 1880 to 1900 material.

Historical Context

Noting a few features of the historical environment in which Hokusei Jo Gakko was developing during the years under consideration will be useful in understanding the annual updates on happenings there. On the U.S. side, the New York Board was established in 1870 as the nation emerged from the debilitating division of the 1861 to 1865 Civil War. As the economy recovered and continued to grow along with the population, the ability was regained and enhanced for local organizations such as Christian churches to supply offerings and support efforts including establishing schools in Japan. Presbyterian churches in the North and South, which had been divided particularly during the War years, found it possible to cooperate and combine their labor increasingly.

The sense of mission which characterized Hokusei's teachers from the U.S., their backers, and the Christian church in North American and Europe generally during this period is reflected in a story from the post-Civil War years.¹ A cavalry officer's young wife wrote home to loved ones in the northeastern U.S. describing the appalling spiritual condition of people in the unsettled West. Inspired by her concern, women in Presbyterian churches around New York began forming the organization which grew into the Ladies' Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church in 1870. As an auxiliary to the PCUSA Home and Foreign Boards, it was focused on home, or U.S. domestic, missions. However, the larger group's membership and activities increased, continuing to include work outside the U.S., and was eventually renamed the Women's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, New York. It was tasked with supporting the international work of the denomination, while the domestic mission responsibilities were transferred to another organization.

This Board backed Sarah Smith and others serving at Hokusei. Meanwhile, on the Japanese side, the population of Sapporo and Hokkaido continued to increase steadily. This meant an expanding need and opportunity for the education of girls and young women of the area. As the economy of the island continued to develop past its pioneer days, larger numbers of families could afford schooling for their daughters in private institutions, as well. With Japan becoming more firmly established and recognized as a nation on the world stage, the perception of the need for foreign

language skills, cultural understanding, and connections with people beyond Japan also deepened during the last two decades of the 1800s.

The physical conditions in which teachers and students at Hokusei labored during these years deserve mention. Encountering health problems related to the harsh winter climate of Hokkaido became the specific occasion for a number of missionaries to leave the school. Also, general health conditions presented problems which are typically not a concern in today's Japan. There is a note in the 1887 report, for example, that a cholera epidemic has swept over the nation, and almost all missionaries have suffered to a greater or lesser extent (p. 17).

Struggles for equality among nations were also issues inside and outside Japan. After hundreds of years of being closed to the outside world before the Meiji Restoration, the attitude of Japanese people toward foreign nations moved generally toward openness, yet with swings and fluctuations from time to time. For example, Sarah Smith was invited by Japanese government officials to transfer to Sapporo to teach in a school under their authority (1887, p. 17). However, there was opposition from other quarters, notably in the 1890s. The perception that treaties forced upon Japan by Western nations were unfair in nature fueled considerable resistance toward non-Japanese. In the 1894 report, for instance, a missionary in Tokyo notes (p. 29):

This is an anxious time in Japan, because of the struggle between the Ministry and the Diet. If the former prevail, we are safe, but should the Diet succeed in establishing the strict enforcement of the treaties with foreign powers, our mission property is endangered, for the treaties permit foreigners to hold land and to reside only in certain specified districts ('concessions') in seven 'open ports.'

By 1900 agreements between nations had been reached so that the Japan Mission report to the New York Board was able to announce, "The Revised Treaties having taken effect last July, Japan is now recognized as on a footing of equality with the nations of the West, and foreigners are now under Japanese law" (p. 36).

The institutional context in which the events reported to the New York Board took place also requires attention. The women's auxiliary groups, noted above, which existed inside the organizational structure of the PCUSA's global missions organization (BFM), were maintained on national, regional, synod, presbytery, and local levels. They did a great deal of the actual work of supporting the denomination's mission effort. Each missionary belonged to particular groups within this system, so that individuals such as Sarah Smith, Clara Rose, and Ida Pierson reported regularly by letter to these sponsors and visited in person when possible.

A regional Board supplied support for women missionaries assigned to it by taking active part in recruiting, commissioning, and sending them, as well as corresponding by mail, and meeting them

for study and social and spiritual support when the missionary was in the U.S. for furlough (once each several years, though the frequency varied according to the times and individual circumstances).

The New York Board, located in New York City, was one of what became seven regional PCUSA women's mission groups. The others were based in Albany (covering northern New York from 1872 to 1908), Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Portland, and San Francisco. The New York Board was originally housed in the home of its first president, then 20 Washington Square, North. It was moved to 53 Fifth Avenue in approximately 1888, where it shared a building with the PCUSA General Assembly's Board of Foreign Missions. Then beginning in 1895 its home was 156 Fifth Avenue.

The number of missionaries sponsored by the New York Board rose from 28 in 1880 to 60 by 1890 and 84 as of 1900. Of these, several would typically be in the U.S. on furlough at any given time, while the others were in locations including Syria, Persia, India, China, Siam, Liberia, and Chili. The New York Board maintained a presence in these countries over the years being considered here and by 1900 had expanded to involve mission activity in Brazil, Mexico, and the Philippine Islands, among other places. It was represented in Japan by 2 missionaries as of 1880, 9 in 1890, and 10 by 1900. Of these, at least a few were unmarried women, who were generally assigned to educational ministry, while the others were married to men engaged in more directly church-connected work.

As noted above, the New York Board was part of the PCUSA Board of Foreign Missions. This larger organization employed a force of 345 American missionaries in 1880, 565 by 1890, and 712 as of 1900. In Japan as of 1880, there were 44 BFM missionaries, serving in three stations. By 1890 the number had risen to 71 laboring in five stations, and as of 1900 it had decreased to 57, working in nine stations.

Inside the structure of the New York Board as a whole, in smaller areas, there were women's mission groups from a number of churches, called a synod. Sarah Smith's Synod of New York consisted of the following Presbyterian Societies: Binghamton, Boston, Brooklyn, Cayuga, Chemung, Genesee, Geneva, Hudson, Long Island, Lyons, Nassau, New York, Niagara, North Laos, North River, Otsego, Persia, Rochester, St. Lawrence, Steuben, Syracuse, Utica, Westchester, and Morristown, New Jersey. These were among the people whom Smith and other missionaries would visit when possible to maintain connections and build support.

Within each synod was a number of presbyteries—groups of churches (typically several but in some cases larger or smaller), each with a women's mission organization called a presbyterial society, which was likewise composed of women's mission groups in a number of individual, local churches. Inside individual presbyterial societies, there also existed various smaller groups to which an ordinary church member might belong. They included women's societies, young people's societies, young people's societies for Christian endeavor, and mission bands (1900, p. 131).

One method of fostering personal connections was designating Board representatives who would manage communications through the mail. For instance, by 1900, Sarah Smith's sponsors in the Chemung Presbyterial Society had a member assigned the task of handling correspondence with missionaries—a Mrs. F. M. Wixson of 1024 College Avenue, Elmira, New York (p. 97). Through this particular communication route, Smith was able to maintain links with her home base, going to them for support as she and Hokusei Jo Gakko needed it. She could also demonstrate to them that she was accomplishing the mission for which they, and according to their faith God, had commissioned her.

Format of Reports

The general format of the annual reports, despite some variation in content and order, includes the following: (a) title page and front matter, (b) rosters of missionaries under the sponsorship of this Board, (c) updates of the New York Board missionaries' work in each country, (d) lists of supporting organizations inside the New York Board structure down to the presbyterial society level, with the name of the society, its president, its secretary, and amounts of offering made in the past year, (e) amounts of money given by various groups within local churches (children's, young people's, and women's mission and service groups) for specific purposes, and (beginning 1899) a table of statistical data.

For each year New York Board-sponsored missionaries were in Japan, reports on their work appeared in these annual publications, which are now in book form (in one or two volumes, case by case). Some updates are arranged with a report for individual missionaries, while others list information school by school. For instance, the 1893 report describes the difficulty that Sarah Smith faces in bravely carrying on the work, with measurable results, in a time of opposition to foreigners. It then states, "It does seem very desirable to send some one to assist and sustain Miss Smith in her loneliness" (Vol. 1, p. 30). The 1895 report tells how Miss Rose's serving in the ministry in Sapporo has made possible a whole range of activities: conducting four Sunday schools, weekly prayer meetings, a large Bible class for young men, and many personal visits, among others.

Also, from year to year particular groups are listed as giving offerings directed specifically toward the work at the schools where the missionaries serve. For example, in the years Rose serves in Sapporo, New York Fourth Avenue Church, North River Presbyterial Society, and the American Presbyterian Church in Montreal, Canada, give offerings for education at this school.

The length of the bound volume containing the New York Board's report each year ranges from a few dozen pages in the early 1880s to over 150 by the turn of the century. Within it, the annual report on the Japan Mission varies from roughly half a page to nine (around four or less until the mid-1890s, the volume then increasing along with the number of missionaries and activities). The

section relating to Hokusei Jo Gakko runs from a few lines to over a page and one-half. It does not exceed half a page until 1896, when it lengthens significantly.

A roster of missionaries appears in two locations in most years' publications. The content is generally identical, but at times one appears to be updated earlier than the other, and differences emerge. Beginning in 1894 and continuing onward, a roster is placed before the country-by-country annual report.

Overview of Contents

The year-by-year summaries below describe changes occurring in the life of Hokusei Jo Gakko. They do not provide an exhaustive account of each report but include particularly notable events.

In terms of the work of the New York Board as a whole, undertakings such as developing Hokusei Jo Gakko held a prominent place. The author of the 1892 summary remarks, "It is pleasant to notice the constantly recurring testimony that no part of the mission work in Japan is more promising than that which our Christian women are doing among the women of the country" (p. 31).

Each year's report notes the particular organization designated as sponsor for individual missionaries. In Miss Smith's case, the Chemung Presbyterial Society served as her backers, beginning in 1882, as it had for Fannie Gulick until she left her position. This grouping of PCUSA churches in the Chemung County, New York, area continued supporting Smith through the years under consideration here. These women teamed up in their task in only one year, 1887, with the Fourth Avenue Church Auxiliary in New York. As for Clara Rose, Madison Square Church in New York City was charged with particular responsibility for her support. This group is listed as her sponsor from 1886 through 1900. Ida Pierson was linked with supporters from Rutgers Riverside Church in New York, beginning in 1896 and continuing through 1900. In 1896 and 1897 they were joined as sponsors by the King's Daughters, one of the volunteer groups inside the church organization.

Information on Sarah Smith is included for practically all of the years under consideration here, covering her ministry in Tokyo, Hakodate, and then Sapporo, so data on her appears regularly. Updates on Clara Rose's work at Hokusei appear only in the 1894 to 1896 summaries; however, some reports on her continued ministry in Otaru overlap in content with happenings at Hokusei Jo Gakko. Ida Pierson served directly in connection with Hokusei from 1897 through 1900, so reports from her are likewise presented for those years.

Among other matters included in the annual reports is a description of a Bureau of Exchange, which existed to facilitate communication between missionaries and their supporters. For instance, the 1898 update states that 12,324 letters have been exchanged in the past year (p. 77).

1880. No mention of Sarah Smith appears in this year's report. There is a note that Graham Seminary² is under the care of three Presbyterian missionaries: Mrs. True, Miss Gulick, and Miss Eldred.³ Miss Fannie Gulick is currently sponsored by the Chemung Presbyterial Society.⁴

1881. No information directly related to Sarah Smith or other missionaries who will serve at Hokusei Jo Gakko is presented in this year's update. It is noted that the school where Smith is now actually serving (Graham Seminary) is outgrowing its facilities and needs a new wing built. The position she is filling appears to be recognized as significant by the families sending their daughters to study there.

1882. No specific note of Sarah Smith's work appears in this year's report. The only mention is that "three young ladies" are now serving as teachers at Graham Seminary under the leadership of Miss Leete, who has been placed in charge of the school (p. 6). One of the three is Miss Smith.

1883. The author of the update for this year notes Smith among the ladies engaged in the work at Graham Seminary (p. 42).

The good cause in Japan is progressing grandly in the hands of an admirable corps of workers, and we feel the most assured confidence in their faithfulness and diligence. Miss Leete, Miss Smith, Miss Reade and Miss Lena Leete are engaged in various departments in the Seminary, in addition to doing outside evangelistic work.

1884. A guest connected with a mission school complimented the girls at Graham Seminary on their English enunciation, saying it was the best he had ever heard in Japan. "For this, Miss Leete says, they are largely indebted to Miss Smith, who was a most faithful and efficient teacher" (pp. 10-11).

However, she has "been compelled to leave her post." The author explains (p. 11):

Miss Smith, after a strenuous effort to carry on her work in spite of ill health, has been obliged to leave Tokio. She is now in Sapporo, her one desire being that the climate there may be less trying, and that she may have health given her to accomplish in that place something of the work she so earnestly desires to do.

There is a note that it will probably be necessary to send someone to take Smith's place in Graham Seminary (p. 23).

1885. Sarah Smith, acting under advice of the Mission, has moved from Sapporo to Hakodate. In the first few months in Hakodate, she organized two Sabbath-schools, averaging 30 and 40 attendance. There is a church with neither building nor pastor, which asks for her help. These

schools, other church work, and prayer meetings for women and children nearly fill her schedule. “Miss Smith expresses a fear that the work will be too much for her, but she is sowing the seed, trusting that He who alone can give the increase will send the reapers” (p. 17).

One class of student teachers in the government schools is meeting daily with Smith as teacher. She includes 20 minutes per class of Bible study. She hopes to have a Bible woman.⁵ The church Smith was connected with in Sapporo has recently added 15 members. There are 56 students in the Sabbath-school she left in the care of college students.

1886. Smith is continuing her work among the women of Hakodate. In addition, she has a class for young men, runs two Sabbath-schools, and holds an informal church service in her house. These activities keep her schedule full, but she sees an awakened interest in Christian faith in the people around her. She senses in them a strong desire to know more about it.

1887. This year's update describes the specific plans for opening the school Miss Smith will lead (p. 17).

We hear of Miss Smith as settled again at Sapporo. This is in response to the invitation which came to her in August to teach in the Government Normal School there, which the Mission permitted her to do. Sapporo is an inland city, the capital of Yesso [*sic*], and presents an important field for work. Foreigners are rarely permitted to live there, except as employees of the Japanese government. Miss Smith's position in the Normal School will therefore give her the protection she needs, and at the same time an opportunity for Christian work. As her new duties will occupy but two hours a day, she proposes to have a small school in her own house. As a nucleus for this she takes with her the five⁶ girls she had with her in Hakodate. Her Biblewoman [*sic*] too will be with her.

1888. Smith's work after her being called back to Sapporo is not only growing but “fulfilling her highest expectations” (p. 14). The building which the government gave her to use has been expanded to suit the needs of the school. She now has 40 students, 11 of whom are boarders. Of her Normal School students, 10 or 15 are gathering for a Bible class on Sundays, 3 have become Christians, and 1 of these 3 has gone to be a teacher in the countryside.

1889. Smith is continuing to teach in the local Normal School. She is busy with her ministry and engrossed in it. She experiences loneliness, especially in the long winter, as the only foreign lady in the city, yet she does not allow herself to dwell on it. Over the past summer, seven from her school, three from the Normal School, and one from her Sunday Bible class were baptized. Though she finds it difficult to break away from her labors, she feels the need for rest after nine years of mission work and is planning to return to the U.S. in the summer.

1890. Smith is in the U.S. on furlough. She reached New York just in time for the New York Board's annual meeting. There she gave an address, along with a few other missionaries, each speaking on her work in the country to which the organization had sent her.

The Normal School where she has been teaching in Sapporo gave her a year's leave. At the school she has now founded, Miss Light and Japanese assistants are maintaining the work. There are 60 students there, 20 of them boarders. Among all the pupils at least 15 are Christians, and 7 of those under Smith's care in the government school have confessed faith in Christ. Miss Smith's school has a Kindergarten Department, with both boys and girls learning there. The Sabbath school which she organized during her first visit to Sapporo has now grown into a church.

1891. Smith is back in Japan, having arrived just before Christmas last year to find the school she led in founding to be in a prosperous condition after a time in Miss Light's care. There are currently 60 to 70 students. While she was gone a Presbyterian church was established, and 60 to 80 are attending now. A Sabbath school has also been started, led by a man who became a Christian while Smith was teaching him at the Normal School (pp. 23-24).

Her heart is more than full as she sees him conducting the services and gaining the attention of the forty or more children gathered in from the streets, teaching them to bow their heads in prayer, and she remembers the time when she was so discouraged because she could make no impression upon the students of that school.

1892. Smith's temporary replacement, Miss Light, "held the fort" while Smith was on furlough. But soon after returning, Smith sent her away for a vacation and now has buckled down to work.

Smith recalls years earlier taking on the task of teaching knitting to a group of women who "belonged to a little band of Christians, the result of the work of Prof. Clark, of Amherst College." She confesses, "I did not know how to knit myself, but I sent for books, and was six months knitting my first sock." Yet she learned and conducted the class, adding, "I gave them a Bible lesson at the same time" (p. 30).

The unnamed author of the summary describes the two years Smith served in Hakodate as a success. During that time membership in her church rose from 18 to 60 and in a women's class from 5 or 6 to 30.

Later ". . . she brought with her five girls to live with her in her home and to train as Christian teachers." In three months, the number of pupils had grown to 40. Their first school had two rooms (measurements provided), neither of which was spacious. "Subsequently, thanks to the influence of the Governor, whose daughter was one of her pupils, much better accommodation was provided for them" (p. 30).

In the government school where she was employed, Smith was allowed to choose the texts for her class. She selected the Bible as one of them and sold 40 copies of it her first year.

Her present daily routine includes (a) teaching at her own school from 7:30 to 9:00, (b) classes at the government school until 12:30, (c) English instruction at her school in the afternoon, (d) music lessons after 4:00, and (e) meetings or school work in the evenings. She is also responsible for caring for the boarders' clothes, 60 day pupils, handling money, correspondence, and more. The author concludes (p. 31), "Does she not need a helper?"

1893. Though Smith's work was included as being among the most promising types the New York Board was undertaking just last year, now opposition against foreigners and Christianity has reached Hokkaido. Her report describes the situation by saying that the work never looked so *unpromising* as now. Some pupils have left the school since the beginning of the academic term in September, as often happens, but this year they have not been replaced by others—a very unusual occurrence. Yet there have been positive signs, as well. In Smith's church every Communion Sabbath at least one to five baptisms are held, and all the older girls in the school have become earnest workers in its Bible classes and Sunday schools. The author notes that Smith has bravely continued the work in this remote location for a long time already and concludes, "It does seem very desirable to send some one to assist and sustain Miss Smith in her loneliness" (p. 30).

1894. This year's report is a very meager one, due to Miss Smith's being burdened with work. As a result, "It is very pleasant to announce that Miss Smith is no longer alone, Miss Rose having gone to her aid" (p. 31). Currently, 47 pupils are studying in the girls' school, 8 of these are baptized Christians, and 5 are waiting for an opportunity to make a confession of faith. An organ has been donated by one of the women's auxiliaries under the New York Board for a new church building being erected. The school is holding the organ for safekeeping until the construction is completed.

1895. The school headed by Miss Smith now has an enlarged faculty, modified curriculum, board of directors, upgraded quarters, and a new name: Hokusei Jo Gakko (the North Star Girls' School). It has grown steadily since it was established in 1877 [*sic*], with *seven* (see 1887 report) students whom Smith had brought to Sapporo from Hakodate. Eight pupils have become church members recently.

Hokusei Jo Gakko runs a Sunday-school for poor children, held in its chapel and taught by students. Enrolled pupils number 170, with 40 typically in attendance, and it is "full of life and interest" (p. 33). The arrival of Miss Rose has given Miss Smith more time to visit people, but both ladies are working actively outside the school as well as inside. Activities include four Sunday-schools, weekly prayer meetings, Christian Associations, a large Bible class for young men, voice lessons (tenor, bass), plus many visits in homes and elsewhere. The new church building to which

supporters under the New York Board have contributed is now completed, adding 36 new members during the year.

1896. At the North Star Girls' School, the student population has more than doubled in the past year. There are 12 teachers in the school now, all but 3 Christians. Last year a Post Graduate Department was added. Its curriculum includes science (taught by professors from the local College), English literature, *koto*, organ, and Japanese and Chinese language studies. A Preparatory Department was started last year, also, and is growing.

Activities in the school life include a teachers' prayer meeting held once a week, weekly church attendance, memorization of Scripture, daily Bible study, and morning and evening prayers. Two have recently joined the church, and five members of the senior class are Christians. Several members of Miss Rose's Bible class have become Christians. There are 70 pupils in the Sabbath school, with 40 attending on average.

Miss Rose has been assisting Miss Smith in the work in Sapporo. However, she has also recently undertaken activities in Otaru. This grew out of the feeling that there was a good opportunity to serve in connection with ministry already begun by Mr. Pierson.⁷ When Rose took Miss Kawai (a graduate of Smith's school in Sapporo) with her during summer vacation last year and began work, the results were so encouraging that it was decided to make it permanent. There are 30 pupils now, 15 of these boarders. Miss Rose thinks it is possible to run this school in connection with Hokusei. She goes to Otaru on Fridays for this ministry and returns on Mondays. There are already two Sunday schools in Otaru, a large Bible class of men, a women's meeting held monthly, and an English class mostly of students from outside the school.

Mrs. Pierson has visited in Elmira, New York, and given a speech on work in Hokkaido. It included reports directly from Misses Smith and Rose.

1897. Mrs. Pierson is now helping Miss Smith in the work at The North Star Girls' School (p. 45). The New York Board welcomes her warmly as a new representative of the organization. Miss Rose has left Sapporo to undertake her work in Otaru, focused on women and children.

At Hokusei, 80 pupils are registered and 58 in regular attendance, 30 of these boarders. The Bible is used as a text daily. Smith's work includes classes, caring for boarders, housekeeping, and two catechism classes (6 and 11 students, respectively). There are two other special classes, The King's Daughters and Helping Hand. Among the activities of the pupils in these groups is helping to raise money to pay off the debt the school has incurred in purchasing the school building (50 yen raised so far).

As for work outside the school itself, 358 students are registered in attendance at Miss Smith's

three Sabbath-schools. She helps support two other Sabbath-schools farther away, which she visits in the summer. Last July Smith traveled into “the interior” with a Bible woman and held a number of meetings, which were well-attended. One woman walked several miles to take part, carrying a young child. She spoke of her education in a mission school and how faith in Christ had comforted her living in a lonely place. Smith comments, “We have had disappointments, failures, discouragements, but also some encouragements and a good measure of success, for which the Master's name be praised” (p. 46).

1898. Sarah Smith is heading the mission work at Hokusei, with Ida Pierson assisting while engaged primarily in more directly church-related ministry in the Sapporo area. Pierson's service at the North Star Girls' School has consisted of partly secular instruction along with some Bible teaching. She holds catechetical classes for Hokusei boarding students on Sundays. Her church involvement focuses on serving the women of the church (40 of them on roll), including a regular house-to-house visitation system. She also teaches a Bible class to Agricultural College students.

Smith's ministry, though focused on the school, likewise involves church work. For instance, she has maintained contact with one of seven who became followers of Christ under her influence when she was teaching at the local government-operated school. He has kept the faith he acquired there and recently returned to Sapporo as a teacher at the Normal College. He and his Christian wife appear ready to provide strong support for their church.

Hokusei's enrollment stands at 100, with 70 of these attending daily and 30 boarders. Smith writes, “Interest in Christianity among the day pupils seems sadly wanting, one only having become a Christian. Among the boarders the interest is encouraging, six having united with the Church.” All things considered, she concludes, “The school was never in a better condition” (p. 48).

1899. Mrs. Pierson has had charge of Hokusei Jo Gakko since Miss Smith left for the U.S. on furlough last August. One pupil has passed away. Mrs. Pierson went to visit her in a distant town and was with her when she died.

Hokusei Jo Gakko is ranked higher than any girls' school in this part of Japan except for the Methodist school in Hakodate,⁸ which is two days distant. “The scholarship of the girls is fair and their growth in Christian character is most gratifying” (p. 36).

There are several student societies, meeting weekly “for spiritual profit” and contributing generously to the church and charity. Last year they made and have now contributed 16 yen toward reducing Hokusei's debt. During the past year, one teacher and nine pupils have professed faith in Christ, among them the entire senior class. All but one (forbidden by her father) was baptized on Christmas Day. Large parts of the church and Sabbath school are made of Hokusei students. All but two Sabbath school teachers are either Hokusei faculty or Hokusei pupils (p. 36).

The school building was originally a barn, but now it looks much nicer (p. 35). The current property was bought three years ago and has tripled in value from 2,000 to 6,000 yen.

In the past year, 75 pupils have been in constant attendance, of whom 32 are boarders. Several of the dormitory students receive various amounts of financial aid. About half the pupils are from Sapporo and half from other parts of Hokkaido. They are mainly daughters of farmers, merchants, and owners of fisheries in newly-developing Hokkaido. "The girls are strong in body, bright in mind and independent in spirit" (p. 35).

As for its curriculum, the school is now in a process of dropping the lowest grade each year from its program until the Advanced Course has four years and the Preparatory Course two (pp. 35-36).

1900. Mrs. Pierson provides this year's report. She notes a relatively large number of baptisms, including some older day pupils and a teacher. ". . . The loyalty and devotion of the teachers, and an earnest spirit among the majority of the younger pupils were refreshing" (p. 41). On the negative side, she first describes a problem from inside the school (pp. 41-42).

Otherwise the year was an exceedingly trying one, owing to a spirit of insubordination on the part of a few of the older pupils, culminating in a ' strike ' which, being fed by hostile newspaper articles, and unfortunately countenanced by a few leading Christian men in the community, lasted for two months and seriously affected the good name of the school, the attendance, and the tuition fees. However, in the end, discipline was maintained, the culprits returned, apologized in public, and were allowed to re-enter on the promise of good behavior. The promise was fulfilled, and two of them were among the three who graduated.

By December 1899, Mrs. Pierson is able to report, "An excellent spirit now prevails in the school." A teacher has been baptized, and "at present all the teachers are Christians" (p. 42).

However, another problem has emerged, this one from the Japanese government. The Japan Mission report explains (p. 36).

The present Minister of Education has seriously interfered with the work of our schools by issuing a regulation forbidding any religious instruction in schools having Government recognition. Our Mission determined to dispense with privileges derived from Government recognition, and close the schools, if necessary, rather than give up Bible teaching.

The explanation concludes with the update that the government has relented in the case of one school, and there are hopes for a complete repeal of the directive (p. 36).

The impact of this matter at Hokusei has been significant since August 1899, when the *Kunrii* (or

Educational Department Regulation) was announced. It prohibited “ ‘ religious ceremonies ’ or ‘ religious instruction,’ even ‘ outside the regular course of instruction ’ in schools of primary grade. . .” (p. 42). At Hokusei, the result was a drop in enrollment from 113 to 50 (as of January 3, 1900). There were 12 children in the Primary Department at that point, and “we were obliged either to dismiss them or to cease giving them instruction in the Bible. Of course we chose the former alternative.” Pupils also were required to go before government primary school authorities to pass a qualifying examination, and all new pupils under 14 will have to do the same. The requirement has already frightened off one potential pupil, at least (p. 42).

As of September 1898, Hokusei had a student enrollment of 113 and an average attendance of 75. Three students had graduated, 12 had been baptized, and there were 32 professing Christians (apparently among the pupils, p. 41). After the attendance drop described above, it returned to 70 by end of the academic term in July 1899.

The author states that since its beginning 12 years ago, the school has resisted being overly dependent on outside funding and “stood firmly for self-support” (p. 41). As of now, all the day students pay their tuition, but 6 of 32 boarders are entirely supported by mission funds (p. 41).

Smith returned from furlough “in buoyant health and spirits,” but soon became overworked and “has been struggling with ill-health for the past six weeks” (p. 42). Authorization was given in May 1899 for an assistant to be sent out to serve with her. One has now been found and is expected to arrive for the opening of school next September.

Analysis and Discussion

Each of the preceding summaries is compiled by an unnamed person. Quotations make up a portion of the contents, but the author edits routinely, and mistakes in spelling appear from time to time. She or he was no doubt working at least some of the time from hand-written rather than typed reports, and the possibility of mis-transcribing content was always present. This was especially the case when dealing with content including non-English names and other words, with which the compiler was often unfamiliar, almost certainly. Although the information recorded appears essentially reliable, given the summarizer's limited direct or background knowledge of the content, representing in concise form a wide variety and volume of work no doubt presented a challenge. As a result, it is possible and probably unavoidable that some degree of uncertainty or lack of clarity entered the writing process on occasion.

The 1884 update notes that after leaving Tokyo for health reasons, Sarah Smith came to Sapporo in hopes of finding a less trying climate. The question arises as to why this city, not Hakodate, where the Japan Mission would assign her to work. However, no clear answer is provided. Neither is it made clear whether her physical condition was the only significant factor in her choice to leave

Tokyo. The author states that (p. 10) one strain on missionaries is having to find ways to fit their activities inside the restraints of an extremely tight budget.

The natural expansion of the work calls for more money every year, consequently the estimates for the coming year were rather larger, but, on hearing of the limited state of the treasury at home, they insist on doing their part in economising as far as possible. After carefully examining the estimates already made, cutting down a little here and a little there. . . , they have retrenched so quietly and effectively that they feel assured of getting on comfortably without additional aid.

Though it may have appeared to the writer that the missionaries were managing the budgetary pain quite nicely, it is not clear that the workers actually serving within those limits felt the same about the conditions. It is possible that types of stress such as this also contributed to Smith's decision to situate herself in a different work environment.

In terms of content, the annual reports of the Women's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, New York, resemble quite closely the other sets of documents related to the earlier years of Hokusei Gakuen's history. Their value lies in the detailed and specific nature of the accounts of life at Hokusei Jo Gakko and the corroboration they provide for information found elsewhere, rather than in information on any major events revealed only in these annual updates.

The yearly reports are distinctive in the specifics and details they bring into focus. Each missionary attempts to describe to her supporters at home the daily activities, signs of progress, obstacles in the path, and various other aspects that make up her life in Japan. As she does, she makes an effort to put a human face on the programs, facts, and figures she is also reporting. Sarah Smith's description in the 1891 report of the discouragement she felt at struggling to communicate Christian faith, and the fulfillment she felt when even one person demonstrated he had found deep meaning in it, is one example of the personal touch evident in these annual updates. Her adventure in learning to knit in order to be able to teach knitting (the 1892 update) is another, as is the account of Mrs. Pierson's visiting a Hokusei student as she is dying (1899). In the particulars of the stories passed along here are opportunities for a more complete and thought-provoking understanding of Hokusei Gakuen's past.

Conclusion

Continued progress in advancing the rights of women in the U.S., Japan, and elsewhere during this time period was leading to an increasing recognition of the need for formal education of females as a foundational aspect of developing a strong society. The legal right to vote had not yet been gained and actual opportunities for paid employment after graduation remained dauntingly few. Nevertheless, the continued cooperation between Hokusei's female educators and those who backed them in the U.S., together with girls from around Hokkaido and the families and others who

supported them, contributed during these years to the eventual achieving of the larger goal of equal treatment under just laws.

Part II of this article will present the continuation of the story told here of Hokusei Jo Gakko's development in connection with the Women's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, New York. It will be aimed at introducing the way that the Hokusei community continued to form as the school moved through the first two decades of the new century, and the last two of the New York Board, still linked closely to its supporters in the U.S.

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[Notes]

¹See the 1920 report, pp. 6-7.

²This school in Tokyo, also called Shinsakae Jo Gakko, where Smith will arrive this year, will later be combined with another in Bancho and formed into Joshi Gakuin (see 1890 report).

³It is *Elder* in the report, an apparent mistake. Misses Eldred and Gulick will resign in order to be married, according to the 1881 Japan Mission report to the PCUSA General Assembly (p. 80). Mrs. True has moved to begin new work in Kanazawa, the 1880 report to the same General Assembly states (p. 68). So Smith apparently enters a work environment in considerable transition.

⁴This will be the organization within the New York Board which is tasked with providing Smith's support throughout the years under consideration.

⁵Common in mission work in this era, a Bible woman was a lady from inside the local culture who

worked with a minister and did not have an official title such as pastor or missionary, yet performed many of the tasks necessary in conducting mission activities. She was sometimes called a female evangelist.

⁶No information here makes clear the discrepancy between this number and the seven from Hakodate whom Smith lists in *Sumisu-Sensei Nikki* [スミス先生日記, *Koumu Nenshi*, 校務年誌, 1887].

⁷George P. Pierson, another member of the PCUSA Japan Mission, came to Hokkaido soon after marrying Ida Goepp in 1895 and began evangelical work. They continued serving around Hokkaido, including providing support in various capacities for Hokusei Jo Gakko, until 1928.

⁸From this school, today's Iai Joshi Women's Academy has grown.

