

Introduction to *Sumisu Koumu Nenshi* (Sarah C. Smith's Annual Report on School Affairs)

Of all the existing records of the formation and development of Hokusei Jo Gakko (North Star Girls' School, 北星女学校), from which grew today's Hokusei Gakuen, the most complete and definitive single set of information on its earliest years is *Sumisu-Sensei Nikki* (Miss Smith's journal, スミス先生日記). Though this is the title hand-written in Japanese on the hardbound work's first title page, it is more commonly called *Sumisu Koumu Nenshi* (Smith's annual report on school affairs, スミス校務年誌) or simply *Koumu Nenshi*. It consists essentially of the educational ideal of the school's founder, Sarah C. Smith, then a year-by-year account of its progress from 1887 to 1909. She paints a fairly vivid picture of life at Hokusei Jo Gakko. The book also provides a representative example of Christian educational work conducted in the late 1800s and early 1900s by the Japan Mission of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA).

Hokusei Gakuen University's Smith Mission Center Steering Committee members have scanned and transcribed the *Koumu Nenshi* originals in an effort to facilitate a deeper understanding of Hokusei Gakuen's historical roots. They are intended as a supplement to the English transcription of *Koumu Nenshi* in the second volume of *Hokusei Gakuen 100-Year History (Hyakunenshi, Hokusei Gakuen, 1990)* and the Japanese *Koumu Nenshi* translation by Kikuo Ishihara (1994), which are also presented here. Hopefully the combination of the originals and these various representations will make possible a more thorough and accurate understanding of the story Sarah Smith tells. For further information, refer to the article on *Koumu Nenshi* in 北星論集 (*Hokusei Review, The School of Social Welfare*), Volume 48, pages 1-19.

A few points regarding the Mission Center transcriptions require noting. First, due to the lack of clarity in the cursive handwriting and at times inaccurate spelling in the original *Koumu Nenshi* lists of Japanese student and teacher names, the Smith Mission Center transcriptions of those lists are based not strictly on Smith's records but other materials, including the Japanese *Koumu Nenshi* translation, which references sources including *Hyakunenshi* and the Hokusei Gakuen Girls' Junior and Senior High School Alumni Association membership list. Second, certain words scattered throughout the book have been underlined and notations or translations added in the margins. However, because it is not clear which of these markings were part of the originals and which added later, they have been excluded from the transcriptions. Third, whereas the Japanese translation and *Hyakunenshi* English transcription correct minor mistakes, provide only initials of people rather than full names in some cases, and skip words which seem unnecessary, the Mission Center version is arranged as closely as possible to the format of the originals, blemishes and all. The only notable exception is that the lists of names, often arranged in two or three columns in the original, for convenience's sake have been set in a simple, one-item-per-line format here.

The *Koumu Nenshi* records present a unique set of facts and figures necessary for a thorough understanding of Hokusei Gakuen's formation and development. Smith's book provides an essentially very reliable and coherent set of data on the school's constituent groups and the conditions in which they studied and taught, as well as the policies, programs, and personalities which helped give Hokusei its character and spirit. These words of the school system's founder help supply a useful perspective on the journey this school system has made as Hokusei Gakuen University celebrates its 50th Anniversary and Hokusei Gakuen its 125th.

