

[title page]

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[pp. 25-28]

HOKKAIDO

Leo C. Lake

The personnel of the Hokkaido Station remains for the most part as it was last year : Dr. and Mrs. Pierson, Miss Smith, Miss Monk, Miss Evans, and Miss McCrory, the changes being the absence of Miss Davidson in America, and the coming of Rev. and Mrs. Lake as recruits.

Educational Work

The educational work in Hokkaido is becoming more important all the time and it is hard for the missionary schools to keep pace with the material growth of the island. The equipment is not as good as it should be and many of the teachers are overworked. Hokkusei Jo Gakko is doing all in its power to Christianize the young women and to prepare them to meet the demands of the day. Miss Monk says, " The year has been marked by an unusual number of

anxieties and sorrows. To an institution that has always practiced rigid economy, the constant advance in prices could not but bring great anxiety. The first year's use of a new heating system means its own series of problems and annoyances. With gratitude we record that the fiscal year closed in March with all bills met, and that, on the whole, classrooms and dormitories were warmer last winter than ever before.

“ The absence of the matron from December to March laid on the shoulders of younger teachers unaccustomed responsibilities and burdens, which were made heavier by the long illness of the school cook. In February we were saddened by the sudden death of the wife of our faithful janitor. As she was temporarily acting as school cook, the shock was the greater. Her daughter is a special student of our third year class.

“ Three teachers were ill, and two have been obliged to rest for a time, Miss Davidson in America and Miss Nakagawa at her home in the country. Several sporadic cases of contagious and other illnesses among the students brought their own anxieties, happily soon relieved.

“ The Thirtieth Anniversary celebration, held June ninth last, was signalized by fine weather, a large attendance, a well-executed program, and a notable address by President S. Sato on “ The Higher Education of Women”. Suitable recognition was also made of ten year's service by two teachers and twice that period by two others. It was a day to make glad all friends of the school, and especially the founder, Miss Smith, to whom many congratulatory addresses were made.

“ The following day came the sad news of the death at Custer, South Dakota, of Midzuyo Takahashi. The attack of pneumonia in January had been followed by tuberculosis, which ran its swift course until, on June eighth, the brave sufferer was at rest. Almost her last words were, “ Jesus is good”.

“ Her brief life was rich in influence, both in Japan and in America. Scores of students in four schools were deeply affected by her spirituality, her friendliness, her faithfulness to every task, and her patient suffering. The letters received from America all testify to the large place she made for herself in the love and respect of teachers, students, nurses, and doctors. Her life and death form a deathless link between the two lands, and thus fulfill the primary purpose in going abroad.

“ Miss Kunii returned from America in August, full of gratitude for the loving care lavished upon her friend, and happy to be back in her own land after five year’s [*sic*] absence. After several months of good work in the school she in [*sic*] now fulfilling the technical requirements for obtaining a government teacher’s certificate.

“ With the new school year five new teachers have been added to the faculty, two of whom hold certificates. The required number of teachers, and a minimum amount of apparatus having been secured, other preparations for making application for recognition are now being hurried. We hope thus to prevent such an exodus of Juniors and others as took place this spring because of the lack of recognition.

“ An entering class of forty-six gave us, on May first, an enrollment of one hundred sixty-three. Although only twenty nine of these are Christians at least forty others have indicated special interest. The eleven graduates in March were all Christians, but the new Senior class is thus far only half Christian.

“ We have a large task before us this year. Our prayer was that the Lord would give us only so large an increase as we could influence for Him. Add your prayers to ours for these many, away from Him.

“ All of the teachers along with their teaching are doing some outside work, which they barely mention or may omit it altogether. Miss Smith is working up such a good Sunday School at Toyohira that it is hoped it will soon develop into a church. Miss Smith states, “ I am glad to report an increased attendance at the Toyohira Sunday School where the average has doubled during the past year.

“ The attendance at the semi-monthly evening service for adults, in the same place, has been fair, averaging fourteen. I have several admirers there among the old people, because the distance from the school is about two miles, and the streets rough, and I can walk it twice on Saturday evening, again on Sunday and and [*sic*] be ready for other work on the following day. One old lady has become a devout worshipper of the “ Sunday School God”, tho [*sic*] she yet hesitates to call him Father.

“ Attending the twentieth anniversary celebration of the Gillett Chapel in Muroran, which was followed by three days of aggressive evangelistic services, it was pleasing to find the new evangelist so earnest and efficient, and at each service a crowd which the house could not accommodate.

“ Miss Monk and I had the pleasure of attending an anniversary dinner, not long since, given by some of my former Normal School pupils of thirty years ago. (See cut on page 25). They are now all men in middle life, holding responsible positions. One who is Shi—cho—cho (county supervisor) has promised his assistance in procuring recognition for Hokusei when we apply for [sic] it.

“ I still do a little teaching in the school, but hope in the recent [sic] future to be free for purely evangelistic work”.

Now along comes “ Betty ” Evans with her broad smile and gives you a common scene in the class room, when she has her beginning class in English. “ I am still teaching, ‘ This is a fine day,—I see a man,—I have a cat ’ etc., in Hokusei Jo Gakko, (we only have magazine pictures of men and cats to show pupils—none are allowed on the campus) trying to run a Sunday School and the City Y.W.C.A.

“ The school report I shall leave to Miss Monk. My Fukuinkwan Sunday School is not nearly as large as it was, but I am glad to report that the ones who do come, [sic] come regularly. We do not have the three hundred around Christmas, but about a hundred the year round. I am certain there is opposition. While calling in our district one day a girl told me she wanted to come to the Christian Sunday School but her parents and the priests made her go to the temple Sunday School which met at the same hour.

“ At the Y.W.C.A. special spring meeting we found that during the past year thirty three new members had joined. The membership was almost doubled. The meetings last year were excellent and well attended. The Koto Jo Gakko Bible Class is flourishing under the leadership of Miss Kobayashi a Methodist helper. The other two school Bible classes are not so well attended. The active opposition of the Koto Jo Gakko principal seems to have stopped. A little incident here, I think, would be interesting. This very principal asked his class one day, to whom he was lecturing on “ ethics,” whether there was anyone there who knew about the Christian religion. One of our Y.W. girls, whose mother is a member of our church, raised her hand and he said to her, “ What place has love in Christianity?” She answered, “ It is founded on love.” The principal said, “ Yes, in all history there has been no character like that of Christ, no one who has shown such unselfish, pure love for mankind.” The girls were amazed and our Y.W. girls overjoyed. Christmas time the girls made over a hundred bags, and asked the

ladies of the churches to fill each bag with a sho of rice. Those were distributed Christmas morning among the poorest of the poor. We were rather dismayed afterwards though, to hear that some of the bags were brought to a pastor's house to be refilled.

“ Not long ago I attended two funerals within a few days of each other. The contrast was startling. One was that of a Christian young man, the son of Dr. Miyabe of the college who had died suddenly in Chosen. Just before his death he wrote across his photo “ I am not dead but living ” and had it sent to his home. His remains were brought back to Sapporo and the funeral was a wonderful service. Through it all there was a spirit of love and hope. Speeches of his short but active Christian life were given by members of the college faculty, alumni, the church, and his Sunday School class. The other was a Buddhist funeral of the wife of our school servant. Oji San is a Christian at heart but his elder brother, the head of the family, insisted on his own kind of service. I think I never will get over the horror of it. The meaningless chants, the bells, the audible whispering of the unsympathetic audience, most of whom had come out of curiosity, the burning of the incense. No words of comfort. It made me feel more than ever before the need of more prayer, more power, more witnessing, more active service on my part toward the people of this country.”

[pp. 32-34]

Mrs. Lake writes, “ My service during this first year in Hokkaido Station has been small and truly that of a recruit. My first care has been the establishing of a new home, the training of new servants, and the great joy of a new baby. This, with a language teacher each day, has helped to fill my hours. Relative to the new home, has been, naturally, Japanese callers who are interested in every thing American. They are most enthusiastic over foreign embroidering, which I find they have learned to do quite well. It interested me to see them looking over the patterns I had brought out with me, and to hear their exclamations—“ Ah kore wa—seed stitch !—Ah, chiisai scallop ! ” They completely forgot their usual dignity, and snatched them up with the same avidity American women do at a bargain sale. The little wife of one of the pastors took home ten patterns !

“ I have also had the pleasure and privilege of conducting a class in Theory of Music at Hokusei Jo Gakko, and in teaching organ to

four of the Japanese teachers, who, during the winter, gave a very creditable recital. A little teaching in piano and voice has been a pleasure. The late arrival of our piano has postponed a good deal of work I had planned. The university quartette, and another at the church, are in formation. On Sundays I have been trying to adapt pipe organ music to a pathetic little organ at the church, which actually trembles with fright, and doesn't know a four foot flute stop from a thirty two foot Bourdon. The need of a two manual reed organ with pedal bass is almost imperative. Sapporo is an educational center with a marked degree of appreciation and training in good music, so that there is a wonderful opportunity for serious work, especially among the students."

Mr. Lake quotes as follows : " My work in Hokkaido so far this year has been rather small, for most of my time and energy have been spent in trying to learn the Japanese Language. Under the guidance of Dr. Rowland of the Congregational Board, the Correspondence Course of the Tokyo Language School has been interesting and profitable. I have found it hard to attend to business, for in Japan one is not always master of his own time. My mornings are usually free for study, while I am interrupted in the afternoon ; but these interruptions have given me a chance to practise what I have studied.

" When we first came to Sapporo the Hokusei Jo Gakko teachers opened their generous hearts and cared for us until our home was settled. The one member of the Station I have been thrown with most in my work is Dr. Pierson. On the three or four tours I made with him I have always found him a most delightful companion. He never thought of his own comfort but was always watchiug [*sic*] out for me because I was a tenderfoot. This has been ideal, for it has given me the practical along with the theoretical, and has made me more eager than ever to learn Japanese. On these tours I have preached a number of times, and used my stereopticon slides some. While the evangelistic work is most enticing the work among the University students is also of equal importance. Sapporo is the intellectual center of the island, as Otaru is the business center. The University with its eight hundred students will be greatly increased as soon as the big medical school is finished. Out of the eight hundred men now in school possibly only fifty attend the Protestant churches. Think of the other seven hundred and fifty who come not only from all parts of this island but from all Japan ! At present

there is no one missionary who is working distinctly among the University students, although some have English Bible classes. It seems to me a wonderful opportunity, for who can tell but that many young men may be induced to enter the ministry. In the Bible class for the University men I have organized, much interest is shown. They are wide awake young men, and enter heartily into the hour of “ stunts ” and games that follows the lesson. I have also had two English classes each week one at the Y.M.C.A. and one at the Fukuin Kwan.

“ Whether in the University work or out on the field Mrs. Lake has been a wonderful help to me. Although at present our permanent location has not been decided, yet we are doing what we can, trying to lay a foundation now upon which we hope to build a structure later. The opportunities of the Hokkaido are boundless. Pray for us that money and workers may be sent so that the island may be won for Christ in this day and generation.”