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Report
of
The Japan Mission
of the
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

As embodied in the annual
reports of the thirteen
stations in the Empire

and compiled by

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HOKKAIDO STATION

PERSONNEL

The members of the station have regretfully seen six of their number leave for America during the year. Mr. and Mrs. Whitener of Asahigawa, Miss McCrory of Otaru, and Mrs. Lake with baby Ruth, went on furlough in August ; while Miss Lillian Evans, having completed her promised year of service in Hokkusei Jo Gakko, left Japan in November.

But there was great rejoicing at the return of Miss Davidson in August, Miss Smith in December and Mrs. Lake and Ruth in April. Miss Davidson finds it a joy to be with the Japanese girls again. Miss Smith says that though she enjoyed her year of furlough in the home land, every day seeming a golden link in a chain of days created by the kindness of friends and sympathizers, yet she is glad to get back to the work to which she felt so surely called forty years ago this summer, and to the people she has learned to love. Mrs.

Lake reports, “ It was a great pleasure to speak many times while at home, thus giving information of and stimulating interest in the work, especially that of Hokkaido.”

EVANGELISTIC

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Sunday Schools

Miss Smith’s Sunday School and stated preaching service in the Toyo Hira suburb, were carried on during her absence by Miss Lillian Evans and Miss Monk. There had been one misfortune : a fire had burned her Sunday School organ, mats, charts, shelves for sandals and other equipment. However she adds, “ The children for Sunday School and the people for evening meeting, are still there, and present a very much needed work to be done.” By a recent transfer a small cottage has just been secured which will serve as a center for work in one neighborhood.

On the opposite side of Sapporo, a little Sunday School has been started by Miss Evans in a college Professor’s home and has an attendance of between thirty and thirty-five, mostly professors’ children, many of whom have never attended a church. One family in the community is extremely opposed and the Sunday work of the grandfather is to keep one small boy from going ; —nevertheless, he has managed to get as far as the door of this school several times. We often hear of the reports the children take home to their parents. One little girl repeats everything she has heard, and nearly always accurately ; but once when the lesson was on God’s love for little children (and how even grown folks must be like little children before they can enter Heaven) the little girl told her mother that probably *she* couldn’t go to Heaven but maybe her baby could.”

Miss Davidson has continued to oversee the Sunday School at Zeni Bako. She says:—“ The Japanese teacher who has been the stand-by for years having been married, a recent Hokusei graduate has taken her class, proving herself a most acceptable teacher [*sic*] for the older girls, and holding an unusually regular attendance of twenty or more. A new teacher for the tiny tots, a Hokusei and a Joshi Gakuin graduate, now a teacher in Hokusei, has greatly improved the singing not only in the Sunday School, but also in the evening meetings, where a dozen or more of the older Sunday

School girls form a sort of choir. At Christmas, Testaments were give [*sic*] to the older children, and these have been brought and used in Sunday School and evening meetings.”

Mr. Lake’s university Bible class, in which Mrs. Lake helps with the music, and the Sapporo student Y.W.C.A., with Miss Evans’ help, are doing their “ bit ” among the students. One Koto Jo Gakko (Girls’ High School) class numbers twenty-seven at present.

General Impressions

Dr. Pierson writes as his general impressions of the year :—
“ While Japan in the ‘ upper ’ circles may have made up her mind to hold the place she has won for herself among the leading powers as a non-Christian nation, yet Christian sympathy with and prayer for the bereaved, disappointed and lonely individuals, melt down through the ice shells of custom and prejudice to the responsive human heart. We are in constant danger of being side-tracked from the main line of personally getting the Gospel to the ‘ every creature ’ of the nation. There are not wanting signs of new purpose in individual work for individuals. *Our work is significant only in so far as it is Spiritual.*”

EDUCATIONAL

Hokusei Jo Gakko

Hokusei Jo Gakko, (Northern Star Girls’ School), has this year experienced at least four superlatives. (1) The largest class in its history, twenty-eight in all, was graduated in March. The longest list of applicants ever received necessitated, for the first time, an entrance examination. (2) In April welcome was given to the largest number of new students ever received at one time. There were ninety-three regular and five special new students in the first year, besides seven in other classes. The unprecedented enrolment of April 1919, was surpassed by thirty percent, in the April, 1920, enrolment of 260. Seventy-eight of these live in the dormitory.

The increase is due in part to the large amount of press notice in connection with receiving Government Recognition, in part to the recognition itself, and in part to the general prosperity of farming communities.

Two other superlatives were less happy. (3) Nine changes among faculty members are far too many. The much-loved matron of over

twenty years' standing resigned in July, to make her home with her only daughter in Muroran. At the same time another most faithful teacher resigned to enter a home of her own. In August, Mrs. Lake, who had been doing invaluable chorus work with the students, went to America. She was followed, in November, by Miss Lillian Evans, whose personality and teaching will long be remembered.

(4) No fewer than seven teachers were absent for weeks during the fall and winter on account of illness, four of whom were obliged finally to resign. One teacher who had resigned in March (1919) on account of ill-health, died in September. An unusual number of students also were ill, and three died, two from influenza. A large number of deaths among the graduates has been reported to the school during the winter. It is to be hoped that such an experience need not soon be repeated. Happily, Miss Evans and Miss Monk kept in health.

A graduate of a dozen years ago, now a widow, was Providentially secured as matron. Her gracious Christian character and household wisdom are making her a power not only in the dormitory but in the entire school. Moreover, in August Miss Davidson returned to Japan, improved in health, to take up work again in Hokusei. And in December Miss Smith, the loved and honored Principal Emeritus, was welcomed back. Yielding to the urgent request of the Board of Directors she has taught two classes ever since. Two other earnest Christian teachers joined the faculty this spring.

Other Changes

To accommodate the increased number in the school, the science room is in use as a regular class-room, the teachers' room has been exchanged for a smaller one, and two large dormitory rooms have been converted into a class-room. Four smaller rooms above the lavatory have been fitted up for the dormitory use. Other alterations have also become necessary, while floor coverings, paper doors, and walls which had been neglected during war years, all required attention.

A high wind sent flat great sections of the fence, that had to be propped up temporarily. Thorough-going repairs would cost more than was on hand, while lesser repairs would cost too much for the barely two or three years of satisfaction guaranteed [*sic*].

The spiritual side of the work has not been forgotten. In addition to the usual Bible classes, Christian Endeavor and other prayer-meetings, for several months the pastor held a weekly class for inquirers at the school. About twenty attended this class. Then in January, after a short series of preparatory prayer-meetings by Christian teachers and pupils, special services were held for three days. Attendance was voluntary but classes were shortened so that all might feel free to come. At the last meeting a quiet appeal was made for decisions. Twenty-six responded. Sixteen others pledged themselves to press forward towards the Light. Three of the ten hitherto non-Christian Seniors were among the number. One other made her decision later. Ten more belong to the new senior class (numbering twenty-one). Of this class fifteen are now Christians, and five others more or less definitely committed. The one not yet committed comes from a Christian family. Of the twenty-four students who during the year have joined the church, fourteen were influenced by these meetings.

One earlier baptism was of a doctor's wife, who for several years had been taking piano lessons at the school,—always with a Bible lesson accompanying. She and her husband were received into the church together, just before he sailed for a two year's study abroad. Happier looking people were never seen than they two were.

The Future

The five year program approved by the Mission includes new land, either supplementary to or instead of the present site, with buildings adequate for a school of four or five hundred students in the classes (two for each school year). An agricultural and Domestic Science Department in the not distant future is a dream of some of the friends of the School.

The new appropriations have given the courage to go forward, and the stimulus to do better work. They are a symbol and earnest of the Divine appropriations only waiting to be drawn upon, by faith, for every need. Who will join in making *available* the "Riches in Glory in Christ Jesus" to the nearly three hundred teachers and students now gathered in these halls, to their homes, and to the other hundreds who shall follow *them*?

Some Contrasts

Miss Monk visited all of the Mission stations on the main island except Wakayama and Hiroshima, in her six weeks of Outlook Committee service in the fall. In March Mr. Lake visited the West Coast, going as far as Wakayama. Both were impressed over and over again with the difference between the south and Hokkaido, with the violent opposition, and the relatively meagre response to the Christian message, be it ever so faithfully taught. As Mr. Lake points out, Hokkaido is “ The West ” of Japan. The people are not bound down by old customs ; the Buddhists and Shintoists are not so strong in their opposition ; the churches all have women officers ; and in some places mixed choirs or even the family pew is found on Sunday Morning. People give generously : in one place practically all the members are tithing. Sapporo, a city of about one hundred thousand people, has six self-supporting churches, about two thousand Christians, and one of the five universities in Japan. In this university over twenty-five percent of the faculty is Christian. Where else in Japan can this be duplicated? ” In his opinion, Hokkaido will be the place in Japan where the greatest Christian growth will be made in the next twenty years.