A HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF

THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

TOHOKU IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY

WHAT AMERICA HAS DONE FOR A JAPANESE GOVERNMENT COLLEGE

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The friendship between America and Japan owes much to the work and influence of American educators in Japan. The fact that this friendship—all assertions to the contrary notwithstanding—grows warmer year by year, is one proof that these American educators have been doing their work well. To Japan, they represent America, and Japan has gained a fairer, kindlier conception of America through acquaintance with these teachers than through all her study of American history.

There is one School in Japan today which stands pre-eminently illustrative of this truth. It is the Agricultural College of the Tohoku Imperial University at Sapporo. This School was organized and developed by American teachers, but always for Japan and the Japanese. The Americans should know something of the achievement in the East of their statesmanlike educator, William Smith Clark, sometime president of Amherst College, Massachusetts, for his name is written

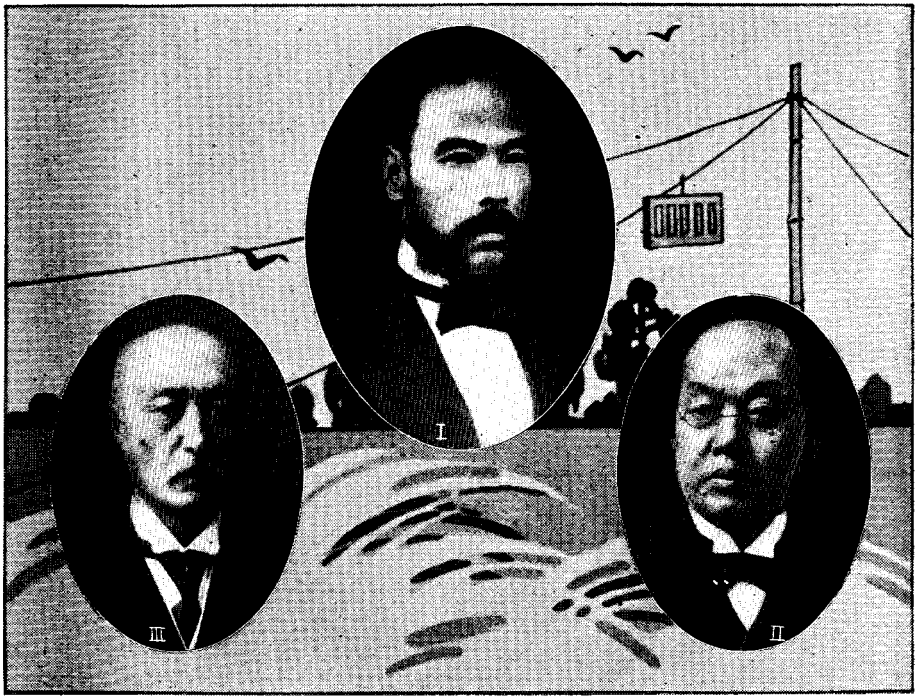
The establishment of the Agricultural College at Sapporo came about quite indirectly, for it was no part of the Government's plan at that time to place an agricultural institution, or in fact any school whatever in the northland. Of all unpromising sections in the Empire, the northern island seemed the least worthy of a school. It was an unknown waste land, vaguely called Yezo, inhabited by a race of savage called the Ainu, and believed to be unfit for any sort of cultivation or settlement. It was at this time that the first fruits of America's leadership became apparent, for with the coming of the Americans, Japan was taught to know her own territory.

The Emperor, Mutsuhito, appointed as Vice-Governor of Yezo an able and far-sighted General Kiyotaka Kuroda, who took his post in 1870. This public-spirited official soon proved the wisdom of the appointment, for he went immediately about the work of exploring and opening up his province, thereafter known as Hokkaido. He found that so far from being barren and waste, the soil was fertile, and the country immensely rich in natural resources. The greatest

need was for development—development that required not merely men, but wisdom. General Kuroda himself did not feel equal to the undertaking, but he had an idea where wisdom might be gained. There was one country which held the attention of the world just then in the development of frontier lands. This was America.

General Kuroda induced his government to send abroad some promising young men to be fitted for the all important work of colonization. And yet with the intuition of a born master, he felt that the person most in need of proper equipment was himself. Hence it was that in the fall of 1870, General Kuroda, *de facto* Governor of Hokkaido, proceeded to America to learn the lessons of colonization. The western states were just being opened up, and the active statesman studied diligently to discover the secrect of America's success. He found it, and in July of the following year, he returned to his homeland carrying the secret with him.

In a memorial which he drew up and presented to His Imperial Majesty, he emphasized three things. The first, he noted that colonization was only successful



Founder, President and Director

1. Late General Count K. Kuroda, Governor of Hokkaido, Who founded the College in 1876
2. Honorable T. Hojyo, President of the Tohoku Imperial University
3. Prof. S. Sato, Ph. D, Nogakuhakushi, Director of the College

under trained leadership; he advised his people to secure the services of the best leader to be found, from whatever source, and at any cost. Second, he saw that the school-house always followed the explorer and the settler, an observation which confirmed his own strong conviction; he urged his government to establish a school whose special function should be to train young settlers. And third was the place of elevation and respect which is held in America by women; he recommended that a number of young girls be sent to America for training, to return later on and become mothers in the infant colony.

All of his recommendations were carried out. The industrial leader upon whom the choice fell was General Horace Capron, the Commissioner of Agriculture at Washington, D. C.

A little technical school was started in Tokyo to train young men for the work of colonization of Hokkaido.

General Capron, with the title of Commissioner and Adviser to the Colonial Office, took up his work in Hokkaido at once. He introduced American crops

and machines, and he had brought over a number of American stock. But most important of all, he seconded the efforts of General Kuroda toward the establishment of a colonial training school. In his preliminary report, drawn up in January of 1872, shortly after his arrival, he dwelt upon this feature. He wrote, "It should be the endeavor of this Government to establish by every possible effort scientific, systematic and practical agriculture. In no way can this be done more effectively or economically than by connecting with the experimental lots at this place (Tokyo) and also with the farm at Sapporo, institutions at which shall be taught all the different branches of agricultural science. These institutions should have well equipped laboratories, and should be supplied with professors of acknowledged ability in their several specialties."

This recommendation, so exactly in accord with General Kuroda's own plan, determined the course of action. The little school which had been started in Tokyo was transferred to Sapporo, and the Japanese Minister at Washington was asked to secure the services of another leader, an educator, who should be competent to

Reading Room of the Library

take entire charge of an agricultural school, and establish it as a high grade institution. Such men were rare at that time, even in America, and the one man who met the requirement was William Smith Clark, President of the Massachusetts College of Agriculture at Amherst.

It was out of the question, of course, to think of taking Dr. Clark away from Amherst, but finally it was agreed that if Amherst would loan its president for only one year, Japan would thereafter look elsewhere. It was thought that if Dr. Clark could lay the foundations, other men might be able to erect the superstructure. And so in fact it came about.

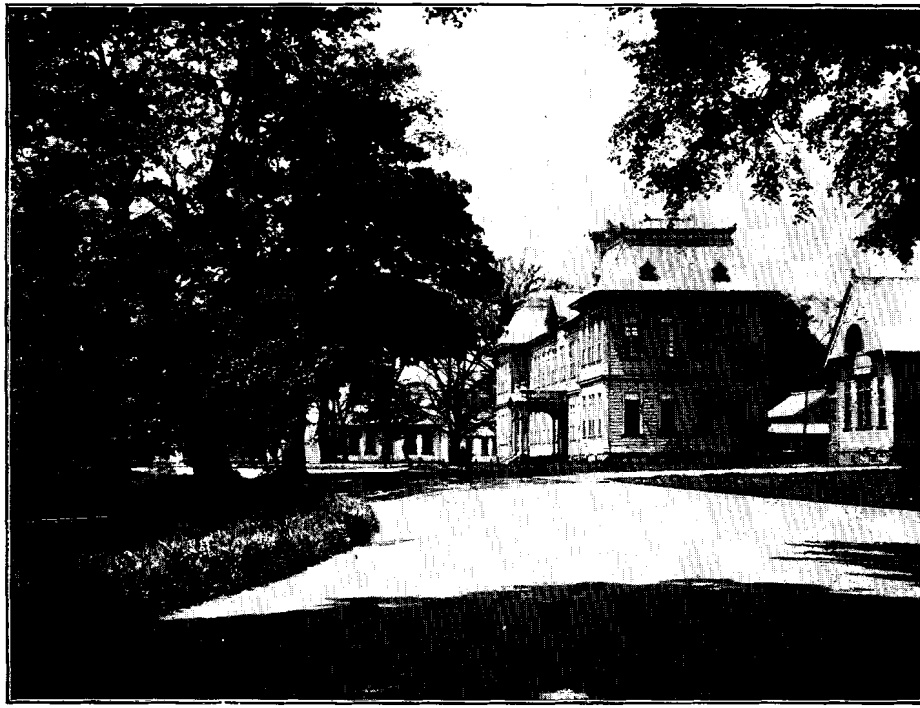
In the summer of 1876, William Smith Clark, Ph. D., L.L.D., with his two American assistants, came to Sapporo. A university, as once defined by President James Garfield, may be "a student seated at one end of a log, Mark Hopkins at the other." The beginnings of this school in Sapporo were scarcely more pretentious. But it was a real university, for Dr. Clark was there as a teacher. He immediately began the work of revising the curriculum, outlining courses, direct-

ing the equipment, and bringing the school up to the standard of a good American college.

The faculty as appointed consisted of Hon. Hirotake Dsusho in the position of Director, William S. Clark as President and as Director of the College Farm, William Wheeler, C.E., as Professor of Mathematics and Civil Engineering, David P. Penhallow, B.S., as Professor of Botany and Chemistry, Seitaro Hori, Secretary, and K. Yoshida as Farm Overseer.

On the fourteenth day of August, 1876, the school was ready for work, and opened auspiciously under the name "Sapporo Agricultural College". Only twenty-four students were enrolled in the first class, but Dr. Clark was not the man to count results by the number of students enrolled. With a prophetic appreciation for strategic opportunities, Dr. Clark began the instruction of those twenty-four Japanese boys with all of the zeal and enthusiasm which he had given to Amherst—perhaps even more.

A single instance of his work will reveal the spirit of his teaching. General



Forestry Building

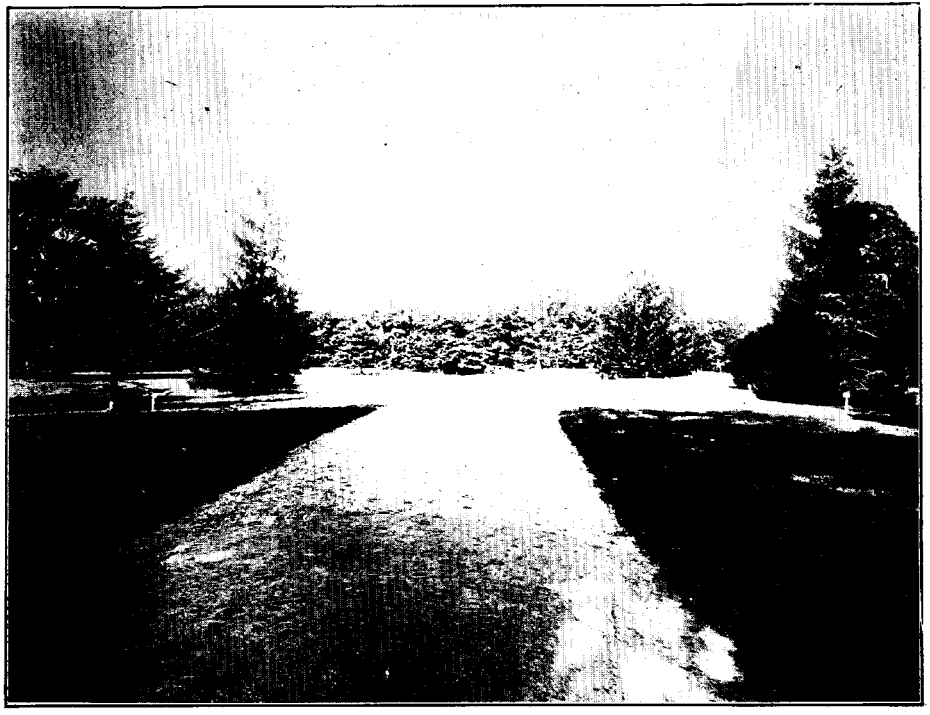
Kuroda was anxious that ethics should be taught in the school, and in an interview with Dr. Clark, he expressed this desire. "Certainly", Dr. Clark replied, "I shall be glad to teach ethics, but the only ethics that I know is Christian ethics, so if I teach this subject, I shall have to teach Christianity." Since the institution was a government school, it was felt that it would be too great a departure from the established order to allow Christianity to be taught directly in the classroom, and General Kuroda demurred. "Very well," Dr. Clark responded, with his usual gracious firmness, "I fear then that I cannot instruct the boys in ethics."

The outcome of the matter was that Dr. Clark was allowed to teach his ethics in his own way, supplementing his work in the classroom with a Bible study class in his own home. The faith of the teacher became the faith of his students, and before the year was ended, ten of those boys had become Christians. Bishop Harris, who was then a young American Missionary at Hakodate, loves to tell of how he journeyed across the wilds and came up to Sapporo to officiate at the baptism of these young men. This Christian influence was so strong that it continued to

win converts among the students long after Dr. Clark had departed.

A year is a short time in the mere number of days, but measured by experience, it was infinitely long in the lives of those students at Sapporo. The day of farewell came at last, and Dr. Clark was ready to ride away on horse back. His sad-hearted pupils followed him for a little distance along the trail across the plains, and then as he left them, he spoke one parting sentence. "Boys, be ambitious!" It has become proverbial in the school. "Boys, be ambitious!" Be ambitious not for money or for selfish aggrandisement, nor for that evanescent thing which men call fame. Be ambitious for knowledge, for righteousness, and for the uplift of your people. Be ambitious for the attainment of all that a man ought to be. This was the message of William Smith Clark. And the boys who heard that call never forgot the mandate. One of them is the Director of that same College today.

Dr. Clark's two assistants remained, and the Presidency of the College was given to Professor Wheeler. In addition to the performance of his academic



A Part of Botanic Garden

duties, this able engineer also rendered valuable services to the Government in surveying and road making. Professor Penhallow too performed something more than his required work, for he improved the process of tanning in Hokkaido, and he devoted himself zealously to investigating the textil fibers produced on the Island. Another American educator had come to join the faculty, Professor William Penn Brooks, B.S.,from Amherst.

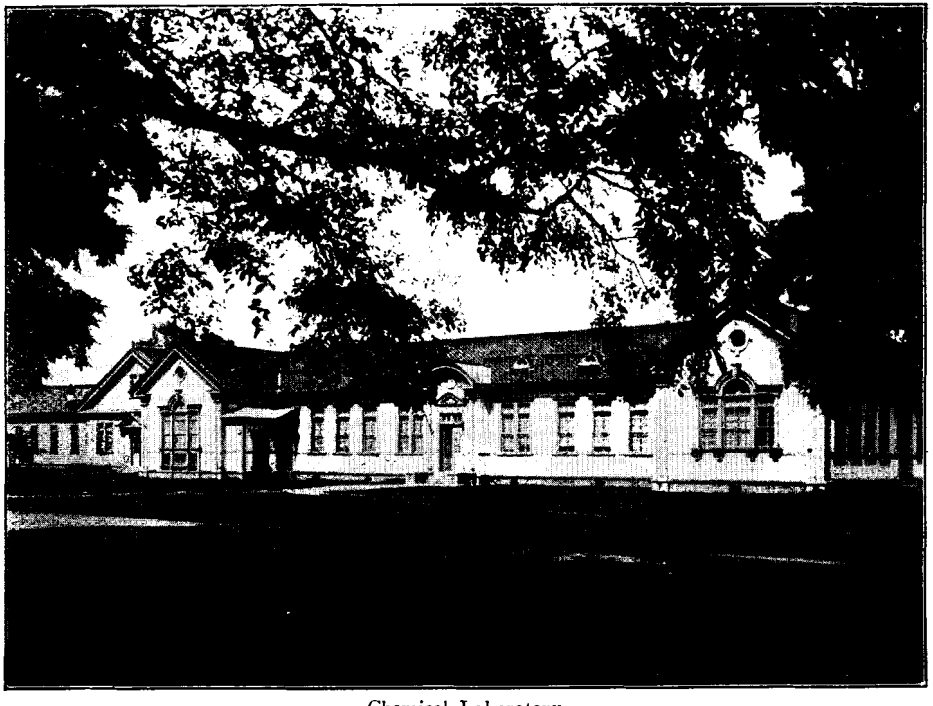
He succeeded Dr. Clark as Superintendent of the College Farm, and took his place in the institution as Professor of Agriculture. He remained altogether more than ten years at the College, leaving it at last only to return to the United States to become Professor of Agriculture at his Alma Mater.

With so strong an American influence, it was little wonder that the city of Sapporo grew up on American lines. The streets were marked out wide and straight, many of the buildings were substantial structures of American pattern, the farms of the surrounding country had American crops and machines, American ideas were in favor, and the whole section became in effect an experiment

station for American civilization.

Because of limited appropriations the number of students who could enroll in the school was at first limited to fifty. But the Government was determined to make full investment and reap full harvest in relation to those fifty. The students were chosen by a severe competitive examination, and all successful candidates at government expense, money being allowed them for board, room, clothing and stationery. In return the students agreed to serve in the Colonial office for five years after graduation, and to make their homes during that time in Hokkaido. The inference was that after becoming thus saturated with the colonial atmosphere and spirit, the young men would voluntarily decide to invest their lives permanently in the colonial territory. This inference proved correct.

But there was another influence at work in Sapporo which proved equally strong. This was the influence of the American teachers. They gave to those young learners a vision of the civilization across the waters, and opened up a horizon which included the wonderland of America. The result of this influence was



Chemical Laboratory

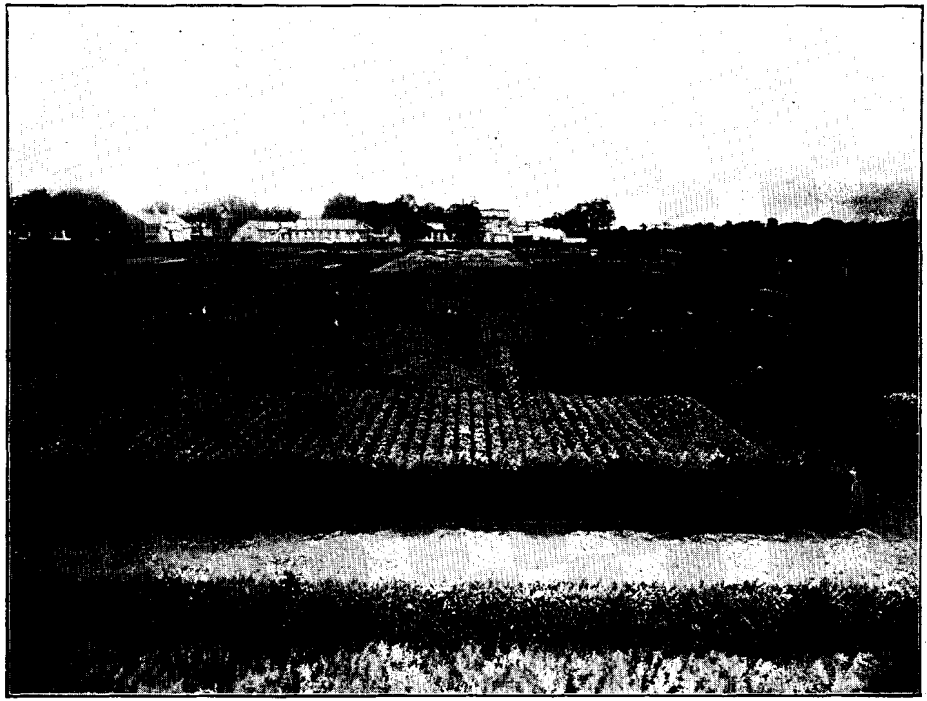
that every graduate formed a resolution that sooner or later he would go to America to study. The list of graduates who actually did carry out this resolution includes many names of men well known today among the leaders of Japan. Two of them, at least, Dr. Inazo Nitobe and Dr. Shosuke Sato, are known to all Americans, for they served respectively as Japan's first and second Exchange Lecturers to America. Dr. Sato was a member of the first pioneer class at Sapporo, and Dr. Nitobe was a member of the second.

It was the policy of the Agricultural College from the outset to train its own teachers, supplementing this training whenever possible by a course of advanced study to be pursued abroad. How far this policy has prevailed may be understood from the fact that of the present faculty membership of 140, those who were formerly students of the school number 67, 38 have been trained abroad, among them 14 being educated in American Universities beside those who have travelled there. So it may be said that the College from its inception has been independent, and the American influence instilled at the beginning has remained through all

the years.

There are many reasons why this influence should have remained. One reason is that it was a good influence, tending toward unselfish service, and high motives. Another reason is that American teachers have been retained virtually throughout the whole time as element of the teaching force.

In the third year of the institution's existence, two new American instructors were employed, John C. Cutter, M.D., as Professor of Physiology and Comparative Anatomy, and Cecil H. Peabody, B.S., as Professor of Mathematics and Engineering. In 1835, another American, H.E. Stockbridge, Ph.D., came out on a two years' contract as Professor of Chemistry and Geology, this contract subsequently being renewed for another fifteen months. When the department of Civil Engineering was opened in 1888, with an initial enrollment of five students only, Milton Haight, B.A., was engaged to take charge of the work in Mathematics and Physics. The well loved Professor Brooks departed in this year, and Professor Arthur A. Brigham was called to take his place. For a number of years after Professor Brig-



Experimental Field

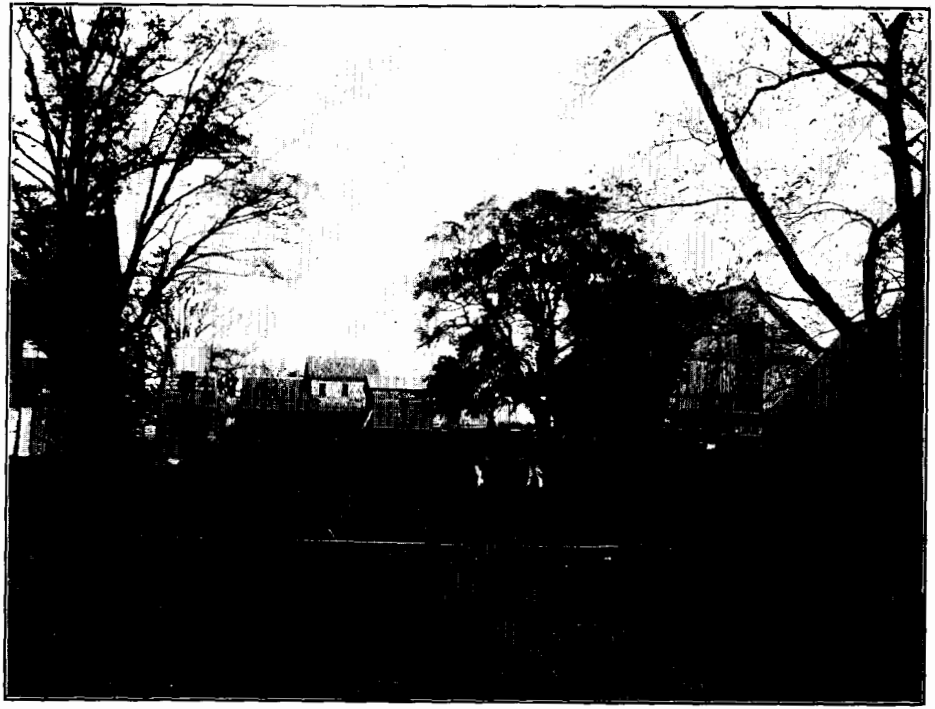
ham's term of service expired, the College from time to time engaged members of the Mission force in Hokkaido as teachers, but in 1907, an American was engaged as Professor of English Language. This Professorship has been held successively by J.B. Morgan, A.M., 1907–1911, and Gail Cleland, A.B. 1911–1914. Professor Paul Rowland, A.M. is now in charge of the course.

The influence of these Americans can hardly be overestimated, for it is through themselves quite as much as through their teaching that the young men of the College learn to understand America. To the students, these teachers are something more than representatives of America. They are America, in miniature. And it is a cause for America to rejoice that without any known exception, the attitude of the students toward their American instructors has been an attitude of respect and affection.

The academic growth of the College has had a steady progressive trend, always with emphasis on the practical rather than the theoretical. The courses of instruction have been gradually extended until today the collegiate work includes

the Departments of Agriculture Proper, Agricultural Chemistry, Zootechny, and Forestry. In addition, the College maintains a large Preparatory School, a School of Civil Engineering, a School of Fishery, a School of Practical Agriculture and a School of Practical Forestry. The equipment of buildings, laboratories, museums, etc. has kept pace with the growth of these various elements, so that at the present time, the College stands as the best University of the kind in Japan. With the enormous need for this kind of education in Japan, it is not surprising that applications are received every year from students many times in excess of the number that may be admitted.

Though the number of students at present has been increased nearly twenty-fold since the first years, the number of applicants has increased still more. By the end of the fourth year, it was deemed well to remove the numerical limit of fifty, and open the school to as many students as the equipment allows. At the same time, the direct government support of students was withdrawn, though it was still possible for a worthy student to secure needed financial help in the form of a

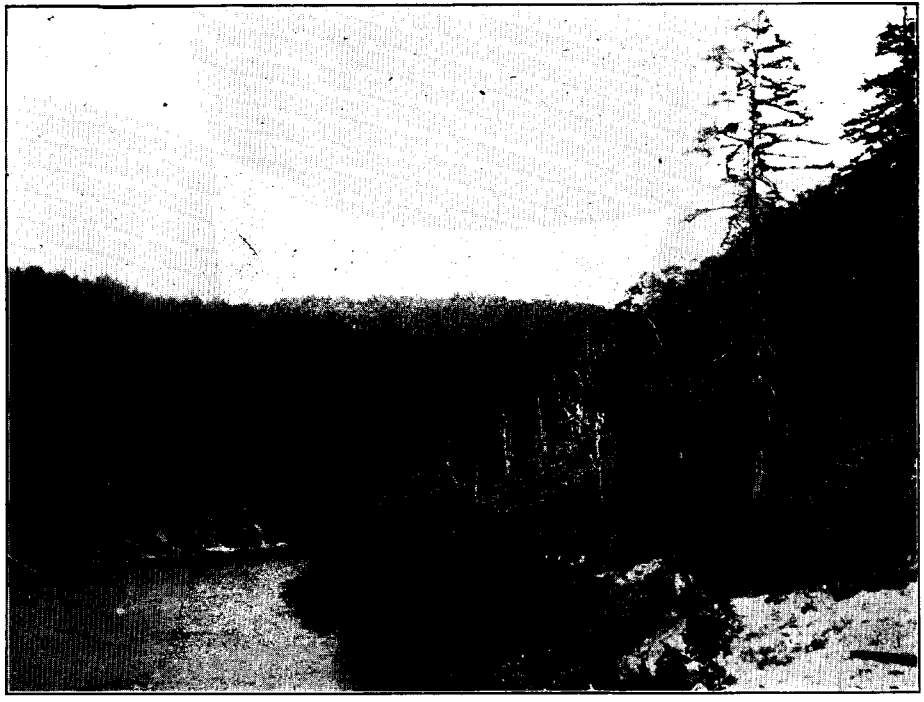


Second College Farm

loan. Advantage of this provision was taken by a great many keen promising young men, but since the dormitory, the chemical laboratory, the lecture rooms, etc. had been constructed for the accommodation of fifty students only, the number in actual attendance could not exceed fifty for several years. Then the buildings were extended, and the number of students swelled in direct proportion. Again and again, the housing equipment was enlarged, only to become overcrowd as before. The present enrollment is nearly nine hundred. Those who come from the Hokkaido do not materially outnumber those who come from the southernmost part of the empire, so that the students are truly the prize men from all Japan. The proportion of graduates who go out each year to take positions of leadership is very great, and American influence, or any other influence invested among the undergraduates, reaches with great potency to every part of the Japanese Empire.

For a long time, the only support of the College came from direct government appropriations. But this was always unsatisfactory, since it depended upon the officials in power, and frequent efforts at retrenchment by new parties of officials

kept the College finances in a continual state of fluctuation and uncertainty. Originally, the care of the College budget was wholly in the hands of the Kaitakushi, the Hokkaido Government. The Kaitakushi, however, was abolished in 1882, and the College was taken over by the Bureau of Supervision of Hokkaido, in the Department of Agriculture and Commerce, which had headquarters at Tokyo. It so remained until the reforms of 1886, which did away with the Bureau of Supervision and established a central governing agency for the northern island, known as the Hokkaido Cho. This new authority then assumed protection over the College of Agriculture. Since 1895, the administration has been in the hands of the Imperial Department of Education. Such has been the varied fortunes of the school, which naturally followed from the administrative changes in the government of Japan during that period. Another feature of Dr. Clark's work for the development of the school which proved of lasting worth was the establishment of a model farm, such a farm as had never been seen before either in Hokkaido or in all Japan. A tract of 250 acres of Government land lying near the college had been given for that



College Forest

purpose. Every possible effort was made to fit it as a model worthy to be copied by the farmers of Hokkaido. The founding of this model farm was a far-sighted stroke of policy. Since then, the college has acquired, from time to time, extensive tracts of farm and forest lands in different parts of the Island. Today, in addition to the sixty acres included in the Campus and in the Botanic Garden, the University possesess eight College Farms, six College Forests, an Orchard, and a lot for the Marine Experiment Station, or a total of 313,000 acres. These lands are used both for their income and as experient fields for the training of students.

After Dr. Clark's return to Amherst the function of the management of the College has been gradually handed over to the Japanese, the office being filled successively by Messrs. H. Dsusho, G. Mori, H. Sato and B. Hashiguchi. Then, Dr. Shosuke Sato, the first graduate to take a higher degree in America was appointed as a Professor of Agricultural Economics, and the following year, Dean of the College, and one year later, in 1888, the office of President being vacant, he was appointed temporarily to fill the vacancy. Four years later, he became President

de facto. In 1907 by affiliation with the School of Science at Sendai, the College was raised to university rank under the name of "Tohoku Imperial University" the President of which at present is Hon. T. Hojyo. In consequence the former office of President of Sapporo Agricultural College is now absorved in the office of Director, which has remained in the same capable hands ever since.

Dr. Sato is a man peculiarly representative of American influence in Japan. Being a member of the first class at the College, he was a pupil of the American educator, Dr. Clark; he studied under American teachers throughout his undergraduate course at Sapporo, and then crossed the ocean to study further at the American university, Johns Hopkins. And finally in 1913, Dr. Sato was appointed to serve as Japan's Second Exchange Lecturer to America. Need it be said that in his homeland, he is the friend of Americans and the defender of America's name?

Dr. Sato's record is but one of the many that Sapporo Agricultural College has been established by her graduates. At present the total number of graduates of

all departments and schools has reached 2,527. The whole world was open before them. They could go wherever they desired. The wide range of studies they pursued, gave them a broad basis of action. In almost all departments of activity and all parts of the Empire, their names are to be met with. Not a few of them went to America and equipped themselves by the advanced training there received. A long list of work done by these graduates might be cited covering the fields of agriculture, science, literature, education, civil service, business, and industry.

Thus from the center which was so firmly formed in Sapporo by a band of well chosen American scholars, the waves of their influence have radiated all over Japan in the last 40 years, in the shape of undaunted practical as well as scholary men. They have served to encourage mutual understanding between Japan and America and thus to insure mutual friendship between the two countries. What these graduates have done to cement the friendship between Japan and America, though less spectacular, rivals the results attained through diplomacy and com-

mercial intercourse.

May we not express the hope, in closing, that the bonds of friendship, which were thus so auspiciously tied in the early days of Japan's intercourse with America, may become stronger and stronger with the years, forming a bridge of mutual understanding and comradeship across the great ocean, which otherwise would seem hopelessly to separate us?

Diagram showing the Annual Increase of the Number of Faculty and Students, 1876–1914

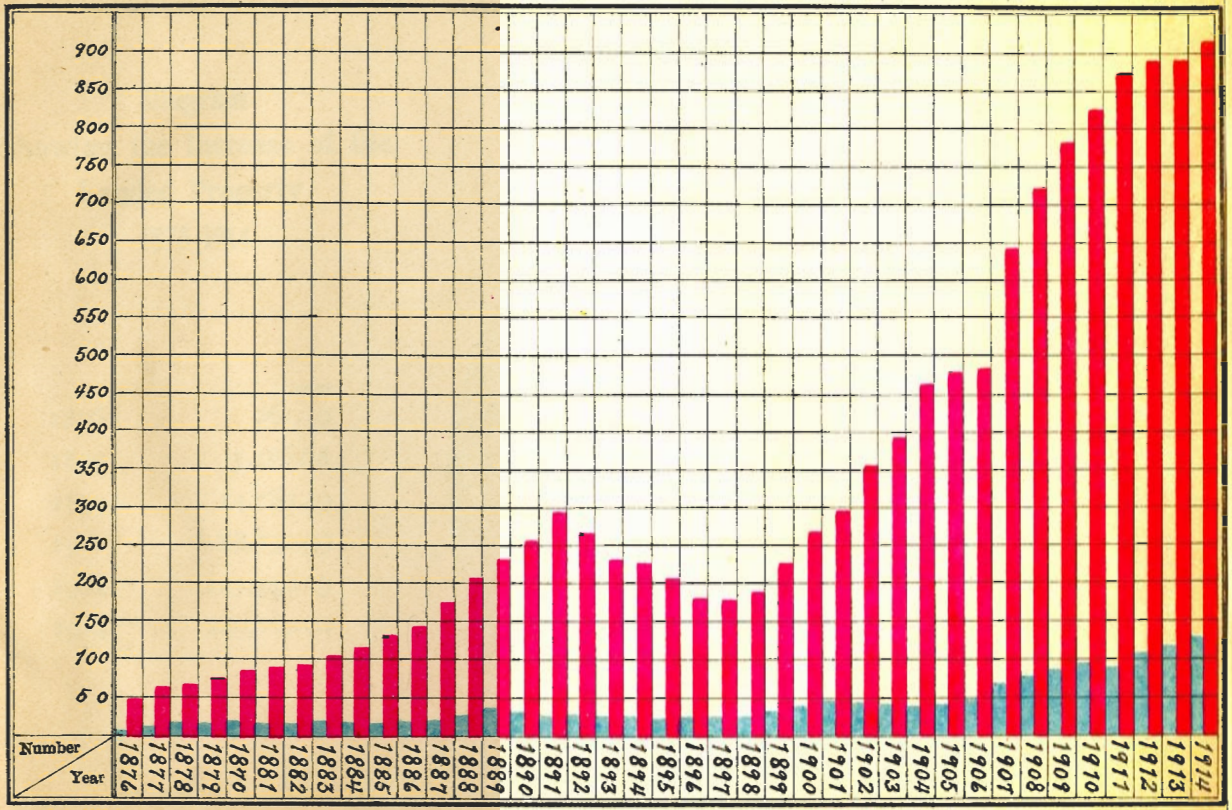
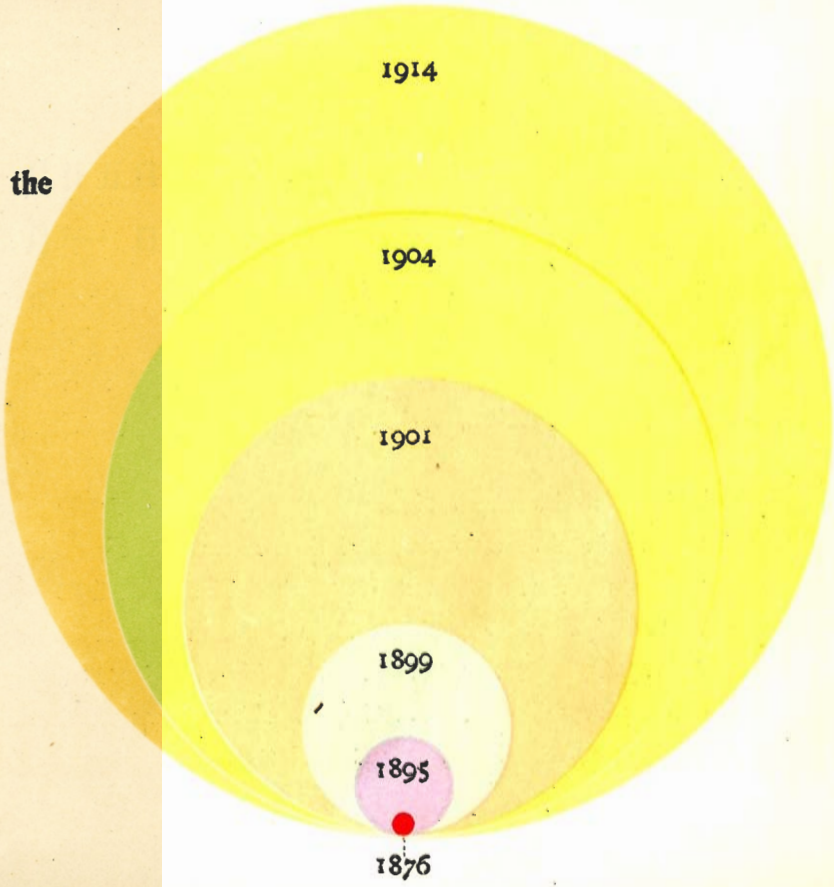


Diagram
Showing the Increase of the Landed Property 1875-1914

	acres
1876	261.19
1895	5,486.68
1899	14,780.49
1901	88,730.99
1904	143,540.29
1914	249,100.62



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