



MISS SMITH AND TWO NATIVE NURSES.

NAGANO, SHINANO, JAPAN

March 24th, 1897.

DEAR CANON SPENCER:—I have thought that since you accepted the position of Hon. Sec. of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Church in Canada, that you might like to have an account of the medical work in the Canadian Diocese in Japan, about which I may have to write you from time to time.

I removed from Kobe, a Treaty Port at the head of the Inland Sea, where I had been working over two years under the directions of the clergyman of the S.P.G., to Nagano, in the Canadian Diocese, in November, 1895, so that I have only been here a little over one year. With me came the Matron of our Nurses' home, two trained nurses, two pupil-nurses and two Bible women, and it was our intention to begin a small Charity Dispensary and a system of district nursing among the sick poor as soon as we could do so. One great difficulty was to obtain suitable buildings, or rather, any kind of buildings, for it was impossible to find houses that could in any way be considered desirable, but at last we rented a small house for a Home for the native workers,

and in the Spring of 1896 another building was procured for a Charity Dispensary.

The presence of so many Christian workers excited no small amount of hatred and opposition among the people of the city, who are all very strict Buddhists, and during the first few months we were here we could not walk in any of the streets without being pelted with sticks and stones. However, after the Dispensary was opened and the inhabitants realized that we really meant to help them, the persecution ceased, and the local newspapers spoke in the warmest terms of praise of the nurses, and their kindness to the patients.

During the months of June and July and September and October of last year, this province was visited by two epidemics, "camp-fever" and "dysentery," and the Government authorities were obliged to erect temporary hospitals for the sick poor in nearly all the towns and villages of the district. There was no one who understood how to look after the patients properly and the "head-men" or mayors of several of the towns applied to me for assistance. I was able to let nurses go to three different hospitals and take charge, instruct the servants how to disinfect, assume the responsibility of the patients, etc., assistance that was much appreciated. In this way

our work became very popular among all classes of the people and has done much already to break down the prejudice against "foreigners" and Christianity, which exists more strongly in this province than in any part of Japan.

Last November the two pupil-nurses I spoke of received their diplomas, and it was the wish of the Bishop and the other workers in the mission that they should be sent over to Matsumoto to begin district nursing, under the direction of the Rev. Mr. Kennedy. At present I have five assistant women-workers, one of whom has just been sent to take charge of an accident hospital, erected on the new line of railway that is being constructed in this neighborhood. She was a Bible woman before she began to study nursing, and as she is somewhat advanced in years is a most suitable person to do medical and missionary work among a rough class of men.

The native doctor, who is in charge of the Charity Dispensary, was baptized on Christmas Day, and as he is exceedingly popular among all classes of the people, we feel that he has a decided influence for good in the Mission. About twenty patients come daily for medicine