"FOR GOD, HOME, AND COUNTRY":
THE WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION
AND REFORM EFFORTS IN MEIJI JAPAN

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To my parents, Jacob and Carole Dorn, and my husband, Keith Lublin, for their love, support, and belief in my abilities as a historian
ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on the organizational development of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in Meiji Japan and on the activities its middle-class members undertook to achieve moral and social reform. It argues that the women who joined the society felt a great sense of duty as Japanese to promote national progress and that they considered widespread acceptance of their reform agenda and the Christian faith essential to Japan’s advancement. These mutually reinforcing motivations informed their activism and led them to assume a dynamic role in trying to define social problems and guide public and private behavior. In developing this argument, this dissertation reveals that the members of the WCTU did not compromise their beliefs and principles to accommodate the government’s imperialistic ambitions and program to mold a loyal and patriotic citizenry. Instead, they attempted to harness the power of the state and the imperial institution to further their aims.

This dissertation makes extensive use of WCTU publications and writings by members to support this argument. It first proceeds chronologically with a three-chapter history of the WCTU’s establishment and growth during the Meiji period. Particular foci in this overview include the impact of World WCTU missionaries on the formation of an organizational structure, conflicts among Japanese women over the agenda to be pursued, and activities members undertook to expand the union and arouse interest in their reform principles. The remaining three chapters follow topical lines of analysis. Chapters four and five provide,
respectively, detailed discussions of select components of the WCTU’s anti-prostitution and temperance campaigns. Chapter six addresses the nature of members’ reverence for the imperial institution and outreach during the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. Blending description of specific activities with analysis, these chapters illustrate how intertwined members’ patriotism and sense of national duty were with their religious and reform fervor.
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INTRODUCTION

In early 1902, the Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union (JWCTU) initiated a petition campaign to abolish the age-old custom of rewarding meritorious deeds with gold, silver, or wooden sake cups. The petition was sent to members of the House of Peers along with a chart that showed a direct correlation in Japan between increases in sake production and a greater incidence of bankruptcy, child abandonment, suicide, and roadside starvation. The petition's author referred to this empirical evidence as proof that drinking "[dissipated] the energy of the people and [squandered] national resources." She continued that it is human nature to be sure to use an imperial gift . . . as is the intent behind the emperor's giving of a present. . . . With a sake cup, the recipient will accept it and, in order to publicize the gift, will certainly invite friends and family, throw a grand banquet, and express thanks with the cup itself.  

1With this petition, the JWCTU followed the example of the male Tokyo Temperance Society, which had submitted a far lengthier appeal four years earlier. Japan Evangelist 6, no. 3 (March 1899): 84-86.

2"Shōhai haishi no seigan" [The petition to ban prize cups], Fujin shimpō [Woman's herald], no. 58 (25 February 1902): 4. The JWCTU often relied on Christian politicians in the Meiji Diet to submit its petitions. Who interceded with the appeal regarding ceremonial cups is unclear. So is the reason why the union chose the House of Peers. Its greater power vis-à-vis the House of Representatives may have influenced that decision.

That drunkenness and harm to individuals and, by extension, society should result from a
gift, ostensibly bestowed to recognize service performed for the sake of public welfare and
the nation, struck the author as “absurd.” She urged the petition’s readers to arrange for more
“appropriate” awards, although she stopped short of identifying what she deemed suitable.

This 1902 campaign was merely one component of the JWCTU’s wide-ranging program
to reform public and private behavior during the Meiji period. The organization’s statement
of purpose in 1899 alludes to just how broad the objectives of that program were. It reads:
“This society aims to expand work to end drinking and smoking, to reform social customs,
morals, education, health, and general evils, and to promote the welfare and happiness of all
of society.”

In pursuit of these multifarious goals, members urged church leaders to use only
unfermented wine for Holy Communion, supported a bill to ban underage smoking, opposed
the participation of geisha in state ceremonies and public festivals, and operated several
homes where former prostitutes and destitute women could learn an “honorable” means of
self-support. They also distributed flowers and Scripture cards to hospitals, offered mothers
childcare instruction, and annually submitted a petition to the Diet calling for revision of
specific clauses in the civil and criminal codes that discriminated against women and
contravened the principle of monogamy.

Focusing on the WCTU in Japan, this dissertation examines the activities of the society’s
middle-class members as agents for moral and social reform during the Meiji period. The
above-mentioned appeal to the House of Peers typified this reform activism and serves as a
good stepping stone for introducing one of the central questions that guides this examination.

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4 Fujin shimpo, no. 25 (20 May 1899): 29.
Namely, what motivated the JWCTU's members to advocate a ban on the giving of ceremonial sake cups? Or, to rephrase this question more broadly, why did Japanese women become involved in the WCTU in the Meiji period, why did they pursue the reforms they did, and what did they hope to accomplish? The petition's reference to drink as depleting people's energies and wasting the nation's resources provides a clue to the answers.

JWCTU members felt a keen sense of duty as Japanese to further the country's progress, as did most of their countrymen and women, Christian or otherwise. Japan's 1853 opening by Commodore Matthew Perry and the country's subsequent subjugation by unequal treaties with the United States, Holland, Russia, England, and France had awakened Japan to the tremendous military and economic superiority of the West. The desire to achieve a position of equality with these powers engendered national projects epitomized in the 1870s by the slogans “fukoku kyohei” [“rich country and strong army”] and “bunmei kaika” [“civilization and enlightenment”]. At the heart of these catch phrases lay the belief that the West stood at the apex of civilization and that only by modernizing, i.e., Westernizing, could Japan attain the economic prosperity and military strength that equaled standing in the community of Western nations required.

The transformation that ensued in Japan, especially during the first twenty years of the Meiji period, remains unprecedented in scope and speed of implementation. Those two decades alone witnessed the creation of a national army with universal conscription, the introduction of compulsory education, the adoption of a court system modeled on the French, and the implementation of a new national land tax. Modernization also took place in the realms of transportation, communications, and industry, as the government encouraged and,
in some cases, even initiated the opening of banks and the construction of railroads, telegraph lines, factories, and mines.

Not all changes the government implemented met with a warm reception. For example, the commutation of samurai stipends played a causal role in anti-government uprisings by destitute samurai in the 1870s. Unbridled Westernization also came under attack beginning in the mid-1880s, in what Mikiso Hane has referred to as a natural “swing of the pendulum.” Critics questioned the inherent merit and suitability to Japan of Western practices and ideas and decried the rejection of things Japanese merely because they were Japanese and deemed anachronistic to a modern power. This backlash notwithstanding, the basic desire to promote Japan’s progress and elevate her standing in the international community remained paramount in the minds of the country’s political, military, and economic leaders, not to mention the average citizen.

The members of the JWCTU were no exception. They felt both committed to this goal and duty-bound to help ensure its attainment. If the definition of a nationalist is an individual devoted to the political, economic, and social advancement of his/her country as an independent entity and in relation to others, then JWCTU members were unabashedly nationalistic. In fact, most Japanese Christians in the Meiji period were such, with the notable exception of a small but vocal group of Christian Socialists. Where JWCTU women differed from their non-Christian and anti-Christian contemporaries was in their conviction that Christian belief and the values and morals it promoted were essential to Japan’s progress. The

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American Protestant missionaries who took to the Japanese field beginning in the late 1850s had helped to nurture this belief. So had the emissaries of the World’s Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WWCTU), who, beginning with Mary Clement Leavitt in 1886, provided stimulus and guidance for organized WCTU activism in Japan. Under the influence of these missionaries, JWCTU women developed a strong sense of Christian social responsibility both to serve as living epistles and to devote themselves to the “betterment” of individuals and society. They also came to accept and define their duties as women in light of the Victorian ideology of womanhood the missionaries disseminated. This ideology posited that women were morally superior to and more pious than men and that these characteristics best qualified them to serve as guardians of children and defenders of the home (and their own role in it) against the encroachment of moral and social “evils.”

These three identities JWCTU members embodied, as Japanese, as Christians, and as women, did not compete with each other, but instead mutually defined who they were. As a result, the motivations characteristic of each were entangled and provided a single ideological framework for their activism. In July 1901, the WWCTU’s motto “for God, home, and every land” first appeared in English on the cover of Fujin shimpo [Woman’s herald], the JWCTU’s monthly periodical. The two words “every land” implied universality or the act of engaging in reform for the benefit of all nations. The Japanese word that appeared in the

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magazine in place of "every land" was "kokka," which more accurately translates as "country." The connotation both then and now, however, is Japan alone. The WWCTU's motto continued to grace the cover of *Fujin shimpo* through the April 1908 issue. Nonetheless, the slogan "for God, home, and country" better identifies the triad of motivations that informed the activism of JWCTU members during the Meiji period.⁷

Returning to 1902, the JWCTU's campaign that year against ceremonial sake cups also sheds light on the means members employed to achieve their reform goals. JWCTU women did use moral suasion and religious rhetoric in speeches and publications to urge listeners and readers to embrace temperance and to support the abolition of brothel districts. They did so particularly when they knew that their audiences would be receptive to the message so wrapped. The community of Christian sympathizers remained small throughout the Meiji period, never exceeding one percent of the population. In 1900, after roughly forty years of mission work in Japan, Protestants claimed fewer than forty-five thousand church members,  

⁷It would be wrong to imply that the members of the WCTU in Japan were generally disengaged with the world around them. Many did join the hundreds of Japanese and millions worldwide in signing the WWCTU's Polyglot Petition, the epitome of that society's global aspirations in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In this document, women and, later, men bemoaned international trafficking in stimulants and opiates and asked rulers and governments worldwide to "raise the standard of law to that of Christian morals, to strip away safeguards and sanctions of the state from the drink traffic and the opium trade, and to protect our homes by the total prohibition of these curses of civilization" [Reprinted in Dorothy Staunton, *Our Godly Heritage: A historical review of the World Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1883-1956* (London: The Walthamstow Press, n.d.), 11]. In addition to support for this petition, a handful of JWCTU local and national leaders worked to organize unions and spread reform principles in Korea and California. Still, Japan remained the focal point, and even this overseas outreach targeted Japanese. For a discussion of JWCTU and American WCTU work among Japanese in California, see Rumi Yasutake, "Transnational Women's Activism: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in Japan and Beyond, 1858-1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1998), 206-57.
and just over ten thousand students attended mission schools. To reach beyond these few, JWCTU members needed to construct their message in a way that would make it more palatable and less threatening to the mainstream. They did so by emphasizing the “for country” aspect of the motto “for God, home, and country.” As the wording of the 1902 petition illustrates, they frequently couched their arguments in the language of national progress. They also provided empirical evidence, whether within the text or through enclosures, to lend credibility and authority to their claims. This rhetorical strategy reflected a realistic appraisal of the environment and members’ basic desire to accomplish reform.

The extent to which the JWCTU’s members focused on national service in their discourse raises yet another question central to this dissertation. What was the nature of their engagement with the state? Did they passively accept and propagate government policy? Or, did they assert themselves and try to establish a less linear relationship? Their use of the petition to win a ban on ceremonial sake cups and presentation of that appeal to the House of Peers is just one of many incidents that suggests the latter. Indeed, from the early years of the Tokyo WCTU, members repeatedly engaged in petition campaigns, which served not only organizational, but also propagandistic purposes. With these petitions, they sought to define social problems for the government and shape official solutions. They also tried to harness

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8 Otis Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan: Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant Missions*, vol. 2 (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1909; reprint, Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1976), 296. Cary did not indicate whether or not he included student totals for Protestant schools established by Japanese and financially and managerially independent of missions. If not, the revised figure would still be much less than twenty thousand.

state authority to their own causes and use reform legislation to realize their vision of a more moral society. This willingness to employ state power stemmed from their sincere belief in the authority of the state to dictate and control conduct in society and the home. JWCTU members' active engagement with the state clearly shows that they did not become mere pawns of the government. Nor, as this dissertation argues, did they compromise their beliefs and reform objectives to accommodate the Meiji government's imperialistic ambitions and program to mold a loyal and patriotic citizenry.

This portrait of JWCTU women as politically active challenges the prevailing picture of women in the Meiji period as politically suppressed. Lori Ginzberg has said that "the historical focus on the radical demand for the vote as women's only significant political act... has had the effect of both foreshortening and distorting the history of women's participation in the political process."¹⁰ She made this observation in reference to the historiography of feminism in America, but I would suggest that her words also apply to scholarship on Japanese women. Historians have focused on women's lack of suffrage as a take-off point for discussing the ways in which the Meiji government attempted to define and constrict women's roles.¹¹ This approach has resulted in the presentation of feminism mainly in terms


of women’s getting the vote. The many other ways in which women attempted to advance their rights, to assert themselves politically, and to construct roles for themselves have been largely overlooked. Notable scholarly exceptions in English include E. Patricia Tsurumi’s history of factory girls and Emily Ooms’s study of Deguchi Nao and millenarian protest.

My portrait of JWCTU members actively engaged with the state also challenges the dominant interpretation of state-citizen ties in the Meiji period, namely, that power flowed from rulers to ruled. This dissertation’s conceptualization of the JWCTU and the state owes much to two recent studies, both of which have shown how much more complex those ties actually were. Specifically, Sheldon Garon has claimed that women’s wartime collaboration was not the result of government efforts at mobilization alone. Rather, he has suggested that women’s belief in the power of the state to effect improvement in their position and their desire to help shape official policy impacting their own lives also provided stimulus. Even more influential for this dissertation is David Ambaras’s work on middle-class reformers.

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12 Among scholars of the JWCTU, Utsu Yasuko has most noticeably been shaped by this interpretation. “Akatsuki no shōsei: Sasaki Toyoju” [The sound of a bell at dawn: Sasaki Toyoju], in Saisōyori, yori fukaki tamashii ni: Sōma Kokkō, wakaki hi no henreki (Tokyo: Nihon YMCA Dōmei Shuppanbu, 1983).


Ambaras has shown how these reformers placed themselves at the center of power by using their social knowledge to identify problems and shape official responses.  

In addition to contributing to the study of women and to enhancing understanding of the nature of power ties, this dissertation seeks to shed light on the vibrant reform movement in which JWCTU members participated. That movement itself was truly diverse and involved Buddhists and Catholics, along with many others who were motivated to organize and agitate for abolition of Japan's system of licensed prostitution, among other changes, solely because of secular concerns. Their collective involvement falls beyond the scope of this dissertation. The focus here is on Protestant reform efforts and in particular on the contributions of the JWCTU to shaping and furthering Protestant activism.

A plethora of primary sources is available on Protestant activities and societies. Extant WCTU publications pertaining to the Meiji period alone include fifty- and one hundred-year histories, the tale of its anti-smoking crusade, an account of the union's rescue home in Tokyo, its first temperance tract, a collection of temperance talks, and virtually all issues of its periodical from 1888. In addition, public and university libraries throughout Japan have in their holdings periodic issues of other reform-oriented magazines and leaflets, articles, and autobiographies by native activists. Despite this wealth of materials, the story of Meiji-era Protestant reform efforts remains largely absent from scholarly texts. General histories of

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16 In the mid-1980s, Fuji Shuppan compiled all surviving issues of the WCTU's magazine from its appearance in 1888 through 1958 and published them in sixty volumes. The biography reprint series put out by Özorasha has also made accessible autobiographies by several WCTU members and biographies of others written by union and family members.
Japanese Christianity make only token mention of them. Of more specialized studies, two manuscript-length works in English introduce the Salvation Army in Japan and highlight its 1900 campaign to free prostitutes from the Yoshiwara brothel district in Tokyo. These do not, however, take into account the profound role women played in reform. This same criticism does not extend to Abe Reiko, Ichibangase Yasuko, and Takamizawa Junko, who are among the many scholars who have written articles on the leading members of the JWCTU. Collectively, though, they have stressed biographical information over detail on activities, and only the rare piece considers aspects of the reform movement other than agitation against prostitution.

Rumi Yasutake, in contrast, has highlighted the breadth of the Protestant reform agenda in her dissertation on the transference of the WCTU from the United States to Japan and back. Her focus on WWCTU missionaries, however, leads her to downplay the role JWCTU women had themselves in the organization’s development. Her theme of thwarted feminist aspirations causes her to simplify the nature of the JWCTU’s relationship with the state. She also overlooks how members used government ideology regarding women’s proper roles to justify their reform activities, which, in turn, subverted those same ideas. Moreover, she


does not give religious conviction the attention it deserves as a motivation for JWCTU women.¹⁹

This dissertation, which offers a reappraisal of the JWCTU, begins with a three-chapter chronological overview of the organization's establishment and growth during the Meiji period. The first chapter provides the context for future WCTU activism in Japan by discussing how American Protestant missionaries nurtured a body of native Christians with a strict ethical code and strong sense of social responsibility. Their influence spurred the birth of numerous temperance societies, agitation against licensed prostitution, and critiques of polygamy in the 1870s and early 1880s. Onto this fertile soil stepped Mary Clement Leavitt with a mission to spread WWCTU principles and to organize men and women in support of the temperance cause. After briefly examining her 1886 tour, this chapter chronicles the steps that led to the founding of Japan's first WCTU in Tokyo and relates how, in choosing a name, members of this union indicated their intention to agitate for much more than just temperance.

The second chapter covers the initial half decade of organized WCTU activism in Japan, a period during which the Tokyo union experienced first phenomenal growth and then steep decline. Members' enthusiasm and sense of purpose greatly contributed to the society's early success and fueled the initiation of a host of activities to strengthen and expand the organization and to promote reform principles. After offering a brief collective biography of leading members, this chapter introduces these endeavors and assesses their impact on the union's development. The focus then shifts to the causes of the society's downturn and in particular

³⁹Yasutake.
to the personality conflicts and ideological differences that, by 1892, rendered the union divided and weakened.

Chapter three commences with the arrival that same year of WWCTU missionary Mary Allen West, who not only brought resolution to the turmoil, but also paved the way for the establishment of the national union in 1893. This chapter proceeds from a discussion of her work and the JWCTU's founding to an examination of organizational growth and the expansion of the society's agenda during the last two decades of the Meiji period. As part of this institutional history, the impact of WWCTU missionaries in sustaining and shaping native activism is considered. This chapter also pays special attention to the WCTU's periodical. Specifically, it looks at changes in the magazine's content over time and analyzes the text's effectiveness as a medium for espousing reform and strengthening the JWCTU as an organization.

This dissertation switches from chronological to topical lines of analysis with chapter four, a detailed study of the organization's fight against prostitution. This chapter opens with an overview of the history of licensed prostitution in Japan and an introduction to the early anti-prostitution movement in order to provide context for the JWCTU's participation. It then delves into three specific components of the organization's campaign: agitation against Japanese prostitutes overseas; opposition to licensed brothel districts; and, work to rescue former prostitutes and destitute women on the doorsteps of brothels.

Chapter five takes as its topic the battle against drink. It first provides sketches of the history of alcohol consumption and early temperance work in Japan and then briefly introduces the central arguments WCTU members and supporters gave as they struggled to create
a temperate society. The chapter next examines the organization’s special outreach among youth as a way to ensure a dry next generation and to reach into the core of Japanese society, i.e., the family. It also details the JWCTU’s temperance campaign in connection with the 1903 National Industrial Exposition in Osaka, and argues that, by using this celebration of Japan’s industrial development as a forum to spread temperance, JWCTU members asserted their belief that abstinence was a sign of national progress, not domestic production of beer using the most advanced technology the world had to offer.

Finally, chapter six explores the JWCTU’s responses to the demands of loyalty to the emperor and service to the nation during the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. With respect to the former, it discusses how WCTU members used celebrations in the life of the imperial family, including the wedding of the crown prince, to promote monogamy, improved status for women, and Christianity. As for the latter, this chapter details the union’s work to support the war causes and to provide comfort to soldiers, sailors, and the bereaved all the while evangelizing and agitating against alcohol and tobacco. These last chapters blend description of such specific activities with analysis. They also serve to illustrate both how intertwined JWCTU members’ patriotism and sense of national duty were with their religious and reform fervor and how applicable the motto “for God, home, and country” is as a description for WCTU activism during the Meiji period.
CHAPTER ONE

THE FOUNDING OF THE WCTU IN JAPAN

The beginning of WCTU activism in Japan did not occur in isolation, but instead resulted from a convergence of historical developments in Japan and the United States. This chapter will discuss two of those: first, the introduction and spread of Protestant Christianity in Japan in the wake of the latter's opening; and, second, the origins of American women's temperance activism and initiation of overseas outreach. The final sections will then chronicle Mary Clement Leavitt's tour and the organization of the Tokyo WCTU, the first known Japanese union to affiliate itself with the WWCTU.

The Early Decades of Protestant Christianity in Japan

In 1858, Townsend Harris, America's first consul-general to Japan, concluded the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce, a commercial pact that became the model for treaties Japan subsequently signed with Holland, Russia, Britain, and France. Collectively known as the "treaties with five powers," these agreements provided for the scattered opening of five ports and two cities to foreigners, granted them the right of extraterritoriality, fixed tariffs for imports to Japan, and bestowed upon the foreign signatories most-favored nation status.¹ Harris's goal extended beyond simply gaining diplomatic and business advantages for his countrymen. A pious Episcopalian, he noted in his journal before beginning treaty

negotiations that he also intended to “boldly demand for the Americans the free exercise of
their religion in Japan, with the right to build churches.” He added that he would “be both
proud and happy if [he could] be the humble means of once more opening Japan to the
blessed rule of Christianity.”

Frances Xavier had first introduced Christianity to Japan in 1549. Both he and the Jesuits
who followed him into the field quickly made gains and, by 1582, had converted an
estimated one hundred fifty thousand. They owed much of their success to support from
several Kyushu daimyō and Oda Nobunaga, who believed that the missionaries’ overseas
connections would provide them with avenues for foreign trade. This same hope later
became a fear that the import of guns would lead to domestic political instability. The
perception that the propagation of Christianity was the first step in a campaign of conquest
by foreign powers further heightened suspicion of missionaries. After the execution of
twenty-four foreign and native Christians in Nagasaki in 1597, public persecution intensified,
as the early Tokugawa rulers issued a series of increasingly strident anti-foreign and anti-
Christian decrees. By 1641, Japan had become a “secluded” nation, trading only with the
Netherlands, China, Korea, and the kingdom of Ryūkyū, and Christianity was proscribed
under punishment of death.

While Harris failed to negotiate a lifting of this ban on Christianity, he did succeed in the
U.S.-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce in winning for Americans the right to worship

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3 Mikiso Hane, Premodern Japan: A Historical Survey (Boulder, Colo.: Westview
in treaty ports. This opening proved to be all that was needed, and, by the end of 1859, mere months after the treaty came into effect, six American Protestant missionaries had taken up residence in Nagasaki and Kanagawa (Yokohama). Ostensibly there to minister to the foreign community, they quickly initiated educational and medical work among Japanese and used their identity as carriers of Western knowledge to attract students and patients. They circumvented the ban on direct evangelization of Japanese by using the Scriptures, Christian readers, and other works imparting or upholding Christian doctrine in the classroom, in other words, by infusing their language, history, and science instruction with religion. One missionary even hung the Ten Commandments and Scripture passages translated into Japanese on the walls of his dispensary. Once their language skills allowed, these first Protestant missionaries and the few who joined them during the 1860s translated the Gospels and devotional literature, prepared tracts for sale or free distribution, and worked with Japanese converts to publish periodicals. Both before and after that, they imported Christian texts written in Chinese and English, which the educated could read.4 A particular article in the U.S.-Japan treaty actually provided for the sale of these works. This clause granted Japanese permission to buy from Americans anything but opium and firearms. Harris later said to John Liggins, co-founder of the American Episcopal mission to Japan, that he had insisted on this wording “expressly to cover the sale of Scriptures and other Christian books by missionaries.”5


Despite these diverse activities, American Protestant missionaries won few converts during their first decade. Suspicions of Christianity as a religion of black magic remained pervasive, and, in 1868, the Meiji government renewed the Tokugawa-era policy of having notice boards forbidding Christianity and offering rewards to informants placed throughout Japan. This step and severe persecution of native Christians drew the ire of consuls-general in the treaty ports and their respective governments and led to the stipulation that the unequal treaties would not be revised before the Japanese government granted religious tolerance to its citizens. Eager above all to achieve a position of equality, Meiji government leaders ordered the removal of the edict boards in 1873. This turnaround reflected their tacit approval of conversion by Japanese, not an open-ended endorsement of Christianity. Only with the enactment of the Constitution in 1890 did religious freedom become the law of the land.

The year 1873 witnessed other great leaps for the nascent Protestant Christian movement in Japan. The arrival of additional American Protestant missionaries increased the size of the mission force more than twofold, public preaching was undertaken, and a Japanese church was organized in Tokyo. Over the next decade, the mission community continued to grow exponentially, with missionaries increasingly traveling into the country’s interior to evangelize. Waves of conversions by former samurai at schools in Kumamoto, Yokohama, and Sapporo helped to create a body of native Christian leaders who undertook tours of propagation, established churches in cities big and small, founded new schools and taught

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at existing institutions, and actively used the printed word to spread the Gospel. As a result of these combined efforts, the number of Protestant Japanese church members jumped from 16 in 1872 to 5,634 in 1882. The following year, revivals began to sweep the country and ushered in a period of even more spectacular growth. So great was the rate of conversion that native Christian leaders and missionaries alike “began to anticipate the day when Japan would become a Christian nation.”

American Women’s Temperance Activism and the Origins of the WWCTU

Into the middle of this milieu of rapid expansion of the Christian community stepped the WWCTU’s first round-the-world missionary, Mary Clement Leavitt. The daughter of a New England Baptist minister and abolitionist, Leavitt had been born in 1830 and raised in a dry household. As was common among women of her class and social standing, she had trained as a teacher and worked before she married. Her husband was a wealthy real estate broker, but his spendthrift ways forced her to return to the classroom to support their family of five and ultimately led to their divorce in 1878. Throughout these travails, Leavitt maintained an abiding personal commitment to temperance. A fateful meeting the year prior to her divorce with Frances Willard, then the corresponding secretary for the WCTU, inspired her to move beyond her private abstinence and simple membership in a temperance society to assume a much more active role in the burgeoning women’s temperance movement.

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7Ibid., 53-55.
8Ibid., 55.
9Mark Edward Lender, *Dictionary of American Temperance Biography: From Temperance Reform to Alcohol Research, the 1600s to the 1980s* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984), 290; Ian Tyrrell, *Woman’s World/Woman’s Empire: The Woman’s
Organized opposition to alcohol in the United States began in the early nineteenth century, when Protestant evangelicals began to view drastically increasing consumption as a real threat to their "effort to secure a Christian civilization." Regardless of denominational affiliation, Protestants saw drinking as an indication of low moral standards and as an impediment to the coming of God's kingdom on earth. To eradicate this scourge, they organized themselves into societies, at first church and then more broadly based. Their public meetings and writings stimulated interest in temperance and even spurred the formation of the Washingtonians in 1840, a group of former tipplers who set as their goal the reform of fellow alcoholics.

Women contributed to this surge in temperance activism by joining male societies and even made up more than half of the membership in a number of these by the 1830s. They also organized on their own. Barbara Epstein has qualified the extent of women's influence in and through these activities by noting that even the male-led societies that allowed women to join "relegated them firmly to a subsidiary role" and that women's independent organizations were "largely devoted to encouraging [their] temperance efforts in their own homes and

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11The founding Washingtonians regularly gathered in a bar to socialize. A temperance meeting flier sparked their interest one day, and they sent one from their group to attend. He returned only to convince them of the merits of abstinence and of the need to reach out to fellow drunkards. Epstein, 92-93.

12Tyrrell, 15.
immediate circles." One notable exception were the Martha Washingtonians. Auxiliaries of the Washingtonians, these groups provided women alcoholics with domestic jobs and donated clothing to drunkards' families. With the former activity, they sought, in short, to reform women drinkers with honest employment. The latter reflected the belief, widely held among early temperance advocates of both sexes, that alcoholic indulgence caused poverty. Activist teetotalers argued that drinking men frivolously spent money on pints and even prostitutes that should have gone to buy food and clothes and to pay rent. Imbibing also made men less productive on the job, hangovers resulted in tardiness and absences from work, and both often led to termination, merely pushing families deeper into poverty. In addition, as both men and women temperance reformers claimed, men when drunk frequently became violent and physically abused their wives and sometimes even children.

This perception of alcohol as endangering the family and making women vulnerable informed not only the work of the Martha Washingtonians and other women's temperance societies, but also periodic and spontaneous campaigns against saloons. The largest of these began in December 1873, when a group of churchwomen in a small town in southwestern Ohio marched from saloon to saloon urging the owners to sign temperance pledges and cease selling alcoholic beverages. When their verbal appeals failed, they either occupied saloons or demonstrated outside, all the while praying, singing, and taking note of those who entered. This crusade spread like wildfire through Ohio, its neighboring states, and further into New

13Epstein, 92.
14Gicle, 45.
England and the Midwest. Critical to women’s participation in the attacks against saloons were the respectability of temperance as a cause and the compatibility of their actions with their view of themselves as defenders of the home. The successes the crusade reaped proved fleeting, but the impact on those who joined was tremendous. Participants gained experience in expressing themselves in mixed company and in using legislative tactics as well as suasion. Moreover, they acquired self-confidence and a recognition of the power they had when united to effect change.

The crusade eventually lost momentum during the summer of 1874, although not before women’s interest in organizing a national temperance society had been wetted. That November, over one hundred women representing sixteen states met in Cleveland and held the first national convention of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). There they set total abstinence as their goal and resolved to use persuasion and prayer, not politics, to achieve it. This conservative approach reflected the position of Annie Wittenmyer, the WCTU’s first president, who opposed women’s suffrage as a danger to the home and feared that the use of legislative methods would eventually lead women to demand the vote.

Frances Willard, elected corresponding secretary at the inaugural meeting, shared with Wittenmyer a deep religiosity and strict moral code, but not her distaste for women in politics.

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16Epstein, 97-100; Bordin, 30-32.

17Epstein, 117-18; Bordin, 36-46.
or her exclusive commitment to temperance. Willard quickly moved to challenge the policy of political noninvolvement by urging her fellow Illinois state union members to adopt the “Home Protection ballot” in 1875. This petition called for women’s right to vote in local elections involving issues pertaining to saloon licensing and the enforcement of prohibition. As the name of the petition implies, the demand for limited suffrage was made not in terms of women’s inherent rights, but rather made use of the Victorian idea of domesticity and asserted women’s right as women and victims of alcohol use to defend the home. Willard’s attempts to garner national support for the ballot initially met with intense opposition from Eastern members, but continued debate and the increasing numerical strength of pro-suffrage Midwestern unions eventually swayed a majority in favor. Her defeat of Wittenmyer in the 1879 presidential election reflected this shift and members’ growing commitment to a more aggressive approach and varied program.18

Willard remained at the helm of the WCTU until her death in 1898. During the first decade of her presidency alone, her charismatic leadership and support for organizational and programmatic expansion helped to turn the WCTU into the largest women’s organization in the United States.19 In 1879, the WCTU boasted fewer than thirty thousand members, scattered among roughly one thousand local unions in twenty-four states. Within four years, membership had surpassed seventy thousand, and, by 1892, on the eve of the organization’s

18Epstein, 118-19; Bordin, 56-64; Mary Earhart, Frances Willard: From Prayers to Politics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), 151-73.

19This remained true of the WCTU until the early 1890s, after which women’s foreign mission societies, clubs, and suffrage groups began to surpass the organization in size. For a discussion of the factors that contributed to the WCTU’s diminished role as an outlet for women, see Bordin, 140-50.
twentieth anniversary, the roster of adult members included approximately one hundred fifty thousand names representing every state in the union. This phenomenal growth owed much to Willard’s frequent and often lengthy lecture tours, letter-writing, and personal popularity, as well as to the dispatch of paid national organizers to areas without unions. Also critical were her “Do Everything” policy and decision to grant local autonomy with respect to agenda.

At the WCTU’s national convention in 1881, Willard introduced this policy with respect to methods, but it quickly evolved into a call to diversify the organization’s agenda. Under this mantle, the WCTU came to espouse a broad program of reform that still placed emphasis on temperance, but also attacked a host of other social problems arising from industrialization, urbanization, and immigration. As the battle over the “Home Protection ballot” highlights, members nationwide held varied opinions regarding means and goals, and the breadth of the WCTU’s program had the potential to alienate the more conservative. Local autonomy, however, ensured that state and local unions had the liberty to set their own

20 Epstein, 119-20; Bordin, 3.


22 During Willard’s tenure, the WCTU pushed for prison reform, campaigned for the inclusion of Scientific Temperance Instruction (STI) in public school curricula, tried to place homeless children with foster or adoptive parents, and agitated to raise the age of consent for prostitutes. Members also supported a five and one-half-day work week, opposed military training in schools, and worked to promote a morally upright culture through censorship and the production of their own movies, art, and publications. Bordin, 97-116; Alison M. Parker, “Hearts Uplifted and Minds Refreshed: The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union and the Production of Pure Culture in the United States, 1880-1930,” Journal of Women’s History 11, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 135-58.
agendas as long as members paid dues and pledged abstinence. This latitude, the diversity of the national program, and the framing of reform within the context of Victorian womanhood combined to enhance the WCTU’s appeal and make it a vital outlet for women in late nineteenth-century America.

The two decades of Willard’s leadership coincided with the golden age of the American Protestant foreign mission movement, a period when societies proliferated, financial contributions soared, and those in the field worldwide increased more than tenfold. Temperance reformers shared with their missionary counterparts a sense of moral superiority and belief in themselves as God’s chosen and, from the beginning of mission work in the early 1800s, had supported this religious and cultural outreach. Inspired by their view that drinking was an “obstacle to gospel work” and that temperance had to “triumph everywhere” for missions to succeed, they embarked on a movement to export their reform ideas and organizations.

Willard proved to be the catalyst for the internationalization of the WCTU. She attributed her interest in expanding the organization beyond American shores to a visit to San Francisco in 1883. Briefly in her autobiography and later in a handbook for international temperance workers, she wrote that her exposure to the city’s opium dens and Chinese brothels had suddenly awakened her to the need to organize women around the world in defense of the home and themselves. Ian Tyrrell has noted the tendency of historians of the WCTU and

23Epstein, 123-24.

24Tyrrell, 12.

biographers of Willard to perpetuate this claim to a spontaneous conversion to internationalism. Debunking the same, he has argued that Willard demonstrated interest in international work as early as 1875 and helped to organize a WCTU-sponsored convention of temperance women representing four countries in 1876. The subsequent years witnessed sporadic efforts by individuals to spread WCTU ideas and organize unions in Canada, Ireland, England, South Africa, and Australia. 26 Willard moved to consolidate this work and establish a sound basis for further internationalization when, at the WCTU’s national convention in 1883, she proposed the organization of the World’s Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WWCTU). The previous year, Willard had urged Mary Clement Leavitt, who had since quit teaching to devote herself full-time to the WCTU and the suffrage movement, to consider an overseas trip. Leavitt had initially refused, but acquiesced after Willard approached her again in late 1883 on behalf of the WWCTU. 27 Less than one year later, she set sail from San Francisco on a tour that would last seven years, take her to forty-three countries, cover approximately one hundred thousand miles, and turn the WCTU into a truly international force for women’s activism. 28

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26Tyrrell, 19-23.

27Tyrrell has attributed Leavitt’s early reluctance and subsequent change of heart to her elderly father, who passed away in June 1883. Ibid., 11.

28Margaret C. Manns, “First in the Field” (Evanston, Ill.: National WCTU Publishing House, n.d.), 1, Mary Clement Leavitt Folder, Japan Collection, Frances E. Willard Memorial Library, Evanston, Ill. The WWCTU had 766,000 dues-paying members worldwide at its peak in 1927. Tyrrell, 2.
Mary Clement Leavitt and the Introduction of the WCTU to Japan

Leavitt embarked on her voyage as the WWCTU’s first round-the-world missionary with only a few dollars in her purse and no guarantee of any financial support, but firm in her belief that God was with her and that He would provide.29 Her precarious position stemmed from the WWCTU’s own lack of funds. The world organization did not institute a policy of having affiliates pay annual dues until 1891 and only began to offer its missionaries a regular salary in the mid-1890s. Still, the WWCTU’s coffers remained low, largely because the amount requested per member was minimal and many national unions lacked even the wherewithal to pay that. These straitened circumstances necessitated a reliance on special donations from members and supporters worldwide, contributions from locals where WWCTU missionaries traveled, and assistance from denominational missionaries in the field.30 The help of American Protestants stood out as the most important and not just financially. Their years of experience in-country, language abilities, cultural understanding, personal contacts, and institutional ties made them indispensable to the early WWCTU missionaries who were rarely able to acquire the same assets because of the brevity of their stays in any particular country.

After stopping in Hawaii, New Zealand, and Australia, Leavitt landed in Yokohama on the morning of June 1, 1886, with not a soul in sight to greet her. The American Protestant mission community in the port city had received advance notice of her tour, but had thought


30Tyrrell, 37-38, 108.
that she would travel to China first and thus did not expect her for months. Leavitt fully recognized the importance of mission support to the success of her undertaking and, shortly after disembarking, went to missionary residences and the Bible Society rooms, an inter-denominational gathering place, to introduce herself. The acquaintances she made that day included Dr. James and Clara Hepburn, founding members of the Presbyterian mission to Japan. Since arriving in 1859, James had spearheaded the translation of the Old and New Testaments, prepared the first Japanese-English dictionary, taught English, math, theology, and medicine, and operated a successful dispensary where he proselytized while providing care. For her part, Clara had opened a Sunday school at the clinic and had taught English first to adults and then to boys and girls. She quickly extended the helping hand Leavitt so needed when, several days later, she gathered together a group of non-missionary foreign women in Yokohama for Leavitt’s first public address.

Leavitt remarked in a letter reporting on her first weeks in Japan that one of the greatest hindrances to her work to arouse interest in temperance and organize unions was the behavior of non-Christian foreigners. This sentiment mirrored the experience of American Protestant missionaries who had long struggled against the debauchery of foreign sailors.


32 Even before then, Clara Hepburn had taken Leavitt to Tokyo for a student assembly at Graham Seminary, a Presbyterian boarding school for Japanese girls. Isabella Leete, her sister and acting principal, also lent assistance by inviting Leavitt to lodge at the school. *Union Signal*, 5 August 1886, 8-9.

33 *Union Signal*, 12 August 1886, 9.
merchants, and government representatives. Seemingly innocuous, Leavitt’s comment revealed, to borrow a phrase from William Hutchison, a “tension between Christ and culture.” 34 Leavitt and her denominational counterparts believed in American culture as the most civilized, yet, at the same time, they pointed to flaws such as intemperance. They viewed the exportation of these imperfections as impeding their own efforts to transfer a “pure” culture, meaning a Christian one. 35 In fact, Japan’s first temperance society grew out of concern about dissolute behavior among foreigners. This organization, established by foreign residents of Yokohama in 1873, aimed specifically to reform foreign seamen. 36 Nothing is known about the group of women Leavitt first addressed other than that they were not missionaries. Clara Hepburn might have invited them simply because she thought they would be able to attend on short notice. It would be a mistake, however, to disregard as a motivating factor the need, widely perceived by American Protestant missionaries and Leavitt, for a foreign community steeped in Puritan values.


35 Leavitt subtly offered this criticism in several lectures she gave while in Japan. For example, in a talk entitled “Sake no rekishi: Sono seishitsu oyobi gai” [The history of alcohol: Its characteristics and harms], she expressed regret that Japanese were consuming increasing quantities of Western liquor. She blamed this trend largely on a California distillery/winery that was producing for export to Japan. Implied in her renunciation of America’s role in furthering the international drink trade was the idea that the United States was inhibiting the spread of Christian beliefs and morals and preventing the civilization of others. Imamura Kenkichi, Kinshū enzetsushū [Temperance lectures (by Mrs. M. C. Leavitt)] (Osaka: Fukuinsha, 1887), 11.

Despite Hepburn's help, Leavitt felt herself making little progress early on. Her letters and reports indicate that she did meet with individual missionaries, attend church, and speak with students at Sakurai Jogakkō [Sakurai Girls' School], but make no mention of another lecture until June 13, nearly two weeks after her arrival. The day before, Orramel Gulick, a representative of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, had introduced her to Kozaki Hiromichi. Kozaki was of samurai descent and had studied under L. L. Janes at the School of Western Studies in Kumamoto. In spite of his early resistance to Christianity, he had converted in 1876, inspired by Janes's own witness and the steadfastness of his classmates' religious convictions in the face of intense persecution. He had completed his studies at Dōshisha and then begun a pastoral career in Tokyo, a post from which he helped to establish the first Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in Japan and launch Rikugō zasshi [Cosmos magazine], the most influential Christian periodical of the Meiji period. He had also become an adherent to the principle of temperance, and, supportive of Leavitt's mission, he invited her to speak at his church the next day. The assistance he rendered extended beyond this invitation, and he not only interpreted for her

37Leavitt, Report... 1891, 27.

38In January 1876, thirty-five of Janes's students climbed to the top of Mount Hanaoka, where they declared their faith and vowed to spread Christianity. News of their conversion ignited a firestorm of opposition from within the school's doors and the wider community. Among distraught relatives, Yokoi Tokio's mother threatened suicide to restore her family's honor, and Tokutomi Sohō's parents burned his Western books. Despite the persecution, Tokutomi alone recanted and then only temporarily. F. G. Notehelfer, American Samurai: Captain L. L. Janes and Japan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 196-205.

on June 13, but also escorted her the day after on a visit to Minister of Education Mori Arinori. An enlightenment thinker who, in the 1870s, had called for reform of feudal marriage customs to elevate women’s status, Mori was but one member of the Japanese elite with whom Leavitt had contact during her tour. The social standing of her acquaintances was not lost on Leavitt or the WCTU. Frances Willard even stated with pride and some exaggeration at the 1886 WCTU convention that Leavitt had enjoyed more opportunities to interact with high-class Japanese than any other foreigner.

Leavitt’s sense of treading water prior to her meeting with Kozaki quickly evaporated, as she embarked on a rigorous round of private meetings and public lectures. Notable among the latter, she spoke on the fall of the Western race to a YMCA gathering and on temperance to a meeting sponsored by the Kyōfūkai [Moral Reform Society], an organization Japanese ministers had established prior to her tour to “correct” behavior. She also addressed a club of naval surgeons and their wives on the place and power of women and gave a talk entitled “The Testimony of the Scriptures on the Temperance Question” to one thousand members of the Scripture Reading Society. Additional lectures at churches and mission schools both

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40Leavitt, *Report... 1891*, 27.


42*Union Signal*, 11 November 1886, 7. The avenues open to Leavitt did not extend into the imperial palace, as the Imperial Household Ministry refused her request for an audience with the empress. Leavitt, *Report... 1891*, 29.
for Japanese and foreigners filled her schedule before a cholera epidemic and a government ban on public meetings induced her to leave the Tokyo-Yokohama area at the end of July. 43

Leavitt next traveled to Kobe, Kyoto, Osaka, Wakayama, Okayama, and Nagasaki before departing for China in mid-October. With the exception of a month-long retreat on Mount Hiei, she hectically and with great zeal continued to organize and agitate. She spoke more than a dozen times during her week in Kobe, averaged two addresses per day in Okayama, and gave three talks in less than twenty-four hours in Wakayama. 44 One Japanese periodical reporting on her tour claimed that she was so well received that she could “take to the lectern five times in single day.” 45 As it was, her talks repeatedly attracted such crowds that not even standing room was available. The novelty of a Western woman speaking in public contributed to her appeal, as did her words equating the reforms she espoused with Japan’s advancement.

Rumi Yasutake has argued that Leavitt “resorted to scientific and empirical instead of religious language” to make the “temperance cause more appealing to Japanese” after one crowd vociferously rejected her lecture-ending appeal that they convert. 46 She has offered as proof of this switch an address Leavitt gave entitled “Shudoku no iden” [The hereditary influence... 1891, 9.

43 Jogaku zasshi [Woman’s education magazine], no. 28 (5 July 1886): 260; no. 29 (15 July 1886): 278; Union Signal, 26 August 1886, 8; 2 September 1886, 8; Leavitt, Report... 1891, 9.

44 Union Signal, 18 November 1886, 8; 30 December 1886, 8; Leavitt, Report... 1891, 28.

45 Jogaku zasshi, no. 30 (25 July 1886): 295.

46 Yasutake, 81-82.
of alcoholism]. In this speech, Leavitt delineated the physical and mental handicaps children inherited from drinking parents. She introduced her topic, however, by quoting Bible verses that discussed how God visited “the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations.”

Leavitt did become attuned to her environment, and she did realize that the Japanese welcomed “with especial favor everything that [would] improve the nation, and raise it to a higher rank among the nations of the earth.”

She also tailored her message. Her published lectures are replete with references to the medical and economic consequences of drinking, and, in a talk on chastity and concubinage, she spoke more about their effects on race deterioration than about morality, because this was “more effective in Japan.”

The secular tone of much of her rhetoric reflected this awareness, but also the mentality widespread in American Protestantism that one did not have to use specifically religious language to do God’s work. Linked to this idea was the influence of postmillennialism on the thinking of many Christians, particularly those engaged in reform and overseas outreach. The proponents of postmillennialism argued that the purification of society was a necessary step in preparing for the creation of God’s kingdom on earth. This interpretation “encouraged social action toward reform” and shaped an approach that gave priority to the end result over the

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47This verse comes from Judges 13:8. For Leavitt’s entire text, see Jogaku zasshi, no. 28 (5 July 1886): 257-59; no. 29 (15 July 1886): 273-74.

48Union Signal, 30 December 1886, 8.

49Union Signal, 2 September 1886, 8.
arguments employed to achieve it. Leavitt herself was a postmillennialist, and her more secular discourse must be considered against this backdrop. It is also important to remember that the tailoring of her message worked both ways. When she thought her audience would be receptive to Biblical quotations and references to God, she did not shy away from including either, as the title of her talk to the Scripture Reading Society most clearly reveals.

Whether wrapped in religious or scientific lingo, Leavitt's main theme that the acceptance of temperance and monogamy would further the civilization of Japan won her listeners among men and women, Japanese and foreigners, Christians and non-believers. Her advocacy of women's rights as wives and mothers and appeal to women to rouse themselves to action also resonated strongly, especially among missionary women, graduates of and teachers at mission schools for girls, and native Christian men. They heeded her call to organize and established societies from Tokyo to Nagasaki both during and after her tour. For inspiring their interest in temperance, purity, and the elevation of women, Leavitt earned the sobriquet the "second Commodore Perry to the women of Japan."

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50Tyrrell, 24.

51Notto Thelle has pointed out that Christian expansion in the 1880s combined with a feeling of "moral and spiritual decay" to create a sense of crisis among Buddhists. On the one hand, they criticized Christianity, yet, on the other, took inspiration from Christian models of social action as a means to counter this rotting. Thelle has suggested that Leavitt likely stimulated the founding of Hanseikai [Self-Examination Society], a Buddhist temperance group. The society's establishment actually took place two months before her visit, but this timing does not negate the fact that Leavitt and other Christian reformers did arouse Buddhist interest in temperance, purity, and women's rights. Thelle, 196-202.

52*Union Signal*, 19 May 1887, 3.
Iwamoto Yoshiharu and the Organization of the Tokyo WCTU

Among those whom Leavitt truly inspired was Iwamoto Yoshiharu, the second son of a low-level samurai born in 1863. At the age of fourteen, Iwamoto had enrolled at Dōninsha, where he came under the tutelage of the school’s founder, Nakamura Masanao (or Keiu). An early student of and traveler to the West, Nakamura had become convinced that Japan’s only route to equality with the West lay in adopting Western knowledge, practices, and moral values. He devoted himself to “civilizing” and “enlightening” his countrymen and women, most notably by translating Western texts on popular rights, opening Dōninsha, and being a founding and active member of the Meirokusha [Meiji Six Society]. Of particular concern to him was the servile position of Japanese women in society and the home, which he blamed for the country’s backwardness. He charged that women’s lack of education, especially in morals and religion, made them ill-prepared to fulfill their principal duties to raise and educate future generations. In his view, “we must invariably have fine mothers if we want effectively to advance the people to the area of enlightenment and to alter their customs and conditions for the good” of Japan. His acceptance of Victorian ideas of

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53 Established in 1873, the Meirokusha was a society of authorities on the West, which aimed to promote education and enlighten Japanese through discussions about all aspects of contemporary Japan and the dissemination of new ideas.

54 Nakamura set forth this argument in the Meirokusha’s journal. Nakamura Masanao, “Creating Good Mothers,” translated and reprinted in Braisted, 401. For a secondary analysis of this article, see Sievers, 22-23.
womanhood, together with his advocacy of women’s education, had a profound impact on the impressionable Iwamoto, who remained at Dōninsha until he was eighteen.⁵⁵

Nakamura’s influence on Iwamoto also extended into the realm of the spiritual. A devout Christian, he first invited missionaries to give Sunday sermons at Dōninsha and later employed several as boarding instructors. Personal witness, daily prayer meetings and Bible readings, weekly worship, and the use of religious texts in the classroom exposed Iwamoto to Christian beliefs and practices and laid the groundwork for his conversion.⁵⁶ The seeds of his faith were further nurtured in the early 1880s by Tsuda Sen and Kimura Kumaji. After leaving Dōninsha, Iwamoto had briefly studied agriculture under Tsuda, a Meirokusha member and Christian who, like Nakamura, invited missionaries into his school to evangelize. While there, Iwamoto had a chance meeting with Kimura, an American-trained ordained minister who had just returned to Japan after more than a decade abroad. Kimura’s example and guidance and revivals then sweeping Japan intensified Iwamoto’s religious feelings and led to his baptism by Kimura in the spring of 1883.⁵⁷

Kimura also played a fundamental role in shaping Iwamoto’s thinking about women and decision to devote his life to their education and advancement. Kimura had been impressed by the relatively high status and numerous educational opportunities women in the United


⁵⁷Nobeji, 181-84, 194-97.
States enjoyed. While lamenting the limited avenues for schooling open to Japanese women, he criticized missionaries, at the forefront of women’s instruction in Japan, for Americanizing the Christian education they provided. As a counter, in 1885, he and his wife Tōko opened Meiji Jogakkō [Meiji Girls’ School]. Of like mind, Iwamoto participated with other Japanese Christians in the school’s establishment and remained actively involved for the next two decades as a teacher, administrative aide, headmaster, and lastly owner. 58

That same year, two months before the founding of Meiji Jogakkō, Iwamoto and another former Tsuda pupil launched Jogaku zasshi [Woman’s education magazine], Japan’s first mass-circulated periodical for and about women. 59 In this publication, they aimed to enlighten and educate women as to the “ideal” of womanhood, a model based on the Victorian notion of women as having dominion over the home and a special mission as wives and mothers. As Rebecca Copeland has pointed out, this “favoring of domestic roles for women did not mean that they should be relieved of social responsibilities.” 60 Iwamoto believed that women had a duty to improve their own position and status, as well as to work to better the country, and that they could and should do so by exercising their moral authority at home and in society. Far from being an unconditional advocate of women’s social outreach, he supported select outlets for women’s expression and, in the pages of Jogaku


59 In 1888, Jogaku zasshi had a circulation of just over ten thousand, a figure that increased roughly eightfold during the next two years. Kindai Josei Bunkashi Kenkyūkai, ed., Fujin zasshi no yōake [The dawn of women’s magazines] (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1989), 11.

60 Copeland, 27.
zasshi, tried to direct women’s social activism along channels and towards goals he thought appropriate.

One of his earliest attempts to encourage yet shape women’s action was an editorial in the April 1886 issue entitled “Yūryoku naru fujinkai” [An influential women’s society]. By way of introduction, he called the present a golden opportunity for the expansion of women’s rights and argued that “pioneer” women needed to seize the chance to “rescue” their sisters from centuries of submission and “accomplish a revolution of female society.” He identified licensed prostitution and concubinage as the greatest social evils women had to address and then offered a supplemental list that included wives’ lack of rights, inadequate training for daughters as future wives and mothers, and discriminatory marriage and divorce practices. He expressed his hope that, in eradicating these offenses, women would not mirror the actions of men, which he likened to a torrent, but instead “would be noble and mild, like a stream passing under a tree.” More explicitly, he wrote that women should establish an organization with branches throughout the country, publish a magazine and books to educate women and promote morality, and appeal to the government and society for change.61

Less than two months after writing this article, Iwamoto attended the lecture Leavitt gave at Kozaki’s church. He reported that her spirit and eloquent words touched him immensely and her prayer for the conversion of the Japanese people actually moved him to tears. Her Biblical arguments for temperance and public speaking by women resonated strongly, as did

her mission to enlist women as reformers and to organize them into temperance societies. Eager to further her work and realize his own hopes, he published the translation of her talk on the hereditary influence of alcoholism in *Jogaku zasshi* along with a short history of the WCTU, details of her speaking engagements in Tokyo, and news about the work of foreign women to establish a temperance union in Yokohama. He also invited her to speak at what would be the first in a series of lectures the magazine’s publishing company sponsored.

The meeting took place on July 17, and, although Iwamoto had advertised it as for women only, men joined in the audience of over six hundred, including a teenage Yamamoto Gumpei, soon to be the first Japanese officer in the Salvation Army. Leavitt had insisted on a female interpreter, likely to show her expected listeners what a Japanese woman could do in public. With Graham Seminary graduate Watase Kameko next to her at the lectern, she briefly spoke of the need for mothers to abstain from drinking and smoking for the sake of their children, labeled concubinage as “impure,” criticized public undressing and bathing, and recommended reform of Japanese dress. Yajima Kajiko, then principal of Sakurai Jogakko, heard this talk and later claimed that she had understood little because of Watase’s poor interpreting. The transcript of the Japanese lacks the passion and development

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64 Mary Clement Leavitt, “Kain oyobi kanai shofutoku ni taisuru fujin no gimu” [Women’s duties regarding overdrinking and immorality in the home], *Jogaku zasshi*, no. 31 (5 August 1886): 1-3; no. 32 (15 August 1886): 21-22.

characteristic of Leavitt's other speeches and has a shrewish tone. Despite these shortcomings, Leavitt did succeed in arousing interest, and approximately thirty women responded to her appeal to remain after the talk to discuss establishing a temperance society. Names were taken for a WCTU and plans made for a subsequent meeting to accomplish the actual organization before the group adjourned.66

Kimura Tōko was one who pledged to Leavitt that day to organize. Born into a samurai family in 1848, she had married at seventeen and, during the years Kumaji studied in the United States, had struggled to support their son and her birth family. The high hopes she had for future financial security were dashed when he returned and began a ministerial career. His evangelizing, however, soon wore down her own opposition to Christianity, and, after converting, she became an active member of his church, first teaching Sunday school and then establishing a women’s circle whose members made handicrafts and donated the proceeds to charity. Her commitment to advancing women received even greater expression through her work as secretary for the Sokuhatsukai [Women’s Association for Western Coiffures]67 and her management of Meiji Jogakkō.68 On July 24, exactly one week after

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66 Jogaku zasshi, no. 32 (15 August 1886): 22; Union Signal, 2 September 1886, 8.

67 As its name implies, this organization advocated Western hairstyles for women. In 1872, the Meiji government made it illegal for women to abandon their time-consuming traditional butterfly coiffures and to cut their hair short. Sharon Sievers has referred to this law as an attempt by the government to deny women’s “right to participate and contribute actively” to social change. Conversely, the adoption of Western hairstyles was a very visible way for women to assert their voice and right to self-identification. Sievers, 14-15.

68 “Kimura Tōko no den” [A biography of Kimura Tōko], Jogaku zasshi, no. 34 (5 September 1886): 71-77; no. 35 (15 September 1886): 92-95; no. 37 (5 October 1886): 135-36.

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Leavitt's talk, Tōko carried through on her promise and, with thirteen other women, Iwamoto, and Tsuda Sen present, convened a meeting at the school to discuss further the establishment of a WCTU. A follow-up was held on August 8, again at Meiji Jogakkō, at which Tōko and the others deliberated on rules and procedures for membership. Her death from cholera just ten days later brought to a sudden halt the organizational process underway.69

Iwamoto tried to revive interest in a women's temperance society in Tokyo by publishing information about Leavitt's tours of western cities and notifying readers of the establishment of a Japanese union in Kobe. Beginning with the late-September issue of Jogaku zasshi, he also finally printed in serialized form an article Leavitt had contributed, at his request, in early July. In “Nihon no shimai ni tsugu” [To inform my Japanese sisters], Leavitt attributed the great advances Western women had made to Christianity and urged her female readers to believe in God and to strive to fulfill their God-given duties as wives and mothers. She added that arguments against women speaking in public had no Biblical basis,70 and, in an attempt to silence male critics and encourage Japanese women to speak out, she wrote that, "even though it is difficult for women to go beyond their [proper] place as women, they raise the timbre of their voices in order to show the glory of God, protect their families, and refine

69 Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 36.

70 Mainline American churches had long maintained that the Bible strictly prohibited women from speaking or praying before mixed audiences. The public experience women gained in temperance, abolition, and mission movements led many to question the validity of this position. The WCTU itself issued several defenses of women's public voice in the late 1880s. See “Let Your Women Keep Silence in Churches,” Union Signal, 1 July 1886, 7-8; Geo. P. Hays, May Women Speak? A Bible Study (Chicago: Woman's Temperance Publication Association, 1889).
mankind.\textsuperscript{71} Iwamoto also worked behind the scenes with Ōgimi Motoichirō, a pastor and president of the Kyōfūkai, the same organization that had sponsored a Leavitt lecture in early July.\textsuperscript{72} At the urging of both, Ōgimi’s wife Yoneko and Miura Riuko, also married to a minister, decided to arrange yet another preparatory meeting. A preliminary announcement appeared in \textit{Jōgaku zasshi}, along with an abridged version of the WWCTU’s rules, which Iwamoto printed as a “reference” for those who would decide on bylaws for the new organization.\textsuperscript{73}

Miura and Ōgimi Yoneko held their meeting on November 9 at Toranomon Church in Tokyo with forty-one other women, Iwamoto, and Ōgimi Motoichirō present. By consensus, Iwamoto served as secretary and Motoichirō as chairman for an open discussion about the breadth of the agenda the new society should pursue, its name, and membership pledge. Twenty-two women were then chosen as founders and, from this group, seven as committee members entrusted with the task of preparing a constitution and a set of bylaws. At the heart of the deliberations that day lay the question of whether the organization should work for temperance alone or pursue a broader reform agenda. The opinion that intemperance was


\textsuperscript{73}Jōgaku zasshi, no. 40 (5 November 1886): 197, 200; Utsu, 50.
but one of many social evils that the society needed to address prevailed. To reflect this
diversity of purpose, the attendees decided not to include “kinshu” [temperance] in the
society’s name, but instead to borrow from the Kyōfūkai and use the more inclusive word,
“kyōfū” [moral reform]. They also opted against including “Christian.” Records of the meet-
ing make no mention that the issue of a religious marker was even raised with respect to
name.74 This exclusion was by no means an attempt to make the organization secular, nor
did it reveal a lesser religious commitment on the part of the forty-three women who met on
November 9. The pledge they agreed on points to the centrality of God in their thoughts and
intellect to create a society of like-minded Christians. It read: “I pledge, with God’s help, to
use every appropriate method to prohibit and abolish all Japanese and Western liquors,
tobacco, and other things harmful to manners and customs.”75

Shortly thereafter, Iwamoto again used his pen to lend encouragement, guidance, and a
legitimizing voice to women’s efforts to organize. In an editorial published in mid-
November, he stressed that Japanese women lacked experience and influence and needed to
unite in order to accomplish change. He wrote that they should work together to promote
women’s education, abolish prostitution, enact legislation whereby women could inherit
property, revise marriage and divorce laws preferential to men, and otherwise expand
women’s rights. He also defended the decision of November 9 to name the soon-to-be
organized women’s society in Tokyo the Fujin Kyōfūkai [Woman’s Moral Reform Society].

74 Jogaku zasshi, no. 41 (15 November 1886): 16-17; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin
Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 36-37.

75 Jogaku zasshi, no. 44 (15 December 1886): 76.
Specifically, he pointed out that, while the word “temperance” appeared in the WWCTU’s name, that organization aimed to reform morality overall. He added that the new society in Tokyo would do likewise and with, as he implied, a more fitting title. In short, the Japanese organization would “respond to the needs of contemporary Japan at the same time that it would make clear the spirit of the WWCTU.”

The formal establishment of this society, which I shall call in English the Tokyo WCTU, occurred on December 6, 1886. That afternoon, about one hundred gathered at Nihombashi Church, and, after an opening hymn, prayer, and a statement as to the society’s purpose, the Reverends Ebina Danjō and Tamura Naomi spoke about the responsibilities of Christian women and women in the United States respectively. An appeal for members followed and

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77I would argue that “Tokyo WCTU” is not a misnomer for this society. Iwamoto clearly saw it as working in the tradition of the WWCTU, and Japanese writing in English referred to it likewise. Moreover, members of the organization made the identification quite visibly themselves with the inaugural cover of their periodical, which bore the initials “WCTU” in the upper left-hand corner.

78One of Japan’s most influential theologians, Ebina had studied at L. L. Janes’s School of Western Studies in Kumamoto and had converted while there. He completed his education at Dōshisha, and, after serving as pastor at numerous churches throughout Japan, he returned as the school’s president. Tamura, introduced to Christianity by Dutch Reformed missionaries, had studied theology in Tokyo and gained his own pulpit at twenty-three. In 1893, he published, in English, The Japanese Bride, a comparative study of American and Japanese marriage practices. For “exposing” the subordinate place of Japanese women in the family, he was harshly criticized and divested of his ministry in the Nihon Kirisuto Kyōkai, an interdenominational federation of Japanese Christians. He continued to minister independently until his reinstatement three decades latter. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishishi Daijiten Henshū kai, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten, 195; Kudō Eiichi, Meiji-ki no Kirisutokyō: Nihon Purotesutanto shiwa [Meiji-period Christianity: Historical tales of Japanese Protestants] (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1979), 210-12.
then, after a short recess, elections for officers. The initial membership roster included fifty-one women, Iwamoto, and another Japanese gentleman, the latter two of whom had joined as special members. Their purpose was to "reform the evil ways of society, cultivate morals, prohibit drinking and smoking, and promote women's dignity."

The catalyst for the birth of the Tokyo WCTU was the visit of Mary Clement Leavitt, but the success of her efforts to arouse interest in temperance and women's advancement would have fallen on deaf ears had she toured Japan even a decade earlier. The previous work of American Protestant missionaries and widespread concern with modernization and Westernization had helped to create an audience receptive to her message and eager to heed her calls to organize and reform. The fifty-three members of the Tokyo WCTU did just that and embarked on a program that would shape the definition of Christian social activism in the Meiji period.

79 Special membership was open to men and women for an annual fee nearly three times that of regular members. In permitting men to join as honorary, non-voting members, the Tokyo WCTU was following in the footsteps of the WCTU and WWCTU. *Jogaku zasshi*, no 44 (15 December 1886): 75-76; Yajima Kajiko, "Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai ryakushi" [A brief history of the Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union], in Wirādo Furanshisu [Frances Willard], *Bankoku Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai annai* [Guide to the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union (Original title: Do Everything)], trans. by Ukai Takeshi (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1898), 49-50.

80 *Jogaku zasshi*, no. 44 (15 December 1886): 76.
CHAPTER TWO

THE TUMULTUOUS EARLY YEARS OF THE TOKYO WCTU: 1886-1892

An atmosphere of purpose and potential permeated the founding meeting of the Tokyo WCTU on December 6, 1886, and propelled the society’s inaugural members to act quickly to accomplish both. The union enjoyed spectacular growth in its first two years as a result; yet, persistent ideological differences and personal conflicts undermined organizational cohesion and left the union and the larger reform movement in which members participated divided by 1892. This chapter will focus on the tumult of these early years. It will begin with a short collective biography of the union’s first leaders to underscore what motivated and initially united them. It will next discuss measures they implemented to spread their message and strengthen and expand the WCTU’s organizational base and then examine the causes and ramifications of the discord.

Women Reformers

The Tokyo WCTU’s founders and first executives by no means typified the average Meiji woman. Her profile in 1886 was that of a married rural resident who toiled daily to meet her family’s basic subsistence needs and increasingly onerous tax obligations and who, therefore, lacked the leisure and money that active membership in the union required.¹ She also had

¹The society’s inaugural rules stipulated that regular members had to pay at least three sen per month to be in good standing. That figure equaled the cost of a bowl of noodles in 1887, a sum not exorbitant but still prohibitive for many. Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 39.
received little more than a rudimentary education in reading and writing, if even that. Thus, she remained entrenched in a community that assumed men’s superiority over women and was largely untouched by Western-inspired discussions about women’s roles, rights, and responsibilities.

This is not to assert that the early leaders of the Tokyo WCTU had nothing in common with their contemporaries. Of the twenty-eight women chosen in November and December 1886 as founders, constitutional and bylaw committee members, executives, and officers, the identities of nine can be confirmed with varying degrees of biographical detail. All nine then faced significant financial and time constraints, which might have precluded their service. The recently widowed Ushioda Chiseko worked as a kindergarten teacher and evangelist to support herself and her five children. Yajima Kajiko, a divorcée, served as principal of Sakurai Jogakko, an American foreign mission-backed girls’ school, which offered elementary, secondary, and nursing instruction. Asai Saku likewise earned her own living by running a private school for boarders and commuters with the help of her only son. The other six were married to prominent public Christian figures whose work earned modest salaries, required them to rely heavily on their spouses to maintain the home front, and, in some situations, even involved their wives in complementary roles. Moreover, of these six, at least two had very young children needing almost constant care and attention. That these

2 The six were: Yuasa Hatsuko, married to Jirō, a member of the Gunma prefectural assembly, a church deacon, and owner of a soy sauce and miso factory; Ebina Miya, wife of Danjō, the evangelist and ordained minister who spoke at the union’s founding meeting; Shimada Masako, whose husband Saburō served as a Kanagawa assemblyman and a writer and editor for Mainichi shimbun [The daily paper]; Sasaki Toyoju, who was wed to Motoe, a doctor; and, Ōgimi Yoneko and Miura Rinko, both wives of pastors, as mentioned in chap. 1.
two, Yuasa Hatsuko and Sasaki Toyoju, respectively operated a nursery school at home and directed a women’s sewing circle while tending to their own highlights how unaccustomed either was to an idle life.3

The fact that such family and work obligations did not deter these nine women from active service in the Tokyo WCTU gives pause. Their involvement had to do with what most distinguished them collectively, namely, their faith and their firm belief in the importance of reforming behavior as well as improving the position of women. Ushioda’s background illustrates this particularly well. While in her thirties, Ushioda came under the influence of Methodist missionaries. These evangelists stressed individual conversion and acceptance of Christ’s teachings as the “good news of human liberation.” They argued as well that a life of faith entailed living free of sin and, even more importantly, giving daily witness to Christ’s example. According to historian Kudō Eiichi, their words and association of a “pure” life with chastity and abstinence from alcohol and tobacco resonated with Ushioda and formed an integral part of her own belief system. Equally crucial in shaping her future activism were the struggles that she endured as a widow. Her limited education and lack of practical skills at the time of her husband’s death hindered opportunity for gainful employment. Only after years of sacrifice did she acquire proper training to earn a respectable

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living. Her experiences during this period made her keenly aware of the disadvantages women faced and, together with her faith, caused her to lend a receptive ear to Mary Clement Leavitt’s message of reform. 4

Ushioda’s cohorts followed different paths as they moved toward activism. They also came to accept Christianity through disparate processes. Puritan values and a strong sense of social responsibility as Christians and as women, however, united them. As with Ushioda, American Protestants played a profound role in instilling these values and inspiring social consciousness. 5 For Yajima, it was Presbyterian Maria True; for Sasaki, it was Mary Kidder of the Dutch Reformed Church. Both True and Kidder had spearheaded educational outreach among Japanese women, and the emphasis they placed upon elevating their sex through learning, living a righteous life, and believing in the Bible and the power of prayer left indelible marks on the psyches of Yajima and Sasaki. As critical was the example they presented themselves of socially concerned, publicly active women. 6

4Kudō Eiichi, “Ashio kōdoku jiken ni okeru Ushioda Chiseko: Kirisutokyō no mondai o chūshin ni shite” [Ushioda Chiseko and the Ashio mine pollution incident: A focus on the issue of Christianity], Mita Gakkai zasshi 75, no. 3 (June 1982): 4-7.

5Available sources reveal virtually nothing about Ōgimi, Miura, and Shimada beyond marital status. Whether they had ties with missionaries thus remains uncertain. Given that foreigners converted the vast majority of Japanese Christians during the first three decades following Japan’s opening, it is not groundless to think that missionaries had at least some impact on these three. As for Asai, she did not receive the rite of baptism until 1893. Earlier writings, however, reveal that her faith was quite deep by the late 1880s. Again, records do not reveal details about her early exposure to Christianity, but she might have been introduced by missionaries or Yajima at Sakurai Jogakkō, where she taught for a number of years before opening her private school in 1884. Katano, “Asai Saku oboegaki,” 20-24.

6Takamizawa, 12-14; Utsu, 40-41.
As for Yuasa Hatsuko and Ebina Miya, one of their greatest guiding forces was L. L. Janes, a fervently religious layman and former officer in the United States army who was hired in 1871 to teach at a school of Western studies in Kumamoto. As young girls, both Yuasa and Ebina had brothers who enrolled at Janes’s institute, and the young girls clamored to attend as well. Initially, Janes’s wife taught them, but her resignation shortly afterward left them without an instructor. Undeterred, they insisted on pursuing their studies, even though that meant sitting in the hallway outside the boys’ classroom without desks or a heater. Little time passed before their “classmates” objected to their presence. Janes responded by pointing out that the boys’ mothers were also female. This simple reply, grounded in his belief that women had the same abilities as men to learn and the same duty to help build a new Japan, planted in the malleable minds of Yuasa and Ebina a sense of self-worth and of obligation. As influential in molding their characters were Janes’s assertion that a Christian life entailed strict adherence to Puritan values and his depiction of Christianity as a faith best expressed through service to one’s community and country.

Janes’s patriotic rhetoric echoed that of male and female denominational missionaries and the Meiji state. It is no wonder, given their respective influence in shaping early members of the Tokyo WCTU, that the union worked for the sake of “country,” as well as for “God” and “home.” Society members also acted for “self,” a word far less eleemosynary than the other three, but equally important to understanding their motivations. Membership in the

7Ebina’s future husband was then also a student at the school, and his later support of his wife’s public activities doubtless owed much to Janes’s influence.

WCTU provided a forum for social exchange and intellectual stimulation and offered release from the drudgery of household chores and work obligations. This combination undoubtedly influenced the decisions of many to join. So did the opportunity for meaningful service, as illustrated by the range of activities leaders initiated in the weeks and months after December 6, 1886.

The Initial Flourish of Activity

A mere three weeks after that auspicious day, a handful of Tokyo WCTU members gathered to develop plans to convene regular meetings for executives and the rank-and-file. Such gatherings would serve as valuable forums for members to discuss potential activities, plan or delegate responsibility, keep informed about relevant issues, and be rejuvenated. The WCTU’s rules included provisions for periodic meetings, along with special prayer sessions and conferences, and talk of a meeting program for the following year dominated the conversation in late December. The resulting schedule was nothing if not rigorous. Executives met roughly once a month to discuss plans to publish and distribute free temperance tracts, as well as the status of dues and other such business matters. Regular members gathered almost as frequently for meetings at churches all around Tokyo. These sessions typically began and ended with prayer and hymns and included as the main attraction a speech by a distinguished male Christian. The society also celebrated its first anniversary with an afternoon of reports by the secretary and treasurer, officer re-elections, and inspirational speeches. The event continued into the evening with a banquet to which honorary members and other

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9 As of January 1888, the monthly cost of regular membership went up to five sen. Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfukai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 54.
select supporters were invited. At the table, Kushida Shigeko delivered an impassioned plea about the union’s need for an office to facilitate operations. Her appeal netted nearly ¥200, a figure that fell far short of the total needed, yet clearly reflected the zeal of those who gave and the promise they saw in the society’s future.¹⁰

Like these executive, regular, and anniversary gatherings, public lectures served as a critical means of outreach for the WCTU in 1887 and remained a core activity throughout the Meiji period. Activists in the movement for freedom and popular rights had made extensive use of public lectures in the 1870s to rally widespread support for the establishment of a national assembly. The success of speakers in stimulating open criticism of the government in urban and rural areas led the state to impose harsh restrictions on public meetings. Permit requirements and a prohibition on advertising for political assemblies, among other constraints, ultimately contributed to the collapse of the movement in the mid-1880s.¹¹ These same repressive measures, however, failed to squelch enthusiasm for or lessen usage of public lectures. The podium had proven to be an effective tool for influencing citizens and the state, which, in 1881, had acquiesced to public clamor and declared its intent to draft a constitution and set up a national assembly by 1890.¹² This fact was not lost on moral and


¹¹For a detailed examination of women’s participation in the movement for freedom and popular rights and of the social critiques and political demands they issued from public podiums, see Sievers, 26-53.

¹²Hane, Modern Japan, 118-26.
social reformers. During the second half of the Meiji period, temperance and anti-prostitution groups in particular came to rely heavily on the lectern to propagate reform principles and generate support for specific campaigns. In so doing, they followed the example of Iwamoto Yoshiharu and the leaders of the Tokyo WCTU.

The latter sponsored four public assemblies in 1887 and at least three the next year, one of which spanned several evenings. The rosters of speakers represented a veritable “Who’s Who” of the Japanese Christian community and included the Reverends Ibuka Kajinosuke, Matsuyama Takayoshi, Hoshino Mitsuta, and Yokoi Tokio.13 The final meeting of 1887 also found Dutch Reformed missionary Guido Verbeck and members Sasaki, Yuasa, and Kushida at the lectern. Notable among those who spoke in 1888 were Pandita Ramabai of India’s WCTU and the WWCTU’s Emma Ryder, who visited Japan briefly while en route from the WCTU’s convention in Philadelphia to India, where they planned to build a home for young high-caste widows.14 Such participation by foreigners and eminent native men lent the Tokyo WCTU’s public lectures and the union itself an air of respectability and authority vital to the nascent group. Equally important, their presentations offered the promise of attracting

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13Ibuka was the husband of a WCTU member, an ordained minister, and a director of Tokyo’s Meiji Gakuin, where he also taught. Matsuyama was a staff member at Dōshisha and pastor of Kyoto’s Heian Church and had earlier helped to compile Japan’s first hymnal and translate the Old and New Testaments. Hoshino, a former pupil of Nakamura Masanao, was an evangelist and an ordained minister with his own pulpit in Gunma. Yokoi, Yajima’s nephew, had studied under Janes and at Dōshisha and was then jointly serving as pastor of a church in Tokyo and contributing to Rikugo zasshi. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Linkai, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten, 130, 1257, 1284, 1333, 1463.

more diverse audiences than might have been the case had the programs included only Japanese women.

To maximize that potential, the society’s leaders advertised in advance in *Jogaku zasshi* and a range of other periodicals and held all but two of the meetings in 1887 and 1888 at Kōseikan, a public hall in central Tokyo. This facility provided a more neutral setting than a church and could easily accommodate one thousand people, an audience far larger than any Protestant chapel in the capital could seat. Regardless, the hall still proved too small for the union’s first lecture, as simple curiosity and sincere interest produced a standing-room-only crowd and forced members to turn dozens away at the door. Many of those who did find space were very likely surprised that the meeting had a decidedly religious flavor despite the secular setting. For example, the gathering began with a prayer and an instrumental rendition of a hymn.\(^\text{15}\) In addition, Ibuka used the platform to argue that the only way for the Japanese to reform society and improve women’s status was to “borrow the power of Christianity.”\(^\text{16}\) Such religious content reflected members’ hopes of winning more to the Christian faith as well as their agreement with Ibuka’s claim. Subsequent public lectures continued to include hymns and prayers, and statistics reveal that attendance suffered little as a result. Meetings

\(^{15}\) *Jogaku zasshi*, no. 55 (12 March 1887): 98.

\(^{16}\) Ibuka Kajinosuke, “Kirisutokyō to fujin no chiī” [Christianity and the position of women], *Jogaku zasshi*, no. 58 (2 April 1887): 147-52; no. 59 (9 April 1887): 165-66; no. 60 (16 April 1887): 185-87. Quoted from no. 58, 148.
in November 1887 and December 1888 each attracted one thousand, and a three-day event in March 1888 drew over two thousand listeners.\textsuperscript{17}

In late December 1887, Tokyo WCTU executives decided to employ yet another familiar technique for spreading their reform message and stimulating organizational growth when they voted to launch a monthly periodical. Their determination to publish placed them squarely within the tradition of Japan's burgeoning modern press. As James Huffman has observed, Japan's increased contact with the West after the 1850s resulted in a growing awareness in elite circles of the importance of news and the power of the press to mold public opinion. A rash of newspaper publications critical of the new Meiji government in the spring of 1868 induced officials to enact the first in a series of laws to control the press. Yet, many in government continued to see regularly published periodicals with information and editorial opinions as a vital tool for civilizing commoners and making them agents of Japan's modernization. Officials thus sponsored the development of a daily press in the first years of the Meiji period. They withdrew their patronage, however, in the mid-1870s in the face of fiscal constraints, political crises, and most noticeably the growing voice of government critics in print. Freedom and popular rights advocates in particular began to debate state policy issues in established and newly created papers. In so doing, they came to envision their role in the news media not as simple transmitters of what the government

\textsuperscript{17}For the March 1888 meetings, the Tokyo WCTU borrowed a slide machine in order to illustrate the physiological harms of drinking. The machine was a curious contraption to most Japanese at the time, and the novelty of seeing how it worked combined with word of mouth resulted in a near doubling in attendance from the first evening to the last. \textit{Jogaku zasshi}, no. 84 (12 November 1887): 80/3; \textit{Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi}, no. 1 (14 April 1888): 16-17; no. 10 (19 January 1889): 20.
deemed as enlightened, but as citizens who had their own views about how Japan should modernize and who felt a duty to shape public and private thinking in line with those views.\textsuperscript{18} This new understanding of journalistic responsibility transcended newspapers and came to characterize many of the magazines published during the mid-to-late Meiji period, including Jogaku zasshi and the Tokyo WCTU’s monthly, Tōkyō fūjin kyōfū zasshi [Tokyo woman’s moral reform magazine].

The inaugural issue of Tōkyō fūjin kyōfū zasshi appeared in April 1888, a year that saw the publication of no fewer than eight periodicals directed primarily toward female readers. This figure represents but a small fraction of the approximately one hundred sixty women’s magazines published between 1877 and 1912. Increasing rates of literacy contributed to this boom. So did the pronounced concern of publishers and editors to encourage women either to become the Confucian-influenced “good wives and wise mothers” [ryōsai kembo] of state policy or to embody the ideals of Christian womanhood.\textsuperscript{19} Regulations as of 1888 allowed women to publish magazines on topics related to learning and the arts, but prohibited all but native men twenty years of age and older from producing regularly printed media that dealt with social and political issues. Tokyo WCTU executives had no intention of so restricting the content of Tōkyō fūjin kyōfū zasshi. They wanted to use the pages of the magazine to agitate for social change, yet retain editorial control themselves. So, they created an

\textsuperscript{18} James L. Huffman, \textit{Creating a Public: People and Press in Meiji Japan} (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1997), 24-75.

\textsuperscript{19} These two visions personified competing ideas about the role women should play in Japan’s modernization. Katō Keiko, “Josei to jōhō: Meiji-ki no fūjin zasshi kōkoku o tōshite” [Women and information: Advertisements in Meiji-period women’s magazines], \textit{Shimbun Kenkyūgo nempo} 32 (1989): 31-33; Kindai Josei Bunkashi Kenkyūkai, ed., 4-41.

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organizational structure for the magazine that abided by the letter, but not the spirit, of the law. On the back page of the first issue, they credited two men, Iwamoto and special member Fukuhara Yūshirō, as editor, and publisher and printer, respectively. Regular members Sasaki and Asai were listed only as part of the editorial committee, yet they exerted real control. 20 Using the former’s home as headquarters, the two produced the maiden issue of Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, which quickly won praise as the nation’s only magazine for women actually by women. 21

Twenty-two pages long and priced at six sen per copy, the first issue opened with editorials by Asai and Sasaki. Asai appealed to readers to aid the WCTU in its mission to reform Japanese customs, and Sasaki provided ideological support for the periodical and for the public role members had assumed. In particular, Sasaki argued that women’s nature and thoughts differed from men’s and that these differences prevented men from knowing what women truly believed. Therefore, women had to end their reliance on men and begin to express themselves with their own voices. 22 After these opinion pieces came a biographical

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20 Sasaki and Asai flaunted their control from the second issue. While they continued to credit men as editor, publisher, and printer in Japanese, they added a special mention in English that identified first Sasaki and then later Asai as the editor.


22 Asai Saku, “Kyōfūkai no nōkuteki” [The purpose of the WCTU], Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 1 (14 April 1888): 1-4; Sasaki Toyoju, “Onore no omoi” [My own thoughts], ibid., 4-5.
sketch of the WWCTU’s president, a letter from Frances Willard to the Tokyo WCTU, a talk by Randolph Churchill in favor of prohibition in England, and an article on the repatriation of Japanese prostitutes from Hong Kong. The inaugural issue also carried reports of other reform societies, details of WCTU meetings, a list of new members, an advertisement for *Jogaku zasshi*, and three songs Sasaki had composed for use at union meetings and for family and individual prayer.

Collectively, this content reflected Asai and Sasaki’s advocacy for temperance, an end to prostitution, and greater rights and a voice for women. These additional materials also served to encourage and celebrate membership in the WCTU and to promote union activities, all for the purpose of organizational growth. Furthermore, by including Sasaki’s prayer songs, the magazine also functioned as an evangelizing tool. No single component of the periodical made its religious orientation clearer than the cover. The front showed an angel in the shape of a Japanese woman floating before a globe, with the islands of Japan visible. From her right hand cascaded cards bearing the title of the magazine and the Tokyo WCTU’s name, while, in the upper left corner, a cross shot rays of light in all directions. The symbolism of members widely espousing reform principles as God’s light shone down on them is clear. So is the depiction of the WCTU as the agent of reform that would enable Japan to become an equal of the nations dwarfing the island country on the globe.

During the early days of the Tokyo WCTU, members did indeed resemble this image as they reached beyond Tokyo to espouse their values. News of the society’s establishment generated requests for lecturers from nearby prefectures, and officers responded by

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23 *Tokyō fujin kyōfū zasshi*, no. 1 (14 April 1888).
embarking on many organizational trips. In the first five months of 1888 alone, members traveled to Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa to stimulate discussion about reform, counsel individuals interested in establishing unions, advertise for *Tokyo fujin kyōfū zasshi*, and win members for the WCTU itself. In August 1887, the Tokyo WCTU also printed a thousand copies of a prospectus and began to distribute these at meetings and in letters to Japanese throughout the homeland and abroad. An abridged English version appeared two months later in *Union Signal*, courtesy of Nemoto Sho. Then studying at the University of Vermont under the auspices of railroad tycoon and temperance advocate Frederick Billings, Nemoto had earlier notified the WWCTU of the Tokyo union’s establishment and had since translated a newspaper article about one of the society’s public lectures for reprinting in *Union Signal*.

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24 Honorary member Tsuda Sen assisted in this outreach by speaking and organizing on behalf of the society while on a six-week tour of four prefectures in the spring of 1888. *Tokyo fujin kyōfū zasshi*, no. 2 (19 May 1888): 13, 22; no. 3 (16 June 1888): 14.

25 Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., *Hyakunenshi*, 54. See the next section for detail on this prospectus.

26 *Union Signal*, 27 October 1887, 7.

27 *Union Signal*, 26 May 1887, 9; 28 July 1887, 7. Nemoto was born in 1851 into a pro-Tokugawa samurai family, and he received an education steeped in Confucianism as a youth. After the Meiji Restoration, he moved to Tokyo where he pursued Western learning at Dōninsha. He continued his studies with missionaries in Kobe and Yokohama and, under their influence, converted to Christianity in 1878. Over the next decade, he studied at various schools in the United States, finally graduating from the University of Vermont in 1889. He returned to Japan one year later and became a government servant. He also deeply immersed himself in the temperance movement and continued to report to the WWCTU on temperance activism in his homeland. *Japan Evangelist* 7, no. 10 (October 1900): 309-10; Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Iinkai, ed., *Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten*, 1085.
These specific steps, taken primarily to publicize the WCTU’s existence and purpose and to garner support, reaped great rewards. Of the 4,530 copies of the magazine distributed in 1888, nearly one-third went to readers residing outside of the capital.\textsuperscript{28} Moreover, the union’s membership roster increased dramatically after the prefectural tours.\textsuperscript{29} The novelty of the WCTU, the continued popularity of Westernization, and ongoing growth in the Christian community acted as external catalysts for this expansion. To overlook the work of WCTU members themselves, however, would be a mistake. That the union’s membership roughly quadrupled in 1887 and more than doubled in 1888 speaks to the enthusiasm and conviction of executives and the rank-and-file, and to the range and number of activities they undertook during these years.\textsuperscript{30}

The Fight for Ideological Control Between Yajima Kajiiko and Sasaki Toyoju

The Tokyo WCTU’s initial spurt of public activity and the phenomenal growth the society enjoyed belied, however, the existence of ideological differences, personal animosities, and repeated power struggles among leading members. The turmoil generated did not render the union completely ineffective, but it did contribute to a marked decline in membership after 1888 and gave rise to intense criticism from within the organization and the larger Christian community. Yajima and Sasaki, the WCTU’s first president and secretary, initially stood at

\textsuperscript{28}Kindai Josei Bunkashi Kenkyūkai, ed., 16.

\textsuperscript{29}For lists of those who pledged membership in 1888 up through July, see the inside back covers of: Tōkyō fujin kyōgū zasshi, no. 1 (14 April 1888); no. 2 (19 May 1888); no. 3 (16 June 1888); no. 4 (21 July 1888).

\textsuperscript{30}As of December 31, 1888, the number of dues-paying members totaled 546, of whom 102 were special members. Fewer than thirty had joined only to withdraw their membership by this date. Tōkyō fujin kyōgū zasshi, no. 11 (16 February 1889): 20-21.
the center of the storm. Separated by twenty years in age and dissimilar childhoods, they differed in their views of reform priorities and advocated divergent approaches to social action.

The more conservative yet persistent of the two, Yajima was born in 1833 into a well-to-do Kumamoto peasant family. Her parents so despaired that she was a girl, their sixth, rather than a boy that they left her nameless until one of her sisters took pity and provided the infant with an appellation. Her upbringing reflected the ideology of danson johi [respect men and despise women] that had informed this reception. Like her sisters, she received no formal education and instead learned to read and write by simply transcribing copies of the Chinese classics and Onna daigaku [The greater learning for women]. The latter defined “proper” conduct for wives and stressed above all else women’s obedience to men. Yajima’s mother further instilled this message through personal example and practical instruction in household management, including lessons in how to handle servants and brew sake. At the relatively advanced age of twenty-five, Yajima finally assumed the role of wife herself when her brother arranged her marriage to Hayashi Shichirō. Hayashi had been wed twice before and had three young children, yet his samurai status and financial security made him appear to be a good match. He loved sake, however, and became physically abusive when drunk. Yajima endured his violent outbursts and bore him three more children over the next decade before she fled to her parents’ home and declared her intention never to return to her husband by cutting her hair short.31 This act elicited great condemnation from family and neighbors.

31For centuries, women had signaled their withdrawal from active life by cutting their hair, a symbol of their physical beauty.
After five troubled years of relying on her sisters’ hospitality and moving peripatetically, she relocated to Tokyo to care for her ailing brother, a civil servant then working in the capital.

Once in Tokyo, Yajima enrolled in a one-year teacher training course, having a desire to learn and seeing an opportunity for economic independence in the state’s decision to make primary education compulsory. Soon thereafter she found employment in a public elementary school, where her skills were rewarded with an initial salary and later raises more typical of male than female teachers. A spark of interest in Christianity and the news that Presbyterian missionary Maria True wanted to hire a Japanese woman to help her run Shinei Jogakkō [Shinei Girls’ School] led Yajima to apply for the job five years later in 1878.32 True found Yajima’s enthusiasm and seriousness appealing and, overlooking her habit of smoking and limited knowledge of Christianity, hired her. True’s daily witness to her own faith and decision to have her new assistant teach Bible and ethics classes nurtured in Yajima a belief in God and support for Puritan values. Before long, Yajima replaced her pipe with a hymnal and the Scriptures, and, in late 1879, she publicly professed her faith and was baptized by True’s compatriot, David Thompson. Yajima’s facility at administration and teaching led True to appoint her principal of Sakurai Jogakkō the next year when True and her mission board assumed financial responsibility for the school. In that capacity, Yajima oversaw the merger of Shinei and Sakurai in 1889, and she subsequently served as head of

32 The product of a very pious New York family, True professed her own faith at the age of fifteen when a revival swept her community. She married a minister shortly thereafter and worked at his side to proselytize. Following his death in 1871, she vowed to fulfill his dream of foreign mission work. After a brief stint in China, she arrived in Japan in 1874 and undertook evangelistic and educational outreach on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Inkai, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten, 940.
the new institution, named Joshi Gakuin [Women’s Academy], until her retirement in 1921 at the age of eighty-two. 33

Shortly after arriving in Tokyo and years before she met True, Yajima had an affair with a married man and became pregnant. She attempted to mitigate the scandal by entrusting her newborn daughter to the care of a farming family and then, once the child reached school age, by adopting her. In keeping with this subterfuge, Yajima never spoke publicly about the affair, and her secret only became widely known after her death, when her nephew, Tokutomi Roka, divulged it in a censorious article. 34 Historian Katano Masako has postulated that the burden of hiding this secret manifested itself in Yajima’s tenaciousness and in her profound sense of responsibility for the success of the WCTU. 35 Yajima’s silence makes any assessment about the psychological impact of having and hiding an illegitimate child little more than speculation. Her reticence did not, however, extend to the experiences that led her to


35Katano Masako, “Fujin Kyōfūkai ni miru haishō undō no shisō: Futatabi tennōseika no sei to ningen o megutte” [Thoughts displayed by the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union about the movement to abolish licensed prostitution: Sex and humans under the emperor system once again], in *Josei to bunka III: Ie, kazoku, katei*, ed. Ningen Bunka Kenkyūkai (Tokyo: JCA Shuppan, 1984), 245.
become a fierce proponent of temperance. While she rarely identified her husband’s abuse as a cause, she repeatedly referred to her early years as a teacher and the link she saw between parental drinking and a child’s poor performance in the classroom. For example, in a 1902 speech, she related how she had initially thought it odd that some of her students made no headway with their lessons despite great effort. One day, she accompanied one of her slowest home only to find the child’s father inebriated. Additional home visits and questions to her class revealed that all of her students who struggled had drinking parents, a fact that made her realize that, thanks to heredity, “sake not only destroyed families and weakened individuals,” but also “enfeebled precious citizens from all over Japan.”

A recent transplant to Tokyo from a distant rural area, Yajima likely lacked at the time a sound understanding of the principles of heredity. Whether she already had the clearly defined nationalistic consciousness this story displays is also questionable. What is certain is that her experiences teaching heightened her concern about the harm of drink. So inclined, she accepted Leavitt’s call to women to agitate against alcohol and, at the November 1886 organizational meeting of the Tokyo WCTU, argued that “kinshū” [temperance] should be included in the union’s name because intemperance represented such a profound threat. Sasaki countered with an impassioned statement about how the society needed to address a broader range of social evils and how “kyōfū” [moral reform] should be used instead as this term better reflected such an agenda. Sasaki prevailed, although the resolution of the name issue did not settle disagreement over reform priorities. Quite the opposite, difference of

opinion persisted, and the election of Yajima as president and Sasaki as secretary impended trouble. As Utsu Yasuko has written, their appointments imbued the Tokyo WCTU from the very beginning with an “air of two great women who did not see eye to eye.”

Differences in upbringing and in education in particular contributed to this ideological gap. Whereas Yajima was raised to accept women’s subservience to men and received only the training necessary to become a “good” wife, Sasaki enjoyed freedoms and educational opportunities customarily given only to boys. Indeed, her samurai father treated her after her birth in 1853 in Miyagi Prefecture just as he would have the sole son he had previously lost. For example, he permitted her to pursue her studies as far as she wanted and encouraged her to develop her talents to their utmost. He also placed responsibility for the family’s financial well-being on her shoulders after his dismissal from official service in 1869. Sasaki took full advantage of this liberal and liberating upbringing and, in the process, developed a profound sense of her own potential that bordered on conceit. She became especially self-assured about her ability to influence others, as the following anecdote from her teen years reveals. Dressed in a man’s clothes, she would race her horse through the streets of Sendai and castigate juvenile delinquents and scoundrels for their behavior. Sasaki never wrote about these crusades herself, so the specific conduct she found objectionable remains murky. Her rides, however, presaged her future work as a WCTU reformer and her tendency toward outspokenness and confrontation to accomplish her goals.

Sasaki’s commitment to the WCTU’s Puritan values and Christian faith began to take root in the early 1870s after she moved to Yokohama to further her education. There she enrolled

37Utsu, 54.
in the girls’ school run by Dutch Reformed missionary Mary Kidder. Kidder then focused her instruction on English and Christianity, although she paid special attention to the latter with Sunday worship services, daily group readings from the Book of Mark, and regular use of the scriptures in the classroom. Utsu, Sasaki’s foremost biographer, has postulated that the decidedly evangelical nature of Kidder’s instruction and her reliance on the Bible helped to instill in Sasaki belief in the “sanctity of the individual” and in the “equality of all” before God. Kidder’s advocacy of monogamy likely reinforced both while sharpening Sasaki’s consciousness of the inferior and precarious position of women in Japanese society.

Sasaki’s subsequent studies at Nakamura Masanao’s Dōninsha built upon the religious foundations Kidder had laid and further refined Sasaki’s thinking about women’s roles and rights. As mentioned in chapter one, Nakamura firmly believed that women’s education and the elevation of their status were vital to Japan’s development as a civilized nation. In keeping with that conviction, he opened Dōninsha to women in 1874 and formally established a

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38Born in 1834, Kidder decided at an early age that she wanted to engage in foreign mission work, but the lack of opportunities for single women overseas precluded an appointment. She thus gladly accepted an invitation to accompany Dutch Reformed missionary S. R. (Samuel Robbins) Brown and his wife to Niigata in 1869. She spent one year in that outpost and then relocated to Yokohama. There she took over Clara Hepburn’s English class and, in 1871, opened her own school. After devoting the next decade to women’s education, she resigned from the school in 1881 and subsequently focused her energies on publishing and evangelism. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Inkai, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten, 358; Cary, vol. 2, 70.

39Ibid., 40-41.

40Sasaki’s two older sisters enjoyed none of the freedoms she had while growing up and instead were raised in a rigidly traditional manner. Even if only subconsciously, Sasaki must have been cognizant from an early age of the fact that Japanese women as a whole were social and intellectual subordinates.
women's department five years later. As did their male schoolmates, female students read the Bible and attended prayer meetings and worship services. They also studied the Chinese classics and Western political and social theory. When a student himself, Nakamura had been very impressed by the writings of British political philosopher and social reformer John Stuart Mill. In 1871, he expressed his admiration by translating Mill's classic treatise on liberal democracy, *On Liberty*, and he later introduced Mill's works into the curricula at Dōninsha. One of the most important texts assigned to female students was *The Subjection of Women*, in which Mill argued for equality of political, economic, and social opportunity for men and women and decried the "legal subordination of one sex to the other" as "one of the chief hindrances to human improvement." Nakamura became well acquainted with this feminist polemic soon after its publication in 1869. Though a complete Japanese translation did not appear until 1879, he incorporated its ideas and arguments into women's education at Dōninsha from the start. By so doing, he hoped to cultivate a generation of young women who not only intellectually recognized their subordination, but also had the desire and ability to lead their sisters in the fight for greater rights.

Sasaki indicated that Nakamura's efforts were bearing fruit in November 1876, less than three years after she enrolled at Dōninsha. That month, she joined him in addressing several hundred women at a teachers' training school in Tokyo. The gathering attracted press attention as one of the country's first lecture meetings for women with female as well as male orators, and Tokyo's second largest daily at the time, *Tōkyōnichi nichishimbun* [The Tokyo...
daily paper], included Sasaki’s name and the fact that she spoke about how to manage family finances effectively. Her own experience as the caretaker of her family’s resources must have made her alert to the cruciality of careful spending and saving and to women’s insecurity as non-wage-earners. The specific contents of her talk remain unknown, but, in light of future statements she made regarding women’s economic dependence on men, she probably offered a feminist critique worthy of Mill.

Despite the promise Sasaki displayed with this talk, her path to becoming a full-fledged reformer and advocate for women was not smooth. Indeed, she became embroiled in a public scandal over her affair with Sasaki Motoe within months of her lecture. Motoe, also a native of Sendai, was an adopted son and married father of three who had studied medicine with James Hepburn in Yokohama and there converted to Christianity. He moved to Tokyo in 1873 to work as an army doctor and reportedly became an English teacher at Dōninsha after it opened. Sasaki began her liaison with him knowing full well that he had a family and that her involvement transgressed the moral code espoused by Kidder and Nakamura. She could do so, Utsu has contended, because she accepted the idea, put forth by both these teachers, that a true Christian union required love between husband and wife. She and Motoe

\[42\text{For circulation statistics, see Huffman, 386.}\]

\[43\text{In 1888, Sasaki wrote an editorial for Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi in which she articulated her views about a woman’s economic rights in the family. Specifically, she argued that the functions of a wife differed from those of a husband, but were no less essential to the prosperity of the family. Thus, even if the wife did not earn a wage outside the home, she had the right to own half of the household’s property. To further justify equal division, Sasaki asserted that it would bring harmony to the family and keep a husband from selfishly and frivolously wasting the household’s money, as he was wont to do. Sasaki Toyoju, “Dōhō shokei ni nozomu (Dai-ni)” [To ask my fellow countrymen and dear friends (Part II)], Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 4 (21 July 1888): 3-6.}\]
shared such affection, whereas Motoe and his non-Christian wife by an arranged marriage
did not. So rationalizing the affair, Sasaki and Motoe began living together in 1877. Motoe
annulled his marriage three years later, and, in late 1886, he formally entered Sasaki’s name
on his own family register as his spouse. By then, Sasaki had borne him four children, buried
one, and accepted the rite of baptism from David Thompson. She had also created a
women’s sewing circle to teach Western techniques, to provide women with an outlet for
developing friendships, and, most importantly, to educate and enlighten them. Sasaki’s
formation of this society in September 1886 signaled her readiness to return to public work.
The organization of the Tokyo WCTU later that fall offered her a natural forum to expand
her efforts for the sake of women, and she quickly moved to assert ideological leadership
over the nascent group.44

Sasaki intended to use the WCTU’s inaugural meeting as an opportunity to reaffirm the
decision the union’s organizers had made in November as to the society’s name and agenda.
She refrained from doing so because of the tightness of the scheduled program of speeches
and administrative business, the late hour, and bad weather. She remained adamant, how-
ever, about advancing her views of reform priorities over those of Yajima. So, shortly after
the meeting, she committed her planned remarks to paper and submitted them for publication
in Jogaku zasshi. Her article appeared in three installments beginning with the January 22,

44Utsu, 38-49; Abe Reiko, “Sasaki Toyoju oboegaki: Wasurerareta fujin kaihō undō no ichi
senkusha” [Notes on Sasaki Toyoju: A forgotten pioneer of the woman’s liberation
movement], Nihonshi kenkyū 171 (November 1976): 54-55; Kohiyama Rui, Amerika fujin
senkyōshi: Rainichi no hatkei to sono eikyō[American women missionaries: The background
to their coming to Japan and their influence] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1992),
274-75.
1887 issue of the magazine. In this piece, Sasaki took issue with a range of age-old customs among women, which included: keeping quiet in the presence of men; committing suicide to protect one’s chastity; engaging in prostitution to help impoverished parents; and, shaving eyebrows and blackening teeth after marriage. She disputed the entrenched assumption that these were virtues and argued instead that they were “obscene” and “savage” customs, which invited ridicule from abroad and prevented Japan from becoming truly civilized. Because women perpetuated these ways, she continued, women had a duty to help eradicate them. In her mind, the WCTU should set an example, and she urged her fellow members to take the first step and abandon these customs themselves. 45 Heeding her own exhortation, Sasaki published a second article in Jogaku zasshi in March 1887 that directly addressed the problem of women’s reticence to express their opinions. In this piece, she emphasized that cooperation with male reformers was crucial to the WCTU’s success. She cautioned against making men the sole public voice of the union, however, because their sex precluded them from truly knowing women’s thoughts. Only women, she said, could express those.46

As oppressive and barbaric as Sasaki found the convention of women’s silence, she considered Japan’s system of licensed prostitution even worse. She thus continued to push the

45Sasaki Toyoju, “Sekinen no shūkan o yaburu beshi” [We must destroy age-old customs], Jogaku zasshi, no. 48 (22 January 1887): 154-55; no. 52 (19 February 1887): 34-35; no. 54 (5 March 1887): 75-77.

46Sasaki Toyoju, “Tōkyō Fujin Kyōfūkai no kaiin aishi ni tsugu” [To tell my beloved sisters in the Tokyo WCTU], Jogaku zasshi, no. 56 (19 March 1887): 114-16. As noted earlier, Sasaki used this same reasoning to justify the publication of Tōkyōfujin kyōfūzasshi in 1888. That year also saw her issue a twenty-nine-page tract entitled Fujin genron no jiyū (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1888). This text offered a Biblical defense of women’s speech and was a translation of an elaborated version of “Let Your Women Keep Silence in Churches,” Union Signal, 1 July 1886, 7-8.
WCTU to work toward its elimination in the weeks after her first article appeared in *Jogaku zasshi*. Her prodding revived the debate about the union’s reform priorities at an April 24, 1887 meeting of the union’s executive committee. Once again, Sasaki convinced a majority of members to vote with her, and the committee passed a formal resolution that identified the “abolition of geisha and prostitutes” as the WCTU’s primary objective.47

This triumph emboldened Sasaki to become even more outspoken in expressing her view of the WCTU’s purpose. On May 2, just eight days later, she took the lectern at a *Jogaku zasshi*-sponsored public meeting and argued that unions in the United States and England could focus on temperance because neither country had licensed prostitution. That Japan did revealed that “true civilization had yet to be imported.” Eliminating prostitutes and geisha thus represented an urgent task, and, she averred, the Tokyo WCTU was working to fulfill it “with the help of God.”48 She also penned a formal prospectus for the society, which appeared under her title of secretary alone in a column for special announcements in a late-May issue of *Jogaku zasshi*. She opened with the general statement that, “on this occasion when the opportunity to expand the rights of women is ripe,” the members of the Tokyo WCTU “will do their duty” to publicize the harm that old and newly imported “evil ways” cause, abolish the same, and thereby create an environment conducive to the spread of “good customs.” A list of specific goals the society would pursue followed. These included:


48 The text of Sasaki’s speech, entitled “Fujin bunmei no hataraki” [Women’s work for civilization], appeared in *Jogaku zasshi*, no. 65 (21 May 1887): 86-88. Quoted from 87 and 88.
ending practices and abrogating laws that perpetuated the ideology of danson joji; advocating monogamy; eliminating all prostitutes and concubines; correcting relations between men and women in the home; and, eradicating drinking, smoking, prodigality, and laziness. Sasaki ended with an appeal for supporters, but not before she proclaimed that the WCTU would undertake first the abolition of prostitution and concubinage.49

After months of apparent silence, Yajima responded to these challenges to her leadership in early August when she published a second prospectus under her own name and WCTU title in Jogaku zasshi. Her version mirrored Sasaki’s in identifying a broad range of reform goals, yet differed in three important respects. First, Yajima placed equal emphasis on each aim, instead of privileging one over the others. Second, she painted a more conservative portrait of the roles Tokyo WCTU women would play in bringing about change. Whereas Sasaki had depicted members as independent agents for reform, Yajima described them as helpmates who would “assist their husbands in the home [and] help gentlemen in society.” Finally, Yajima likened reform work to an expression of loyalty to Japan’s imperial couple. Specifically, she declared that the freedoms and rights citizens had been granted since the Meiji Restoration were due to the “virtue of the emperor and empress.” She found this particularly true of the gains women had made against inequality, and she argued that women had a duty to respond to the “emperor’s mercy” by eliminating “evil ways that degraded women and opposed the [imperial] intent.”50


50 Yajima Kajiko, “Tōkyō Fujin Kyōfūkai shuisho” [Prospectus of the Tokyo WCTU], Jogaku zasshi, no. 70 (6 August 1887): 190-92. Quoted from 191 and 192. For a critical
To establish the authority of her prospectus over Sasaki's, Yajima had the WCTU print one thousand copies of her version and begin widespread distribution days before it appeared in *Jogaku zasshi*. These mimeographs took the form of an eight-page pamphlet with the title “Tōkyō Fujin Kyōfūkai no susume” [Advice from the Tokyo WCTU] and, quite remarkably, credited authorship to both Yajima and Sasaki. Records reveal nothing about any communication between the two regarding the dual listing. Even if they had corresponded or talked about this beforehand, the idea that Sasaki acquiesced rings hollow given how forcefully she had expressed her own views and tried to establish her leadership during the preceding months. Unilateral inclusion by Yajima thus stands out as the most probable answer. As open to conjecture is the reason why Sasaki did not publicly refute the attachment of her name. She did include her own prospectus, identified as that of the Tokyo WCTU, in a temperance tract she published with union backing in December 1887. She otherwise maintained an unusual silence regarding Yajima's version. She may have done so sensing that Yajima's more conservative view of women's roles in reform work had the support of

analysis of the two prospectuses and their differences, see Katano, “Asai Saku oboegaki,” 14-16.

51 One copy went to the leading Tokyo daily, *Chōya shimbun* [The national paper], which carried the text in full on August 6, 1887. The WCTU contributed another from a subsequent printing to the WWCTU's exhibit at the 1893 World Exposition in Chicago. The former has been reprinted in Suzuki Yūko, ed., *Nihon josei undō shiryo shūsei* [A collection of materials on the Japanese women's movement], vol. 1 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1996), 86-87. The latter, with a hand-written note about the fair, can be found in a box labeled Japan, World Collection, Willard Memorial Library.

a sizeable number of members and that any direct rebuttal could weaken her power base. She may also have recognized that, by invoking the imperial institution, Yajima gave the society much needed legitimacy. The fact that the WCTU accepted Yajima’s text without rancorous debate suggests that, at the very least, the first is true.

Escalating Tensions and Rising Criticism

The absence of open acrimony between Yajima and Sasaki, however, proved short-lived. In the summer of 1887, their relationship was friendly enough for Sasaki to propose marriage between her niece and Yajima’s son. Yajima initially agreed, but her ideological differences and ongoing power struggle with Sasaki soon infected her personal feelings and, just days before the wedding was scheduled in October, she broke the engagement. Tension was less palpable at the Tokyo WCTU’s first annual meeting in early December when Yajima and Sasaki were re-elected to their respective positions as president and secretary. Three months later, in early February 1888, the two even collaborated when they jointly sent letters to Andō Tarō, then acting Consul General of Hawaii, and Ueki Emori, a member of the prefectural assembly in Kōchi. As had been widely reported in the press, Andō had taken a stand for temperance in the Hawaiian islands when he publicly disposed of two large casks of sake that he had received by pouring it down a sewage drain. Yajima and Sasaki commended him for setting such a “fine example” for his fellow Japanese in Hawaii and at home, claiming that

53Sasaki’s niece was sent home immediately and died ten years later after having gone mad pining over Yajima’s son. In her own biography, Sōma Kokkō, younger sister of the “returned” bride, squarely placed blame for her sibling’s fate on Yajima’s high-handedness. Sōma Kokkō, Mokū: Sōma Kokkōjiden [Moving to silence: The autobiography of Sōma Kokkō] (Tokyo: Josei Jidaisha, 1936; Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1999), 314-22; Utsu, 56-57.
his "one act should impress public sentiment even more deeply than one hundred lectures." The letter was printed in Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 1 (14 April 1888): 12-13. Quoted from 12.

55Ibid., 13. In the following decades, the WCTU sent many more letters to public figures either praising them for reform-minded acts or chastising them for immoral conduct.

56Born in 1851, Ogino married at sixteen and was divorced two years later after her husband infected her with a sexually transmitted disease. Her hospital experience awakened her to the shame women felt as victims of male promiscuity and patients of male doctors, and she vowed to become a physician. In 1885, she achieved her goal when she was licensed as Japan’s first female doctor. Baptized the next year, she joined the Tokyo WCTU and became a vocal opponent of licensed prostitution. Ogino Gin, “Experiences of the First Woman Physician in Modern Japan,” Japan Evangelist 1, no. 2 (December 1893): 88-91; Nihon Kirisutokyo Rekishi Daijiten Henshūinkai, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyo rekishi daijiten, 251-52.

57Thirteen years Ogino’s junior, Shimada was adopted by a Yokohama merchant after her pro-Tokugawa samurai family collapsed in the wake of the Restoration. In 1871, she

Ueki had also received media attention for having submitted a petition to abolish licensed prostitution in Kōchi. In a joint letter to him, Yajima and Sasaki applauded him for shaming men for letting their women publicly prostitute themselves and expressed hope that his appeal would succeed for the sake of “Japan’s future civilization.”

The impression of harmonious cooperation these letters created had little basis in reality, though, and conflict erupted at an executive committee meeting convened on February 4, just two days before the letter to Andō was dated. As mentioned earlier, committee members had decided in late December to publish Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, but they did not appoint an editorial staff straight away. Yajima recognized that whoever was chosen would become the union’s most prominent public voice. For that power to fall into Sasaki’s hands was anathema to her. So, at the February meeting, she tried to forestall Sasaki’s likely selection by naming two other members, Ogino Ginkō and Shimada Kashi, herself. Both Ogino
and Shimada endorsed Sasaki’s broad view of reform priorities and of women’s role in bringing about change. This fact could not have escaped Yajima, who may have picked these two to appease the society’s more radical faction. In any case, Ogino and Shimada thwarted her plan by refusing to serve. Immediately thereafter, Yajima found her authority challenged by yet another member who proposed that the society be split into two separate unions, one of which would focus only on temperance and the other of which would address a broad range of social issues. The committee vetoed this idea before dispersing, but the specter of organizational division continued to loom. The election of Sasaki and Asai Saku as the magazine’s co-editors at a regular meeting one week later did nothing to lessen tension.58

Asai shared Sasaki’s commitment to improving women’s rights and likewise believed that women had to engage directly in reform work themselves. She also possessed a sharp mind and did not hesitate to criticize harshly that which she found objectionable. She differed from Sasaki, however, in her view of the value of women’s work in the home. She thought that wives and mothers played an essential role in shaping the moral consciences of their husbands and children and that only when women instilled in their families a sense of shame for “improper” behavior would Japanese society truly rid itself of drinking, concubinage, and

enrolled in Mary Kidder’s school, where she met Sasaki and converted to Christianity. After graduating in 1882, she taught at the school and simultaneously began a literary career as first an independent writer and then a staff member of Jogaku zasshi. She became active in the WCTU shortly after its founding and married Iwamoto Yoshiharu in 1889. Copeland, 99-121; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 48.

58Utsu, 57-58, 62-63.
prostitution. Sasaki, in contrast, described cooking, cleaning, and other domestic tasks as toil that did not require specialized knowledge and thus did not advance civilization. Such devaluation of traditional women’s work, along with her aggressive style and calls for radical reform, attracted acerbic criticism of Sasaki and the WCTU itself from conservatives and liberals within and outside the Christian community. One outspoken critic was Uchimura Kanzō, whose years living and studying in the United States had led him to think highly of a woman’s place in the home. In early August 1888, in a talk he gave at a Tokyo church, he chastened women reformers in Japan for believing that standing before a stove was less distinguished than public lecturing. He added that such women were frivolous and negligent in performing their God-given duties. Around the same time, an anonymous male expressed identical sentiments in a letter, in which he derogatorily referred to the WCTU as the “crazy wind” society by substituting the first character in the union’s name with the same-sounding character for “looney.” Criticism did not come only from outside the organization. WCTU members also joined the chorus and criticized Sasaki, with Asai assuming the lead.

Taking advantage of her partial control of Tōkyō fujin kyōzō zasshi, Asai used the magazine’s pages to attack and undermine Sasaki. In an editorial in the third issue, she bemoaned the fact that prostitution, drinking, and smoking were daily increasing in popularity. As if this were not enough to make reform work more difficult, she continued, the WCTU lacked


60 Sasaki, “Fujin bunmei no hataraki,” 86-87; Kohiyama, 276-77.

61 Ushioda Chise, “Kaikō to kibō” [Recollections and hopes], Fujin shimpō, no. 67 (25 November 1902): 16-17; Utsu, 65-66.
unity and the strength of numbers because members were too involved with their own trivial plans to cooperate together to effect change. Asai’s comment about individual endeavors was a far from oblique reference to Sasaki’s writing, lecturing, and work to raise money for Dōshisha and to establish a vocational school. The following month, Asai again criticized Sasaki without specifically naming her when she wrote that reformers needed to be mindful of current social conditions and not press for too much change. Their radical public statements and writings, she said, might otherwise throw society into turmoil.

Surprisingly, Sasaki issued no defense against these attacks. Instead, she simply resigned as WCTU secretary in August 1888. She also relinquished all editorial control of *Tokyō Fujin Kyōfū Zasshi* at the same time, although the magazine continued to list her as co-editor with Asai through the January 1889 issue. Her reasons for stepping down remain sketchy. She did fall ill over the summer, and poor health might have been the cause. Diminished fervor for reform was not. Indeed, she maintained her membership in the WCTU and months later founded another society, which threatened the organizational integrity of the Tokyo WCTU.

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62 Asai Saku, “Kyōfūkai-in ni kankoku su” [Advice to the members of the WCTU], *Tokyō Fujin Kyōfū Zasshi*, no. 3 (16 June 1888): 1-3.

63 This vocational school will be discussed in chap. 4. For information on Sasaki’s fund-raising activities for Dōshisha, see Utsu, 72-73.


The Tokyo WCTU: Divided and Weakened

The sequence of events that led Sasaki to establish a second reform organization began with the promulgation of the Constitution in February 1889. The WCTU saw in the nation’s euphoria over this document an ideal opportunity to promote Puritan values and the Christian faith. Members did so by condemning the practice of supplying celebrants with sake, distributing hundreds of temperance tracts to those in the streets, and praising the clause granting Japanese freedom of religion. They also held a public lecture at Kōseikan on February 12. Advertised as a “celebration of the Constitution,” this gathering resembled the WCTU’s earlier meetings in that it began with prayer and a Bible reading. The several hundred who attended also heard the Reverend Hiraiwa Yoshiyasu speak in favor of local self-government as a system that would enable temperance supporters to elect officials who would represent their reform ideas. Yajima was especially active in the weeks surrounding the promulgation and was en route to see her nephew about another lecture meeting when her rickshaw overturned. The seriousness of her injuries forced her to resign. As vice president, Ogino initially assumed Yajima’s duties, but she quit herself shortly thereafter. The society’s rules included no provisions for choosing a president outside of the annual meeting, so members decided instead to hold a special election for a new vice president who would lead until Yajima regained her health. The run-up to that election revealed once again how fraught the union was with internal dissent.

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66 Union Signal, 23 May 1889, 5; Tōkyō fujin kyōfūzasshi, no. 11 (16 February 1889): 16, 24, 32; no. 12 (16 March 1889): 12-14; no. 13 (20 April 1889): 21-23; Japan Evangelist 3, no. 1 (October 1895): 34.

With victory by Sasaki a distinct possibility, Asai once again used the pages of the union’s periodical to attack Sasaki and in turn campaign for herself. In particular, in an April editorial, she cautioned her fellow members that they should not vote for a new leader solely on the basis of whether or not she was educated, decisive, and full of vitality. Nor should they require their choice to be talented at socializing and lecturing. She advised instead that they should choose a humble, trustworthy, and pious individual. The same day this editorial appeared, Iwamoto addressed a general meeting of the union and challenged Asai’s conception of the type of leader the WCTU needed. Like Asai, he did not explicitly name Sasaki. Still, the words he used to describe his vision fit her perfectly and could have left little doubt about whom he was speaking. In his opinion, the enthusiastic, fiery moral reformer was exactly the type of person the nation and the WCTU needed most. He argued that this woman had to be prepared to guide others and incite them to agitate for reform; she had to cause trouble and stand firm before critics and opponents of change; and, she had to accept personal unpopularity as a result. Despite this fervent “campaign” speech, Asai garnered the most votes when WCTU members cast their ballots on June 15. That Sasaki only came in third speaks strongly of her increasingly marginal position within the union.

Exactly one week later, Jogaku zasshi announced the formation of the Fujin Hakuhyō Kurabu [Woman’s White Ribbon Club/WWRC], a society whose stated purpose was to

68 Asai Saku, “Kaitō no jishoku oyobi kōsen” [The president’s resignation and the upcoming election], Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 13 (20 April 1889): 1-4.

69Iwamoto Yoshiharu, “Kyōfū no jigyō, shakai kairyō no jigyō” [The work of moral reform and social improvement], Jogaku zasshi, no. 159 (27 April 1889): 1-5.

70Jogaku zasshi, no. 167 (22 June 1889): 30.
provide women with knowledge of the world outside the home and to encourage their "social influence." This notice named as the founders two teachers at mission schools for girls in Tokyo, but Sasaki acted as the real driving force. She had long wanted the Tokyo WCTU to become more aggressive and political, but had been repeatedly stymied. Hours after her defeat in the election for vice president, she invited a few supporters to her house to discuss what to do next. Their solution was the WWRC. As Sasaki later described, this society had neither binding rules regarding "appropriate" activities nor a president who could dictate to others. Instead, she argued, the organization responded to social and political issues when and how members saw fit.

Only a small number joined the WWRC, including the WCTU’s Ushioda and Iwamoto Kashi [nee Shimada]. In tune with Sasaki’s more aggressive orientation, though, members engaged in a variety of politically oriented reform activities. In September 1889, for example, Sasaki and Ushioda wrote on behalf of the WWRC to the National Progressive Party. In this missive, the two condemned the custom that men discuss political matters while being entertained and served drink by geisha, and they exhorted the party to conduct

71Ibid., 29; no. 168 (29 June 1889): inside front cover; Utsu, 75. Those attending included Iwamoto and Ueki. Sasaki and Ueki had become very close in the months after her resignation as secretary through their collaboration on Tōyō no fujo [The women of the East], his polemic against women’s subjugation. Sasaki provided a preface and publication money and, in return, found a supporter for her own public activism. For a discussion of the book’s contents, see Yasutake, 119-21.

72Sasaki Toyoju, “Fujin Hakuhyō Kurabu no seishitsu o nobete seijyō no ichi gimon ni kotau” [In response to a public question about the nature of the WWRC], Jogaku zasshi, no. 186 (9 November 1889): 8-9.
its upcoming annual meeting in a more upstanding manner. They also sent, in the fall of 1889, a letter to Queen Victoria in which they urged her to revise England’s unequal treaty with Japan post haste. In addition, in 1890, WWRC members campaigned against an especially prejudiced regulation known as Article 5 of the Public Meeting and Political Societies Law. This law reflected the government’s determination to further contain popular rights agitation and, for the first time, to restrict women’s political participation. Article 5 specifically prohibited women from attending political meetings and banned their membership in political organizations. The WWRC took particular offense at these restrictions. Member Shimizu Shikin, in a scathing attack, labeled the bans discriminatory and contrary to the Constitution’s guaranteed protection of individual rights. Her words, however forceful, failed to persuade the government to rescind the bans.

The WWRC did not stand alone against Article 5. Members of the WCTU saw the clause as an impediment to their own ability to influence official and private morality, and they, separate from the WWRC, submitted petitions to the Prime Minister and the Justice Minister.

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73 Jogaku zasshi, no. 183 (19 October 1889): 23.

74 Ibid., 27.

75 Shimizu Shikin, “Naniyue ni joshi wa seian shūkai ni sanchō suru koto o yurusarezaru ya” [Why are women not allowed to participate in and listen to political talks?], Jogaku zasshi, no. 228 (30 August 1890): 5-8. Shimizu was first drawn into the popular rights movement by her activist husband. In the late 1880s, she became a frequent traveling companion of Ueki on the lecture circuit, and, like Sasaki, she contributed a preface to his Tōyō no fujo. The women’s ties deepened thereafter. Following Shimizu’s divorce in 1889, she lived with Sasaki temporarily and through Sasaki’s intercession found a job with Jogaku zasshi. Copeland, 163-67.
to have it reversed.\textsuperscript{76} The two groups did cooperate, though, in 1890 to win reversal of a rule that banned women from the gallery of the House of Representatives.\textsuperscript{77} Just after the founding of the WWRC, they also joined forces to petition for revision of the civil and criminal codes to favor monogamy. The civil code in 1889 perpetuated the age-old practice of concubinage by identifying the rights of a concubine and her offspring in relation to a wife and her children. The criminal code also provided legal support for polygamy by not identifying men who visited brothels or had concubines as adulterers and excusing them from punishment. Sasaki, Yajima, and other members of both groups had come to accept monogamy as a moral imperative and believed that it was essential for the elevation of women's status in Japan. Their petition called for the civil code to be rewritten to define male adultery as any sexual contact by a husband with a woman other than his wife and, the criminal code, to stipulate punishment for unfaithful men.\textsuperscript{78} This appeal garnered eight hundred signatures and spurred women in Kobe, Osaka, Kyoto, and a number of other cities to submit similar petitions.\textsuperscript{79} The united effort failed to achieve revision, but the campaign did not die. Members of the WCTU continued to appeal on an annual basis until the passage of the postwar constitution established monogamy as the legal standard.

\textsuperscript{76} Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., \textit{Hyakunenshi}, 70.

\textsuperscript{77} Yasutake, 132-35.

\textsuperscript{78} Although the text of the 1889 petition is lost, its drafter, Yuasa Hatsuko, did set forth its basic ideas in an article in \textit{Jogaku zasshi}. Yuasa Hatsuko, “Rinri no motoi no yōshi” [The fundamental principles of morality], \textit{Jogaku zasshi}, no. 161 (11 May 1889): 30.

Cooperation between the WWRC and the WCTU lent numerical support to the petitions for gallery seats and revision of the civil and criminal codes, but it did nothing to relieve the tension between Asai and Sasaki. Nor did it forestall criticism of the WWRC for the circumstances under which Sasaki had founded the club. The crux of the criticism was that Sasaki had taken advantage of Yajima’s withdrawal from active involvement in the WCTU and the resulting weakness of the union’s power structure to establish a competing group. Unlike previous attacks, Sasaki responded to this one and defended her actions in an article in *Jogaku zasshi*. She wrote that she and the WWRC’s few other founders did not establish the society “in order to vainly carry out [their] own ideas. Nor did [they] do so in order to split off from the WCTU.” Instead, she claimed rather ambiguously, the WWRC resulted from “unavoidable trends of the time.” Her words did nothing to appease Asai, whose position was most threatened by the club’s existence and by the fact that Sasaki, Ushioda, and other prominent women in the WWRC maintained their memberships in the WCTU. In the spring of 1890, Asai publicly addressed the problem of dual affiliation by saying that, “just as oil and water did not mix,” individuals with different opinions did not belong in the same organization. She did not state explicitly that WWRC activists should drop their memberships in the WCTU, but such directness was unnecessary. Her purport came through loud and clear.

80 Sasaki, “Fujin Hakuhyō Kurabu no seishitsu o nobete sejyō no ichi gimon ni kotau,” 8.

81 Asai Saku, “Kurayami no itchi o nasu koto nakare” [We must not be united in darkness], *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi*, no. 23 (15 March 1890): 2-5. Quoted from 3.
Sasaki reacted to Asai's continuing attacks on herself and the WWRC by attempting to strengthen the society's ties with male reformers. In early February 1890, she and Ushioda met with Iwamoto Yoshiharu, Tsuda Sen, and several others to discuss ways to unite Japan's many local anti-prostitution and temperance groups.\(^{82}\) Their plans gained momentum, just weeks later, when Jessie Ackerman, the WWCTU's second round-the-world missionary, arrived in Japan for a ten-week tour. An enthusiastic, sincere woman then in her mid-thirties, Ackerman had already visited Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and South China, and she expected to add many more miles with stops in Yokohama, Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and a number of other cities. While in Japan, she did establish ties with the WWRC and the WCTU, whose members welcomed her with great fanfare.\(^{83}\) She worked much more closely, though, with men and with Andō Tarō in particular. She first met Andō in Hawaii, where he had organized a temperance society among Japanese residents after receiving the letter of praise from Yajima and Sasaki. He had returned to Japan in late 1889, and his active participation in the temperance movement naturally drew Ackerman to him. She relied heavily on him as a translator, and his eloquence in conveying her thoughts in Japanese helped her to inspire hundreds to join temperance unions. Her words also provided the spark reformers needed to organize the Tokyo Kinshukai [Tokyo Temperance Society] on March 29, 1890.\(^{84}\)

\(^{82}\)Utsu, 77.

\(^{83}\)Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 23 (15 March 1890): 6.

This society was predominantly male, but it did have a small women’s department, which Sasaki and Ushioda helped to create. Their respective positions as the division’s first treasurer and corresponding secretary enabled them to strengthen their own and the WWRC’s ties with male reformers, just as Sasaki had hoped. Those connections grew thicker in mid-April when Sasaki invited Ushioda, Ueki, and others to her house to plan a gathering of reform groups from all over the country. The process continued in late May when the WWRC became a member organization of the newly founded Zenkoku Haishō Dōmeikai [National Federation to Abolish Licensed Prostitution].

Under Asai, the WCTU also participated in the Dōmeikai’s establishment and sponsored its activities. The union in May 1890, however, was far weaker than it had been when Yajima resigned. The conflict between Asai and Sasaki, the public criticism of female reformers, and the controversy over the WWRC had combined with a growing backlash against all-out Westernization to create disenchantment with the WCTU. Membership had plummeted, as the society had difficulty recruiting new members and keeping existing ones.

*Tokyo fujin kyōfū zasshi* had also struggled. Executives had revised organizational rules in early 1889 to stipulate that every member would receive a free subscription. Despite this

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85Ibid., 52; Utsu, 77-78.

86Membership fell from a high of 546 in late 1888 to 140 during Asai’s tenure. *Fujin shimpo*, no. 123 (25 July 1907): 2. Both of these numbers, however, obscure the fact that only a small percentage of women who joined the Tokyo WCTU were exceptionally active in the union’s early years. Indeed, the names of but a handful appeared with any regularity in *Tokyo fujin kyōfū zasshi* as attendees at meetings, subscribers to the magazine, or financial contributors to particular activities. Such limited involvement suggests that the society’s leaders failed to induce the rank-and-file to make engagement in organized reform a truly significant aspect of daily life.
change, only 3476 copies were distributed in all of 1890, pushing the magazine’s profitability further into the red.  

Voices had begun to question the wisdom of even publishing a full-fledged magazine. Asai had admonished her fellow members that the work of setting a moral standard required faith and prudence. If the WCTU halted publication, she had said, no benefit would be gained. Her opinion had prevailed. Uncertainty about the periodical’s economic viability had persisted, though, and Asai’s presidency had become increasingly problematic. Elections in December 1890 showed how tenuous her popularity was. She won by only one vote.

Four months later, the women’s division of the Tokyo Temperance Society reorganized itself as an independent society, the Tokyo Fujin Kinshukai [Tokyo Women’s Temperance Society/TWTS]. With Ushioda as its president and her continuing WCTU ties, this organization threatened to undermine the position of the WCTU in relation to male reform groups and the WWCTU. This challenge was not lost on critics of Asai. The final straw to her leadership came in September in the form of an article in Fukuin shimpō [Gospel news], a prominent Christian paper. The author of this piece criticized the WCTU for failing to establish strong ties with both the WWCTU and male organizations. Also damaging was the charge that the WCTU had made great strides for temperance when Yajima was president.

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87 Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 11 (16 February 1889): 18-19; no. 12 (16 March 1889): 11-12; no. 44 (19 December 1891): 6-9; Kindai Josei Bunkashi Kenkyūkai, ed., 33.

88 Asai Saku, “Kyōfūkai zasshi ni tsuki chūi” [A warning about the WCTU magazine], Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 13 (20 April 1889): 18.

89 Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 32 (20 December 1890): 13.

90 Utsu, 80.
but since had done precious little. Asai resigned five days later.\textsuperscript{91} The WCTU’s rules again prevented a prompt election for her replacement. In February 1892, Yajima won the votes necessary to return to the WCTU’s helm.\textsuperscript{92}

The WCTU remained a beleaguered society, as ideological differences and personal animosities persisted among women involved in the reform movement. Nor did unity appear to be on the horizon. Yet, as quickly as the WCTU had been torn in two, it was made whole by the intervention of Mary Allen West, the third round-the-world missionary.

\textsuperscript{91}Katano, “Asai Saku oboegaki,” 44.

\textsuperscript{92}Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., \textit{Hyakunenshi}, 82.
CHAPTER THREE

THE ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE JWCTU: 1892-1912

The last two decades of the Meiji period witnessed great fluctuations in the fortunes of the WCTU in Japan. The year 1892 opened with the Tokyo union divided and weakened by prolonged infighting, yet ended with women’s temperance activists in the capital once again united and contemplating the establishment of a national organization. The spring of 1893 saw that goal come to fruition and the WCTU infused with a regenerated spirit of potential. Within months, however, the union began to struggle in the face of a new conservative climate, rising nationalism, and internal shortcomings. This chapter will first describe these ups and downs while paying special attention to the unifying efforts of WWCTU round-the-world missionary Mary Allen West. It will then introduce measures the world union took to strengthen the WCTU in Japan in the mid-1890s, discuss the JWCTU’s subsequent organizational resurgence just before the turn of the century, and briefly comment on the society’s development during the last decade of the Meiji period.

Mary Allen West and the Establishment of the JWCTU

In the spring of 1892, the WWCTU appointed Mary Allen West superintendent of its department of methods and specially commissioned her to travel to Japan to train temperance workers how best to organize and promote reform. The notice of her naming in Union Signal
indicates that WWCTU officers had been considering such a charge for years. Letters the world union had received over the last few years from male Japanese temperance workers, WWCTU and denominational missionaries, and foreign visitors to Japan had raised concern about the condition of native women’s organizations and activities. One traveler had written at the end of 1888 that the members of the union in Kobe that Mary Clement Leavitt had helped to establish were "very distrustful of their ability to carry on the work, and to keep up the interest of meetings." Another had reported in 1890 that women in the Tokyo WCTU viewed their own work as "quite unsatisfactory." In addition, just before Yajima Kajiko regained the presidency in February 1892, Nemoto Shō had told the WWCTU that internal problems had distracted the Tokyo union and, as a result, it had been "slow" to undertake activities. He had added that Yajima’s probable return to leadership boded well, but that men, not women, were at the forefront of the temperance movement in Japan. WWCTU officers inferred from these and other reports that Japanese women lacked a firm understanding of how to establish organizationally strong societies and effectively promote reform. So, they decided to appoint a missionary to correct this perceived problem and to propel temperance work in general forward.

1Union Signal, 12 May 1892, 1.
2Union Signal, 7 March 1889, 4.
3Union Signal, 5 June 1890, 5.
4Union Signal, 7 April 1892, 10.
5Beginning in the 1890s, the WWCTU pursued a “deliberate strategy” with respect to the selection and dispatch of missionaries. The first round-the-world missionaries had been chosen because they were already organizing on the Pacific Coast. Those picked later
In West, the WWCTU found an enthusiastic and experienced worker. Born in 1837, she grew up in a “Christian colony” her parents had helped to found in Illinois. She excelled at her studies, and, after graduating from the town’s college in 1855, she became first a teacher and then county superintendent of schools. After nine years in that elected post, she resigned to assume the presidency of the Illinois WCTU. She labored tirelessly to unionize women throughout the state and drill them in techniques of organization and outreach and even wrote a book on the subject. She also penned numerous leaflets, gospel tracts, and a tome on childcare for the WCTU. This print work eventually led to her appointment as editor-in-chief of *Union Signal*. Despite the demands of the job, she continued to travel widely to hold classes in WCTU methods. In a letter she later sent from Japan, she mentioned that she had initially been reluctant to venture as far afield as Asia, but soon came to feel that God had inspired her trip.

West set sail shortly after receiving her commission and reached Yokohama on September 13, 1892. Temperance workers in Japan had responded to news of her impending arrival with great anticipation, and members of the Tokyo WCTU, the TWTS, and the WWRC had begun in mid-August to arrange her welcome with male activists. Despite inclement weather caused by a typhoon, Yajima and Nemoto greeted her on board just after her ship anchored.

were either close friends of Frances Willard or “national organizers with plenty of experience in regions of WCTU weakness.” Tyrrell, *Woman’s World/Woman’s Empire*, 84-85.


7*Union Signal*, 8 December 1892, 1.
A formal gathering with five hundred was held the next evening at Yokohama’s Kaigan Church, followed by a smaller but no less enthusiastic reception in Tokyo on September 19. This second fete doubled as a farewell, for West departed the very next day on a three-week tour of the North.

West’s travels took her first to Hokkaido, where in Sapporo alone she lectured at Tsuda Sen’s agricultural school and in a military hall, addressed two gatherings of women, spoke to the city’s Sunday school students, and held a meeting for the explicit purpose of teaching methods to temperance workers. At her next stop in Otaru, located on the western coast of the island, she talked to a group of fishermen and sailors. She focused her remarks to them on the physiological harm of alcohol and tobacco and used a medical chart that showed the ravages of intemperance on organs to emphasize her words. This same chart saw repeated use during subsequent stops in major cities in Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, Tochigi, and Saitama prefectures, as West, like Leavitt before her, often relied on secular language to arouse commitments to sobriety from non-Christians.

8Although only fifty attended the banquet in Tokyo, three hundred met West’s train with a giant silk banner bearing the words “Tremble, King Alcohol, we shall grow up.” Union Signal, 24 November 1892, 15.

9Ibid.; 20 October 1892, 5; Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 51 (28 August 1892): 5-6; no. 52 (28 September 1892): 4-5.

10Union Signal, 1 December 1892, 5; Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 53 (31 October 1892): 1-3. West also repeatedly couched reform in the language of national progress. For representative lectures, see Takekoshi Takeyo, Wesuto joshi ikun [Miss West’s dying instructions] (Tokyo: Tokyo Fujin Kyōfūkai, 1893); Nagato Tsurumatsu, Uesuto-jō kinshu enzetsu hikki [Notes on Miss West’s temperance lectures] (Nagoya: Tokida Daiichi (?), 1893); Nemoto Shō, ed., Uesuto-jō shōden oyobi kinshu enzetsushū [A short biography of Miss West and a collection of temperance lectures] (Tokyo: Kōyūsha, 1892).
Over the course of this three-week trip north, West took special pleasure when her secular appeals led non-believers first to abstinence and then to Christ. Their conversions reinforced her belief that doing God’s work did not require one to use only religious language and that temperance could be an effective evangelistic tool. She thus found very disturbing a pervasive indifference she saw while traveling to special temperance work among native converts to Christianity. As she later wrote in a report to *Union Signal*, many of the ministers and laymen whom she met viewed churches as temperance societies in and of themselves and saw no need to do anything more than maintain their affiliations to promote abstinence. She worked hard to dissuade them of this notion and to impress upon their consciences the fact that temperance is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and work for temperance an important part of Christian work; that if it is confined to the church, those who need it most will not be reached. . . . and that unless Christians are leaders in all moral reforms they give occasion to all non-Christians to scoff at the religion of Christ and so bring reproach to our blessed Savior.\(^\text{11}\)

West found as disconcerting as such apathy certain changes that the WCTU had made to its rules under Asai Saku’s leadership. She categorically blamed the inability of the society’s officers to communicate in English for these revisions. Such a linguistic deficiency, she concluded, had “shut them off so completely from knowledge of [WWCTU] work that . . . they had gone off in many directions, modifying their constitution and the pledge itself till they no longer required total abstinence and so could not be considered a W.C.T.U.”\(^\text{12}\) After her return to Tokyo from the North in mid-October, she promptly set out to reverse these

\(^{11}\) *Union Signal*, 22 December 1892, 5.

\(^{12}\) *Union Signal*, 29 December 1892, 5.
changes and to redirect the union to the "true" way. The WCTU under Yajima needed very little convincing. Executives decided to convene a special general meeting to amend the rules on October 31 in conjunction with a farewell party for West, who planned to leave shortly for Shizuoka and other parts west. There, members agreed to twelve changes, some minor but four of significance. First, they added a new clause as rule number two, which stated that the WCTU was in communication with the WWCTU. Second, they revised the statement of purpose to read: "This union seeks to advance the morality of members and non-members, correct education, customs, hygiene, and other general bad habits, expand work against drinking and smoking, and promote the happiness of all of society." Third, they rewrote the membership pledge to require abstinence from alcohol and tobacco. Finally, the stipulation that ten members were needed to establish specific departments of work was replaced with a rule that all had to join one of six designated sections.

Winning these amendments represented but one of several fundamental goals that West wanted to accomplish while in Tokyo. Another was to unify the fractious women's reform movement and initiate the founding of a national WCTU. She thus endeavored to bring Sasaki Toyoju, Ushioda Chiseko, and other women who had joined the TWTS back into the WCTU fold and to settle the differences that had originally caused division. Her departure came before organizational reconciliation occurred, but her return, which was scheduled for


14 The Tokyo WCTU's departments, like those in unions worldwide, were equivalent to committees of work and had chairs (known as superintendents) and members. The six referred to here included organizational outreach, education, health, customs, charity, and publishing. *Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi*, no. 54 (28 November 1892): 3-4.
mid-December, assured renewed effort and bore the potential for success.\textsuperscript{15} West died, however, in Kanazawa while visiting Lila Winn, a friend and former student who had been engaged with her husband in evangelical outreach in Japan for over a decade. West had arrived in the country with no known health problems, but her schedule during the fall had taken its toll. Before reaching Kanazawa, she had traveled 3580 miles and lectured ninety-seven times to just over forty thousand, preparing different remarks to fit each audience and often taking the podium more than twice a day. Fatigue and the arduous journey by train and rickshaw to the Winns had exacerbated a cold, and she passed away on December 1.\textsuperscript{16}

Native converts and reformers, along with members of the foreign mission community, mourned her death. Memorial services were held in Kanazawa, Tokyo, and Yokohama and collectively drew twenty-five hundred.\textsuperscript{17} On a more individual basis, Tsuda Sen made a bell in her honor and donated it to the American WCTU. The metal came from the pipes of hundreds and hundreds whom Tsuda and West had convinced to foreswear smoking. As his inscription celebrated, these same individuals "had once been slaves of tobacco . . . but were now free."\textsuperscript{18} Dozens also sent letters to Frances Willard and \textit{Union Signal} praising West’s

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Union Signal}, 29 December 1892, 5; \textit{Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi}, no. 53 (31 October 1892): 7-8.


\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi}, no. 55 (28 December 1892): 8-9.

\textsuperscript{18}Yajima tolled the bell at West’s Tokyo funeral four days before it was shipped to the United States to be displayed at the WWCTU’s booth at the 1893 World Exposition in Chicago. Ibid., 16; \textit{Union Signal}, 26 January 1893, 8.
commitment to reform work and hoping that her death would not be in vain. Such proved not to be the case. While her efforts during her two and one-half months touring Japan “strengthened the temperance cause,” her death helped to “solidify and perpetuate it.” Indeed, her passing directly contributed to the unification of women’s temperance forces in Tokyo and the founding of a national WCTU.

Members of the Tokyo WCTU and the TWTS recognized how earnestly West had wanted to bring them together. So, out of respect for her wishes, they gathered on December 3, just two days after she died, to effect a merger under the mantle of the WCTU. The setting, Joshi Gakuin (Yajima’s school), and the occasion, the regularly scheduled annual meeting of the WCTU, gave the union a marked advantage in determining who would assume leadership. At first, attendees from the WCTU selected twenty-one candidates to run for office from among their own. Ushioda vehemently opposed this attempt to exclude the TWTS from even the possibility of power. Yajima responded to this criticism of procedure by calling on TWTS women to field their own candidates. They did pick eight hopefuls, but the results of the election established the WCTU’s authority as almost absolute. Yajima won the most votes and was re-elected president. WCTU members also claimed the offices of recording secretary and treasurer, plus eight of ten vice president positions.

19 Union Signal, 26 January 1893, 9. For copies of many of the letters sent from Japan, see ibid., 5-10.

20 In addition to Yajima, five of the eleven WCTU women elected had ties to Joshi Gakuin. Their participation in the union both reflected her influence in shaping their social consciences and helped to reinforce her more conservative approach to reform. Ohama Tetsuya et al., Joshi Gakuin no rekishi [A history of Joshi Gakuin] (Tokyo: Joshi Gakuin, 1985), 316-17.
garnered only enough support to take the remaining two vice president posts, and the sole other spot a TWTS woman assumed was that of corresponding secretary. Right after the election, Yajima turned to the WCTU’s annual reports as if the merging of the TWTS into the union had been but one item on the agenda. Her nonchalance aside, unification did impact the WCTU. Over eighty former TWTS members joined the union in December 1892. Their numbers not only fortified the WCTU, but also gave momentum to the drive to establish the Nihon Fujin Kyōfūkai [Japan Woman’s Moral Reform Society/JWCTU].

In early February 1893, a group of WCTU members gathered to discuss how to organize a national union and thereby fulfill West’s second wish. They determined that the initial step should be to establish a headquarters, so they appointed a committee of five to consider how best to accomplish that. In addition to Yajima, Sasaki, and Ushioda, the committee included Tsuda Sen’s wife, Hatsuko, and Takekoshi Takeyo. Takekoshi had then been in charge of Tōkyō Fujin Kyōfūzasshi for over a year, and she well understood the importance of using the magazine to mobilize female reformers nationwide in favor of organization. To that end,


23 Tōkyō Fujin Kyōfūzasshi, no. 57 (28 February 1892): 5.

24 Born in 1870 into a former samurai family, Takekoshi initially received a strict upbringing in traditional womanly virtues and was even given a sword by her mother so that she could protect her chastity. Her father’s death ten years later turned her life upside down. Her mother took a job at a Christian school to earn a living and, after converting, became an evangelist and temperance supporter. At her urging, Takekoshi became a Christian herself and attended Baika Jogakkō (Baika Girls’ School), one of Japan’s earliest Christian schools for women established by Japanese. Marriage to a fellow convert followed her graduation, and, after she and her husband moved from Osaka to Tokyo in 1890, she began a career as
she included in the first issue published after this meeting a short announcement about the WCTU’s desire to establish a national union. She pointed out that, unlike the United States and England, Japan lacked such an organization, and women should therefore establish one. She appealed to groups nationwide to support the WCTU in this endeavor and to share their thoughts on a draft set of regulations for the new union that would be announced shortly.²⁵

Tokyōfujin kyōfūzasshi never carried those proposed rules. A suspension order forced the WCTU to stop publication after this issue. The police had previously halted publication once or twice during Takekoshi’s tenure as editor because the WCTU had failed to provide the guarantee money required for periodicals that dealt with social and political issues.²⁶ The absence of any noticeably objectionable article in the February 1893 issue suggests that the same reason applied here. The loss of the magazine’s pages as a vehicle to reach women did not, however, seriously impede work to establish a national union. The WCTU’s planning committee still drafted a set of rules. Its members also wrote letters to thirty-five women’s groups throughout the country asking them to send delegates to Tokyo for several days of organizational discussions at the beginning of April.²⁷

²⁵Takekoshi Takeyo, “Zenkoku fujinkai no domei” [A national alliance of women’s societies], Tokyōfujin kyōfūzasshi, no. 57 (28 February 1893): 3.

²⁶“Taku o kakonde: Meiji nijūnen kara sanjūnen goro made” [A round table discussion: From 1887 until around 1897], Fujin shimpō, no. 370 (1 January 1929): 30.

²⁷Union Signal, 8 June 1893, 10.
These talks culminated in the formal establishment of the JWCTU on April 3, 1893, at Reinanzaka Church. WCTU members and visiting representatives had already adopted rules and agreed to create six departments of work. On this afternoon, they gathered for a varied program that included hymns, prayer, a reading of Psalm 146, several addresses, and officer elections. Yajima assumed the presidency while her two rivals, Sasaki and Ushioda, were appointed only as co-superintendents of two different departments. Her leadership affirmed once again, Yajima wrote to the WWCTU to announce the founding of the JWCTU with five local affiliates and to ask for “prayers that [the new national union] may be able to work for God, home and humanity.”

The Rise and Then Ebb of the JWCTU in the Mid-1890s

In the immediate afterglow of the founding of the national union, JWCTU members in Tokyo showed a revived commitment to organizational expansion. In May 1893, Yajima and Shioda Chise traveled to Nagoya to rally women to establish a local society. Yajima also took time from a private trip to Hokkaido that summer to visit areas only recently made accessible via roads and to lecture on behalf of the WCTU. Just before Yajima departed on

28These six duplicated those of the Tokyo WCTU with one exception. Law replaced charity.

29Eliza Thompson, one of the leaders of the first concerted campaign against saloons by women in Ohio, decided to participate only after reading Psalm 146. She interpreted the Psalm’s line about how God makes the blind see as a sign that temperance work was God’s work. This Psalm quickly became known as the “Crusade Psalm” and served as a rallying cry for WCTU activism after 1874. Bordin, 16-17.

30Union Signal, 8 June 1893, 10. The original text of Yajima’s letter in Japanese is no longer extant. She typically used the word “kokka” in this triumvirate and likely did so in this letter too. “Japan” is thus a more accurate translation than “humanity.”
this second journey, officers met and decided to make a concerted effort to attract more special members. To this end, they had printed several hundred copies of the JWCTU's rules in Japanese and English for distribution at public lectures and in correspondence. They voted as well to launch a campaign to raise money for activities and to renew the collection drive for an office.31

That drive had first begun at the Tokyo WCTU's 1887 anniversary fete, when Kushida Shigeko had appealed for donations. Just one week later, the union's officers had charged her and Ushioda with responsibility for actively canvassing for contributions. The two did and before long had gathered an additional ¥437 from over two hundred fifty supporters.32 The WCTU's internal struggles, however, had distracted attention from the project, and the lack of an office had forced Yajima, Asai, the society's secretaries and treasurers, and the editors of Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi to conduct business from their homes and workplaces. Consequently, crucial clerical tasks had been left undone, and some activities postponed.33 WCTU members in Tokyo recognized just how important having an office was to the viability of the national organization, so they recommitted themselves to soliciting building funds within Japan as well as from abroad. Sakurai Chika, founder of Sakurai Jogakkō and a

31Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 1 (2 November 1893): 1-2 of back announcements; no. 3 (2 January 1894): 24; no. 6 (6 April 1894): 3 of front announcements, 38.


33Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 6 (6 April 1894): 38. One clerical problem that persisted into the mid-1890s was the absence of a master list of members and periodical subscribers. This hurt communications and negatively impacted efforts to collect the dues and fees that the WCTU needed to sustain itself financially. Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakumenshi, 137.
Hakodate WCTU member, had already made plans to visit the United States in the fall of 1893 to learn more about the work of American women's organizations. Officers in Tokyo commissioned her to raise dollars during her trip. They also asked her to represent the union at the WWCTU's second biennial convention to be held that October in Chicago. At that gathering, Sakurai spoke briefly about West's time in Hakodate before appealing for money from the other delegates as "sisters" who "worship the same God . . . [and] are laboring for the same Master." 34

In addition to these steps taken specifically to fortify the national union organizationally, affiliated members initiated a range of reform-oriented activities in the JWCTU's early days. Those in Nagasaki, Kobe, and Tokyo, together with male temperance activists and foreign evangelists, welcomed and arranged meetings for Katharine Bushnell and Elizabeth Andrew, WWCTU round-the-world missionaries who very briefly toured Japan in May and June of 1894. Tokyo members held a number of additional public lecture meetings and began to distribute a collection of West's talks, which Takekoshi had edited and the Tokyo union had published. 35 They also collaborated with mission women to open a rescue home for former prostitutes and women at risk, and, during the Sino-Japanese War, provided material comfort

34 Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 1 (2 November 1893): 2 of back announcements; Union Signal, 2 November 1893, 6. While in Chicago, Sakurai also published an appeal in Union Signal. She mentioned in this letter that the JWCTU's planned office building would serve as a memorial hall to West and would be built with bricks or stone to ensure its durability. Union Signal, 11 January 1894, 5.

35 Union Signal, 5 July 1894, 10; 1 November 1894, 4; 8 November 1894, 4-5; Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 14 (8 December 1894): 34; Takekoshi Takeyo, Wesuto joshi ikun.
and temperance leaflets to soldiers and spiritual consolation to bereaved families. In
addition, in November 1893, they launched a new magazine.

At a meeting six months earlier, Tokyo officers had determined to discontinue publication
of Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi and replace it with a new periodical that would serve as the organ
of the JWCTU. They thereafter agreed to entitle it Fujin kyōfū zasshi [Woman’s moral
reform magazine] in order to reflect the union’s national scope. Much more significant than
this simple cosmetic change was the decision to end the fiction of male control and to publish
in accordance with regulations for printed media dealing with learning and the arts. These
rules permitted women to function in both fact and name as publishers, printers, and editors.
Moreover, they included no stipulation about guarantee money. The first issue of Fujin kyōfū
zasshi offered no formal explanation for the shift. Nor did Takekoshi or Yajima, whom the
back cover listed respectively as editor and publisher, comment on the matter. In light of the

36The founding and work of the rescue home will be discussed in detail in chapter 4,
and the JWCTU’s wartime outreach in chapter 6.

37Whether or not the Tokyo WCTU resumed publication of Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi
after the February 1893 suspension has been disputed. Moriya Azuma claimed in her fifty-
year history of the WCTU that this order forced the union to cease publication. Gomi Yuriko
has suggested instead that the society might have published a few more issues, which simply
have not survived. Details of this May 1893 meeting suggest a third possibility, namely, that
the Tokyo WCTU lacked guarantee money to put out issues in March and April and then, in
May, decided to discontinue Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi in order to publish a magazine for the
national union. Moriya Azuma, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyo Fujin Kyōfūkai gojūnen shi [A fifty-
year history of the Japan Woman’s Christian Temperance Union] (Tokyo: Nihon Kirisutokyō
Fujin Kyōfūkai, 1936), 11; Gomi, “Kaisetsu,” 6; Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 1 (2 November
1893): 2 of back announcements.

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financial problems that had plagued Tokyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, however, release from the burden of paying a bond in all probability was the principal motivating factor.38

The temper of Fujin kyōfū zasshi differed significantly from that its predecessor as a result of this switch. Articles and transcribed lectures decrying alcohol and tobacco as harmful to individuals, their families, and society did continue to occupy much space, and news items and other pieces critical of prostitution in Japan and overseas did still appear, although with less frequency. Takekoshi did also use the magazine’s pages to try to garner support for the rescue home project and to promote wartime outreach. Overall, however, specific details about WCTU activities became scarce, as work reports were largely replaced with dry lists of the names of individuals who had either joined, withdrawn their membership, or sent in money for dues or a subscription to Fujin kyōfū zasshi. Information about the work of men’s reform groups and other women’s organizations likewise became exceedingly rare, as did editorials in favor of greater rights for women. In place of these mainstays of Tokyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, the new magazine offered an increasing amount of advice on nursing, cooking, childcare, and home management. Fujin kyōfū zasshi also carried numerous articles that praised women who assiduously fulfilled their duties in the home and identified as female virtues showing filial piety to in-laws, serving husbands, and neglecting personal wants for the sake of family.39

38Kindai Josei Bunkashi Kenkyūkai, ed., 31; Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 1 (2 November 1893).

39Many of these articles introduced actual women who had been recognized by local officials as epitomizing the state’s idea of “good wives and wise mothers” [ryōsai kembo]. For a representative example, see “Teifu,” [A virtuous woman], Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 4 (2 February 1894): 24-25.
Such content reflected the conservative mood that had come to pervade Japanese society in the early 1890s and, more directly, the influence of state policy in defining “proper” roles for women. This climate resulted in part from a backlash to the unbridled craze for anything and everything Western that had characterized the previous two decades and in part from the failure of the government to win early revision of the unequal treaties. Even more significant in turning the tide were the Constitution and the 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education. The former, premised on the idea of imperial sovereignty, stipulated that the emperor wielded supreme political authority, alone possessed the power to declare war and make peace, commanded all military forces, and reigned over the state’s legislative and administrative organs. The latter, based on traditional Confucian moral values, put forth patriotism and loyalty to the emperor as the highest virtues to which citizens could strive and likened the nation to one family headed by the emperor. These documents embodied the desire of Japan’s leaders to establish political stability and mold a populace that would be obedient and willing to sacrifice for the national good. These same goals also informed Article 5 of the Public Meeting and Political Societies Law. This article stood as a cornerstone of official policy on women and epitomized the state’s stance that the involvement of women in political meetings and political organizations was inappropriate. As important a part of the state’s definition of “proper” roles for women was the idea that women could best contribute to the nation by honoring their in-laws and husbands, by frugally managing their households, by raising their children to be loyal citizens, and by denying their own interests for the sake of others.40

40Nolte and Hastings, 151-57.
That *Fujin kyōfū zasshi* extolled women who exemplified these traits highlights just how sharply the JWCTU's new magazine departed from its predecessor. Such evidence of a conservative swing did not go unnoticed and, indeed, elicited a sharp response from Sasaki. After the very first issue appeared, she contributed a letter in which she lamented the new mood of the country and the change she saw in the JWCTU's temper. Addressing the former first, she wrote that, following the establishment of the Tokyo union,

> wives had slowly begun to lift up their heads a little and see the light thanks to women's education. However, after two or three years, Japan entered a period of conservatism. Suddenly, just as women were raising their heads, which had been buried in the earth for hundreds of years, they were trampled on. Regrettably, they have once again gone underground and have regressed further than they were before.41

Sasaki called “deplorable” magazines that contributed to this suppression of women by only telling them how to raise children and make pickles. While she did not directly name *Fujin kyōfū zasshi*, her criticism of its contents rang clear when she admonished WCTU members for not doing their “duty” and told them that they “must immediately rouse” themselves to action.42 Three months later, Sasaki wrote again to warn that those trying to hinder women’s progress included Christians and that, unless the JWCTU prevented these “enemies” from misleading the public with their conservative ideas, women would “fall into a darkness even deeper” than that which they had inhabited before 1886.43

41 *Fujin kyōfū zasshi*, no. 2 (2 December 1893): 34.

42 Ibid.

Both of these letters were sent from Hokkaido, where Sasaki had moved less than four weeks after the founding of the JWCTU. Over the years, various explanations have been given for her departure from the capital and the center of WCTU activism. These include the need for hands-on management at a farm she and her husband had previously purchased, her desire to open a girls’ school and thereby enlighten women of the island, and her wish for a change of scenery in order to recover from a lingering illness. Utsu Yasuko has emphasized that Sasaki’s losses to Yajima in WCTU elections in December 1892 and April 1893 must also be considered. So should the conservative climate of the nation, which Utsu has blamed for nipping the “bud of Sasaki’s movement” and propelling Japan into an era when only those “reform movements that functioned within the limits of [the state’s] idea of ‘good wives, wise mothers’ [ryōsai kembo] were allowed.”

Underlying these words is the interpretation that the Tokyo WCTU began as a truly progressive organization, yet had its “true” feminist nature stifled in the early and mid-1890s. While Sharon Sievers and Rumi Yasutake have given this same reading of the WCTU’s early history, it poses a number of problems. First, this view takes as representative of the whole the opinions and words of an outspoken minority. Sasaki did not speak for all or even most of her fellow members, a fact made eminently clear by the Tokyo union’s decision to adopt Yajima’s prospectus and by Sasaki’s repeated election defeats. Quite to the contrary, a conservative undercurrent characterized the WCTU in Japan from its very beginning.

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45 Utsu, 85.

46 Sievers, 102-13; Yasutake, 147, 151-55.
change in content in the magazine did indicate a strengthening of that humor, the ideological shift has thus been exaggerated. The mainstream of the Tokyo WCTU had justified their participation in reform work in terms of the Victorian ideology of womanhood and continued to do so throughout the Meiji period.

Yet another problem with this reading stems from its premise that the desire for political rights alone indicates a feminist consciousness. True, the JWCTU did not continue to agitate against Article 5 and did not join the suffrage movement until 1917. Nor, however, did members submissively accept the state’s assertion that political activity was incompatible with women’s responsibilities to their families and the nation. Rather, they persisted in asserting themselves politically in order to influence public and private morals. Indeed, the JWCTU continued in the tradition of the Tokyo union and every year submitted the petitions for regulation of overseas prostitutes and revision of the criminal and civil codes. These written appeals represent but two of the many petitions the JWCTU gave to politicians and bureaucrats after 1893 to achieve their reform goals.

The JWCTU’s continuing “progressivism” and commitment to reform aside, the union did suffer organizationally as a consequence of the state’s move to dictate gender roles, the new strength of conservative thought, and rising nationalistic sentiment. The entire Christian community found itself besieged. While the 1880s had been a decade of tremendous growth,

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47 The JWCTU’s inability to prevent construction of a brothel district in Osaka in 1917 directly propelled members to advocate women’s suffrage. They had waged an intense eighteen-month campaign, which had included a march by hundreds of women to prefectural headquarters. With defeat, they realized that only when they had the vote would they finally succeed in ridding Japan of licensed prostitution. Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 346-50.
the early and middle years of the 1890s witnessed a sharp decline in fortunes. New converts dropped precipitously; the number of once professing Christians who renounced their faith increased sharply; and, attendance at educational institutions run by foreign missionaries and graduates of mission schools plummeted. The JWCTU did not escape the repercussions of Christianity's declining popularity.

The initial steps members had taken to expand the national union's base had resulted in the founding of a local in Nagoya and a doubling of the number of affiliated societies. The report of the JWCTU's second anniversary convention in 1895 reveals, however, that headquarters had failed both to strengthen the JWCTU membership-wise and to establish firm ties of allegiance with all local branches. As a case in point, three of the ten affiliates did not even provide information for the meeting. Of the remaining seven, one had paid no dues to the JWCTU during the previous twelve months and had in fact suspended all activities because its president was ill. Two locals, including the one in Nagoya, claimed fewer than ten members each, and another two had less than fifteen. In total, the JWCTU could account

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48The introduction of scientific rationalism and liberal theology, which denied such traditional doctrines as the Trinity, coincided with the rise in conservatism and nationalism and contributed to the troubles the Christian community faced. Iglehart, 91-93; Elizabeth A. Dorn, “Protestant Christian Girls' Schools in Early Meiji Japan” (master’s thesis, University of Michigan, 1994), 38-42.

49The largest of these was the Yokohama WCTU, which Bushnell and Andrew had helped to establish in 1894 with eighty-some women. Its members initially corresponded directly with the WWCTU and resisted becoming a branch of the JWCTU. Only under great pressure did they agree to affiliate with Tokyo, but their association with the national union remained tenuous, as their failure to send in a report in 1895 reveals. Fujin kyōfūzasshi, no. 10 (2 August 1894): 33; Nakadzumi Naoko, “Onna ni yoru onna no tame no katsudō: Yokohama Fujin Kyōfūkai no gojūnen” [Activities for women by women: Fifty years of the Yokohama Woman's Christian Temperance Union], in Shi no Kai kenkyuishi: Jidai no mezame o yomu, vol. 3, ed. Shi no Kai (n.p.: Esashi Shōko, 1996), 10-11.
definitively for only 199 members, 131 of whom belonged to the Tokyo union. Reports from
the national superintendents of the departments of work proved almost as dispiriting. The
legal section revealed that its members had been able to garner far less support for the
union’s monogamy petition than the previous year, while those in charge of organizational
outreach and health indicated that neither department had done more than ponder activities.50

To blame the decline in the WCTU’s fortunes solely on external social factors would,
however, be short-sighted. Indeed, many of the problems that had earlier inhibited organiza-
tional consolidation and expansion remained. The JWCTU continued to function without
a formal office, and the energies of leading members in Tokyo remained divided among
family, work, and union responsibilities. As important was the change in content in *Fujin
kyōfū zasshi*. With its dearth of detail about union activities and policy, it failed either to
create a common sense of purpose among those members who subscribed or to evoke a sense
of affiliation with both the JWCTU and its affiliates. These shortcomings also encumbered
*Fujin shimpo* [Woman’s herald], which replaced *Fujin kyōfū zasshi* as the organ of the
national union in February 1895. The previous month, Takekoshi had printed an editorial
in *Fujin kyōfū zasshi* in which she likened the Sino-Japanese War to a storm and objurgated
the tendency of many to become caught up in the frenzy of the moment and as a result turn
their eyes from the need for reform.51 Authorities had viewed her reference to the conflict
as a violation of content rules and had issued a temporary suspension order for the magazine.

50 *Fujin shimpo*, no. 3 (28 April 1895): 31-34.

51 Takekoshi Takeyo, “Ichiji no fūha ni mayou nakare” [Do not become lost in the
Instead of using the stoppage as an opportunity to revamp the periodical as a means to energize the WCTU, Takekoshi and Yajima simply changed its name and thereafter included even less information on union activities at the local and national levels.\textsuperscript{52} Just how ineffectual headquarters became as a beacon for women’s reform is readily apparent from the report of the JWCTU’s convention in April 1896. Only sixteen delegates attended, and they represented but two branches, those in Tokyo and neighboring Chiba.\textsuperscript{53}

**Efforts to Strengthen the JWCTU with the Help of Resident Missionary Women**

Even before this dismal showing, WWCTU executives had determined that the future of union work in Japan depended on sustained guidance and stimulation from foreign residents. Leavitt, West, and their fellow round-the-world missionaries had generated great enthusiasm in temperance and organization among Japanese, yet their peripatetic travels had prevented them from nurturing the individuals and unions they had inspired. That the superficiality of her contacts with natives represented a fundamental flaw in the WWCTU’s plan of expansion did not escape Leavitt. Over the course of her travels, she had herself relied heavily on in-country denominational missionaries, and she recognized how valuable a role they could play in maintaining local interest and societies. She thus urged Frances Willard and the other world officers to approach American Protestant missionaries to work specifically for the WWCTU shortly after she returned to the United States in 1891. Four years later, executives responded at the WWCTU’s biennial convention in London with a proposal for a new two-pronged strategy to establish a less transitory missionary presence overseas. The first part

\textsuperscript{52}Gomi, “Kaisetsu,” 6-7.

\textsuperscript{53}Fujin shimpō, no. 15 (28 April 1896): 31-32.
of this plan called for the appointment of paid WCTU organizers who would each live in a particular country for an extended period of time. The second involved asking foreign mission boards to charge one or more of their representatives in fields overseas with the task of recruiting members for the WCTU from among their compatriots.54

Although initially slow to adopt such a policy, the WWCTU acted promptly to implement it, especially with regard to Japan. Mere weeks after the convention, executives approached Mary Denton, a member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions then living in Kyoto, to become a resident WCTU missionary. Denton had grown up in a teetotaling, religiously devout family, yet had become involved in temperance outreach herself more by happenstance than plan. As a young country school teacher in California, she had boarded with a family that operated a ranch whose workers spent their Saturday evenings drinking in town. The owner and his wife regularly went to fetch these men on Sundays to ensure that they would show up for work the next day. Denton lent a hand by driving the least inebriated back. This experience deepened her commitment to total abstinence, while a chance meeting with Frances Willard in the early 1880s strengthened her “zeal” for temperance work. She became active in the WCTU in southern California, and, after she relocated to Japan in 1888 to teach at Dōshisha, which the American Board funded, she combined temperance outreach with her mission duties. Of note, she provided logistical support for WWCTU missionaries.

54Yasutake, 156-57; Tyrrell, 109.
who visited Kyoto, and, in 1890 in particular, she appealed to union supporters in the United States for temperance literature to use in the classroom.55

Denton at first declined the WWCTU’s request to become a resident missionary out of concern that the added work would cause her to neglect her primary responsibilities to the American Board. Her dedication to temperance, however, soon overrode this worry, and she proved an eager and energetic organizer among her fellow missionaries. In her first months on the WWCTU’s payroll, she sent leaflets to clergy throughout the country to instruct them in the arguments and methods of temperance reform. She also secured a regular column for the world union in Japan Evangelist, an English-language magazine issued by the Methodist Publishing House in Tokyo for the foreign mission community.56 Heading each entry with the WWCTU’s motto, pledge, and objective, she used her allotted pages to encourage missionaries to make reform an integral part of their daily work. For example, she repeatedly urged her readers to collect signatures for the union’s Polyglot Petition while on evangelizing tours, and she pressed them to include lessons on abstinence in their Sunday school curricula. To facilitate the latter, she provided detailed information about the various tracts, textbooks, and other publications available for use among Japanese.57 In addition to such print work,

55 Frances Benton Clapp, Mary Florence Denton and the Doshisha (Kyoto: Doshisha University Press, 1955), 4-14; Union Signal, 1 January 1891, 1.

56 Methodist missionaries decided to create the Methodist Publishing House in 1885 to import Western works on Christianity and to publish and distribute Sunday school texts, hymnals, tracts, and other literature in Japanese. The firm came under native management in 1896, the same year that its Japanese name was standardized to Kyōbunkan. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Iinkai, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi daijiten, 402-403.

57 Union Signal, 3 October 1895, 10; 27 February 1896, 10; Japan Evangelist 3, no. 4 (April 1896): 237-40; no. 5 (June 1896): 291-92.
she provided the spark missionary women needed to unite and establish their own WCTU in order to strengthen and advance native union activism.

Like Denton, denominational missionaries had promoted the development of the WCTU in Japan following Leavitt’s tour. Some had joined local unions and had addressed member meetings, while others had contributed funds for activities and had subscribed to *Tōkyō fujin kyōfūzasshi*, *Fujin kyōfūzasshi*, and later *Fujin shimpō*. Participants in the Ladies’ Christian Conference, a periodic, interdenominational gathering of American and Canadian missionary women in the Tokyo-Yokohama area, had also collaborated with the JWCTU in 1894 to launch the rescue home project. This latter endeavor aside, missionaries had cooperated with native unionists solely on an individual basis. Even before she accepted the WWCTU’s appointment, Denton had concluded that her mission sisters needed to act collectively if they were to exert a positive and lasting influence on the JWCTU and its affiliates. The Ladies’ Christian Conference struck her as the most logical forum in which to propose the organization of a union among foreigners, not least because of its ties with the Japanese society. Her work in Kyoto excluded her from membership, but she did not let this technicality dissuade her. Instead, she approached Maria True in September 1895 to act in her stead and broach the issue at the Conference’s next gathering.58

True had for years been a prominent figure in the Conference, and her close personal and professional relationship with Yajima meant that she could speak knowledgeably about the condition of the WCTU in Japan. Just as Denton had hoped, her intercession convinced the members of the Conference to act. A preliminary meeting in October resulted in the

58*Japan Evangelist* 3, no. 3 (February 1896): 174.
appointment of a committee to consider specifically how best to organize in relation to the JWCTU. Those select few gathered several weeks later and agreed that establishing a separate society solely of foreigners offered distinct advantages over uniting with Japanese activists. Most importantly, they believed that “more could be done, and in much less time” if they worked independently. 59 In line with that reasoning, they decided to name their union the Auxiliary WCTU of Japan and to maintain direct ties with the WWCTU instead of using the JWCTU as an intermediary. They also voted to adopt their own constitution, create their own departments, and elect their own officers. These latter organizational tasks were accomplished at a general meeting of the Conference’s participants on November 23, at which time Denton was chosen the first superintendent of the Auxiliary’s publishing division. 60

Denton singlehandedly made her department one of the foreign union’s two most active. She did so with her continuing contributions to Japan Evangelist and her successful efforts to secure the Methodist Publishing House’s agreement to print and distribute a collection of temperance lessons for Sunday school teachers, an intermediate temperance textbook for adults, and several leaflets for children. A host of problems, however, plagued the Auxiliary. The time and geographical constraints of members’ mission assignments precluded frequent meetings. As a consequence, officers, superintendents, and the handful of women appointed to assist the latter not only had to plan activities, but also garner support and coordinate implementation through time-intensive correspondence. The burden proved overwhelming for several. Within six months of the Auxiliary’s founding, its corresponding secretary and

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59 Ibid.

60 Ibid., 173-76.
three helping to recruit new members resigned. True’s death in April 1896 similarly deprived the Auxiliary of its superintendent of purity work. As problematic as such rapid turnover in leadership was the union’s separation from the JWCTU. The Auxiliary had been established to “assist and encourage” the Japanese society, yet the absence of direct organizational ties inhibited collaboration. Far from offering constant guidance and support for native WCTU activism, this union of foreign denominational missionaries needed sustenance itself.\footnote{Japan Evangelist 3, no. 4 (April 1896): 239; no. 5 (June 1896): 290; no. 6 (August 1896): 317; vol. 4, no. 1 (October 1896): 27.}

Clara Parrish and the Rejuvenation of the WCTU in Japan

The fortunes of the Auxiliary and of the JWCTU turned swiftly and for the better after the appointment of Clara Parrish as the first full-time resident WWCTU missionary to Japan in 1896. Born and raised in Illinois, Parrish had begun teaching at fifteen, but had quickly become disenchanted with the narrow confines of her one-room country schoolhouse. Her eagerness to expand her own horizons as well as those of other women led her to attend a WCTU lecture. The words she heard set her heart “on fire” and propelled her almost immediately to join her local union and then form a society among young women. When named a WCTU organizer for her district in 1889, she accepted without hesitation despite the reduction in income her new job would bring. Her aptitude for lecturing, organizing unions, and arranging conventions won her notice and earned her a promotion to national organizer for young women in 1892. Japan represented one more field in which she could
“give her entire time to the cause of God and humanity,” and she arrived in October 1896 full of enthusiasm for the work that lay ahead.\textsuperscript{62}

Within days of settling herself in Tokyo, Parrish sent letters to the officers of all the local unions affiliated with the JWCTU to gather information about their conditions and ascertain how best to proceed with her work. She learned that they had been left to sustain themselves without guidance and stimulus from Tokyo and that “nearly all [were] greatly discouraged” as a result.\textsuperscript{63} Additional inquiries also made her aware of the fact that the national union had but a few departments of work, most of which were inactive. This latter piece of information in particular led her to conclude that the JWCTU had “really never been organized along the lines of [WWCTU] work” as set forth most explicitly by Frances Willard in \textit{Do Everything: A Handbook for the World’s White Ribboners}.\textsuperscript{64} As the subtitle indicates, Willard intended this text to be a practical guide for women around the world who wanted to form unions and agitate for reform under the aegis of the WWCTU. To that end, she gave instructions on how to organize, generate support, devise rules, elect officers, and advertise for and conduct meetings. She also stressed the importance of all local and national unions pursuing varied agenda, and, to encourage adoption of her “Do Everything” policy, she detailed the goals of the WWCTU’s departments of work and described methods appropriate for each.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{62}\textit{Japan Evangelist} 4, no. 2 (November 1896): 47-48; \textit{Union Signal}, 19 November 1896, 1. Quoted from \textit{Union Signal}.

\textsuperscript{63}\textit{Union Signal}, 28 January 1897, 4.

\textsuperscript{64}\textit{Japan Evangelist} 4, no. 8 (May 1897): 253.

\textsuperscript{65}Willard, \textit{Do Everything}. 116
Parrish interpreted the minor presence of departments within the JWCTU as evidence of a limited commitment to this same policy. She thus decided to focus her energies at first on convincing members to broaden their reform program. Her words of inducement struck a chord with the union’s beleaguered officers, and, at the JWCTU’s annual convention in April 1897, they appointed a five-person committee to consult with Parrish about which WWCTU departments of work best suited Japan’s needs and members’ interests and abilities. The five took their charge seriously and met with Parrish several times during the weeks immediately after the convention. On the basis of their recommendation, the JWCTU’s officers resolved to restructure the union’s existing six departments to mirror sections in the WWCTU and to create an additional nine. The fifteen included: Evangelistic; Loyal Temperance Legion (LTL) [societies of young boys and girls]; Mothers’ Meetings; Scientific Temperance Instruction (STI) in Public Schools; Narcotics; Social Purity; Sabbath Observance; Sunday School Work; Work among Young Women in Schools and Colleges [unions formed among young women were known as Ys]; Press Work; Literature; Heredity; Unfermented Wine at the Sacrament; Work among Soldiers; and, Legislation and Petitions. Japan Evangelist 4, no. 8 (May 1897): 253-54.

66 Union Signal, 20 May 1897, 8.
and a short history of the society included, was published the following year. To provide personal instruction as well, Parrish held a five-day school of methods for Japanese workers in July 1898. While these activities focused only on the native union, Parrish knew that she also needed to solidify commitment to department work within the Auxiliary. Many of its members shared with Denton a history of WCTU involvement, but relatively few had any experience in superintending departments. For their sake, she convened a second methods convention just two weeks after the first with help from Eliza Spencer Large, the Auxiliary’s corresponding secretary.

Parrish recognized that the future of the WCTU in Japan depended not only on a stronger organizational structure, but also on renewed interest in the union and in reform activities in general. Inspirational tours had proven highly effective before, and she did not hesitate to travel extensively herself. In her first four months alone, she covered almost one thousand miles to speak at branch meetings and mission schools for girls and to address church groups and any other gatherings that foreign missionaries and native temperance activists arranged. Her experiences with various audiences early led her to conclude that the youth of Japan and young women in particular would be the “‘corner stones’ upon which the ‘palace’ of the

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69 Japan Evangelist 5, no. 9 (September 1898): 286-87.

70 Union Signal, 29 April 1897, 10.
W.C.T.U. of Japan" would be constructed. Their impressionability made them more likely to convert to temperance than adults, and young women through motherhood had the power to raise a dry next generation. Parrish thus paid special attention to the young while touring, and at each mission school she visited she encouraged students to organize Young Woman’s Christian Temperance Unions, otherwise known as Ys. Japan’s first Y was founded in 1896 at a Methodist school in Hakodate, and Parrish organized the second at the Congregational Kobe Jogakkō in early 1897. Enthusiasm for Y work intensified thereafter within both the JWCTU and the Auxiliary, and, by the fall of 1897, nine young women’s unions with a total membership of roughly five hundred were in operation thanks to their assistance. Parrish’s travels similarly sparked enthusiasm in adults, as her report to the WWCTU’s fourth biennial convention held in October 1897 in Toronto reveals. At the time she wrote it, the JWCTU had approximately five hundred adult members, which represented nearly a twofold increase over the previous year, while the Auxiliary had ninety-two, up from sixty-eight in 1896.73

The JWCTU’s total growth including adults and young women proved so spectacular that it surpassed percentage-wise membership increases in any of the WWCTU’s other forty-nine national affiliates. In recognition of this accomplishment, the WWCTU awarded the union a prize banner made of silk at the Toronto convention. The banner’s front emphasized the

71 Union Signal, 1 July 1897, 10.


WWCTU’s global reach with a picture of a young woman holding up the world in her hands and the union’s motto “For God and Home and Every Land” embroidered to her right. Yajima realized the potential use of the banner as a tool to create a sense of unity among the JWCTU’s dispersed members and to generate interest in the society in Japan in general. So, before the union returned the banner to the WWCTU for its 1900 convention, she dedicated much of her free time to traveling the country with the banner in hand. Six feet by four feet in size and suspended from a large brass stand, it made quite a sight next to the diminutive Yajima. It also served as a notable centerpiece at the JWCTU’s own convention in April 1898.

Soon after her arrival, Parrish determined to make the WCTU’s annual meetings public showcases for the union’s work, forums for education, and opportunities for the rejuvenation of interest in reform activities. She helped to negotiate the rental of the YMCA auditorium in Tokyo for the 1897 convention, her first in Japan, in the hopes that advance advertising and a varied program of business sessions, lectures, and entertainment would attract crowds and make the two-day event the “largest temperance meeting ever held in Japan.” The convention did draw delegates from more branches than had sent representatives the previous year, and the union did receive a score of congratulatory telegrams from around the country. Parrish lamented, though, that the largest attendance at any one time did not exceed eight


75 *Fujin shimpo*, no. 10 (20 March 1898): 27; *Fujin shimpo*, no. 33 (25 January 1900): 2-6; *Union Signal*, 22 February 1900, 6.

76 *Union Signal*, 28 January 1897, 4.
hundred because of inclement weather. She expressed no such regrets the following year. Indeed, she praised the JWCTU’s 1898 convention as a “wonderful monument to the worth and work of the women” of Japan. The meetings lasted for three days with morning, afternoon, and evening sessions, and consistently drew large audiences, which included a record 162 members representing branches from Kobe to Morioka. A stenographer was on hand to record all the proceedings, and committees on credentials and courtesies ensured that the convention was conducted in accord with Roberts’s Rules of Order, the guide for procedure that the WWCTU followed. To get the JWCTU to apply these rules conscientiously stood as one of Parrish’s goals for the annual meeting. Another was to settle the question of local representation in the convention. The union’s constitution included no provision guaranteeing branches a vote in decisions made at the convention, and this structural shortcoming had weakened local interest in the meeting and had contributed to poor participation among members outside the immediate Tokyo area. At Parrish’s recommendation, the JWCTU solved this problem and decided that every twenty-five members would be entitled to send one official delegate.

Parrish’s contributions to the organizational strengthening of the JWCTU and to its expansion did not end with her efforts to bring order to the union’s conventions. She also accomplished unification of Japanese and foreign unionists. In 1897, she indirectly broached the subject of a merger at the Auxiliary’s own annual meeting in November, when she urged its members to “identify themselves” with branches of the JWCTU and to assist and, where

77 Union Signal, 20 May 1897, 5.

78 Japan Evangelist 5, no. 5 (May 1898): 151-56. Quoted from 151-52.
necessary, guide native activities. Continued prodding finally induced Auxiliary women
to agree to become a branch of the JWCTU instead of a national affiliate of the world union
at their next annual meeting in September 1898, just two months before Parrish left Japan.
This alliance made them responsible for paying dues to the JWCTU, but in exchange entitled
them to delegates at JWCTU conventions and made them eligible for office in that union.

The link between Parrish’s work and change in the content of the JWCTU’s periodical
is far less obvious. Her reports in Union Signal and Japan Evangelist offer no indication that
she took steps to encourage Yamaji Taneko, the magazine’s editor in 1896 and 1897, to more
forthrightly use the organ’s pages to promote reform. Her enthusiasm and the strength of her
own resolve to advance the WCTU’s cause in Japan, however, undoubtedly impacted Yamaji
and quickly at that. Indeed, the lead editorial in the January 1897 issue of Fujin shimpo
manifested a renewed commitment to pursuing in print the JWCTU’s reform agenda. In this
piece, Yamaji argued that efforts to improve family morals would fail to achieve real success
as long as immorality remained rampant in public. Reflecting on the fact that previous issues
of Fujin shimpo had dealt primarily with the home, she offered the reminder that the JWCTU
had originally been established to reform public and private morality and that the union’s


80 Japan Evangelist 5, no. 10 (October 1898): 320. In addition to these efforts to unite
the JWCTU and the Auxiliary, Parrish worked to bring together native and foreign male
temperance activists. The creation of a national temperance league had guided much of her
outreach in 1898, and her endeavors paid off when her farewell party in October 1898
became the occasion for the establishment of the Nihon Kinshu Dōmeikai [Japan Temper-
ance League]. Japan Evangelist 6, no. 2 (February 1899): 54-55; Koshio, 87-94.
work continued to be very public in nature. She then closed with the prayer that her readers would renew their devotion to the JWCTU and give their all for reform.  

A host of other articles in the first months of 1897 provide further evidence of a shift in the tone and objective of Fujin shimpo. One such example is an editorial on the JWCTU’s monogamy petition, which Yamaji included in the March 1897 issue. Despite the fact that a House of Representative’s committee had voted not to consider the petition, she expressed pleasure that attention had finally been drawn to the virtue and value of monogamy. She vowed that the union would continue to fight and, because one vote alone could determine the fate of a petition, to fight more desperately. This closing assertion projected a forcefulness reminiscent of many editorials in Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi. One month after this article appeared, Yamaji received an order to stop publication. The reason she was given was that the periodical had addressed contemporary issues, and the JWCTU had not paid the guarantee money required for such topics. The article most likely responsible for the ban was this editorial on the monogamy petition.

Shortly after notification of the ban arrived, Yajima Kajiko, still serving as the magazine’s publisher, received a postcard from a young official at the Communications Ministry. This note advised her to deal with the ban by first tendering the form for discontinuing publication and then submitting a new request to begin publishing again under the same name. What

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82 Yamaji Taneko, “Sara ni kokoro o tsukusu beshi” [We must exert ourselves anew], Fujin shimpo, no. 26 (15 March 1897): 1-2.
83 Fujin shimpo, no. 371 (1 February 1929): 38.
prompted his unsolicited assistance remains a mystery. To conclude from his action that he had a personal affinity for the JWCTU’s message or even that the government wanted to encourage the JWCTU to continue publishing out of support for the organization’s attempt to mold a temperate populace would be reading too much into what sources are available. His suggestion does, though, show that ways to circumvent Meiji press and publication regulations did exist, and Yajima and Yamaji wasted no time in taking his advice.

With no significant disruption in the printing schedule, they published the first issue of a new *Fujin shimpo* in May 1897. On the first page, they wrote that the purpose of the magazine was to publicize the JWCTU’s principles and hopes. They also offered a lengthy explanation for the decision to switch back to press regulations. Specifically, they stated that the legal restriction prohibiting women from publishing and editing newspapers and magazines such as *Fujin shimpo* was a problem linked to women’s rights. Because it was essential for the JWCTU to be able to discuss this problem and to advocate for monogamy and the abolition of licensed prostitution, they had no choice but to conform to press rules. This new freedom required greater responsibility, they claimed, yet provided the liberty to address all problems concerning women.84

Over the ensuing years, Yajima, Yamaji, and their successors as *de facto* publisher and editor received periodic summons from the Metropolitan Police Department, which typically preceded pointed suggestions that certain articles be toned down. They remained steadfast,

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84Yajima Kajiko and Yamaji Taneko, “*Fujin shimpo*kaikan no ji” [A word regarding the revised publication of *Fujin shimpo*], *Fujin shimpo*, no. 1 (26 May 1897): 1-2.
however, in pursuing the agenda of *Fujin shimpo* as defined by Yajima and Yamaji.\textsuperscript{85} For example, from October 1897 to March 1898, the periodical included a five-part piece on the expansion of women’s rights, which sought to debunk persisting arguments against suffrage for women.\textsuperscript{86} Articles on women laborers, introductions of new jobs for women, a special section with information relevant for nurses, and a report on a Japanese woman’s ascent of Mount Fuji also appeared and served to enhance readers’ awareness of the wealth of possibilities open to them. As calls for the abolition of licensed prostitution and the movement for self-emancipation by prostitutes intensified, more and more space was devoted to critiques of this system. Detailed reports of branch activities and of national and executive meetings also became regular features and reveal that creating a common sense of purpose and informing members of the policy of the national headquarters also became a key objective with the publication of *Fujin shimpo*.\textsuperscript{87} As such, the magazine itself contributed to the strengthening and growth of the JWCTU from the late 1890s through the end of the Meiji period.

**The JWCTU in the Last Decade of the Meiji Period**

From the inauguration of the WCTU in Japan, members had undertaken relief work to provide victims of natural disasters with material necessities and psychological comfort. The country’s first major incident of environmental pollution likewise provided the union with

\textsuperscript{85}Togawa Hideko, “Shasetsu made kaita ano koro: Keishichō e yobidasareta” [The days when I even wrote editorials: My summons to the Metropolitan Police Department], *Fujin shimpo*, no. 372 (1 March 1929): 24-25.

\textsuperscript{86}“Joken no kakuchō” [The expansion of women’s rights], *Fujin shimpo*, no. 6 (20 October 1897): 22-27; no. 7 (20 November 1897): 10-15; no. 9 (20 January 1898): 17-21; no. 10 (20 February 1898): 9-13; no. 11 (20 March 1898): 15-19.

\textsuperscript{87}Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfukai, ed., *Hyakunenshi*, 129-30; Nakadzumi, 15.
an opportunity to serve, and members responded with a number of different activities during
the early 1900s. The cause of the pollution was the Ashio copper mine. Located in a
mountainous region just hours north of Tokyo, the mine sat near the headquarters of the
Watarase River, which supplied water and food to communities spanning four prefectures.
The mine’s modernization in the 1880s and 1890s had resulted in a tremendous increase in
output, yet growth had entailed massive deforestation. The removal of mountain trees subse-
quently intensified spring flooding. The persistent dumping of arsenic and other toxic waste
materials into the Watarase, which had begun much earlier, compounded the new destructive
power of the floods as they transferred harmful industrial compounds into low-lying fields.
Evidence of pollution had first appeared in the late 1870s. In the 1890s, an active opposition
movement developed in response.88

The JWCTU joined that movement in November 1901, after Yajima, Ushioda, and fellow
members Kuchida Yoshiko, Shimada Nobuko, and Matsumoto Eiko traveled to the polluted
area to witness the damage firsthand. The sights she beheld so overwhelmed Ushioda that
she published a descriptive report in Fujo shimbun [Woman’s journal] soon after returning
to Tokyo in order to alert others to the problem.89 She also collaborated with other JWCTU
members and pollution opponents to hold a charity lecture meeting to benefit victims later
that month, and, in December, she spearheaded the organization of women for the purpose

88F. G. Notehelfer, “Japan’s First Pollution Incident,” Journal of Japanese Studies
1, no. 2 (Spring 1975): 360–80; Kenneth Strong, Ox Against the Storm: A biography of
Tanaka Shozo: Japan’s conservationist pioneer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia

89Ushioda Chiseko, “Kōdoku higaichi Watarase no min” [The people of the Watarase
and the mine polluted area], Fujo shimbun, no. 81 (25 November 1901): 4.
of providing aid.\textsuperscript{90} As president of that society, the Kōdokuchi Fujin Kyūsaikai [Women’s Pollution Relief Association], she helped to sponsor public lectures; she toured the country to raise awareness; and, she personally distributed donations of clothing, food, and other relief goods.\textsuperscript{91} She also opened a vocational training center for women from the polluted areas and sought to teach them basic skills so that they could earn a living by some means other than prostitution.\textsuperscript{92}

These various activities won for Ushioda acclaim within the JWCTU, and, at the union’s annual convention in April 1903, she finally succeeded in winning more votes than Yajima in the election for president. These two had cooperated in furthering reform in the years after the 1893 merger of the TWTS and the WCTU, yet the specter of renewed conflict loomed. The sense that Ushioda had worked behind the scenes to undermine Yajima’s position raised worries about how Yajima would react and led officers to offer her the title of honorary president just weeks after the convention. Yajima refused on the grounds that the title carried responsibility but no real authority. Tensions remained high for months and only dissolved after Ushioda died of stomach cancer in early July 1903.\textsuperscript{93}


\textsuperscript{92}\textit{Fujin shimpo}, no. 70 (25 February 1903): 16.

\textsuperscript{93}Nihon Kirisutokyo Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., \textit{Hyakunenshi}, 210-12.
Yajima returned to the helm of the JWCTU thereafter and oversaw the continued growth of the society and the expansion of its work, both of which had begun under Parrish and had been furthered by the renewal of the union’s periodical. Her leadership gained additional sustenance from three resident WWCTU missionaries who lived and worked in Japan during the last decade of the Meiji period. Those three were Kara Smart (1902 - 1906), Flora Strout (1908 - 1910), and Ruth Davis (1909 - 1913). Their words of guidance regarding activities and efforts at organization helped to solidify the work of their predecessors and win for the JWCTU greater public acceptance and legitimacy. Among the three, Smart had the greatest impact through her promotion of outreach among youth, her direction of the union’s cooperative campaign in conjunction with the Fifth National Industrial Exposition in Osaka, and her participation in the union’s activities to provide comfort and support during the Russo-Japanese War. The following chapters, particularly five and six, will discuss these specific endeavors and their influence on the organizational development of the JWCTU. They will show that the union emerged from its early periods of division and disinterest to become a mature and stable organization by the end of the Meiji period. Indeed, in 1911, the society boasted thirty-six hundred members in forty-six adult branches and nineteen Ys.\footnote{Fujin shimpo, no.169 (25 August 1911): 24.} Not only were members devoted to department work, but they were also committed to continuing to agitate “For God, home, and country.”
CHAPTER FOUR

THE FIGHT AGAINST PROSTITUTION

From the inception of the Tokyo WCTU, Sasaki Toyoju argued that Japan's system of state-regulated, public prostitution represented the biggest impediment to the improvement of women's character and the "enlightenment" of the country. For this reason, she asserted, the union should devote its greatest energy to the problem of licensed prostitution, not to that of alcohol consumption. Her opinion influenced first the decision to omit direct mention of temperance in the organization's name and, then, the union's April 1887 resolution to give priority to the eradication of prostitutes. Though this determination did not preclude pursuit of other reform objectives, the battle to "purify" Japan does stand out as one of the most important the WCTU waged during the Meiji period. It also highlights how members tried both to influence public policy and shape private behavior in line with their own ideas about morality. This chapter will explore in detail three distinct components of that fight: agitation against Japanese prostitutes overseas; opposition to particular brothel districts; and rescue efforts. A brief history of the license system in Japan will serve as an introduction.

An Overview of Licensed Prostitution in Japan and "Modernization" in Early Meiji

In 1612, Shōji Jinna, a brothel owner in Edo, petitioned shogunal officials to establish one distinct brothel district within the capital and to relocate there the dozens of "houses of ill-fame" scattered throughout the city. He supported his appeal with the argument that
consolidation would facilitate both a crackdown on the illegal kidnaping of children for prostitution and surveillance of rōnin [masterless samurai] and other “suspicious characters.” Moreover, he added, officials would be better able to impose restrictions on the length of patrons’ stays and thereby prevent them from lingering to the neglect of their duties. Five years later, the bakufu finally heeded his request and publicly authorized the building of what would become known as the Yoshiwara pleasure quarter. This decision was not the first move by Japanese officialdom to manage prostitution. As early as the thirteenth or fourteen century, the Kamakura shogunate (1185-1333) had named a special administrator just to regulate prostitutes, while its successor, the Ashikaga bakufu (1338-1573), had extended formal recognition to prostitution as a profession for women and begun imposing taxes through its Harlots Bureau. More recently, Toyotomi Hideyoshi had sanctioned the construction of a brothel district in Kyoto in 1589, and officials in Osaka had approved the establishment of a similar quarter within their own city limits in 1610. The bakufu’s authorization of the building of Yoshiwara, however, heralded the development of a comprehensive system of officially sanctioned, regulated, and taxed public prostitution. The cornerstone of this system was the licensed quarter outside of which the Tokugawa prohibited prostitutes from living and working. Soon after establishing Yoshiwara, the


2 Garon, 90.

bakufu began to open quarters elsewhere with such speed that, by the end of the seventeenth century, thirty-five districts were operating in castle towns around the country. Yoshiwara itself became one of the largest, housing in the mid-1800s about three thousand prostitutes by some estimates and as many as ten thousand by others.⁴

The Meiji government inherited this system and, during its first decade in power, instituted a number of significant changes in line with European regulatory practices in an attempt at “modernization.” The earliest reform involved the introduction of compulsory testing of all brothel prostitutes for venereal disease. Mandatory inspection and treatment for the infected had originated in Paris and Berlin in the late 1790s in response to greater knowledge about the nature of venereal disease and a sharp increase in the number of infections among soldiers during the Napoleonic Wars. Over the ensuing decades, authorities in Madrid, Rome, Vienna, Prague, and a host of other continental cities began to require medical examinations on a local basis, while British officials imposed testing in port cities and military towns nationwide in the 1860s.⁵ The first tests conducted in Japan took place in Nagasaki at the behest of the Russian navy. Soon after the port’s opening under the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce, a brothel district was established there to cater to resident and transient foreigners. Concern about the debilitating effects of venereal disease on sailors induced Russian naval officials to demand inspections, to which local Japanese authorities promptly acquiesced. Testing began shortly thereafter in the other foreign

⁴Garon, 90; de Becker, xvii.

⁵Vern Bullough and Bonnie Bullough, Women and Prostitution: A Social History (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1987), 188-95.
concessions, and, in the early 1870's, the Meiji state extended official oversight to the far more numerous body of women who serviced their own countrymen by requiring periodic examinations of all brothel prostitutes. 6

International pressure also prompted change in licensing laws. During the summer of 1872, the Maria Luz, a Peruvian ship carrying two hundred thirty Chinese coolies, anchored in Yokohama to escape bad weather. One of the laborers jumped overboard and, after gaining refuge on a nearby British warship, told a story of how the Peruvians had provided him and his fellow "passengers" with neither food nor water and planned to sell them to South American mines as slaves. Concerned about appearing "civilized" in the eyes of the West, Japanese officials heeded British calls for intercession by first detaining the Peruvian ship and then ordering the release and return home of all the Chinese. The government of Peru raised strong objections in response, as did consular corps from the Netherlands, France, and Portugal. In an attempt to gain restitution, the ship's captain filed suit against two of the coolies in a Japanese court, asserting that they had signed employment contracts legal under Peruvian law and thus should either return to the ship or pay reparations. The court ruled in favor of the defendants but not before a Peruvian representative exposed the hypocrisy of Japanese assertions that traffic in humans was illegal in Japan by producing a copy of a promissory note binding a prostitute to a brothel owner for a set period. 7


7Morosawa Yōko, Onna no rekishi (ge) [A history of women (Part 2)] (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1970), 53-55; Itō Hidekichi, Nihon haishō undōshi [A history of the movement to
The international humiliation Japan endured owing to this incident prompted the Council of State in early October 1872 to issue the Ordinance Liberating Prostitutes. This decree banned the buying and selling of people, called for the release of prostitutes, geisha, and other indentured servants, and barred recourse from their respective employers. The sudden issuance of this edict shocked most brothel owners who knew nothing of the Maria Luz. Fearful of the law’s impact on their livelihoods, many united in outright defiance and immediately tightened control of the prostitutes in their employ in order to keep news of the ruling from reaching the women’s ears. Their concerns proved ungrounded, as the state had no intention of actually outlawing prostitution. Nor were officials about to leave the business unregulated. Two days after the Council promulgated the Ordinance, the governor of Tokyo issued a new set of rules governing prostitutes and brothels within the city. These regulations stipulated that a woman who wanted to prostitute of her own free will could obtain a license and would be permitted to “rent a room” from a brothel owner licensed to provide accommodations within a designated quarter. The inclusion of the idea of self-determination reflected an attempt to make official management of prostitution appear more enlightened and humane. In reality, this particular change resembled the others the governor set forth in

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8Ito, 81-82.

9Morosawa Yōko, Shinano no onna (jō) [The women of Shinano (Part 1)] (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1969), 259.
being cosmetic, not substantive. The arbitrary selling of girls and young women by their families continued unabated, although now under the guise of prostitutes exercising their own wills. These same rules became the standard for regulating and “reviving” licensed prostitution nationwide in the wake of the *Maria Luz* incident. So reconstituted, the system flourished from the mid-1870s on, as the central government and local administrations actively encouraged growth while working to strengthen state control. By 1897, less than three decades after the Council of State “liberated” prostitutes, official registries listed 546 pleasure quarters, 10,172 brothels, and 49,208 prostitutes in all of Japan.

In 1890, shortly after her election as president of the Tokyo WCTU, Asai Saku submitted a petition to the first session of Diet in which she called for the abolition of this system. In her appeal, she bemoaned the fact that the spirit of the Ordinance Liberating Prostitutes had not been realized and challenged the very arguments used to justify state regulation. Specifically, she wrote that licenses had failed to control the spread of syphilis and lewd conduct and had instead fostered both. Moreover, they infringed upon human rights and created an environment ruinous to the morale of youth, harmful to the economy, and destructive to tens of thousands of families. Government approval, she added, had effectively eliminated shame.

10 Many of these “reforms” involved the simple substitution of one term for another. For example, *yūjōya* [brothel] became *kashizashiki* [room for rent], and *zenshakkin* [advance] replaced *minoshirokin* [ransom] to refer to the money a brothel operator gave to a young woman’s family after concluding a contract for her service. Yoshimi Kaneko, “Baishun no jittai to haisho undo” [The actual state of prostitution and the anti-prostitution movement], in *Nihon joseishi*, vol. 4 [Kindai], ed. Joseishi Sōgō Kenkyūkai (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1982), 224-25.

11 Takai Susumu, ed., *Toyama-ken joseishi: Oni to onna wa hito ni mienu zo yoki, ka* [A history of Toyama women: Are demons and women invisible to others?] (Toyama: Katsura Shobō, 1988), 158.
and shame alone had the power to deter immorality in public and private. As a result, Japan was in disgrace as “no greater insult existed for a civilized country” than such a system. Many within and without the Tokyo WCTU agreed and added their signatures to this petition, but their collective appeal brought about no change in government policy. Thereafter, the WCTU continued to advocate the abolition of the system, yet the focus of activity shifted away from attempts to win a comprehensive solution to campaigns aimed at solving specific problems related to prostitution. This approach of trying to achieve small victories in order to win the war characterized the WCTU’s anti-prostitution movement until the end of the Meiji period, with Japanese prostitutes overseas representing one problem the WCTU sought to eliminate.

Calls for the Regulation of Japanese Prostitutes Overseas

Despite a shogunal edict outlawing travel abroad, overseas trafficking in women did occur, albeit on a minor scale, during the Tokugawa period. As Karen Colligan-Taylor has pointed out, Chinese merchants typically hired Japanese maids for their Nagasaki settlement homes, and more than one induced his servant to return with him to China only to sell her into prostitution. This trickle of women going overseas to serve as prostitutes became a steady stream after the bakufu rescinded its ban in 1866 and continued to swell during the Meiji period. Impetuses for this growing “exportation” included the emigration of male laborers to shores across the Pacific and the stationing of troops and government officials throughout the burgeoning Japanese empire. These factors gave rise to a great numerical imbalance between men and women in Japanese communities overseas and heightened the

\[12^{12}Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 32 (20 December 1890): 8-11. Quoted from 11.\]
demand for prostitutes, whom many regarded as crucial to the success of these colonies. Networks for procuring and transporting women emerged in response, and, while some women did set sail aware of the life that awaited them, agents more frequently resorted to deception or kidnaping.13

The experience of Yamada Waka was typical. The second daughter of a poor peasant family, Yamada was beguiled by a jewelry-bedecked woman and her stories of the riches to be had in the United States. Yamada set sail for Seattle with high hopes of helping her family and fulfilling her filial duties only to be seized by the woman’s cohorts upon landing and sold to a brothel.14 The total number of Japanese women who, either forcibly like Yamada or of their own will, engaged in prostitution overseas during the Meiji period remains unknown. What is clear is that that figure greatly exceeds the nearly twenty thousand Japanese living overseas in 1910 who had registered with the Japanese government and identified prostitution as their principal occupation.15

As the number of Japanese prostitutes around the Pacific grew, voices emerged condemning their presence. All spoke to the pervasive concern about national honor and argued that Japanese engaging in prostitution beyond the Mikado’s shores were disgracing the country. One of the earliest objections offered by a government official came from Nakagawa


15See Colligan-Taylor, xxiii, for a breakdown of where these registrants resided.
Tetsurō, Japan’s first consul in Singapore. When he took up his post in 1889, brothels in Singapore housed more than one hundred Japanese prostitutes who, with traffickers and pimps, comprised the vast majority of the Japanese community there. Nakagawa took issue with their collective presence in one of his first reports and charged them with having led Chinese, Indian, and Malay locals to “believe that all Japanese [were] involved in the prostitution racket” and to “despise and ridicule the Japanese in the extreme.” Diplomats on the West Coast likewise complained to Tokyo about the proliferation of Japanese prostitutes and the adverse effects of their presence on immigrant communities in Washington, Oregon, and California. Paramount among their concerns was the fear that prostitutes would generate such anti-Japanese sentiment that the American government would prohibit Japanese immigration altogether. Many outside official circles shared this fear and began to call for state regulation during the last decade of the century. For example, an editorialist for Hōchi shimbun [Information news], one of Japan’s top three dailies, published an opinion piece in 1890 exhorting the government to order its consuls to repatriate prostitutes in order to maintain citizens’ access to the United States. The following year, a group of emigrants in San

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17Their trepidation was grounded in the American response to rising animosity toward Chinese prostitutes in the West. In 1882, Congress had passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited emigration of all Chinese laborers.

18Reprinted in Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 29 (20 September 1890): 11-12.
Francisco petitioned the Foreign Ministry for a total ban on overseas travel by Japanese prostitutes for much the same reason.\footnote{Yasutake, 205-206.}

Members of the Tokyo WCTU were well aware of the increasingly problematic presence of Japanese prostitutes overseas before such official and civilian outcry began and, in fact, had already held meetings to inform the public. In addition, from the first issue of \textit{Tokyo fujin kyōfū zasshi}, the magazine’s editors had repeatedly published articles describing the treatment of prostitutes on foreign soil and the circumstances of their passage abroad. Early writings reflected a complete lack of sympathy on the part of the society’s middle-class members for overseas prostitutes who overwhelmingly came from poor farming families.\footnote{Asai’s editorial in the first issue of the magazine stands out as a noteworthy exception. She there took issue with her fellow members and society at large for treating prostitutes as less than human. In a particularly cutting passage, she argued that “prostitutes [were] also people” and that for the morally upright to “sacrifice” prostitutes for the sake of their own virtue was like “ripping open another’s heart in order to cure one’s own illness.” Her opinion, however, remained very much her own. Asai Saku, “Kyōfū no mokuteki.”}

Later pieces did indicate a heightened sensitivity to the social and environmental factors that made women susceptible to being sold. Consistent throughout, however, was the view that those who engaged in prostitution abroad sullied the nation’s honor and brought shame to all Japanese women.\footnote{For representative articles, see “Hitan subeki ichi daimondai” [One great problem we should lament], \textit{Tokyo fujin kyōfū zasshi}, no. 48 (31 May 1892): 4-5; “Zaigai baiinfu torishimarihō seitai ni kansuru” [Concerning the enactment of regulations for overseas prostitutes], \textit{Fujin shimpō}, no. 21 (20 January 1899): 25-27.}

In addition to such efforts to arouse public opinion, the Tokyo WCTU began agitating for a legislative solution in 1890. That year, Asai petitioned the Foreign Minister for the passage
of a law protecting Japanese women overseas. The next year, the government submitted a bill to the Diet’s House of Peers that set prison terms and fines for women who went abroad of their own accord to engage in prostitution and for individuals who lured or assisted women in emigrating for employment in brothels. The hopes Asai had for this bill quickly faded when the government withdrew it from consideration after just nine days. Disappointed but not defeated, members of the Tokyo WCTU decided in 1892 to submit a second petition to the full Diet urging the passage of comprehensive regulatory legislation.

Over the ensuing years, the government first instructed prefectural officials to take steps to prevent young women from being taken abroad for prostitution and, then, promulgated a law restricting overseas employment for which women desiring to emigrate could receive official approval. However, implementation of both measures proved difficult and half-hearted. One great impediment was the opinion, deeply rooted among officials and Japanese society in general, that prostitution was an acceptable way for daughters of impoverished families to provide for their parents’ needs and thereby fulfill their filial obligations. This view contributed to government inertia. So did the tremendous amount of foreign currency

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22 One impetus for this appeal was a letter the Tokyo WCTU received in July 1890 from Kawaguchi Masue, a member residing in Sausalito, Calif. In this missive, Kawaguchi described her own efforts to prevent newly arriving Japanese women from falling into lives of disrepute and urged her compatriots to petition for regulations. “Kawaguchi Masue shōjo” [A letter from Kawaguchi Masue], Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 28 (16 August 1890): 6-7.


overseas prostitutes remitted to Japan each year. This money fueled economic development domestically, and the Meiji state was not eager to remove the source.

In the absence of effective government action, the JWCTU continued in the footsteps of the Tokyo WCTU and, beginning in 1893, annually petitioned the Diet for laws to regulate Japanese prostitutes going overseas. An 1899 version mentioned in particular the need to revise existing laws regarding travel documents as they were wholly inadequate for preventing the secreting away of women. It also reiterated the charge that prostitutes dishonored the nation in a claim now wrapped tightly in the lingo of Japanese imperialism. Such concern about Japan’s standing in the international community served as one motivating factor for this petition. JWCTU members also saw prostitutes abroad as defaming all Japanese women and as preventing the elevation of women’s status in society and the home by perpetuating the notion that women were commodities to be bought and sold. Far from being a “fire on a distant shore,” to use a phrase from a 1905 article in Fujin shimpo, prostitutes overseas were regarded as a major problem linked to the fate of every family in Japan. JWCTU members, firm in their belief that comprehensive and enforceable regulations were needed

Opposition to overseas prostitutes gave rise to an economic argument in favor of their emigration. Fukuzawa Yukichi for one maintained that those going abroad would have no future in Japan other than as prostitutes. He asserted that they could better serve their country by plying their trade overseas and earning much needed foreign currency. Calculating how much they remitted over the course of the Meiji period is impossible to determine. Records do reveal, though, that, around the turn of the century, prostitutes in Southeast Asia sent over ¥200,000 a year home through the Nagasaki post office alone. Warren, 62-63.

Prostitutes were accused of sullying the national flag just as Japan was “attempting to spread justice across the whole world.” Fujin shimpo, no. 21 (20 January 1899): 23-24.

to eradicate this blight on the country and Japanese women, as well as to protect the stability of the home, persisted with their petition campaign until 1927. Only then did Japan decide to adhere to the League of Nations’ convention with regard to trafficking in women and children.28

Opposition to the Licensed Quarters

Crusades directed at the removal or abolition of particular brothel districts stand out as another fundamental component of the JWCTU’s anti-prostitution movement. The struggles of the petition campaign against overseas prostitutes reinforced in members’ minds the truth that the moral purification of society would not occur overnight and led them to attempt this second ameliorative step in the hopes of changing attitudes and ultimately paving the way to victory. This form of opposition dominated anti-prostitution work during the last decade of the Meiji period and reflected the growing activism of local branches.

The Osaka WCTU initiated one of the first recorded campaigns in 1902 shortly after the branch’s members resolved to devote their greatest energies to the fight against prostitution. That year they formally petitioned the prefectural assembly to remove all brothel districts within the city to remote locations. To sway elected officials and citizens, they also gave each assemblyman a prospectus detailing the union’s position, appealed to newspaper editors and journalists to discuss in print the need for relocation, and, in 1903, held a series of public lectures. The crux of their argument was that urban development and continued building of brothels were both increasing the visibility of prostitution within the city and bringing typical homes into greater proximity to licensed quarters. As a result, Osaka’s youth lived and

28Morosawa, Onna no rekishi (ge), 108.
learned in an “atmosphere of impurity” and thus faced constant exposure to the corrupting power of prostitution. Lamenting this negative influence, the members of the Osaka WCTU called for relocation for the sake not only of the next generation, but also the future of the city. Their crusade failed in the end to arouse sufficient support for removal, but this setback in no way diminished their commitment to ridding Osaka of its brothel quarters. Their belief that they were “[working] under Christ’s orders” sustained their dedication and led them to initiate two more campaigns over the next decade, including one of the Meiji period’s most successful in 1909.

On July 31-August 1 of that year, a fire destroyed Sonezaki, the most centrally located of the city’s five pleasure quarters. Osaka WCTU president Hayashi Utako and the union’s other executives saw in the ashes a golden opportunity to rid Osaka of at least one blight, and they wasted no time in taking action. While the embers still smoldered, they called upon

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30 Fujin shimpo, no. 68 (25 December 1902): 28. The Osaka WCTU’s third crusade took place in early 1912 after a fire destroyed most of the Namba district and, like the second, ended triumphantly for the city’s anti-prostitution forces. For secondary accounts, see Nihon Kirisutokyo Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 296-302; Itō, 229-39.

31 In 1909, a rough total of seventy-five hundred licensed prostitutes plied their trade in these quarters. Sonezaki housed only ten percent, but lay within close walking distance of Osaka’s most trafficked train station, the city’s banking and wholesale districts, and at least two dozen schools. Japan Evangelist 16, no. 9 (September 1909): 357; Fujin shimpo, no. 148 (15 September 1909): 5.

32 For her work, Hayashi was labeled the “female anti-prostitution shogun of Kansai” by proponents for rebuilding. Itō Hidekichi also likened her to Josephine Butler, the British crusader who waged a fierce international battle against state regulation of prostitution during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Tanaka Mitsuko (?), “Kōji kyūsai, haishō ni
the prefectural governor, the chief of police, and a host of assemblymen to recommend that the licensed area be moved to an isolated location on the city’s outskirts. These visits left them discouraged, and, as brothel owners daily became more vociferous in requesting permission to rebuild, the Osaka WCTU took steps to turn its solitary drive into a concerted movement.\textsuperscript{33} Appealing to the Christian elite for cooperation was the most important, and the branch’s leaders did just that at a meeting of YMCA directors and Protestant ministers one week after the fire. Largely at the behest of the YMCA, native and foreign Christians had already joined hands to provide victims with food, clothing, and other basic relief items.\textsuperscript{34} They responded to the WCTU’s plea with alacrity and within days drafted petitions in Japanese and English. The Japanese version was submitted to Prime Minister Katsura Tarō and the Education and Home ministers in the names of Hayashi, the secretary of the Osaka YMCA, and two others representing the city’s clergy and laymen. Copies of the English went to the Home Minister and the governor bearing the signatures of twenty-four resident missionaries.\textsuperscript{35}


\textsuperscript{34}Active participants in this joint effort, Osaka WCTU members worked primarily at the YMCA hall sorting and distributing goods. The head of the branch’s Flower Mission also visited doctors across the city in an individual attempt to find medical treatment for the ill and pregnant among those left homeless. Ibid., 23.

\textsuperscript{35}Itō, 198-99.
In addition to this petition work, YMCA and church leaders collaborated with the WCTU in sponsoring public lectures, the first of which took place on August 14 at the YMCA Hall. This meeting attracted a capacity crowd of roughly one thousand with a list of renowned speakers, which included Yajima Kajiko and Methodist missionary Merriman (M. C.) Harris who traveled from Tokyo to share his personal thoughts on the need for removal as a “citizen of goodwill.” The tone of the lectures so roused the audience that, before dispersing, those in attendance voted to create forthwith an organization for continuing the fight. The majority reconvened just two days later and completed the task by formally establishing the Yūkaku Iden Seinen Kisei Dōmeikai [Alliance of Youth to Move the Licensed Quarter]. According to a resolution adopted then, the members of the Dōmeikai promised to urge the governor to give “serious reflection” to the matter of removal and not “ignore sound public opinion.”

This first statement barely alluded to the great flurry of activity that would follow. Indeed, over the next weeks, the organization’s rank-and-file went door-to-door through all of Osaka’s neighborhoods recruiting supporters, gathering signatures for another petition, and distributing printed materials. Dōmeikai leaders revisited officials and politicians, with Hayashi and several others traveling to Tokyo to see the Home Minister and to seek assistance from Ōkuma Shigenobu. Appeals for coverage also went out to Osaka’s major newspapers, and, on Sunday, August 22, ministers citywide took to their pulpits as one and delivered sermons in support of relocation.

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Up until this point, the campaign’s participants had come almost solely from the ranks of Osaka’s Christian community. The need to expand this base did not escape Osaka WCTU executives or other Christian leaders, and, on August 25, they held as their second lecture meeting a “citizens’ rally.” The public hall chosen for the occasion offered a more neutral setting than the YMCA’s building and a greater number of seats, but even the extra benches were not enough. A crowd of four to five thousand thronged to the meeting, and, because of a lack of even standing room inside, many listened through windows to the full three hours of speeches. The roster of lecturers also reflected the organizers’ aim of reaching out to the general public. The list included city and prefectural assemblymen, lawyers, journalists, a committee member from a trade guild, and a Buddhist priest, along with two ministers.38 Dietman Shimada Saburō spoke last and expounded on why relocation was crucial for the future prosperity of local and national commerce and industry and the international reputation of Japanese business.39

As did the first lecture meeting, this rally ignited those who attended. A call to arms sent out just before Shimada’s address met with thunderous applause as the crowd pledged to take suitable action to achieve removal and to prevent the governor from “pursuing a mistaken

38Itō, 204-205; Fujin shimpō, no. 148 (15 September 1909): 2-3.

39Shimada argued that honesty, trust, and diligence were essential characteristics for a successful business. The close proximity of brothels to average homes as well as dealings between upstanding merchants and purveyors of “profligacy” and “self-indulgence” were destroying these traits and, in his opinion, making it impossible to raise “warriors of peace who would cultivate Japan’s national resources and be fit for international competition.” He also charged that this mingling did not escape the eyes of foreigners and led them to consider Japanese commerce and industry as imbued with frivolity and, as a result, to scorn the same. Fujin shimpō, no. 148 (15 September 1909): 4-6.
long-range plan” that would damage the “city’s honor” and adversely affect morality.  

Three days later, the movement for relocation received a tremendous boost when citizens formed their own distinct organization, the Yūkaku Iden Kiseikai [Union for the Removal of the Pleasure Quarter], and began a vigorous program of visiting officials and canvassing for public support.  

The governor finally responded to this growing agitation on September 10 by issuing a prefectural ordinance abolishing Sonezaki effective April 1, 1910. His decision shocked and delighted the crusaders who had called merely for the quarters’ removal to the city’s outskirts. The Osaka WCTU in particular rejoiced at the outcome and held a prayer meeting the very next day to report on the course of the campaign and to offer thanks to God.  

This triumph invigorated the JWCTU and imbued members with tremendous assurance in their ability to eliminate the scourge of brothel districts by influencing public and official opinion. Their confidence only grew over the following months as branches in Gunma and Wakayama succeeded in thwarting new construction of quarters in their respective communities through tactics similar to those Osaka members had used. As for the Gunma campaign, it had begun in earnest in the fall of 1898 after the governor overturned an 1890 assembly resolution abolishing prostitution within the prefecture’s borders and authorized the building of six new districts. He had promptly been dismissed, but his decree had caused such

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40 Ibid., 3-4.  

41 Although completely independent of Christian leadership, the Kiseikai did cooperate with Christians and, together with the Dōmeikai, gathered nearly twenty thousand signatures for a petition to the Home Minister. Itō, 205-206.  

concern among Christian women that they had organized the Jōmō branch of the JWCTU to fight the strong current of opinion in favor of prostitution. Over the next decade, local unions in Takasaki and Maebashi had joined the fray in opposing repeated motions to introduce licensed quarters in their cities. Their collective efforts were finally rewarded in late 1910 when a new governor announced that he would not grant approval for licensed prostitution as long as he was in office. Also during the last months of 1910, the Wakayama city council narrowly voted to allow the building of brothels. The JWCTU immediately organized a local union to agitate against this decision, which, with the help of Osaka and Tokyo-based members, convinced the governor to veto the motion for the sake of “morality, the city’s development, and the country’s prosperity.” Thanks to these various successes, the JWCTU had extremely high expectations that the “moral” side would prevail when Yoshiwara, Japan’s most famous licensed district, became the battlefield in the spring of 1911.

Mid-morning on April 9 of that year, a fire broke out on the third floor of a brothel in the heart of Yoshiwara and quickly spread through the densely packed quarter of wooden structures. Strong winds further fanned the flames and severely hampered fire-fighting efforts before a depleted water supply rendered Tokyo’s fire brigades completely useless. By the time the conflagration burned out eight hours later, it had destroyed over six thousand

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homes, not to mention schools, offices, factories, temples, and shrines, and had left forty thousand without roofs over their heads. Nothing of Yoshiwara itself remained but ashes.45

Executive members of the JWCTU interpreted the fire as an act of “God’s will” and firmly believed that the organization had a mission to fulfill the “holy intent” behind the destruction of Yoshiwara. They did recognize the necessity of basic relief work and applauded official, corporate, and individual gifts of money, clothing, and medical attention. Nevertheless, they viewed as more urgent and in line with God’s purpose having the district abolished, and they quickly launched a campaign to accomplish that objective.46

On April 11, a mere two days after the fire, Yajima called upon the Home Minister to discuss measures to resolve the problem of Yoshiwara. Refused an audience, she returned within the week to submit a formal petition requesting the more modest goal of relocation. This appeal repeated one of the dominant arguments of all previous WCTU petitions, namely that prostitutes brought dishonor, yet it departed from all but Asai’s 1890 petition in one significant respect. Yajima forthrightly implicated the state for its complicity. She did so when she wrote that government authorization of licensed prostitution had “fanned immorality and demoralized good citizens.” She also more specifically criticized the state’s granting of “special rights” to prostitutes, claiming that this had encouraged the women and their customers to see the brothel business as a legitimate one and thus to feel no shame.47 What

45Japan Evangelist 18, no. 5 (May 1911): 166-68.

46“Yoshiwara yūkaku zenshō wa ten’i nari” [The complete destruction of Yoshiwara by fire is God’s will], Fujin shimpō, no. 166 (15 May 1911): 1-2.

47“Kōshō haishi ni kansuru chinjōshō” [Petition for the abolition of licensed prostitution], Kakusei [Purity], no. 2 (August 1911): 59-60. Reprinted in Itō, 210-12; Nihon
induced Yajima to be so candid in laying blame remains a matter of speculation. Likely, the
great success of the Osaka, Gunma, and Wakayama campaigns emboldened her, as did the
fact that international attention was focused on the fire and the fate of Yoshiwara.

This variation aside, the crusade against the rebuilding of Yoshiwara proceeded much as
had that against Sonezaki. Yajima followed her calls on the Home Minister with visits to
Tokyo’s mayor and chief of police, two of the many other prominent officials whom JWCTU
members attempted to sway in person. The first two weeks after the fire also saw the society
ask for cooperation from the YMCA, the Salvation Army, the network of churches in the
city, and locals nationwide. In addition, the union sent copies of Yajima’s petition to
newspaper companies and associations regardless of religious orientation requesting that it
be reprinted so that a broader audience could be reached. To accomplish that same goal, the
JWCTU also co-sponsored a series of public lectures in locations ranging from churches and
the YMCA Hall to a teahouse. Most of the speakers represented the elite of Christian
society, yet their public prominence repeatedly drew standing-room only audiences. These
same meetings became occasions for distributing copies of a citizens’ petition, canvassing
for which soon resulted in the gathering of twenty thousand signatures. At the behest of the
JWCTU, members of the Foreign Auxiliary also circulated a written appeal among Tokyo’s

Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., *Hyakunenshi*, 278-79. For an English translation, see
*Japan Evangelist* 18, no. 5 (May 1911): 176-77.

The Salvation Army emerged as a leader in the anti-prostitution movement in 1900
when officers entered licensed quarters in Tokyo and urged prostitutes to take advantage of
a recent legal ruling that greatly simplified the procedure for quitting. Their promotion of
“self-emancipation” met with violence by brothel-hired thugs, but their efforts did provide
the encouragement many of the thousands who quit in 1900 and 1901 needed. Baggs, 85-
104.
foreigners. Submitted to the Home Minister with two hundred eighty names, this third petition offered as inducement a veiled promise that other nations would recognize the Japanese government for taking a step forward “for purity and righteousness the world over” if only it rid Tokyo of “its darkest and most inhumane spot.”

Neither this lure nor the mass outpouring of opposition to Yoshiwara swayed the government, and officials granted approval for, first, a temporary and, then, a permanent resumption of brothel operations at Yoshiwara. This defeat disheartened reformers, but it did lead them to realize that their ad hoc campaigns against particular quarters would never bring about a fundamental solution to the problem of licensed prostitution. A permanent organization that was devoted to abolishing the system altogether was needed. So, on May 24, a committee, which included the JWCTU’s Yokokura Hideko, met to discuss rules and draft a prospectus. The former identified Kakuseikai [Purity Society] as the new society’s name and stated that it sought to “abolish the system of licensed prostitution and promote pure relations between men and women.” To that end, members would publish a monthly magazine called Kakusei [Purity], hold public lectures, petition the Diet, and appeal to concerned authorities, in other words, adopt the same tactics previously used but now on a regular basis. These rules finalized, the preparation committee joined approximately one thousand others on July 8 to celebrate the formal establishment of the Kakuseikai. Yajima served as master of

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50 Japan Evangelist 18, no. 5 (May 1911): 181.

51 Kakusei, no. 1 (July 1911): 9-10.
cere monies and was elected one of two vice presidents. Names of many other officers read like the JWCTU’s membership list, with Kozaki Chiyoko being chosen as one of five directors and Honda Teiko, Ibuka Hanako, Tokutomi Hisako, and at least five others as trustees.

The JWCTU’s promotion of and participation in the Kakuseikai extended far beyond such leadership by members. Several issues of Fujin shimpō carried a copy of the new society’s rules and an application form so the JWCTU’s rank-and-file could become active as well. Such outreach contributed to the establishment of local branches across the country and a membership total of twenty thousand by early December. The JWCTU also provided financial support for Kakuseikai activities and encouraged its own members to subscribe to Kakusei, which in turn carried numerous articles by JWCTU leaders and short information pieces about the union. Given the JWCTU’s own limited funds and time pressures on members, some may have questioned this commitment. Whether intentionally or not, an editorial in the February 1912 issue of Fujin shimpō offered a clear defense. The author wrote that “the success of the Kakuseikai is the success of the JWCTU. The two must be

52 Yajima surprised her fellow JWCTU members by wearing a white silk kimono under formal dress, a practice common among samurai going off to war in ages past. When Moriya Azuma asked her why, she declared: “Warriors do not die disgracefully on the front. I think this society is our battlefield.” Quoted in Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfukai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 284.


54 Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfukai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 284; Union Signal, 7 December 1911, 15.
combined and, if we cooperate with each other, I have no doubt that in the near future we will raise individual morality, make homes harmonious, and bring fortune to the nation."\textsuperscript{55}

Any fears the author had about a future fracturing of the alliance between the JWCTU and the Kakuseikai proved ill-founded, as the two remained closely linked and even united to form a federation in 1926 that undertook to pressure prefectural assemblies to proscribe prostitution in their own jurisdictions while continuing to petition the Diet for total abolition. The JWCTU and the Kakuseikai did make gains locally and succeeded in convincing fifteen assemblies to issue bans by the early 1940s. The Diet, however, did not outlaw the system nationwide until 1957.\textsuperscript{56} In hindsight, the above editorialist was overly optimistic, but her confidence that victory would be had was crucial to sustaining the fight, much as the same assurance had fueled earlier crusades against individual brothel districts.

Rescuing the Poor and the Fallen

The absence of serious discussion about the economic and social causes that perpetuated the buying and selling of women characterized Meiji-period arguments in favor of regulating Japanese prostitutes going overseas, relocating or banning particular brothel districts, and abolishing Japan’s system of licensed prostitution altogether.\textsuperscript{57} As a consequence, theoretical

\textsuperscript{55}"Kyōfūkai to Kakuseikai" [The JWCTU and the Kakuseikai], \textit{Fujin shimpō}, no. 176 (25 February 1912): 1-2.

\textsuperscript{56}Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., \textit{Hyakunenshi}, 605-13, 1038.

\textsuperscript{57}Takemura Tamio has surveyed the eight extant issues of \textit{Haishō} [The abolition of prostitution] from the early 1890s and noted the complete absence of both commentary on the social factors driving Japanese prostitutes overseas and discussion of rescue measures. Yoshimi Kaneko has also pointed out that Shimada Saburō and Iwamoto Yoshiharu, two of the most famous anti-prostitution advocates during the Meiji period, failed to include in their theoretical arguments any consideration of specific steps to save and rehabilitate. Takemura
opposition failed to address the need for concrete measures to eliminate poverty and provide women with an alternative means of self and familial support. The same was true of petitions that JWCTU members and other reformers submitted in hopes of achieving a legislative solution to this “social evil.”

One notable exception was a petition Tanabe Jitsumei submitted to the governor of Tokyo in early 1875. Then in charge of administering the rules that governed prostitutes and brothels in Tokyo, Tanabe recognized the relationship between indigence and prostitution and believed that the government had an obligation to help prevent young women from falling into the trade because of poverty. In his petition, he suggested as a specific countermeasure that officials use tax money generated from brothels to open a vocational office and school where the poor could learn an “honest trade” and a “conscience” could be cultivated in the “lazy.” Tanabe’s appeal fell on deaf ears, but the knowledge that legal gains against prostitution would be worthless without welfare measures to save the poor and rehabilitate former prostitutes did not escape anti-prostitution crusaders. This awareness grew with time and led native Christian reformers and Protestant missionaries to step in where Tanabe thought the government should.


58 Yoshimi, 238.

59 Itō, 89-98.
The history of welfare work by the WCTU began in 1888 as an initiative by individual members instead of as a formal project undertaken by the organization as a body. In May of that year, Sasaki Toyoju, Ushioda Chiseko, and Motora Yone opened a vocational school in Tokyo with assistance from a group of American Protestant missionary women. Their purpose was twofold: to teach women a “suitable occupation” by which the latter could achieve self-sufficiency through means other than prostitution; and, to provide moral training in order to reform customs. To this end they offered tuition-free classes in Western sewing, cooking, the organ, and English, taught temperance principles, and tried to instill in their students an understanding of the “shamefulness of prostitution.” Various obstacles, financial and otherwise, impeded this work, however, and forced the school’s closing after only six months of operation.

Undeterred by this failure, Sasaki soon began to solicit contributions for a new institution from influential businessmen and politicians, including Ōkuma Shigenobu and his

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60 This group included Matilda Spencer, a Methodist Episcopal missionary under whom Ushioda then served as a Bible woman, and Mary Soper, whose husband, Julius, had baptized Ushioda in 1882. Nihon Kirisutokyo Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 309.


62 Sasaki alluded to the fact that many problems had contributed to the school’s demise, but did not elaborate on these in a letter written several months after the institution’s closing. The obstacles likely mirrored those subsequent relief projects faced, including a lack of money, few students, the inability of those involved to commit themselves to the work full-time, and a class consciousness that prevented many middle- and upper-class women from comprehending and empathizing with the struggles of their poorer sisters. Sasaki’s unpopularity among many in the Tokyo WCTU must also be considered as a reason why so few in the society extended support. Sasaki, “O. S. C.-kun ni kotau,” 28; Utsu, 58-59.
replacement in late 1889 as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aoki Shūzō. With their help, she and Ushioda founded an employment agency in central Tokyo in September 1890 and thereby revived the project of providing job and moral training to impoverished girls and young women. Ushioda later recalled that she and Sasaki had thought students would flock to the office because the instruction in Japanese and Western sewing and embroidery, knitting, and painting was being provided free of tuition. Moreover, advertisements for the agency proclaimed that students would receive half of the proceeds from the sale of goods they made. Ushioda and Sasaki’s expectations proved naive, as they had failed to recognize that, even if offered gratis and with the promise of future gainful employment, education was a luxury for which few could afford the time. Enrollment did, however, increase gradually, and, by March 1891, numbered about thirty.

The decision to take in former prostitutes as well as the poor, in other words to expand the agency’s purpose from the singular goal of prevention to include rehabilitation, contributed to this growth. According to Ushioda, acting manager of the agency, she initially felt hesitant about accepting prostitutes, because she worried about the influence “those people” would have on the others. Her reluctance stemmed in part from her own sense of moral superiority as a Christian woman and from the disdain she harbored for prostitutes for, as she believed, undermining women’s status in society and the home and bringing shame

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63 Hunter, 267.

64 Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 3 (2 January 1894): inside back cover.

65 Utsu, 78-79; Ushioda Chiseko, “Jiaikan no koto ni tsuite” [Concerning Benevolence Hall], Fujin shimpō, no. 18 (20 October 1898): 11; ibid., “Fujin Kyōfūkai to Sasaki Toyoju fujin (II)” [The WCTU and Sasaki Toyoju (II)], Fujin shimpō, no. 35 (25 March 1900): 20.
to Japan. Her misgivings also arose from her worry that, with their demeanor, former prostitutes would undermine the moral values and customs she was trying to instill through personal example, daily prayer and Bible lectures, and weekly churchgoing. She found her concern warranted when one of the agency’s first prostitutes arrived with a pipe and koto, accoutrements of life in a brothel and instruments of “bad” habits. The agency’s rules forbade such possessions, and Ushioda immediately ordered the young woman to dispose of both. Her negative opinion did gradually soften, however, as she came to recognize and appreciate through actual contact the woman’s eagerness to learn, gentle disposition, and industrial skills. This same woman’s conversion to Christianity after two years at the agency wrought an even more significant shift in Ushioda’s thinking. As she wrote herself, the woman’s faith made her truly accept for the first time that God had given the poor the “same soul” as the rich. She concluded from this that not all women entered into prostitution with “evil thoughts” and, thus, that some could be saved spiritually. This revelation did not rid Ushioda of her condescending feelings toward prostitutes, but it did strengthen her desire to help the poor and the fallen and made her more than ready to assume a prominent role when the WCTU finally took up rescue work as an organization.

Ushioda’s sentiments typified those of American and Japanese Christian women who engaged in rescue work from mid-Meiji. Female reformers in the United States did not share with their contemporaries across the Pacific similar worries about national honor. Instead, they expressed concern about unrestricted emigration, the growing number of immigrant prostitutes, and the potential for race deterioration. As Ruth Rosen has noted, however, “their feelings of compassion [towards prostitutes] were [also] frequently mixed with condescension and self-righteousness.” Ruth Rosen, The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900–1918 (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 63.

The catalyst for the society to become involved in social welfare proved to be a call for help from American Presbyterian missionary Kate Youngman. One of the first single women assigned to a foreign mission field, Youngman had arrived in Japan in 1873 to assist and further Presbyterian educational work among girls and women. Shortly after landing, a Japanese newspaper editor approached her about superintending a rescue home, which he and friends were thinking of opening. The facility never actually materialized, but the job offer did spark Youngman's interest. While on home leave in 1881, she struck up a friendship with a wealthy New Yorker “whose special delight was to save young women from a life of shame.” This acquaintance was a woman of deed as well as word, and she promised to send Youngman $50 [¥100] a year specifically to fund rescue work in Japan. With this money in hand, Youngman began aiding prostitutes and impoverished women as they came to her attention, providing at least one with a mission school education. In 1892, she rescued nine young girls whose relatives were about to sell them into prostitution in the wake of a devastating earthquake in Gifu. Their sheer number and the difficulty of arranging accommodation and training for all simultaneously impressed upon Youngman the imperativeness of collaboration and the need for a permanent home, and she soon turned to the JWCTU and her missionary sisters for help.

Youngman recognized that interdenominational cooperation would be essential for such a time- and money-intensive project as a rescue home to succeed. So, she looked first to two

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68 Kohiyama, 195, 199.

69 Japan Evangelist 11, no. 7 (July 1904): 225.

70 Ibid.; vol. 2, no. 6 (August 1895): 351-52.
of the oldest missions in Japan and solicited support from a pair of their most experienced members—Mary Kidder and Matilda Spencer of the Dutch Reformed and Methodist Episcopal churches respectively. After securing help from these two women, she broached the subject with the JWCTU at a special meeting in December 1893. The executives present responded to her charge that rescue work was a responsibility of the society by appointing a committee of five, which included Ushioda, to study specific rescue measures. Three months later, Youngman issued another appeal, this time to the Ladies’ Christian Conference. Many of the Conference’s participants had heard the story of how their former colleague, Flora Harris, had in 1891 saved and converted three Japanese girls sent to San Francisco for prostitution. These women also knew that the youngsters had since been forced to return to Japan and were in danger of being sold again by their parents “against their own wishes and awakened consciences.” Already aware of the need for a home, the Conference’s attendees agreed to Youngman’s request that they assist the JWCTU and,

71Spencer joined Kidder in the field in 1878, just five years after the Methodist Episcopal mission opened. She also engaged in educational and evangelistic work and, as mentioned previously, assisted Sasaki, Ushioda, and Motora in establishing their vocational school in Tokyo in 1888. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū Iinkai, ed., Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten, 731.


73Harris and her husband, Merriman (M. C.), became the first American Protestant missionaries to reside in Hokkaido when they established a Methodist Episcopal outpost in Hakodate in 1874. After Flora’s ill health forced their return to the United States in 1882, M. C. became superintendent of the church’s outreach among Japanese immigrants in California. Cary, vol. 2, 110, 234.

74Japan Evangelist 2, no. 6 (August 1895): 351.
before dispersing, delegated the task of determining how best to do that to their own committee of eight. In May 1894, the Conference reconvened and, on the recommendation of this task force, moved to advise the JWCTU to find a "good plot of ground in a favorable locality, at a reasonable price and raise as much money as they can, for the purchase of the same, assuring them of our entire sympathy, and our intention to help in this good work."\(^{75}\)

JWCTU members in Tokyo had begun to solicit money for a rescue home almost immediately after executives met with Youngman in December 1893, but their efforts had been tentative and had reaped little.\(^{76}\) The Conference’s commitment to help and own fund-raising activities added much needed momentum to the project and reinvigorated the JWCTU. Within weeks, the society had identified a suitable property of almost sixteen hundred \textit{tsubo} (5290 square meters), on which sat a four-room home, and entered into negotiations to purchase it. Takekoshi Takeyo, then editor of \textit{Fujin kyo\d{z}asshi}, wrote lengthy editorials for the June and July issues of the magazine outlining the purpose of the institution and appealing for donors so that the society could in fact buy the land, which was located in Ōkubo, a neighborhood on the northwestern edge of Tokyo. As did other members, she also went door to door soliciting contributions.\(^{77}\) The collective efforts of the JWCTU and the Conference eventually netted over ¥1000, but an eagerness to launch the home led the JWCTU to purchase the property in early July with money members had collected to build

\(^{75}\)Ibid., 352; vol. 11, no. 7 (July 1904): 225

\(^{76}\)\textit{Fujin kyo\d{z}asshi}, no. 4 (2 February 1894): inside front cover, 27.

\(^{77}\)Half a century later, Takekoshi recalled how she phrased her pleas for donations by asking for the change people spent on cigarettes, an approach that typically won her several yen. \textit{Fujin shimpo}, no. 370 (1 January 1929): 29; Shakai Fukushi Hōjin Jiaikai, ed., 22-23.
an office and a sizeable debt. In the fall, Yajima and Ushioda provided interest-free loans to meet payments when they came due.\(^78\)

Thereafter, money problems plagued the home, or Jiaikan [Benevolence Hall] as Ushioda named it. In 1895, members of the Conference established the Auxiliary WCTU and, under its auspices, collected dues to fund rescue work. Some of this money initially went to buy out the contracts of prostitutes, a mistaken practice abandoned when Jiaikan supporters heard that one brothel owner had purchased five more girls with the cash he had received. Even with the Auxiliary’s financial support, the debt on the property remained staggering. The need to continue making payments and to cover maintenance costs forced the home’s Japanese and foreign executives to rent it out and, in 1899, to relocate the few girls then in residence to the home of Eliza Spencer Large, whom the WWCTU had just appointed resident missionary. The choice of occupants proved ill-fated, as they wrecked the house and destroyed the yard. The rent received did not cover the damage, and, when Large’s return to the United States in 1900 necessitated relocation, additional funds were required to make the property usable and to establish once and for all a permanent home for rescue work. For the sake of Jiaikan, the JWCTU asked for contributions in *Fujin shimpō* and held public benefits, while individual members who collected fees for the periodical solicited donations from subscribers while making their rounds. The Auxiliary did its part by urging foreigners in Japan and friends back home to make annual pledges and to sponsor any number of residents for a period of years. Most gifts totaled only a few yen or dollars, yet Jiaikan did

\(^{78}\)Shakai Fukushi Hōjin Jiaikai, ed., 16-21; *Japan Evangelist* 11, no. 7 (July 1904): 226.
attract a handful of truly generous benefactors. Ōkuma Shigenobu and his wife made at least one grant of ¥50, and Charles Crittenton, an American to whom Large had first appealed in 1899, sent thousands of dollars over the following decade. His generosity helped to erase debt, subsidized new construction on the property, enabled executives to meet basic operating expenses, and, most importantly, put Jiaikan on firmer financial footing.

The financial difficulties that persisted before Crittenton became a benefactor sorely tested JWCTU members' interest in Jiaikan. The lack of a permanent matron during the first years in Ōkubo, disagreements between Japanese and foreign executives, and the absence of a clear route for bringing in girls further impeded progress. The resulting low number of residents, who totaled no more than several dozen during the 1890s, compounded frustrations, as did criticism from outsiders that Jiaikan was not helping more. Individual member's commitment to the basic aim of Jiaikan, however, provided all the inducement the JWCTU needed to remain actively involved through the troubled early years.


80 A self-made millionaire before he turned fifty, Crittenton experienced an intense religious conversion after the death of his daughter in 1882. His new faith led him to devote his later years first to slum evangelism and then to the founding of rescue homes for prostitutes. The WCTU became a staunch ally in this rescue work, with members contributing in a variety of ways to many of the forty-five facilities he established before the turn of the century. Norris Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920*, ATLA Monograph Series, no. 10 (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press and the American Theological Library Association, 1977), 79-81.

81 Unlike Jiaikan, the rescue home the Salvation Army established in 1900 reached full occupancy almost immediately, and it housed hundreds instead of dozens during its inaugural years. Baggs, 103.
That objective was to “rescue women likely to be lured into prostitution as well as those who [had] already fallen, to teach them a trade, to return them to a correct path,” and to prepare them for the day when they could establish their own homes. In line with this agenda, residents studied reading, writing, and arithmetic, and learned to sew, knit, cook, and clean. After a probationary period, some also attended a nearby nurses’ training school or served as maids in the homes of Jiaikan supporters. In addition, all participated in morning worship, memorized the Lord’s Prayer and Biblical passages, and attended church and Sunday school to reinforce the example of Christian womanhood being supplied by their teachers.

The ideological motivations underlying this curriculum and rescue work in general were multitudinous. Members believed that prostitutes shamed the nation, weakened the hearts and minds of citizens and the young in particular, and promoted the diversion of capital that could be used to fuel economic development toward the pursuit of hedonistic pleasures. Thus, they promoted Jiaikan as one way to reduce the number of prostitutes and, as a natural outgrowth of that reduction, to remove these human impediments to progress. Furthermore, their religious faith and participation in the anti-prostitution movement had instilled in them the following convictions: first, that economic independence was a necessary precondition for a woman’s independence; and, second, that spiritual independence required a sound

82 Molding residents so that they would form good homes became a more important aspect of this goal, as revealed in changes made to Jiaikan’s rules just before the move back to Ōkubo. Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 149.


84 “Hakuai naru shokei shimai ni uttau” [An appeal to our charitable brothers and sisters], Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 9 (2 July 1894): 1.
financial base. By providing residents at Jiaikan with skills by which they could support themselves, as well as with religious instruction, JWCTU members aimed to eliminate a structural cause of prostitution and assist former prostitutes and destitute women to enter into a life of faith and service to God.

Linked to this evangelizing focus and the domestic training offered was the concern with cultivating residents to become “good wives and wise mothers” (ryōsai kembo) as defined by enlightenment thinker Nakamura Masanao in 1875. As earlier discussed, he identified women as responsible for the education and moral upbringing of their children and believed that the home represented the most suitable sphere for the exercise of women’s talents and influence. Members of the WCTU clearly contravened this idea with their own activities. However, they did so with the fierce conviction that only by removing the social “evils” that inhibited women from performing this role could they elevate the status of women and purify the home and society at large. In short, they still upheld the idea of women as the guardians of children and the purveyors of a moral standard. Thus, molding the fallen and the destitute into “good wives and wise mothers” was crucial to the JWCTU’s rescue home work. The few articles in the society’s periodical that introduced individual residents highlight just how important both this molding and the objective of winning converts to God were. The vast majority celebrated the marriages and baptisms of current and former residents.

85 For example, a 1902 report carried the news that former resident Motora Yone had been baptized and married to a fellow convert. Seven years later, a eulogy appeared for Tsuda Kimiko, a young woman who had fled Yoshiwara and taken refuge at Jiaikan, where she had “come to know God.” Even more noteworthy than the five-page length of this tribute was the inclusion of Tsuda’s picture. Over the years, the editors of the union’s periodical had bestowed that honor only on a select few that included Frances Willard and Mary Allen West. Fujin shimpō, no. 62 (25 June 1902): 11; no. 150 (15 December 1909): 163
In the end, this rescue work did not reach more than a fraction of the number of women engaged in prostitution during the second half of the Meiji period, and not even all of those who spent time at Jiaikan left with a belief in God and a dedication to moral living. One could easily criticize these deficiencies. The three principal components of the JWCTU’s anti-prostitution movement are also susceptible to critique, because none aimed at a fundamental solution to the problem of licensed prostitution. Yet, such a criticism overlooks one simple and important fact. Members of the JWCTU remained steadfast in their opposition to prostitution and to government regulation of it, and they toiled energetically to win small victories that would ultimately, they hoped, help them win the war for the sake of Japan, the home, and their Savior.
CHAPTER FIVE

AGITATING FOR A SOBER SOCIETY

While the JWCTU's anti-prostitution campaign has received extensive attention by scholars, the story of the organization's temperance work remains virtually untold. The decision the founding members made to exclude direct reference to temperance in the society's name has contributed to this neglect, as has their 1887 resolution to give priority to eliminating the scourge of prostitutes and geisha. From the union's inception, however, the goal of creating a sober Japan stood as a pillar, and members engaged in a host of activities toward that end. This chapter will highlight that diversity, briefly introduce two of the main arguments given in favor of abstinence, and detail two characteristic components, namely juvenile work and outreach at the 1903 National Industrial Exposition. Introductory sections on alcohol use and the origins of the temperance movement in Japan will set the stage.

A Brief History of Alcohol Production and Consumption in Japan

The History of the Kingdom of Wei, a chronicle of a northern Chinese realm compiled around A.D. 297, has long attracted the attention of scholars of ancient Japan because it offers among the first written accounts of the land of the Mikado. From this text, historians have learned about Japan's tributary ties with the Han court, about the country's unification

\[1\] I would argue that the decidedly Christian tone of the temperance movement has inhibited research as well, for Japanese and American scholars, the vast majority of whom are secular, have tended to shy away from topics dealing with Christianity in modern Japan.
by a female shaman in the early third century, and about the leadership turmoil that followed her death. They have also garnered information about social customs and religious practices during the Yayoi period (250 B.C. - A.D. 250), including the following detail about funerals: "The head mourners wail and lament, while friends sing, dance, and drink liquor." Evidence of early sake use in Japan also appears repeatedly in the oldest extant works written in Japanese, namely the Kojiki [Record of Ancient Matters] and the Nihongi [Chronicle of Japan] (compiled in A.D. 712 and 720, respectively), which recorded mythologies transmitted orally about the country's founding. For example, one passage in the Kojiki relates the story of how a male deity named Susa-nō-wo slew an eight-tailed dragon that had been devouring young women. He accomplished this feat by having barrels of a specially brewed "thick wine" put out for the beast to drink and then "[hacking] the dragon to pieces" after it became intoxicated and fell asleep. While this tale lacks historical accuracy, it does illustrate that sake had become both common enough and revered enough by the early eighth century to be mentioned in national myths.

Not coincidently, the writing of the Kojiki occurred during an era of increasing consumption. Prior to the Nara period (A.D. 645 - 794), a variety of foodstuffs including rice, barley, fruits, and mountain potatoes was used to make sake. Crude methods, however, yielded only an unrefined product, which Japanese either consumed at funerals, purification rites, or other religious festivals, or offered to the gods in the belief that wine would pacify them and bring

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humans good fortune. \(^4\) During Nara, the introduction of improved fermentation technology from Korea brought an end to the singularity of sake types and expanded its use. Kinds of sake came to be differentiated by their clarity, and drinking became more of an everyday way of life instead of a periodic release. Members of the aristocracy in particular took daily to imbibing a sweet sake chilled with ice during the hot summer months and to passing cups year-round at banquets of all sizes, formalizing the practice in the process.

In his history of Japanese eating habits, Watanabe Minoru has pointed out that the Nara period also witnessed the beginning of systematic use of sake as a seasoning for food, along with mustard, ginger, and powders made from both mandarin orange peel and elm bark. \(^5\) Although initially used only to sweeten dishes, sake gained wider currency as a flavoring during and after the subsequent Heian period (A.D. 794 - 1185). It became a key ingredient for various kinds of vinegar and _miso_, a paste also containing soybeans, and, by the turn of the sixteenth century, a host of recipes called for food, fish in particular, to be boiled in or grilled and drizzled with a liquid containing sake. This trend toward increased consumption of sake through prepared foods became even more pronounced during the Edo period (A.D. 1600 - 1868), thanks to the addition of a sweet syrupy sake called _mirin_ to the list of standard seasonings. \(^6\)


\(^6\) To this day two of the requisite seasonings in a Japanese household are _mirin_ and sake. Ibid., 43-64, 102-103, 146-49, 204.
The overall growth of sake usage from the Nara period also manifested itself in Japanese ceremonial and religious life. This proved especially true of customs followed to celebrate major life events such as births, engagements, and weddings. For example, by the Edo period, practice in certain districts dictated that families announce the birth of an offspring by giving the local government office money to sponsor a feast with sake. Symbolic of its intended purpose, the “gift” was referred to as kozake or “child wine.” Elsewhere, ritual called for households to mark the naming of a newborn with a banquet of food and wine or to offer sake to the gods during the infant’s first shrine visit. Betrothal ceremonies likewise became occasions for imbibing with customary toasting or the giving of a wine cup or a barrel of sake as a symbol of the marriage contract. The same was true of weddings. In a rite formalized at least by the Muromachi period (A.D. 1392-1568), a groom and bride exchanged three shallow cups, drinking from each three times before sharing with close relatives.

The upward trajectory of alcohol consumption from Nara through Edo evinced by such new ceremonial and culinary uses of sake continued at an even steeper incline during the Meiji period. Once again, better brewing techniques contributed by making sake production easier and less prone to ruined batches. Cheap rice, first from China and French Indochina

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8 Ibid., 41-71.

9 Watanabe, 156.
and then later Korea and Taiwan, likewise boosted production by lowering costs. Largely as a result of these two factors, sake production increased by roughly forty percent from the beginning to the end of Meiji. Government officials quickly recognized the potential revenue to be gained from taxing this growing industry, and, in 1871, amended a Tokugawa-era law requiring brewers of six instead of three kinds of sake to purchase licenses. The state subsequently assessed a manufacturers’ tax on the value of sake made and added an occupation tax for brewers and dealers, fining any who failed to pay. These taxes and penalties sharply raised the market price for sake, with the cost of one koku [44.8 gallons] jumping from ¥14.03 in 1893 to ¥28.73 in only five years. Instead of suffering, however, sales actually grew apace and among all economic classes, although more noticeably in urban areas. Drinking parties became more popular, restaurants or stalls selling sake more familiar, and the act of giving sake or a cup as a gift to a meritorious citizen, a dedicated employee, or a visitor commonplace. Indeed, to fail to offer a guest a drink was deemed a serious breach of etiquette and a sign of disrespect, as was refusing to accept.

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10 Ibid., 284-85, 290-91.

11 According to figures culled from government reports, the amount of sake produced in 1871 was 122,336,701 gallons while the quantity brewed in 1911 exceeded 171,500,000 gallons. Cherrington, ed., 1382.

12 Ibid., 1382-83.


14 Ironically, the Tokyo WCTU and the Tokyo Temperance Society had called for high taxes from early on and, in 1891, submitted a petition asking the Diet to reject an appeal from brewers to lower sake taxes. They succeeded, but stopped agitating for high licenses the next year at the urging of Mary Allen West. Union Signal, 14 January 1892, 11; 29 December 1892, 5.
While sake, thus, played a major role in shaping the drinking culture of the Meiji period, it alone does not account for the tremendous increase in liquor use that occurred after the Restoration. Equally important in making alcohol consumption both more widespread and public was the Japanese taste for Western drinks. As early as the late 1500s, Japanese negotiators and interpreters assigned to Western merchants had had occasion to try wine and other imported spirits, but their usage had remained extremely limited. That changed dramatically in the years following Japan's opening. Foreign businessmen taking up residence in the newly created treaty ports soon began to import beer, port, brandy, gin, whiskey, sherry, and a long list of other inebriating drinks both to consume themselves and to sell. Among their biggest customers were proprietors of Western-style restaurants, who catered to foreigners and the Japanese elite who believed that drinking British pale ale or French champagne made them "modern." This equating of one's consumption of Western liquor with one's level of civilization was a link non-missionary foreigners drew and Japanese enlightenment thinkers and officials and students who traveled abroad perpetuated. This was certainly true of Fukuzawa Yukichi, whose 1867 book Seiyō ishokujū [Western necessities of life] offered a detailed account of the kinds and amount of alcohol Westerners consumed on a daily basis. Kume Kunitake, a member of the Iwakura Mission, made the connection even more


explicitly in his report of a delegation tour of a British beer brewery in 1872. He wrote that “it is only natural for alcohol consumption to increase as a country becomes more enlightened.”

It should come as no surprise, given the variety and number of measures the Meiji state took to “civilize” Japan, that the government worked to promote the creation and development of domestic industries brewing Western spirits, as well as consumption of the same. An 1873 Finance Ministry plan to send a student abroad to research the making of beer fell through, but concerns about increasing imports and the corresponding outflow of much needed capital led the government to invest serious money three years later. Specifically, it imported and widely distributed fifty-six thousand grape sprouts to stimulate local production of wine and built a beer brewery in Sapporo under the auspices of the Hokkaido Colonization Agency, which remained under official management until its sale into private hands in 1886. The venture into wine making proved far from successful, but the brewery became one of Japan’s largest and joined the host of other facilities opened by foreigners and Japanese from the early years of Meiji to create a true boom in domestic production.

Consumption burgeoned in concert with this flourishing of the industry and not just among the elite of society. Relative decreases in the price of bottled beer, the introduction

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17Kume used the term “inryo,” which refers to beverages in general. “Alcohol” is a more accurate translation, however, given the context of the passage. Quoted in Kirin Biru, ed., 9.

of sales by the cup, the opening of beer halls in urban areas, and the selling of beer on trains, in station waiting rooms, and at post offices all contributed to the popularization of beer drinking. So did the increasingly common practice of officials and businessmen to provide free kegs as enticement to the masses to celebrate the promulgation of significant government decrees or the opening of a new bridge or other public facility.\footnote{Kirin Bīru, ed., 71-73, 88-92, 107-27, 140.} Demand in turn fueled production, and, after surpassing imports in 1886, the quantity of beer brewed domestically grew tenfold over the remaining years of Meiji. The total reached 178,660 koku, or just over eight million gallons, in 1911.\footnote{Satō, 287-89.} This figure represents only a fraction of the amount of sake made that year, but, if the two totals are added and considered in light of Japan’s population at the time, annual per capita consumption of sake and beer alone equaled approximately three and one-half gallons.\footnote{According to Shibusawa, Japan’s population was 50,577,000 in 1912. Shibusawa, 332.} Although far from being a nation of drunkards, Japan had become over centuries a country where alcohol usage was an entrenched and even expected way of life.

The Origins of the Temperance Movement

The process by which liquor use became so embedded in public and private behavior in Japan did not occur in so linear a fashion as the above account implies. Indeed, periodic bans on sake production and drinking pepper the ancient, medieval, and early modern histories of the country. One of the earliest proscriptions, issued during the reign of Emperor Kōtoku...
[A.D. 645 - 654], asserted that drinking impeded farm work, and it therefore prohibited sake consumption during the months of rice planting, cultivation, and harvesting. Almost a century later, the court forbade commoners from imbibing in groups of more than two or three after numerous outbreaks of fighting disrupted the public order. The most common cause for a ban proved to be poor harvests and the need to conserve rice to avert famine. In A.D. 806, again in 1252, and repeatedly throughout the Tokugawa period, interdicts were promulgated that outlawed sake production or, more typical of shogunal orders, restricted the amount of sake that could be made. Ultimately, none of these bans succeeded in enforcing lifelong abstinence or in instilling the idea that drinking was inherently bad. But, then, that was not their purpose. Authorities simply used them as stopgap measures to deal with immediate concerns, a fact reinforced by their sheer number and the reasons given for their issuance.

Undoubtedly, some individuals in pre-modern Japan chose not to drink for economic, religious, health, or other reasons and regardless of these proscriptions. Temperance outreach, however, only began to take root after the arrival of the first American Protestant missionaries. As John Howes has noted, Charles Hepburn, James Ballagh, and their compatriots who took to the Japan field after the country’s opening carried with them an abiding sense of the importance of personal conversion, an unquestioning faith in the Bible, and a rigorous set of moral principles. That ethical code dictated not only that they abstain from sexual relations outside of a monogamous marriage and faithfully observe Sunday as the Sabbath,
but also that they refrain from drinking and smoking. Convinced that the Christianization/modernization of Japan required the acceptance of these same principles, they sought to instill their moral code through personal example and active propagation, even making abstinence a requirement for church membership. Such temperance evangelism did win converts and prepared the way for the inauguration of temperance work by Japanese themselves.

At the vanguard of the Japanese temperance movement stood Okuno Masatsuna, third son of a shogunal vassal who was born in Edo and had spent his youth studying Buddhism, literature, and the martial arts. After fighting on the losing side in the Restoration, he found work as Hepburn’s language teacher in 1871, and it was under the joint tutelage of his employer and Ballagh that he converted to Christianity and quit the bottle after years of heavy drinking. Ballagh’s later participation in establishing a temperance union devoted to rescuing foreign seamen inspired Okuno to organize as well. In 1875, he joined fellow members of Kaigan Church in founding the Yokohama Kinshukai [Temperance Society], the first such organization created by Japanese. Despite auspicious beginnings and Okuno’s leadership, however, the society soon collapsed after key members broke their pledges to abstain from alcohol.


24Howes has suggested that the facility with which the first generation of samurai converts accepted Puritan morality as their own stemmed from the code’s compatibility with their Confucian training. Ibid., 346.

The same fate appears not to have befallen the Ueda Kinshukai, a society whose members sought "to cast off false gods and worship the true God, to ban sake, to keep the Lord's Day, to encourage others to acts of benevolence and charity, and to thoroughly wash away the evil ways of society." Inagaki Akira, a domain retainer turned Ballagh student and Bible salesman, founded this society in his home prefecture of Nagano shortly after the organization of the Yokohama Kinshukai. His brand of reform evangelism contributed to the conversion of several dozen over the next months; however, his appointment to a church in Kanagawa in 1877 deprived the union of its guiding force. Whether or not remaining members had his same commitment to temperance remains in question.

The year 1875 was thus an auspicious one in the history of the Japanese temperance movement; yet, the organizational fervor that resulted in the establishment of the Yokohama and Ueda societies failed to spread significantly. Likely reasons include the quick disbanding of the former and the relative geographical isolation of the latter. Still, the spirit of temperance neither died nor lay dormant. American Protestant missionaries continued to expound on the principle as a cornerstone of a civilized and Christian life, and, as the body of native converts grew, so did the number of Japanese who practiced moderation, if not total abstinence. In 1884, even inaugural members of the then defunct Meirokusha bestowed upon temperance the aura of enlightenment when they publicly endorsed the newly established

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27 Ibid., 123, 161.
Nihon Sesshukai [Japan Temperance Society], one of only a handful of reform bodies formed during the late 1870s and early 1880s.\textsuperscript{28}

The spark that finally ignited temperance sentiment and propelled the movement forward in Japan came from Mary Clement Leavitt. As mentioned earlier, her repeated exhortations for men and women, Japanese and foreign, to unite against intemperance and other social evils set off a wave of organizational activity throughout Japan. In the summer and fall of 1886, a new men's society in Yokohama began meeting, and unions of Japanese women were formed in Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe with help from missionary women and native male converts.\textsuperscript{29} Chiba and Sapporo played host to organization the next year, followed by Sendai, Hakodate, Akita, Shizuoka, Fukuoka, and the island of Okushiri in the Japan Sea, just to name a few of the dozens of locales where the nascent Japanese temperance movement took root.\textsuperscript{30} Not all sites proved receptive to temperance agitation, and many a society withered

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\textsuperscript{28}At least five of the Meirokusha's ten charter members lent support to the Nihon Sesshukai, including Nishi Amane, Tsuda Mamichi, Katō Hiroyuki, Nishimura Shigeki, and Nakamura Masanao. "Nihon Sesshukai ni Nishi Amane, Katō Hiroyuki-ra mo sandō" [Nishi Amane, Katō Hiroyuki and others also endorse the Japan Temperance Society], \textit{Tokyo nichi nichi shim bun}, 26 December 1884, reprinted in Meiji Nyūsu Jiten Hensan Iinkai, Mainichi Komyunikeshonzu Shuppanbu, ed., \textit{Meiji nyūsu jiten}, vol. 3, 1883-1887 (Tokyo: Mainichi Komyunikeshonzu Shuppanbu, 1984), 246.
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\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Japan Evangelist} 16, no. 12 (December 1909): 489; \textit{Union Signal}, 18 November 1886, 8; 30 December 1886, 8; \textit{Jogaku zasshi}, no. 37 (5 October 1886): 140; no. 46 (5 January 1887): 119-20.
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\textsuperscript{30}I culled the identification of most of these unions from the pages of \textit{Kinshu zasshi} [Temperance magazine], a monthly Tsuda Sen began publishing in February 1890. The best known by historians is probably Sapporo's Hokkai Kinshukai. In November 1887, a shoemaker, a government official, and an evangelist initiated its organization and actively worked to expand its membership base by establishing branches throughout the island of Hokkaido. Despite their reliance on rules Leavitt had set forth for unions, the pledge they wrote permitted members to use alcohol as a medicine. This exception was common among
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because of local opposition, indifference, and/or financial and time constraints on members. Nonetheless, the movement was born, and participation by WCTU members would help make it one of the most vibrant reform crusades of the Meiji period.

**Arguments in Favor of Temperance**

One of the Tokyo WCTU's first major contributions to the temperance movement entailed holding a public lecture meeting in early November 1887 and inviting Tsuda Sen to address the approximately one thousand who attended. Born in 1837 into a pro-Tokugawa samurai family, Tsuda had studied Dutch and English in Edo’s foreign concession and later parlayed his language skills into jobs as a government interpreter and English instructor. Following the Restoration, he joined the Meirokusha and opened the agricultural school where Iwamoto Yoshiharu briefly studied. An 1873 visit to the world exposition in Vienna provided his first opportunity to see the Bible, which so impressed him that he sought out Julius Soper of the American Methodist Episcopal mission upon his return to Japan to learn more about the Christian faith. Soper baptized him several months later and was quite possibly responsible for Tsuda’s subsequent reform activism. That work included helping to found a temperance society in the late 1880s and speaking for the Tokyo WCTU on behalf of temperance.  

Tsuda titled his November 1887 lecture “Sake no gai” [The dangers of alcohol], and, befitting such an appellation, he gave a systematic recital of the harm drinking caused early temperance societies and a loophole later WWCTU missionaries tried to close. Cherrington, 1384-85; *Japan Evangelist* 16, no. 12 (December 1909): 490.

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individuals and society. With respect to health, he identified liquor as the main cause of a
slew of serious ailments, including pulmonary tuberculosis, rheumatism, palsy, heart disease,
and epilepsy. To further emphasize the link between drinking and health, he presented the
results of a survey conducted by a British life insurance company showing that the life
expectancy of those who did not imbibe was, on average, twenty-seven years longer than that
of tipplers. He also contended that feeble mindedness in children was the fault of mothers
who drank while pregnant and nursing. In discussing the impact of alcohol consumption on
society and the nation, he charged that drinking almost invariably led to a life of crime and
dissipation and that the tremendous amount of money spent on liquor would better be used
to enrich Japan. 32 Shortly after delivering this speech, Tsuda elaborated on his arguments in
a forty-page tract of the same title, in which he showed even more pronounced concern about
Japan’s precarious position in the international community. The solution he again offered
was abstinence, which alone would provide the necessary capital to pay off national debt and
build up the military. Tsuda sent this text to the Tokyo WCTU upon finishing it, and the
society had copies ready for distribution and sale before the end of the year. 33

Tsuda’s tract pioneered in the field of Meiji temperance literature not only because it was
one of the first authored by a Japanese, but also because it set forth two of the central
arguments of the movement. First, drinking weakened individuals physically and mentally

32Tsuda Sen, “Sake no gai” [The dangers of alcohol], Jogaku zasshi, no. 85 (15
November 1887): 85-88; no. 86 (26 November 1887): 111-14; no. 87 (3 December 1887):
126-29.

33Tsuda, Sake no gai. As mentioned earlier, Sasaki Toyoju included a copy of her
own prospectus in this tract in defiance of Yajima Kajiko’s move to claim ideological
leadership over the Tokyo WCTU.
and prevented them from using their labor to strengthen Japan economically. And, second, the state had to divert revenue best used for national enrichment purposes to build jails and operate courts in order to deal with the crime and dissipation drinking caused. Absent from Tsuda’s litany of reasons in favor of temperance was discussion of the link between drinking and physical abuse of women and children. He also did not dwell on the idea that alcohol impeded an individual’s relationship with God by making him/her less responsive to divine solicitations. In so doing, he resembled WWCTU missionaries and the dominant current of temperance discourse in the United States at the time. Moreover, he made temperance a principle with nationalistic implications, which made it more palatable to many Japanese eager to serve Japan. The members of the JWCTU likewise promoted abstinence for the sake of the nation, and their outreach among youth and at the 1903 National Industrial Exposition in Osaka reveals just how creative they were in finding ways to make Japan sober.

Outreach to Youth

During her 1886 tour, Mary Clement Leavitt had the opportunity to meet with Minister of Education Mori Arinori. She did so with full knowledge of the vigorous campaign Mary Hunt of the American WCTU was then waging to win legislation mandating the inclusion of Scientific Temperance Instruction (STI) in primary school curricula. It is quite probable, 

\[\text{Hunt, the product of a dry New England family, became active in the WCTU early. She was elected vice president of the Massachusetts union in the mid-1870s, and, in that capacity, she tried to use moral suasion to win converts to temperance. The inability of many drinkers to stay sober eventually convinced her that the only real solution lay in legislation. This conviction converged with her belief that the future of temperance rested with youth yet unpolluted by drink. She thus began to agitate for state legislatures to pass STI laws first independently and then, from 1879, as head of the WCTU’s Department of STI.} \]
then, that she at least asked Mori whether or not similar laws existed in Japan and, as they
did not, recommended their passage or at least a Ministry of Education directive. Over the
next fifteen years, WWCTU missionaries periodically brought up the issue with the JWCTU,
male temperance activists, the foreign mission community, and other government officials.

But, the drive to have STI included in schools throughout Japan garnered very little support.

For that matter, interest in children as a target of temperance outreach remained weak. Clara
Parrish did prioritize efforts to organize young women during her tour, and, at her urging, the
JWCTU did adopt departments for work with children and students at mission schools for
girls. Neither department became overly active, though, and the most the JWCTU did was
to campaign for a bill Nemoto Shō repeatedly put before the Diet to prohibit smoking by
minors.35

Kara Smart became the catalyst for the JWCTU’s initiation of full-scale juvenile work.

At her welcome party in the fall of 1902, she made clear her intent to push children when she
declared:

> As an organization, we firmly believe that the hope of the Temperance Reform is in the pre-emption of childhood and youth by the slow, but sure processes of education to total abstinence for the individual, and prohibition for the state. For this reason, we shall endeavor to have physiology and hygiene so taught in your schools as to leave in the minds

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35Nemoto finally won passage in 1899, and the bill became law the following year. It prohibited tobacco smoking by youth under the age of eighteen and set forth fines both for guardians who failed to prevent youngsters from smoking and those who sold them tobacco or smoking paraphernalia. Sho Nemoto, “The Anti-Smoking Bill: Its Passage Through the Imperial Diet of Japan,” trans. by Takeshi Ukai (Tokyo: Methodist Publishing House, 1900).
of your children and youth an adequate and proper knowledge of the effects of alcoholic drinks and narcotics on the human system.\textsuperscript{36 }

Essential to providing such an education was the preparation of STI textbooks, and, shortly after her arrival, Smart secured permission for the translation and publication of \textit{Health for Little Folks} and \textit{New Century Scientific Temperance Physiologies}.\textsuperscript{37} The former had been written by Hunt and recently translated by Andō Tarō. Complete with illustrations, it discussed in clear and easy-to-understand language how the body functioned and how drinking and smoking impeded the proper workings of the heart, the brain, muscles, nerves, and the five senses.\textsuperscript{38} Initial sales were spectacular, with five thousand copies sold in just one month.\textsuperscript{39} Getting public and private schools to require use of the text proved much more difficult. Members of the JWCTU and WWCTU missionaries repeatedly visited government and school officials and teachers, but had little success outside of mission schools.

Great rewards, however, were reaped through the introduction of medal contest work. The WCTU in the United States had introduced recitation contests nearly two decades earlier and had found the medium an excellent tool both for instructing young people and “[overcoming] indifference and opposition to [its] principles [among adults] faster and surer than

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Japan Evangelist} 9, no. 11 (November 1902): 368.

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Report of the Sixth Convention of the World’s Woman’s Christian Temperance Union} (n.p., 1903), 70.


\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Report of the Sixth Convention of the World’s Woman’s Christian Temperance Union}, 70.
any other known force."\(^{40}\) As reformers learned, the chance to see children and youth perform lured even total abstinence detractors to contests, most often relatives of the reciters. Moreover, words from the mouths of babes had the power to affect behavior their tracts, appeals, and meetings could not.\(^{41}\) Given the continuing pervasiveness of adult resistance to abstinence in Japan, medal contests offered great promise for the advancement of the temperance cause, and Smart began recommending their incorporation into the JWCTU's plan of work shortly after her arrival in 1902. Her prodding finally bore fruit in the summer of 1904 when the JWCTU and the Foreign Auxiliary adopted Medal Contest departments at their respective conventions.\(^{42}\)

A flourish of preparatory activity followed those conventions, and, by April of the next year, "helps" necessary for holding contests were ready for widespread distribution. These included a booklet of sixteen temperance recitations for contestants to choose from, a leaflet of instructions for judges, and a pamphlet of rules for the contests themselves. As stipulated in the latter, every contest was to consist of between six and eight participants, with winners of bronze medals next vying for silver and recipients of silver then competing for gold. The speakers could be as young as twelve and as old as twenty-five and could contend for any one medal as often as desired. All, however, regardless of age and prior contest experience, had

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\(^{40}\) Japan Evangelist 12, no. 3 (March 1905): 92.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., 92-93.

to adherence firmly to the principle of total abstinence and have refrained from imbibing liquor in any form for at least the previous six months. 43

Six youngsters meeting these eligibility requirements competed in the first medal contest on April 24, 1905. 44 Sponsored by the Loyal Temperance Legion [LTL] at Azabu Christian Church in downtown Tokyo, the two and one-half-hour program began with a hymn and a Bible reading, proceeded with a temperance song, an anthem about the ongoing Russo-Japanese War, and the six recitations, and ended with an award ceremony, another war song and hymn, and a concluding prayer. 45 The unabashedly religious tone of this meeting fit the setting, but also reflected the belief Smart and other WCTU members held that temperance went hand in hand with spreading the Gospel. As Smart wrote just before the competition, the “real contest is for truth – for saving homes and hearts and souls,” and that was just what the JWCTU sought to do. 46 The more immediate goal, however, was to select a winner, and that task fell to a panel of three long-standing JWCTU supporters and well-known public figures, Maishūnippō [The weekly news] editor Shirai Shūichi, Japan Temperance League president Andō Tarō, and Diet member Nemoto Shō. 47 As instructed, these three considered


44 This auspicious date marked the nineteenth anniversary of the American WCTU’s first medal contest, as well as Yajima seventy-fourth birthday.


46 Japan Evangelist 12, no. 3 (March 1905): 92. This assertion is supported by the fact that non-victorious participants in later contests received as “consolation” religious booklets. Japan Evangelist 16, no. 1 (January 1910): 32.

47 Shirai cemented his connection with the JWCTU in 1902, when he joined Ushioda Chiseko and other members in leading a publishing house-sponsored charity trip for seventy
each reciter’s memorization skills, pronunciation, voice, and overall attitude when judging the performances. The result of their evaluation was the awarding of the bronze medal, bearing in Japanese the inscription “Japanese WCTU Prohibition Oration Medal,” to Sano Gen’ichirō, whose talk, “Sakadaruchu no kimono” [In the kegs], “was told in an unaffected simple way that held the hearts of his audience in sympathetic interest to the end.”

In the wake of the success of this inaugural contest, the JWCTU and its foreign members sponsored no fewer than four additional competitions over the next three months. One was even scheduled as a feature event at the society’s annual convention in mid-July, where it “formed an object lesson to those who had but dimly understood the aims and methods” of the Medal Contest Department. Shortly thereafter, the Y at Kobe Jogakuin [formerly Kobe Jogakkō] proved that this line of work was also a natural for affiliated young women’s associations when it held a contest for students. Awareness of this fit prompted Smart and Y national superintendent Tsuneko Gauntlett to recommend that all Ys devote their November 1905 meeting to the study and initiation of medal contest work. How many of the dozen disadvantaged girls. Less than two months later, he collaborated with Ushioda and Yajima to establish the Tokyo Airinsha [Neighborly Love Association], which aimed to educate and “rescue” factory girls and the poor with classes in academic subjects and allied arts, lectures, and “refined” entertainment. Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 197-98, 201. For the Airinsha’s prospectus, see “Tōkyō Airinsha shuusho,” Fujin shimpō, no. 66 (25 October 1902): 7; reprinted in Hyakunenshi, 198-99.

48 Kenshō bungakukai”[Medal contest], Fujin shimpō, no. 97 (25 May 1905): 4; World’s Women’s Christian Temperance Union White Ribbon Bulletin (August 1905); Japan Evangelist 12, no. 5 (May 1905): 165-66. Quoted from Japan Evangelist, 166.

49 Japan Evangelist 12, no. 7 (July 1905): 245.

50 Japan Evangelist 12, no. 11 (November 1905): 379, 381. The suggested program for the meeting included the singing of a temperance doxology, which went: “Praise God
plus Ys then operating read the prepared contest helps in November is unclear, but Smart and Gauntlett’s urging did not go completely unheard. The Y at the Methodist mission-backed Yamanashi Eiwa Jogakkō in Kōfu, for one, responded and had already held one competition and begun planning a second by March 1906. Over the ensuing years, Ys at mission schools in Tokyo and elsewhere also zealously took up contest work, as did LTLs and foreign and Japanese Sunday school teachers. So tremendous was enthusiasm that JWCTU local branches and affiliates sponsored approximately fifty recitation contests before the end of the Meiji period, with a record of twenty-five bronze and three silver held between July 1909 and July 1910 alone.

The number of contests being held soon created great need for additional reciters, and the JWCTU and Foreign Auxiliary worked together to prepare two more, one with twenty-eight entries for young children and the other with more than a dozen for older students. Among the titles from which youth could choose by the end of the Meiji period were “A Glass of Wine ‘Per Se,’” “A Seven Hundred Million Dollar Conflagration,” “Rationale of Scientific Temperance Instruction,” and “The Octopus.” In 1910, an amendment to the rules also

from whom all blessings flow, Praise Him who heals the drunkard’s woe, Praise Him who leads the temperance host, Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” Ibid., 379-80.

51 Japan Evangelist 13, no. 3 (March 1906): 94.

52 Indeed, the Medal Contest Department stood out as one of the three most commonly adopted by LTLs. Japan Evangelist 17, no. 7 (July 1910): 269.

53 The figure of fifty represents a rough estimate based on only those contests reported in Japan Evangelist. For the 1909-1910 number, see ibid.

54 Japan Evangelist 17, no. 8 (August 1910): 314; vol. 13, no. 3 (March 1906): 93. An extensive search of materials in Japanese failed to uncover any reciters from the Meiji
allowed for participants in designated contests to write their own speeches. Two such competitions were held in Mito that same year and to great interest and effect. According to one account, the texts "showed originality in thought and composition," and one of the winners, a telegraph operator, inspired his audience by telling how he had made a big mistake at work after having had a cup of sake at a wedding feast. Additional changes to the rules included the removal of the age restriction, which resulted in this young man's appearance, and the abolition of the six-month abstinence requirement. This latter revision should not be interpreted as in any way a compromise of the JWCTU's principles, but rather as a calculated move on the part of the union. Medal contests had proved successful as a vehicle for spreading the word of temperance, and the JWCTU hoped to influence the behavior of even more.

That same goal infused the introduction of temperance essay contests in 1911. As the line of reasoning went, unlike memorizing and delivering a speech, writing an essay would require an individual to reason logically about the harm alcohol caused and to develop arguments in favor of abstinence in a clear and concise manner. The mental exercise involved could then result in the conversion of the author himself to temperance, while, as with recitation contests, the holding of a competition could awaken interest even in inveterate

period. Discussion of content is thus, unfortunately, not possible.

55 *Japan Evangelist* 17, no. 6 (June 1910): 223.


57 Recitations also dealt with the harm of smoking, and these proved equally effective. For example, a youngster speaking at an LTL rally in Tokyo in 1911 convinced a businessmen to pledge abstinence from tobacco. *Japan Evangelist* 18, no. 4 (April 1911): 150.

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drinkers. To achieve these twin objectives, the JWCTU began holding temperance essay contests in 1911 in cooperation with Chūgaku sekai [Middle school world], a monthly periodical for middle school boys. A full-page advertisement for the first appeared in the April edition of the magazine and gave a length limit for submissions, the period during which essays would be accepted, and the theme for the contest, namely, “The Value of Total Abstinence.” To be eligible, one simply needed to be a middle school student at a private, public, or government institution. The results, determined by a panel of judges that included Shimada Saburō and Andō Tarō, were then announced in July, and the first, second, and three third-place submissions printed in two issues of the magazine. The top honor and ¥25 in prize money went to Suzuki Yoshio, a student in Sendai who was training to become a Buddhist priest.

The response to this first competition and the number of submissions by students attending non-Christian schools exceeded JWCTU hopes, and the organization quickly arranged for a second contest for the fall. The three topics chosen were “World Peace,” “The Spirit of Love for Animals,” and “The Need for Temperance among Youth,” all subjects of great concern to the JWCTU. The winning essays were once again published in Chūgaku sekai.

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58 Japan Evangelist 18, no. 2 (February 1911): 66.

59 Chūgaku sekai 14, no. 5 (April 1911): 87; Japan Evangelist 18, no. 5 (May 1911): 183.


61 Chūgaku sekai 14, no. 10 (August 1911): 127. For the winning essays, see vol. 14, no. 16 (December 1911): 162-75.

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This link with a secular magazine enabled the JWCTU to reach thousands who would not have heard its message otherwise. More importantly, the periodical’s readers represented the next generation, and, by winning them over to its principles, the JWCTU sought to create a sober Japan for the future.

Temperance Work at the Fifth National Industrial Exposition

As did recitation and essay contests, industrial expositions provided the WCTU in Japan with opportunities to spread its gospel of reform. The government early recognized the value of such fairs as a way to promote industrialization, further technological development, and win Western respect for Japanese industry, all for the sake of national strengthening. These goals led the state to provide displays to nearly two dozen international exhibitions during the first two decades of the Meiji period and to sponsor five national fairs between 1877 and 1903. The first, held in Tokyo, drew almost five hundred thousand from across the country and showed off the latest in craft goods. Manufactured and Western-style items subsequently became more numerous as Japan developed modern factories and expanded from traditional to light and then heavy industries. The most noted of Western goods to appear over the years included bottled beer and a refrigerator, which was first displayed at the 1903 fair in Osaka. At the urging of the central government, local officials and private entrepreneurs also made use of expositions to encourage industrial growth, as well as tourism, and, over the course of the Meiji period, they sponsored dozens of additional intra- and inter-prefectural fairs.62

Japanese and foreign temperance activists saw these exhibitions as ideal forums for espousing their principles, and, beginning in the 1890s, they actively took advantage of the

62Hunter, 40-41; Watanabe, 290.
opportunities the fairs presented to reach a broader spectrum of society than they could with their organizational forays, lecture meetings, and publications. One of the first societies to so take action was the Hokkai Kinshukai [Temperance Society], which conducted outreach during a month-long exhibition of Hokkaido products in Sapporo in 1892. Specifically, the society's members set up a booth within the fairgrounds and, from this command post, distributed temperance tracts and copies of the organization's constitution, gave out ice water, and held a number of public lectures. The JWCTU followed this example three years later, when, together with the YMCA, its members handed out temperance leaflets, among other printed materials, at the Fourth National Industrial Exposition in Kyoto. The union greatly expanded its exhibition-related activities thereafter with work at the next national fair in Osaka in 1903 and at regional fairs in Nagoya and Maebashi in 1910. At all three of these, the union sought not only to instill the principle of temperance among exposition-goers, but also to win them to Christ.

Among these three campaigns, the JWCTU's largest took place in Osaka. In late 1902, native members and missionaries involved with the union's Foreign Auxiliary met with

63 Japan Evangelist 2, no. 2 (December 1894): 66-67.

64 Japan Evangelist 2, no. 5 (June 1895): 311. Even before this, the WCTU had sent a banner, a copy of its prospectus, and several issues of Tōkyō fujin kyōfū zasshi for display at the WWCTU booth at the 1893 World Exposition in Chicago. Minutes of the Second Biennial Convention... of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union... , 229; like the copy of the prospectus, the issues of the periodical can be found in a box labeled Japan, World Collection, Willard Memorial Library.

delegates from the Japan Temperance League to begin preparations for what would be a wide-scale reform effort to be carried out in conjunction with the Fifth National Industrial Exposition. They appointed as a preliminary measure a three-person planning committee to develop a concrete plan of action. For reasons that remain unclear, a second committee soon superseded the first one.66 This second body included in total seventeen representatives from the three parent organizations, and it assembled at Kara Smart’s home on February 2, 1903.67 Though not a member herself, Smart used this occasion to voice her opinion about suitable methods of action. A discussion of her ideas followed, after which the committee members decided to undertake four particular activities during the fair. First, they agreed to operate an alcohol-free rest house either within the exposition grounds or at a convenient location nearby. Second, they voted to hold daily lecture meetings on temperance and other reform principles. Third, they determined to sell and distribute for free printed materials regarding temperance and reform, and, fourth, they decided to display related goods within the rest house.68 These activities represented the main components of the allied campaign, and, with these set, the planning committee turned to the details. Its members recognized the need for

66The report of this first meeting in Fujin shimpo includes no indication that Kara Smart was present. In light of the leadership and guidance she later offered in planning and executing reform work at the Exposition, it is quite likely that she encouraged the appointment of the larger second committee, which could more effectively take advantage of the opportunities the Exposition offered. “Sumaitojo no undō hōshin” [Plan for the work of Miss Smart], Fujin shimpo, no. 67 (25 November 1902): 5.

67JWCTU members on the committee included Yajima Kajiko, Ushioda Chiseko, Kozaki Chiyoko, Watase Kameko, Shimizu Fukiko, and Ukai Taeko.

68These methods mirror those employed by the WWCTU at the 1900 World Industrial Exposition in Paris.
a powerful voice and presence to attract exposition-goers to the daily lectures, and they immediately asked fellow representative Miyama Kan’ichi to serve as a full-time speaker, with supplemental lectures to be given by sympathizers traveling to Osaka for business or the exhibition.\textsuperscript{69} They next discussed options for a location for the lectures, and, after deeming a Christian mission hall situated at the entrance to the fairground the most suitable site, they decided to try to rent space there. Uncertain of possibilities for the exact location of the rest house, they delegated that decision to Miyama and Smart. Finally, before dispersing, they appointed three subcommittees and entrusted those with the respective tasks of selecting what publications to have available, generating support, and raising funds.\textsuperscript{70}

With less than one month remaining before the March 1 opening of the exhibition, the subcommittees promptly took action. On February 5, Andō Tarō, Shimizu Fukiko, and the four others appointed to the publications subcommittee met, and, in addition to choosing sixteen tracts and pamphlets they considered essential, they resolved to distribute hundreds of copies of various temperance and reform magazines during each month of the fair. By this point, word of the reform campaign had spread, and one individual had offered to provide for free five thousand copies of a booklet he had written to promote abstinence from both

\textsuperscript{69}In the 1880s, Miyama had evangelized and promoted temperance among Japanese and Chinese immigrants in northern California and Hawaii under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He became an ardent supporter of the JWCTU after returning to Japan, and he toured widely with WWCTU missionaries and on his own to spread the union's program of reform and to encourage the establishment of local branches. Cary, vol. 2, 201-202; \textit{Fujin shimpō}, no. 35 (25 March 1900): 30-31; no. 45 (25 January 1901): 28.

\textsuperscript{70}“Wagatō no jindate” [Plan for battle], \textit{Fujin shimpō}, no. 70 (25 February 1903): 1-2; “Hakurankai kyōfū undō iinkai” [Temperance committee for the Osaka exposition], ibid., 7.
alcohol and tobacco. The subcommittee realized that the decision to distribute materials for free imposed a serious financial burden on the WCTU, the Foreign Auxiliary, and the Japan Temperance League, and its members thus gladly accepted this offer. They also expressed their willingness to field any others like it. On February 6, the members of the remaining two subcommittees also gathered. Those entrusted with soliciting the attention and goodwill of the Christian community agreed to ask churches and Christian organizations around Japan to offer special prayers and sermons on the first day of the exhibition. They then drafted a letter of appeal and sent out approximately eight hundred copies. As for the six members put in charge of funding, they likewise recognized the cost to distribute printed materials for free, as well as to operate the rest house, rent the Christian mission hall, and hold daily lecture meetings. They concluded that the success of the campaign depended on contributions from supporters, and they delegated responsibility for collecting donations, with the JWCTU and the Japan Temperance League to initiate fund raising activities through their respective branches and the two missionaries on the subcommittee to approach their cohorts.71 The JWCTU promptly notified its local unions and, by the initial deadline of March 15, had gathered well over ¥100.72

Following these subcommittee meetings, Smart and Miyama traveled to Osaka in search of a site for the rest house. An introduction from the American minister to Japan enabled


72¥100 in 1903 would be roughly equivalent to ¥714,000 today. “Hakurankai kyōfū undōhi kifukin” [Contributions for reform work at the Osaka exposition], *Fujin shimpo*, no. 71 (25 March 1903): 31-32.
them to enter into talks with the exhibition commission for the purpose of renting land within the fairground. As the two walked through the site, they were struck by just how prevalent alcohol and tobacco were. The Ebisu Beer and Murai Tobacco companies had already put up gigantic advertisements, and beer halls, sake shops, and stores selling cigarettes lined the walkways. Smart lamented this fact and even went so far as to assert that a visitor to the fair would not see anything that could raise dignity and cultivate character. Her desire to situate the rest house within the exposition grounds in order to rectify this situation likely played a major role in her persistence in trying to negotiate rental with the exhibition commission. After three rounds of talks, however, she and Miyama were forced to look elsewhere.73 The lateness with which they began this second search precluded their finding an ideal location, and, after two weeks, they finally settled on an empty plot of land, roughly twelve feet by forty-eight feet, located on a major thoroughfare outside the exhibition’s gate. With money advanced from Smart, construction on a crude structure began. Building proceeded apace, yet the rest home did not open for business until March 16. Moreover, problems with renting space within the Christian mission hall meant that, for the duration of the reform campaign in Osaka, this edifice also served as the auditorium for the daily reform lectures.74

Despite these problems, the rest home soon proved quite an attraction under the supervision of Smart and Miyama. It featured a sales booth for a Bible-publishing company near its entrance, and pictures of WCTU leaders, anatomical charts depicting the health hazards

73Kara Smart, “Hakurankai ni okeru kyōfū jigyō” [Temperance work at the exposition], Fujin shimpo, no. 73 (25 May 1903): 11-12; Union Signal, 7 May 1903, 3.

74Union Signal, 7 May 1903, 3; “Hakurankai kinshu kyūkeijo” [Temperance rest house at the exposition], Fujin shimpo, no. 71 (25 March 1903): 7.
of drinking, and Japanese flags decorated the interior. In addition, a sign bearing the names of the JWCTU and the Japan Temperance League adorned the building's facade. Four or five times a day, foreign missionary women, members of the Osaka WCTU, and a host of other volunteers arranged benches into rows for the lectures, which drew audiences ranging in number from fifty to one hundred fifty. Many found the presentations so inspiring that they returned to the rest house on one or more occasions. The daily lectures did not represent the only vehicle for evangelizing and advocating temperance. Smart and the volunteers also talked individually to the passers-by who stopped to peruse the available literature or just to rest with a sweet and a cup of tea or coffee or a glass of lemonade. So successful were these group and individual solicitations that, by the beginning of April, just weeks after the rest house opened, sixty visitors had pledged temperance.

By the time the rest house closed its doors on June 30, an additional 266 had also signed, including the owner of a sake shop, a number of heavy drinkers, and a rickshaw driver who promised to begin studying the Bible with a minister in the Osaka area. A source of great hope for the eventual expansion of the JWCTU and the Japan Temperance League were the many signers who lived in areas where branches of these two organizations had yet to be established. The great number of printed materials sold and distributed for free also bore the potential to reap rewards. Nearly seventeen thousand pamphlets and eleven hundred copies

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76 Smart, "Hakurankai ni okeru kyōfū jigyō," 12.
of temperance magazines were given out, and the list of total sales included 235 copies of Andō’s translation of *Health for Little Folks.*

The tremendous success of this campaign stemmed in large part from the collaborative nature of the work. With expenses for the four-month endeavor totaling nearly ¥1100, none of the three organizations involved had the capacity, either financially or in terms of manpower, to accomplish such a project on its own. However, equally deserving of credit is Smart. Not only did she offer suggestions for specific work, negotiate for the rental of land, and provide funds for the building of the rest house, but she also supervised daily operations. Her contribution did not end there. The original plan had called for the reform campaign to be conducted through the end of May, with those involved then to consider the advisability of continuing. Miyama’s departure for travel abroad and concern over the additional burden his absence would place on Smart led the planning committee to give serious consideration in early May to drawing the campaign to a close as initially planned. Smart’s conviction that the opportunity the exposition presented should not be missed, together with her resolve to carry on, even if alone, swayed the committee and resulted in a continuation of operations through the end of June.

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78 The JWCTU’s revenue for the period from April 1902 to March 1903 totaled only ¥220. *Fujin shimpo*, no. 72 (25 April 1903): 31.

The Fifth National Industrial Exposition promised to bring to Osaka Japanese from Kyushu to Hokkaido, and the choice of the fair as a forum reflected the desire of all involved in the campaign to touch those who had yet to hear Scripture or temperance principles. The significance of this choice, however, does not stem merely from the fact that thousands from all over were reached. The exhibition showcased Japan's industrial development, and, by espousing the need for temperance and the Christian faith within that context, the JWCTU, together with Smart and the Japan Temperance League, asserted its conviction that true progress could not be had without reform or Christianity.
CHAPTER 6

IMPERIAL LOYALTY AND PATRIOTIC SERVICE JWCTU-STYLE

The assumption that Christians succumbed to the needs and policies of the Meiji state has influenced scores of studies on the Christian experience in modern Japan and has led many a scholar to claim that native converts compromised their beliefs and principles to prove their loyalty to the emperor and the nation. This chapter will consider the applicability of that claim to the JWCTU. It will first discuss members’ understanding of the emperor in relation to God and the nature of their displays of reverence for the imperial family. It will then examine the union’s position on peace and war before exploring in detail the specific activities members undertook during the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars.

Reform and Reverence for the Imperial Family Combined

Instilling in the masses a sense of national identity stood as one of the most pressing tasks Japan’s leaders faced in the wake of the Meiji Restoration. The Tokugawa administrative structure and restrictions on geographic mobility had perpetuated and strengthened existing local loyalties, while the relative absence of commoner contact with the outside world had prevented the vast majority of the population from seeing themselves as part of a distinct nation. The resulting parochialism threatened to undermine the state’s modernization program and to impede the drive for equality with the West. Government leaders realized just how serious a threat that was when they attempted to form a conscript army, establish
compulsory education, and revise the tax system. They intended with these three measures to develop an army to defend the nation, to create an educated populace to fuel industrial development, and to ensure a predictable level of revenue to pay for government initiatives. All three were vital to national strength, and all three met with swift and violent opposition from a public that found itself burdened with greater financial obligations as a result. This reaction made it even more imperative for the state to inculcate feelings of shared identity and obligation, and Meiji rulers found in the emperor the means to do just that.

Opponents of the shogunate had enlisted the emperor as sovereign and tried to justify the overthrow of the Tokugawa by declaring an imperial restoration. Those who formed the new government decided against reviving the monarchy’s political power and instead set about to fashion the emperor into a public figure whom the masses would revere, emulate, and show undying loyalty. The traditional reclusiveness of Japan’s emperors had left commoners virtually ignorant of who he was at any particular time and had contributed to the belief that he was simply one of many deities. Meiji leaders sought to establish the emperor’s divine supremacy and thereby stamp out this notion. To that end, they issued public notices that identified him as the descendant of the Sun Goddess. They also commissioned Buddhist priests to deliver public lectures about patriotism and to promote imperial veneration. What is more, they put the emperor on parade. Usually attired in a splendid Western military uniform, he led truly grand imperial processions to all reaches of Japan’s four main islands, visiting shrines, schools, factories, and military camps and recognizing commoner achievements with gifts and at times personal audiences. In addition to these excursions, the government made the emperor’s birthday a national holiday and held elaborate public
celebrations for significant events in the life of the imperial family. Such pageantry helped to instill in the masses loyalty and reverence for the emperor, along with a sense of him as ruler and themselves as subjects. That consciousness became entwined with feelings of “national communion” and patriotic duty, just as the Meiji oligarchs had intended.¹

Like most Japanese during the Meiji period, the members of the WCTU participated with the state in the construction of the cult of imperial reverence. Yajima Kajiko’s 1887 prospectus foretold such cooperation with its praise for the emperor and empress’s contributions to women’s advancement. Some historians have seen a contradiction between her avowal of loyalty and her Christian faith and have further contended that union members’ devotion to the imperial institution “set restraints on how the JWCTU carried out activities and even led the society to cooperate in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars.”² Informing this argument is the view that unionists compromised their beliefs and principles while trying to prove their allegiance and patriotism. This analysis is problematic for two reasons. First, it misinterprets the relationship between members’ faith and their reverence for the emperor. The few who published autobiographies and contributed personal articles to the JWCTU’s periodical tended not to discuss theology, which makes generalizing about the specific tenets of their Christianity difficult. Yajima did offer a clear explanation of her own position in a 1915 editorial in Fujin shimpo, and her words offer at least a basis for critique. She wrote that she had initially been awestruck by the imperial family, but that her knowledge of God

²Kindai Josei Bunkashi Kenkyūkai, ed., 34.
had transformed her detached wonder into personal affection. Moreover, she had come to believe that the emperor reigned over Japan at God's behest and provided moral support to his subjects on God's behalf. Her reverence thus reflected this understanding of the emperor's place, not uncritical acceptance of the state's assertions about his divine origins.

Secondly, the above interpretation overlooks the content of the JWCTU's demonstrations of imperial veneration. Yajima predicated the nature of these displays in her prospectus when she stated that involvement in reform work was in fact a show of loyalty to the emperor and empress. This conceptualization of the tie between activism and allegiance permeated the JWCTU and led members very consciously to invoke the imperial family in the name of reform.

The JWCTU's activities in connection with the 1900 marriage of the crown prince reveal just how the union appropriated imperial celebrations for its own ends. Japanese nationwide greeted news first of the prince's betrothal and then of his wedding with great fanfare. The state orchestrated some of this response with public announcements and plans for a very grand procession of the prince and his new bride from the imperial palace in central Tokyo to his residence nearby. Unbridled enthusiasm also moved the public to fete the couple, as demonstrated by the tens of thousands who gathered to watch the procession. Extending felicitations themselves, JWCTU officers sent a wedding present, and Tanaka Yone, then

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3Yajima Kajiko, “Hōshuku no shin'i” [The true meaning of the coronation], Fujin shimpō, no. 220 (1915): 1-4. I am indebted to Katano Masako's article, “Fujin Kyōfūkai ni miru haishō undō no shisō,” 245-46, for drawing Yajima's editorial to my attention.

4Fujitani, 116-21.
editor of *Fujin shimpo*, offered congratulations in the magazine.\(^5\) These two activities did not distinguish the union from any others acknowledging the marriage. The JWCTU’s appeals to authorities to admonish the public to respect the solemnity of the procession by abstaining from alcohol-induced revelries did.\(^6\) So did Tanaka’s praise for the wording of the engagement notice. In the lead article in the February 1904 issue of *Fujin shimpo*, she emphasized that the announcement had included the word “promise,” as in “the crown prince had promised marriage.” She interpreted this word as an indication that the prince respected his betrothed and had pledged to enter into a monogamous union with her. It was this that Tanaka praised. Indeed, she rejoiced that the prince’s marriage would set a “precedent that would help to eliminate the evil of *danson johi* [respect for men and disdain for women].”\(^7\) The WCTU had spent more than a decade trying to accomplish that goal, yet had made little headway. The prince’s wedding offered to legitimize both monogamy and the society’s efforts to promote marital fidelity. Tanaka recognized that fact and transformed a demonstration of reverence into an espousal of reform.

Such a mingling of displays of loyalty with calls for reform characterized the JWCTU’s approach to the imperial family during the Meiji period. Indeed, the history of the union’s responses to major events in the lives of the emperor, empress, and crown prince reads like a litany of reform activities. For example, from 1887, members annually celebrated the


\(^6\) *Fujin shimpo*, no. 36 (25 April 1904): 2.

\(^7\) Tanaka Yone, “Tōgō gokekkon no seiyaku” [The promise of the crown prince’s marriage], *Fujin shimpo*, no. 34 (25 February 1894): 1. The government suggested as much in order to make the monarchy appear civilized in the eyes of the West. Fujitani, 118.
empress’s birthday in conjunction with the spring meeting of the Tokyo-Yokohama Women’s Prayer Society and repeatedly called for the day to be recognized as a national holiday as a way to improve women’s position in society. In 1894, the JWCTU also observed the silver anniversary of the emperor and empress with a gift of a brocaded box containing poems and embroidered handkerchiefs and tied with a white ribbon. The ribbon, the badge of the WCTU worldwide, was a subtle addition, but it did serve to advertise the union’s existence. Finally, in 1912, the JWCTU mourned the death of the emperor with praise for his “gift” of religious freedom. Although not directly linked to reform, this display of reverence did represent yet another attempt to harness the legitimacy and power of the imperial family to the beliefs and goals of JWCTU members. That unionists remained steadfast in their faith and reform objectives in relation to the emperor is clear. Were they as unswerving during the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars? The remainder of this chapter will address that question and discuss the JWCTU’s position on peace and war as a starting point.

The Promotion of Peace and Just War

During the Meiji period, the word “peace” appeared together in print with mention of the JWCTU numerous times. For example, in May 1898, Union Signal reported that the

Kate Youngman and Maria True organized this interdenominational society in 1883 to bring foreign and native women together twice a year. WCTU members were very active, and indeed, in 1891, Yajima spearheaded the group’s attempt to present the empress with copies of the Old and New Testaments so that she could learn about Christianity and receive comfort. Yajima Kajiko, “Chikyūsetsu no yurai” [The origins of the empress’s birthday celebration], Shinmin 4, no. 4 (28 May 1909): 16-18; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 54.

Japan Evangelist 1, no. 5 (June 1894): 284.

decorations festooning the church where the union’s annual convention had just been held included a banner inscribed with “peace to all nations.” Four years later, Kozaki Chiyo mentioned in her first article as editor of *Fujin shimpō* that all WCTU activities aimed to achieve world peace. Beyond such references, members of the JWCTU cooperated periodically in organized efforts to promote harmony among nations. Collaborative action first took place in 1899, when the union joined other women’s groups in Japan to establish a federation specifically to support the Hague Peace Conference. In 1910, executives voted to affiliate with the Japan Peace Society as well, and, at the JWCTU’s annual meeting in July, they created a department of peace to coordinate activities.

Yajima, appointed the section’s first superintendent, was well established as one of the union’s leading exponents of peace. She had assumed that role soon after the Russo-Japanese War with two very public acts. First, she had led a contingent of JWCTU members to welcome back to Tokyo Komura Jutaro, Japan’s chief negotiator in Portsmouth. Although

11 *Union Signal*, 19 May 1898, 5.

12 Kozaki Chiyo, “*Kyōfūkai to kinshu jigyō*” [The JWCTU and temperance work], no. 60 (25 April 1902): 1. Born in 1862, Kozaki studied at Kaigan Jogakkō [Kaigan Girls’ School], an American Methodist mission facility in Tokyo. She converted to Christianity and taught Sunday school while there. Shortly after graduating in 1883, she married Kozaki Hiromichi, who by then already had his own pulpit. His support of temperance and of Mary Leavitt Clement’s tour in particular paved the way for Chiyo’s participation in the founding of the Tokyo WCTU. She thereafter served as secretary and treasurer for the WCTU, and, in 1902, became editor of *Fujin shimpō*. Nihon Kirisutokyō Rekishi Daijiten Henshū inkai, ed., *Nihon Kirisutokyō rekishi daijiten*, 277, 519-20; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., *Hyakunenshi*, 503-504.


Komura was then widely reviled for not winning more concessions from Russia, Yajima had greeted him with the JWCTU’s flag in hand and had politely thanked him for his work to restore peace. The following year, she had traveled to Washington, D.C. after attending the WWCTU’s seventh convention in Boston and, in a well-publicized meeting, had personally thanked Theodore Roosevelt for his intercession.15 As the JWCTU’s new director of peace work, she built upon these individual and the aforementioned organizational initiatives and prodded her fellow members to become more involved in agitation for world peace. The Taishō period subsequently saw them actively take up the gauntlet, at the same time that opinions favoring international alliances and arms reduction gained widespread currency in Japan and abroad.16

In promoting peaceful relations among nations, the JWCTU contributed to the emergence of a peace movement in Japan. Concerns about civil unrest had earlier led intellectuals in the Tokugawa period to emphasize the need for stability and order. Yet, Japan's very limited interaction with the rest of the world meant that their rhetoric focused almost exclusively on internal matters, and peace remained a concept. It became the guiding light for a movement only after Japan’s opening and development into a modern power with interests overseas that

15Kubushiro, 42-53.

16The highlights of the JWCTU’s inter-war peace work coincided with the Washington and London Conferences, at which Japan agreed with the world’s leading sea powers to curtail naval build-up. Yajima, Kozaki, and Moriya Azuma attended the former in 1921 and there presented Warren Harding with a peace petition bearing ten thousand signatures. That same year, the words “peace, purity, and temperance” became a regular feature on the cover of Fujin shimpo. In 1930, Hayashi Utako and Tsuneko Gauntlett submitted another appeal to delegates in London, which expressed the support of nearly twice as many Japanese women for arms limitation. Nakadzumi, 224; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakunenshi, 1026, 1029.
needed to be protected. Christian missionaries played a large role in shaping the ideological contours of the movement at its earliest stage. Many male Protestants from the United States had served in the Civil War, and they brought with them stories about the human destruction modern military technology and tactics could wreak. While they painted the same picture of horror, they diverged in the positions they took regarding war. The majority espoused the doctrine of just wars. They argued that peace represented the ideal and should be pursued to the extent possible, but that armed conflict was moral if the causes were virtuous. The minority, on the other hand, propagated pacifism and uncompromisingly opposed war. This same dichotomy of opinion characterized the peace movement in Meiji Japan.

As Robert Kisala has observed, the dominant presence of pacifists in peace agitation in postwar Japan has led scholars of the earlier period to overlook this dichotomy of opinion. Their unbalanced treatment has, I would contend, fueled the interpretation that Christians who showed support for the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars compromised their belief in peace by doing so. Native converts did need to demonstrate their loyalty to the nation in the face of charges that their faith was incompatible with the basic character of the Japanese state. With the exception of a handful of pacifists, most did prove themselves


19Kisala, 16.

20Inoue Tetsujirō, a professor of philosophy at the Imperial University of Tokyo, most publicly leveled this accusation against Christians in an 1893 book. Inoue had been spurred
loyal with their patriotic service. Yet, they acted not because they felt compelled to establish their allegiance, but because they believed that both wars were just. Such was certainly true of the members of the JWCTU, as their arguments in favor of armed conflict first with China and then Russia reveal.

The union’s major apologia for the Sino-Japanese War appeared in the miscellaneous column of the August 1895 issue of Fujin kyōfū zasshi. Takekoshi Takeyo penned this piece just before the outbreak of hostilities. Her readers knew that Japan had sent troops to Korea to assist a Chinese military expedition in suppressing a native uprising. They also had been informed that their government had tried to negotiate a mutual withdrawal but that China had rebuffed the overture. Takekoshi thus saw no need to provide background information. She did offer, though, a concise explanation of why war was “unavoidable.” Namely, she wrote that Japan was simply trying to maintain Korean independence. Because China was obstructing Japan’s efforts, the Meiji government would have no other recourse than to declare war. Roughly ten years later, this same rationale of inevitability appeared in statements Kozaki published in support of war with Russia. To cite one example, her lead editorial in the February 1904 issue of Fujin shimpō first lamented the opening of fire yet then issued the following claim:

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to write it after Uchimura Kanzō had refused, in 1891, to bow to a copy of the Imperial Rescript on Education at the school where he then taught English because he believed that bowing was equivalent to acknowledging the emperor as divine. Inoue Tetsujirō, Kyōiku to shūkyō no shōutsu [The collision between education and religion] (Tokyo: Keigyōsha, 1893).

21Takekoshi Takeyo, “Nisshin sen to kyōfū mondai” [War between Japan and China and moral reform problems], Fujin kyōfū zasshi, no. 10 (2 August 1895): 33.
Obstinate Russia is vainly disregarding peace, trampling on the independence of another country, and endangering the existence of Japan. It has reached the point that Japan has no other choice but to take up swords for the sake of peace in the East and for Japan's own self-defense.\textsuperscript{22}

Kozaki's vindication of war as a necessary way to achieve peace clearly places her within the just war majority of Meiji Christians. That she did not stand alone within the JWCTU in assuming this position is apparent from a speech that Yajima Kajiko gave in the spring or early summer of 1905. Specifically, Yajima said that, because WCTUs the world over "bore great responsibility for bringing about profound peace for the sake of God, countries, and homes," the members of the union in Japan should fulfill their duty as affiliates by meeting the nation's wartime needs.\textsuperscript{23} The motivations that underlay their efforts to meet those needs, though, extended well beyond their desire for peace. For example, they also believed that armed conflict between nations offered women an excellent opportunity to better their status in society. Kozaki provided one of the clearest statements available of this idea in a \textit{Fujin shimpo} editorial published just after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. She contended that women, the original "defenders of ethics and public morals," had exerted little influence on society to date because of their lowly position. War had led the public to ignore problems of behavior, however, and she asserted that women could make themselves "indispensable and at the same time cause their social standing to improve significantly" if only they worked

\textsuperscript{22}Kozaki Chiyo, "Sensō to Kyōfūkai" [War and the JWCTU], \textit{Fujin shimpo}, no. 82 (25 February 1904): 1-2. Quoted from 1.

\textsuperscript{23}Yajima made this statement in a lecture entitled "Komponteki no kyōfū" [Fundamental moral reform]. Kozaki included a passage as the lead editorial in \textit{Fujin shimpo}, no. 99 (25 July 1905): 1-2. Quoted from 1.
to solve those problems. This conviction undoubtedly contributed to the JWCTU’s pro-war stance. So did the philosophy that guided all union activities. That approach gave precedence to action and led members not to question whether war itself was right or wrong, but to ask how best they could meet the nation’s needs. Their answer dovetailed with their reform goals, as the union’s activities during the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars reveal.

The Sino-Japanese War and JWCTU Outreach

With respect to the conflict with China, Takekoshi used *Fujin kyōfū zasshi* not only to defend the government’s decision to declare war, but also to advise how Japanese could and should contribute to the war effort. Her admonitions appeared in short informational pieces and longer editorials and unequivocally equated reform work with patriotic service. She penned her first article in this vein just before hostilities broke out in July 1894 and published it in the August issue of the magazine. She began by saying that Japan would need to spend massively in the early days of war in order to mobilize its forces. That money could very easily come from the country’s drinkers for they consumed almost one hundred million yen per year in alcohol. “If they truly loved Japan,” she then declared, “they would support the principles of reform and apply their drinking funds to military expenses.”

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24Kozaki Chiyo, “Gunkoku fujin no tachiba” [The place of women in countries at war], *Fujin shimpō*, no. 83 (25 March 1904): 1-3. Quoted from 2 and 3.

25Katano, “Fujin kyōfūkai ni miru haishō undo no shiros,” 239.

26Takekoshi Takeyo, “Nisshin no sen to kyōfū mondai” [War between Japan and China and the problem of reform], *Fujin kyōfū zasshi*, no. 10 (2 August 1894): 33.
Takekoshi assumed a more persuasive tone in her editorial the following month, yet she still linked abstinence from vice to military funds. Specifically, she reported that the government planned to float fifty million yen in public debt to pay for the war with the expectation that citizens would assume the burden of repayment. She made the claim, though, that a far better way to acquire the necessary capital was to divert what Japanese spent on alcohol and tobacco each year, for that amount did more than match the proposed debt. To enforce the validity of this suggestion, she wrote: “If, on an occasion such as this, we cannot abstain from the desires of the stomach and the mouth and if we cannot implement reform principles, we should not boast about the patriotism of Japanese citizens to the world.”

In these two articles, Takekoshi focused her attention on drinkers and smokers and therefore on men as much as women. The readership of *Fujin kyōfū zasshi*, however, was almost exclusively female and already supportive of the JWCTU’s reform principles. She thus also published several pieces that addressed the wartime duties of her sisters and set forth specific tasks they should perform. One effort she identified as particularly important was for women to reduce unnecessary expenses, including money wasted on sake, tobacco, and ornamental hair pieces, and to use those savings to subsidize military purchases. The magazine’s readers were also urged to spread reform principles in order to prevent returning soldiers and laborers from disrupting social morals. JWCTU members undertook the latter through two specific

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activities. They sent temperance leaflets to men in arms and provided Red Cross hospitals with financial support and material goods.\textsuperscript{29}

The JWCTU sought as well to provide comfort to families with sons, husbands, brothers, and uncles risking their lives on the battlefield. The main vehicle the union employed to this end was a twenty-four-page pamphlet that Takekoshi wrote and the JWCTU published and began distributing in December 1894. In her opening paragraph, Takekoshi tried to establish common ground with her intended readers with the avowal that all Japanese felt worried that they would never see their loved ones again. She then proceeded to warn that, if individuals allowed themselves to become all consumed by anxiety, they would be guilty of disservice to the emperor and their fellow citizens. To prevent such dereliction of patriotic duty, she admonished that all left behind and women especially should develop strong hearts and labor to protect the home front. She did not provide concrete suggestions as to how women could best maintain the sanctity of their homes, but she did recommend a way they could fortify their spirits. They could (and should) rely on the God of Christians. As she explained,

\begin{quote}
[this] God is omnipresent and omniscient. Work that people cannot do and things of which they cannot conceive on their own become simple when God's power is used. Those with unendurable sadness can easily gain comfort if they depend on God’s might, for He takes those who go to Him with heavy burdens and makes their troubles light. If you are overwhelmed with worry and if you go to God and pray to Him, you will be able to receive help at once.\textsuperscript{30}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{29}Minutes of the Third Biennial Convention and Executive Committee Meetings of the World’s Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Including President's Address, Superintendents’ Reports, Papers and Letters (London: The White Ribbon Company, 1895), 160.

Takekoshi tried to offer comfort herself by also urging her readers to remember two important facts. Death in the Sino-Japanese War would reduce their loved ones to dust and bones in a purely physical sense. They should not forget, however, that there was no greater honor than dying in battle for the sake of the nation. Moreover, they should be mindful that the souls of the war dead did survive in the afterworld and, "sitting next to God, would receive His blessings" for eternity.31

Over the course of the war, JWCTU members distributed approximately fifteen hundred copies of this pamphlet together with issues of the union's magazine.32 Dozens of recipients subsequently sent letters of thanks, two of which Takekoshi reprinted in Fujin shimpo. Both writers expressed appreciation for the solace they had gained from her reminder that death was honorable when met for the sake of the nation. Neither, however, mentioned God or indicated that her comment about the afterlife of the war dead had provided peace of mind.33 Far from disheartening members of the JWCTU, the nature of such thanks strengthened their conviction that efforts to provide spiritual comfort were a legitimate expression of patriotic service, and, indeed, that belief shaped the activities the union pursued nearly ten years later during the Meiji period's second major conflict, the Russo-Japanese War.

Providing Comfort and Promoting Reform during the Russo-Japanese War

The JWCTU's outreach during the conflict with Russia proved to be better coordinated, more varied, and more national in scope that its activities in support of the Sino-Japanese

31Ibid., 21.

32Fujin shimpo, no. 3 (28 April 1895): 32.

33Fujin shimpo, no. 2 (28 March 1895): 29.
War. Multiple factors gave rise to these changes, the most important of which was the development of the JWCTU into a larger, more experienced body with effective central leadership. Such growth included expansion in department work and, in 1897, the adoption of a gunjinka, a section specifically for outreach among soldiers and sailors. Satō Kieko served as the department's first superintendent. The work languished, however, because she never proposed a concrete plan of action. WWCTU missionary Kara Smart attempted to revive interest after her arrival in 1902 by offering instruction in methods. Her urging and the increasingly imminent threat of war with Russia finally sparked enthusiasm, and the JWCTU signaled its renewed commitment to the department when officers named a new superintendent, Shimizu Fuki.

Shimizu first determined to learn as much as possible about the work WCTUs worldwide had initiated during times of war. So, she wrote to her counterparts abroad and asked them for information. She then selected from among their collective activities those that she considered both feasible for the JWCTU and most responsive to Japan’s needs. Her preparations done, she published a list of six recommendations for work in the February 1904 issue of Fujin shimpo. Notably, she advised her fellow members to visit hospitals, barracks, and ships and to encourage and console the servicemen they met with flowers and literature. She

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34Born in 1874, Satō studied at Meiji Jogakkō and became a Christian while there. She joined the JWCTU before graduating in 1895 and, as a union secretary, developed a plan to open an alcohol-free rest house for soldiers during the Sino-Japanese War. Her project never materialized, but her initiative likely contributed to her selection as superintendent of the JWCTU’s department for servicemen. In 1899, she married Yamamuro Gumpei, and her deep involvement in the Salvation Army thereafter left her little time to develop the section. Shimada Tomiko, “Yamamuro Kieko (1874-1916),” in Shakai jigyō ni ikitai josei tachi: Sono shōgai to shigoto, ed. Gomi Yuriko (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1973), 141-49.
also urged them to send supportive missives to those already at the front and to provide material aid to bereaved families. These suggestions highlight the JWCTU’s committedness to providing basic comfort during wartime. However, as with the union’s activities during the Sino-Japanese War, evangelism and the desire to further the organization’s reform goals greatly informed the program put forth for the Russo-Japanese War. Shimizu’s other recommendations offer proof of just how important these latter two goals actually were. Namely, she exhorted branches to send lecturers to barracks and other places with large congregations of servicemen with the explicit purpose of teaching about the Gospel and expounding on the necessity of temperance. She also advocated the establishment of designated places where servicemen could rest, read, purchase healthy snacks at low prices, learn about Christianity, and experience the pleasure of social interaction based on the principle of temperance. 35

In the months after the outbreak of hostilities, other members similarly used the pages of Fujin shimpō to press their fellow unionists to act. They did not reiterate Shimizu’s suggestions word for word, but they did reinforce the importance of reform and evangelism as core components of the JWCTU’s wartime program. For example, in a 1904 editorial, Kozaki asserted that the only way to ease the loneliness and pain of those who had lost family in the fighting was to lead them to Christ. She then stated that members of the JWCTU had a duty

as Christians and as women to engage in evangelistic work for the sake of the nation at war. Kozaki’s editorial and Shimizu’s recommendations show that, at least at the national level, officers saw war as an opportunity to further their agenda, and they promoted outreach to that end.

Did members at the local level share that same steadfastness to reform and evangelism? A look at the activities in which they engaged to serve the nation at war illustrates that many did, in fact, accept and propagate all three stipulated goals of the Gunjinka. For example, Baba Matsue and Kashiuchi Setsuko of the Osaka WCTU comforted prisoners of war and, with Bibles and biscuits in hand, consoled the injured at military hospitals in Hiroshima, Matsuyama, and Sasebo. They also attended a stereopticon meeting, where they helped to explain Christ’s life to dozens in uniform. Kimura Semuko and her fellow members of the Asahikawa WCTU attended funerals for the war dead, gave bereaved families charcoal and rice to ease their straitened circumstances, and welcomed returnees home with temperance tracts and flags. Nishizaki Ayano and her cohorts in the Yokohama WCTU, in addition to sending children from poor families with fathers off fighting to elementary school, donated Bibles and other religious works to a Red Cross library for injured soldiers and sailors. Still

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36 Kozaki Chiyo, “Gunjin izoku no dendo” [Evangelistic outreach toward the bereaved families of servicemen], *Fujin shimpo*, no. 86 (25 June 1904): 3-4.


others met trains carrying soldiers to and from the front to offer words of encouragement, to
sew on buttons, to fix tears in clothes, and to distribute leaflets decrying the evils of drink.40
Not all branches equally espoused and worked to achieve the JWCTU’s triad of wartime
objectives. In keeping with the national union’s support of local autonomy, branches set
their own priorities and established departments of work as fit local needs and their
members’ interests. Some did emphasize comfort over reform and evangelism, as the reports
they submitted for publication in Fujin shimpō reveal. However, that twenty-eight out of
fifty-six local unions were enthusiastically engaged in war work in 1905 illustrates the extent
to which the JWCTU as a national organization embraced the war as an opportunity for
action.41
More so than any other endeavor, the sending of comfort bags epitomized the national
scope of the JWCTU’s wartime service.42 Even branches without sufficient members to form
and maintain gunjinka joined other locals in contributing to the project. The idea for sending
bags to men in uniform originated in the United States and gained currency as a suitable activ-
ity for women during the Civil War.43 Years later, the WWCTU adopted this practice as
one way to spread its reform message. When Shimizu wrote to superintendents worldwide
to inquire about WCTU wartime activities elsewhere, she received from her American

40Fujin shimpō, no. 84 (25 April 1904): 17; Union Signal, 5 May 1904, 3.
41Union Signal, 10 August 1905, 2.
42The following terms were used for comfort bags early in the war: gunjinbukuro [bags for servicemen]; nagusamebukuro [consolation bags]; and, benribukuro [handy bags]. Imonbukuro [comfort bags] subsequently became the standard designation.
counterpart instructions about how to manufacture bags and suggestions regarding what kinds of goods to include. She reprinted this information in Fujin shimpo together with a picture of a bag. Urging her readers to take up this line of work, she asked them to contribute bags directly to the national gunjinka.\textsuperscript{44}

The response to Shimizu's appeal was swift, and, within days, the JWCTU received bags from several branches and a number of individuals.\textsuperscript{45} These initial contributions spurred the union to make six hundred bags on a trial basis. Officials in the War Department refused to accept the bags, so, in mid-March 1904, the JWCTU sent them to the Navy instead with the intent that they would be distributed at Sasebo Naval Hospital and throughout the combined squadron. Shortly thereafter, lieutenants, captains, and even the paymaster of the warship the Usugumo wrote letters of thanks.\textsuperscript{46} This positive reception to the first shipment of bags led the JWCTU to continue and expand its comfort bag campaign.

Initially, the JWCTU asked those interested in assisting with comfort bag work to donate bags that contained socks, gloves, needles, thread, buttons, writing paper, pencils, dried plums, temperance leaflets, and Christian tracts. Lack of time and of appropriate items to put in bags, however, precluded the assistance of many. The JWCTU consequently began to accept ready-made bags and items for inclusion separately, to loan out bags for others to fill, and to sell machine-made bags for five sen each.\textsuperscript{47} To ensure that the contents of each

\textsuperscript{44}Fujin shimpo, no. 82 (25 February 1904): 5, 7.

\textsuperscript{45}Fujin shimpo, no. 83 (25 March 1904): 13.

\textsuperscript{46}Fujin shimpo, no. 84 (25 April 1904): 5-8.

\textsuperscript{47}Fujin shimpo, no. 85 (25 May 1904): 7.
and every donated and returned bag was appropriate, members in Tokyo inspected all bags prior to shipment. They removed rotten food and items inconsistent with the union's reform principles, namely cigarettes and lewd pictures. They also inserted Bibles, temperance tracts, abstinence pledges, hymn slips, copies of the JWCTU's statement of purpose, and letters urging servicemen to join the national gunjinka. The JWCTU still did not have its own office at this point. So, Yajima, cognizant of the need for a central command post, rented a room at Joshi Gakuin. From there, she oversaw the collection and inspection of bags, a task for which the government made her personally responsible.

JWCTU members and officers in and around Tokyo flocked to Joshi Gakuin to assist in the inspection and packaging of bags. Most of the bags they handled initially came from a very narrow segment of society, in short from local members, students at Christian girls' schools, and foreign missionaries. The efforts of Ōzeki Chikako helped to stimulate interest beyond the union's core constituency and to develop comfort bag work into a truly national movement irrespective of religious affiliation and sex. Her personal campaign began in the wake of wild celebrations for the Japanese victory at Liaoyang. Ōzeki was aware that this victory came at the expense of a tremendous loss of life, and she felt evermore the need for citizens to contribute to soldiers' relief. In September 1904, with a sample comfort bag and letter of solicitation in hand, she set out in the Kanda district of Tokyo and went door-to-door appealing for contributions. The response her canvassing aroused surprised even Ōzeki herself. Not only did merchants become spokesmen for the cause and encourage customers

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49Kubushiro, ed., 41; Yasutake, 184.
to give, but employees at the Kanda ward office also lent a helping hand. Even a second-grade elementary school student contributed a bag, which contained two rolls of paper, ten envelopes, and two writing brushes. Like wildfire, the idea of sending comfort bags spread through Tokyo. In mid-October, Ōzeki had to return full-time to her work as a nurse, but by then her efforts had netted 17,150 bags for the JWCTU.50

The effects of Ōzeki’s campaign did not end with this windfall. Other Christian but more importantly non-Christian women’s groups soon adopted comfort bags as an acceptable form of wartime service. Members of the imperial family also became involved, and at least two princesses took up needle and thread themselves.51 An even greater boon came in the fall of 1904 when the War Department dramatically reversed its earlier position and began to solicit bags from and only from the JWCTU.52 Official recognition of the union’s outreach did not end there. The War Department offered free shipping as well, provided the JWCTU send bags in batches of at least ten thousand. The society had long struggled with finances, and

50 In her reports in Fujin shimpo, Ōzeki identified individuals who had donated their time, labor, and money during her month-long campaign. A scan of names reveals that both men and women supported comfort bag work. Ōzeki Chikako, “Tōkyō ni okeru imonbukuro boshū” [The collection of comfort bags in Tokyo], no. 89 (25 September 1904): 24-25; no. 90 (25 October 1904): 18-24; “Tōkyō imonbukuro boshū hōkoku” [Report on the collection of comfort bags in Tokyo], no. 91 (25 November 1904): 18-23; Kohiyama, 279.

51 Fujin shimpo reported in early 1905 that Princesses Tsunenomiya and Kanenomiya had been spurred to make bags after hearing that they offered soldiers on the front the best consolation. Fujin shimpo, no. 94 (25 February 1905): 4.

52 Union Signal, 29 December 1904, 4.
freight for bags had restricted the growth of comfort bag work. Financial assistance thus enabled members to send even more bags and thereby reach even more men.  

The Controversy Over Sending Bibles to Those in Uniform

As the JWCTU’s comfort bag campaign gained momentum nationwide, controversy arose over the insertion of Bibles. A missionary in Nagano first alerted the union’s leaders to the emergence of active opposition when he informed them that the city’s mayor had refused to accept and distribute a shipment of bags. The mayor had so acted, the missionary explained, because he believed that the Scriptures did not qualify as an appropriate relief good for those in arms. The JWCTU soon thereafter received reports that the mayors of Osaka and Kofu shared this conviction and had likewise rejected consignments of bags. This news met with no wavering on the part of the society, but instead prompted an immediate response in Fujin shimpō. Indeed, in the April 1905 issue of the periodical, Kozaki printed as the lead article a sharply worded defense of the inclusion of Bibles. She argued that the JWCTU was working “in accord with Christ’s spirit to reform the evil ways of society . . . and make Japan a pure and truly civilized nation.” She averred that this same spirit informed the JWCTU’s comfort bag work, and, because true consolation meant providing spiritual as well as physical comfort, it was only natural for the union to include Bibles along with soap and socks. The mayors’ charge that Christians lacked patriotism, she wrote, revealed their ignorance of the tenets of Christianity and the backwardness of their thinking.  

To reinforce this barbed


54 The JWCTU learned that the report about the mayor of Osaka had been false shortly after the April 1905 issue was published. Kozaki issued a retraction the next month. Fujin shimpō, no. 97 (25 May 1905): 2.
criticism, she added that even children were more enlightened for they would laugh at assertions that Christianity was inimical to service to the state.\textsuperscript{55}

In the pages following this editorial, Kozaki included an article about additional letters of appreciation that the JWCTU had received for comfort bags. She first mentioned that the union’s leaders had been concerned that the thousands and thousands of bags shipped since the beginning of the year not only to Nagano, Osaka, and Kōfu, but to a host of other military installations as well had failed to reach their destinations. Hundreds of thankful messages had flooded into the JWCTU’s headquarters just before the magazine went to print, though, and Kozaki indicated that these had alleviated worries. She then provided a three-page list of the names and regiments of those who had recently written.\textsuperscript{56} She allocated significantly more space the next month to publicizing the positive reception the bags had received when she included an even lengthier list of letter writers and two illustrations of soldiers appearing jubilant as they opened bags. She also reprinted over a dozen epistles, which were replete with requests for magazines and books, references to specific items of daily use that soldiers had particularly appreciated, and even pleas for the JWCTU to look after elderly mothers.\textsuperscript{57}

During the remaining months of the war, Kozaki continued to give many pages in the union’s periodical to grateful letters. She did so to impress upon the periodical’s readers the fact that their efforts to make and send bags did have a very tangible impact and thereby to encourage

\textsuperscript{55}Kozaki Chiyo, “Shussei gunjin imon no Seisho” [Bibles and the comfort of soldiers on the front], \textit{Fujin shimpō}, no. 96 (25 April 1905): 1-2. Quoted from 1.

\textsuperscript{56}Ibid., 20-23.

them to continue the work. Even more compelling a motive was the sense of need to justify the provision of bags and especially the insertion of religious and reform materials in light of mayoral opposition.

That Kozaki also sought to vindicate evangelical and reform outreach is readily apparent in the August 1905 issue of *Fujin shimpo*. That month she identified twelve soldiers who had signed abstinence pledges after having read the temperance tracts they had received in their comfort bags. What is more, she gave at least twice as much space as was typical for a thank-you letter to an excerpt from a note from an infantryman named Kaneko Yoshitarō. Kaneko wrote that, in the days and weeks after receiving a bag, he had refrained from sending a letter because he considered expressions of support and comfort from civilians his due as a soldier. He had changed his mind, however, because of the Bible enclosed. In order to explain why the Scriptures had so impacted him, he shared the news that he had lost both of his parents as a young child and had grown up with few friends because he had attended school for only a few months before being drafted. There was thus no one to see him off when he left to join his regiment. The sight of his fellow conscripts being attended to by relatives had impressed upon him his own aloneness, and he had cried on the train platform. This same feeling had returned to him in the field and had led him to wonder if he would forever be solitary. With a dislike for sake and tobacco and nothing else to comfort his body, he had begun to read the Bible. He had found true solace in it and in the teaching that God would never abandon him. Indeed, the Bible was the "only thing from which he could now

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gain consolation,” and he had felt compelled to thank the JWCTU.\textsuperscript{59} As Kozaki highlighted in her introduction to this missive, Kaneko’s words proved that comfort bags did indeed “serve to spread [the union’s] assertions among soldiers and to give them spiritual solace.”\textsuperscript{60} Assured of this truth, the JWCTU continued for the duration of the war to send men in arms Bibles, temperance tracts, and other printed materials that promoted Christianity and reform.

The rewards the JWCTU reaped as a result of its comfort work extended well beyond the impact the bags had on individual recipients. Yajima and her fellow officers realized very early on that the campaign to assemble and send bags could also “indirectly” introduce the union and its assertions to civilians. Indeed, every individual who contributed something for a bag or simply heard about the project represented yet another person who at least knew about the JWCTU and its principles.\textsuperscript{61} The total number the union reached is impossible to determine. Nonetheless, the identities of those who responded to Ozeki’s canvassing reveal that people from all walks of society supported the JWCTU’s comfort work. They did so because they considered the bags a logical expression of patriotism and a service that met the needs of the nation at war. This opinion extended into official circles and beyond the War Department. In formal recognition of the WCTU’s comfort bag work, the emperor bestowed

\textsuperscript{59}Ibid., 16-17; reprinted in Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., Hyakumenshi, 223-24.

\textsuperscript{60}Fujin shimpō, no. 100 (25 August 1905): 15-16.

\textsuperscript{61}Fujin shimpō, no. 92 (25 December 1904): 2-3.
three sets of silver bowls bearing the imperial seal on the national union as well as a silver cup on the Osaka branch.\textsuperscript{62} He also conferred a set of embossed bowls on Yajima herself.\textsuperscript{63}

Such public confirmation of the JWCTU’s wartime outreach lent the union legitimacy, garnered for it respect, and gave its officers the assurance they needed to use “Christian” publicly and without reserve as part of the union’s title. Attendees at the JWCTU’s 1897 convention had decided to rename the society the Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai [Japan Christian Woman’s Moral Reform Society] to identify their religious orientation after being prompted to do so by a male supporter. “Christian” did not, however, actually appear in \textit{Fujin shimpo} until the January 1900 issue and then only in a copy of the union’s rules, not within the text of editorials or reports.\textsuperscript{64} Five years later, Kozaki fittingly opened her defense of Bibles in comfort bags by identifying the JWCTU with “Christian” included.\textsuperscript{65} Her use of the word not only reflected the union's confidence of its place in Japanese society, but also heralded an intensified reliance on the magazine as an evangelizing tool.\textsuperscript{66}

That this sureness resulted from the JWCTU’s work during a national crisis deserves note. So does the content of the union’s wartime activism. During both the Sino-Japanese and

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\footnotetext[63]{\textit{Union Signal}, 8 November 1906, 6.}

\footnotetext[64]{\textit{Fujin shimpo}, no. 33 (25 January 1900): back cover; Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai, ed., \textit{Hyakumenshi}, 214.}

\footnotetext[65]{Kozaki, “Shussei gunjin imon no Seisho,” 1.}

\footnotetext[66]{For example, articles about Christmas became a regular feature of December issues.}
\end{footnotes}
Russo-Japanese Wars, WCTU members maintained their convictions and located within service to the state an opportunity to further their aims. At other times, they also demonstrated their loyalty to the emperor and empress in ways that promoted Christianity and their reform principles. Both of these facts are important for they suggest the need for revision of assumptions about the nature of native converts' wartime cooperation and reverence for the imperial family.
EPILOGUE

In 1986, almost three-quarters of a century after the death of Emperor Meiji, the JWCTU celebrated the centennial of organized WCTU activism in Japan. Both continuity and change characterized the intervening decades. The Taishō and early Shōwa periods had seen the society persist with its petition campaigns for monogamy and regulation of overseas prostitutes, agitate against the building of new brothel districts, and provide comfort and material relief to victims of natural disasters. Members had also continued outreach among youth, most notably by supporting a proposal to ban underage drinking, by holding additional medal contests, and by sending thousands of temperance posters and STI textbooks to elementary and middle schools throughout the country. Moreover, as mentioned in chapter six, they had added their voices to the chorus calling for world peace and arms limitation. In a departure, however, they had taken up suffrage as a cause and had joined forces with women’s rights advocates to demand the vote during the heyday of party government. As a result of these activities and efforts at organizational expansion, the JWCTU enjoyed spectacular growth in the inter-war years and, indeed, in 1939, boasted just over ninety-one hundred members in 186 branches.¹

Impending war with the United States and the government’s drives to mobilize the masses in support of that conflict subsequently brought about a great reversal in the union’s fortunes. The JWCTU was forced to cancel its annual meeting in the spring of 1941 and surrender its

organizational autonomy the next year when the state mandated that all Christian groups unite under one umbrella federation. Members also had to halt all communication with the WWCTU because their ties with this predominantly Anglo-American body drew their loyalty to Japan into question. Moreover, in 1944, paper shortages required the JWCTU to suspend publication of *Fujin shimpo*, and an Army requisition of office space deprived the union of its headquarters. These latter setbacks severely hampered the society’s ability to maintain contact with members and, together with lingering suspicions about the JWCTU as a foreign organization, contributed to a great decline in the union’s strength. In 1945, the same year that an American bombing raid destroyed the JWCTU’s headquarters and rescue home, the union counted only 326 members.\(^2\)

Just as swiftly as the JWCTU declined organizationally during the Pacific War, however, the union rebuilt itself after peace was restored. The society’s leaders almost immediately began to petition Occupation officials for abolition of licensed prostitution, to appeal for a ban on the production of sake because of rice shortages, to construct a new office building, and to resume publication of *Fujin shimpo*. They also restored ties with the WWCTU and, in 1968, hosted the world union’s convention in Tokyo. That gathering represented a turning point for the JWCTU. The society had first proposed Japan as a site for the WWCTU’s convention during the last decade of the Meiji period and had made the offer repeatedly in the succeeding years. The JWCTU, however, had long been considered on the WWCTU’s periphery. The decision to allow the Japanese union to host the 1968 meeting thus signaled

\(^2\)Ibid., 1014, 1032-33.
the society’s maturation in the eyes of WWCTU leaders and the union’s full acceptance into the world temperance movement.³

As significant a milestone was the JWCTU’s centennial anniversary in 1986. The union, then with just over three thousand members, commemorated the occasion on December 6 with a meeting and a congratulatory party at Tokyo’s Reinanzaka Church. Executives also published a memorial issue of Fujin shimpō and a one thousand-page history of the society, which included a chronological list of its major events. They compiled a pictorial history as well soon thereafter.⁴ In addition, on April 1, they opened an emergency center within the union’s headquarters known as HELP (House in Emergency of Love and Peace) Asian Women’s Shelter. This facility continues to operate today.

From its inception, this shelter has aimed to provide temporary housing to women from around Asia who have found themselves in trouble in Japan. This mission includes Japanese nationals, and, during the center’s first eleven years of operation, it accommodated just shy of eight hundred who sought refuge from abusive and unfaithful husbands, from divorce, rape, and homelessness, and from insecure futures as senior citizens. HELP’s focus, though, has been on women who have migrated to Japan with promises of well-paying employment as secretaries, waitresses, maids, cooks, babysitters, and entertainers, but have been forced into prostitution. Between 1986 and 1997, HELP sheltered over two thousand such women, the vast majority of whom were from Thailand and the Philippines. Typically, Asian women arrive at the center on the run and with neither money nor the travel documents required to

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³Ibid., 1034-61.

⁴Ibid., 1062.
return home. Their predicament has induced HELP's directors, caseworkers, and volunteers to expand the center's outreach beyond the provision of food and shelter to include financial aid, legal assistance, and intercession with immigration officials. Their stories have also led the JWCTU's executives to seek a more comprehensive solution to the sexual exploitation of female migrant workers in Japan. As one of their first efforts, they petitioned the Diet and the Tokyo Assembly in 1987 for revision of social welfare laws to strengthen protective mechanisms for women. They have also urged lawyers' associations in Japan and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to study Japan's immigration laws and to recommend to the government amendments that will guarantee migrant workers' basic human rights.

By no means do these activities represent the totality of the JWCTU's efforts to eliminate the sexual exploitation of Asian women. Indeed, the union has also played a very active role in campaigns to end sex tours by Japanese men to Southeast Asia. Moreover, individually and in cooperation with other member organizations of the Japan Anti-Prostitution Association, the JWCTU has actively petitioned the Japanese government to apologize and pay compensation to the thousands of women who were forcibly conscripted as sex slaves for the Imperial Army during World War II. The union's decision to take up these two issues

5Shizuko Ohshima and Carolyn Francis, Japan Through the Eyes of Women Migrant Workers (Tokyo: Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1989), vii, 3-179, 195-97. The statistics come from a table I received in 1998 from Takahashi Kikue, then the General Secretary of the Japan Anti-Prostitution Association and an active member of the JWCTU.


7Against Prostitution and Sexual Exploitation Activities in Japan (Tokyo: Japan Anti-Prostitution Association, 1997), 14-39; Japanese Women Supporting WWII Sexual
reflects its longstanding commitment to the eradication of prostitution, yet also highlights how members have accommodated their activities to address new problems associated with prostitution as they arise.

Such dedication to a particular reform goal and persistence in devising activities to deal with contemporary manifestations of the "evil" characterize the union’s recent temperance, anti-smoking, and peace work as well. For example, the proliferation of vending machines selling liquor and tobacco has prompted the JWCTU to repeatedly petition the Management and Coordination Agency, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and other ministries for their removal. The great number of beer and cigarette commercials on television has also led the union to submit numerous appeals to official agencies calling for their prohibition. Additionally, in 1993, the JWCTU wrote to the president of Disney Japan and asked him to ban the sale of alcohol within the theme park. With respect to the promotion of peace, the union has abandoned its just war position and joined the pacifist majority of Japan’s postwar peace movement. In that vein, members have supported Japan’s non-nuclear principles, agitated for the end of the 1991 Gulf War, and opposed government attempts to expand the participation of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces in the United Nations’ peace-keeping operations.8 The details of these particular activities and of the JWCTU’s organizational development after 1912 fall outside the purview of this dissertation. Even so briefly described, though, members’ recent efforts to abolish prostitution, drinking, and smoking and to promote peace clearly reveal the legacy of the Meiji-period WCTU.

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8Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai nempyō, 3-10.

Enslavement Victims (Tokyo: Japan Anti-Prostitution Association, 1993).
During its first twenty-five years, the society endeavored to reform public and private behavior in accord with the Puritan values that American Protestant and WWCTU missionaries espoused. Members believed that those same mores and their Christian faith were essential to Japan’s progress, and they undertook a variety of activities to effect what they considered to be positive change. They sponsored lectures to enlighten the public about the hazards of tobacco, distributed temperance tracts at the 1903 National Industrial Exposition in Osaka, and taught children to be kind to animals. They also operated a rescue home for prostitutes and destitute women, championed women’s right to sit in the gallery of the Diet’s Lower House, and decried the participation of geisha in state ceremonies. Agreement did not always exist among the union’s leaders, and the early days of the Tokyo WCTU in particular were fraught with ideological disagreements and personality conflicts. Such turmoil resulted in organizational division and a sharp decline in membership, problems that criticism of members’ public activism and intensified opposition to Christianity compounded. As swiftly as the union’s fortunes fell, though, they rebounded in the late 1890s, largely thanks to WWCTU missionary Clara Parrish’s efforts to strengthen the organizational structure of the society. In the remaining years of the Meiji period, the union continued to expand in terms of membership and activities, and it finally gained public legitimacy and official recognition through service during the Russo-Japanese War. Despite such development, the JWCTU remained small relative to other women’s organizations. Moreover, members won little in

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9 The JWCTU reported over thirty-six hundred members at its annual convention in 1911. In stark contrast, the Patriotic Women’s Association, founded in 1901, boasted a total membership in excess of eight hundred thousand that same year. *Fujin shimpō*, no. 169 (25 June 1911): 24; Garon, 122.

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the way of noticeable change among the general population. They persevered, however, and continued to try to shape government policy and to use the power of the state to achieve their goals. They did so because they firmly believed that they had a duty to make Japan more moral for the sake of “God, home, and country.”
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