

waste, for one koku will be required for food and the balance for seed. Such a method will make them industrious, sober and economical." Lord Okubo was delighted with the simple wisdom of Ninomiya and immediately set him to work.

For ten years Ninomiya worked for Lord Okubo, during which time he transformed not only the land from barren wastes to productive fields but the people from thriftless gamblers to industrious citizens. So successful was Ninomiya's methods that he had grain available in the time of famine. It is estimated that he was the means of relieving forty thousand persons.

Ninomiya became famous, men were attracted by his teachings and became his disciples. Many who were in financial difficulties sought his aid and thousands paid tribute to his kindness and help in the days of the famine distress.

After he had successfully carried out many commissions for members of the nobility, he was recognized by the Government and asked to undertake the supervision of a public work.

For a time he lived at Yedo, and there gathered about him disciples whom he taught daily. He met with much opposition, and his enemies, who were jealous of his power, threatened death and banishment to any who accepted his teachings. This opposition increased Ninomiya's earnestness, and the young men gathered around him. While in Yedo, he had a very interesting club of young men called the "Imo-Arai-Kwai," "Potato-Washing Bee." In this club the young men spoke freely of their mistakes and gave expression to their desires and aspirations after a better life. It was not unlike a Methodist class-meeting. The name of the club was derived from the Japanese custom of skinning new potatoes by stirring them in a tub with a stick.

While Ninomiya was at Sakuramachi he first gave his disciples the teaching of "Hotoku," and he became known as the "Hotoku" teacher. To-day through Japan these "Hotoku" Societies are very popular and their numbers are steadily increasing. The two outstanding principles of "Hotoku" are, first, to develop morality, and, second, to promote industry and economy. The rules of the society are very interesting, and provide for self-help, mutual helpfulness, and an obligation to serve others whether members of the society or not.

Many lessons may be learned from Ninomiya's teachings and sayings. The following are a few selections:—

"If you forget the blessings received from the past and think only of future blessing, you will certainly lose your joy."

"I also teach the importance of living well within one's means and of limiting one's expenses. I also teach that one's salary is a heavenly gift entrusted to one. With this income one must pay the demands of society, and if the income is insufficient, one must withdraw from society."

"We must be willing to sacrifice for the people, for our own country and for the world, and must pray that we may rescue even one man, one family, one village. This is the spirit of my whole life."

"The reason the country is not continuously prosperous is because each individual is seeking only his own interests. Rich men have no heart to save the world. They are avaricious and greedy, and regard not the blessings they receive from their country and from heaven. Poor men have the same spirit. Both neglect righteousness."

"Our income is the returning of what we give out."

"Our duty is to restore deserted places. Of these there are many kinds. Among these the waste and corruption of the mind is the greatest evil to the country. Waste of fields and mountains is secondary. Our duty is to cultivate all."

"If you wish to do great things, you must not despise the little things."

"A true gentleman does not think about living an easy life. His ideal is not merely to live and eat. He puts forth his efforts on good works, studies truth from men and experience."

"Praise the worthy and help the bad for five years and the village will be reformed."

"Wealth, if used for selfish purposes, is a source of misery; if used for the good of society, it will be a source of happiness."

"One man is a very small thing in a universe, but his sincerity can move heaven and earth."

"To slander another is not good even though the reviling word may be true."

"It is not wise to inform another of your own good qualities."

"Do not unnecessarily say things to displease people; such words are seeds of discord."

Kokoi Tomita analyzed Sontoku's teaching into four principles:

1. Its Foundation—Sincerity—even as God is sincere.

2. Its Principle—Industry—even as heaven and earth and all creation are ever at work without repose.

3. Its Body—Economy—to live simply and never exceed one's rightful means.

4. Its Use—Service—to give away all unnecessary possessions, material or money, in the service of heaven and mankind.

Every school-boy in Japan is familiar with Ninomiya's life. He is one of their heroes and is held up before them as an example of what a man can accomplish who is willing to sacrifice and give his life in the service of his fellow-men and of his country. Yearly pilgrimages are made to his tomb by Japanese students who gather to pay tribute to one of their greatest countrymen.

"It is not unnatural that Japanese scholars should compare Ninomiya with Christ. His unselfish devotion to human welfare is in complete accord with the spirit of Christ. To such an extent is this true that a follower of Ninomiya who really appreciates the spirit of the sage is prepared to appreciate the teachings of Jesus. But because of the prominence given to the economic, Ninomiya taught for a specific time and to meet definite conditions. His teachings are equally applicable to any time or place where similar economic conditions exist. Christ, on the other hand, made spiritual morality an end in itself. Like Ninomiya, He taught at a specific time, but He did not teach to meet conditions peculiar to His time. His problem was the moral and religious problem of man. Hence, though He was a Jew, His teachings apply equally to all human nature. He did not teach about the way or the moral; His presentation of truth was unique. He said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.'"

To such as Ninomiya and his followers, who are devout seekers after truth, it is our privilege, as followers of Christ, to make Him known that they may know the truth that shall make them free.

I am indebted to "Just Before the Dawn," by Rev. R. C. Armstrong, for the information contained in this article.

The book may be ordered from Rev. F. C. Stephenson, Methodist Mission Rooms, Toronto. Paper, 35 cents; cloth, 50 cents.

Hands and Character

You have a pretty face. Well, what if? You are not to be credited with it, are you? The bright eye, the fair skin, the pink cheek, the red lip, the even teeth, were not of your contriving, were they? No pride in all the world is quite so silly as pride in a pretty face. You have a right to be glad of it, to be sure; but concerned over it—how absurd!

It is a little different with the hands. They are more of your own creation than your face. They express your character far more than regularity of features and fineness of complexion.

We are thinking of people in the ordinary walks of life, people that cannot afford manicures. For such people to have white hands, with finger-tips daintily cared for, means something. It means thoughtfulness, and patience, and painstaking. It means a love of beauty and a sense of neatness and order. It means thoroughness, and a desire above all else and lovely through and through, and not merely in the face that all men see.

Hands that spend the day in useful work, that come in constant contact with the roughness of the world, and yet maintain their beauty, thereby testify to skill and practical wisdom and the artistic soul. Their owners would furnish the world something pleasant to look upon, and touch, and have to do with.

There is so much careless disregard of this matter that we sometimes think that ministers ought to preach about it. It is so common to see pretty, bright faces flashing through the world above hands that are actually repulsive with their neglect and lack of cleanliness. We believe that this is a discord most frequently to be found in men and women alike, and it is as annoying in one as in the other.

In all of this we are speaking literally, with a jealous regard for this most wonderful tool ever fashioned, this most expressive portion of the human frame; but also we are speaking in a figure.

For the hand may symbolize all those elements of human life that are within your own control, and yet are often scorned just because they are other elements more splendid to the eyes that are determined for us by causes outside our volition. We may not be rich, but we can always be generous. We may not be a genius, but we can always be faithful. We may not be witty, but we can always be kind. We may not be commanding, but we can always be helpful. We may not be learned, but we can become wise. The first of each couple is the face, the second is the hand.

Now let us have regard henceforth for what God has put within our power. Let us make the most of that.—Selected.

Change for Sun Worshipers

An American, whose business frequently takes him to London, tells of an amusing conversation between the driver and conductor of a public bus in that city.

The bus was fairly crowded, so the American climbed to the top, where, shortly after taking his seat, he observed a person in peculiar garb, with a red turban. There was a leaden sky overhead and a slow, drizzling rain, such weather as is the rule rather than the exception in the British metropolis.

As the conductor came to the top, the red turbaned person, evidently an Indian Parsee, got down.

"What sort of a chap is that?" asked the driver of the conductor.

"I fancy that 'e's one of them fellers that worships the sun."

"Worships the sun, eh?" repeated the driver with a shiver. "Then I suppose he comes over 'ere to 'ave a rest.'"—*Success Magazine*.