

I do my duty to everyone, why then am I in poverty? why do I have troubles of all kinds?" The difficulty in answering a question of this nature is that, as the question implies, the ordinary heathen, so far as I can judge, has no feeling of sin, no idea of what the nature of sin really is. The heathen have a moral code, fairly high it may be, and so long as a man keeps this, his conscience does not reproach him, and he is satisfied. To tell such an one that he is a sinner, which in his idea stands for *criminal*, is simply to enrage him, and send him away beyond any reach of future Christian influence. The first step, without making any personal application whatever, is to teach such an one the real nature of sin and evil, and then the effect of trouble and trial as a disciplining of the character. The next objection Yamamoto brought was a direct one against Christianity as being unpractical in its teaching, and he showed—which was remarkable—a sufficient acquaintance with the New Testament to be able to refer to the texts, "Take no thought for the morrow." "Labor not for the meat that perisheth." I find the very best way of answering objections of this kind is to take the Prayer Book, saying at the same time, "Now I am going to read to you what is taught to every child in my Church as his guide to life and conduct," and then I read over and explain the "duty to my neighbor," from the Church Catechism. This has always a striking effect with such objectors, for, of course with much else, the teaching appeals very strongly to Japanese feeling in the clauses which deal with the cardinal Japanese virtues of loyalty to the Emperor and obedience to parents. All objections against Christianity as unpractical are effectually disarmed. Though, alas! the mind may be well convinced and the heart remain untouched.

The next speaker was a poor fisherman named Omura. He was convinced, he said, of the excellency and truth of Christianity, and would like to make open profession and be baptized, but the difficulties were so great. Though a man of between thirty and forty years of age, he is bound, according to Japanese custom, to pay great deference to his elder brother, who is utterly opposed to the idea. "What," he says, "give up your temple for this foreign superstition! The temple on the register of which the names of our ancestors have been inscribed from time immemorial! Where we and our family have always worshipped! Forsake the priest who has performed so many ministrations for us!" These are all arguments that appeal with terrible force to one living in a little village community and with almost innate ideas of respect and reverence for the ties and obligations of family life. And I notice that in any of the smaller towns

the Christians are for the most part drawn from settlers there, and not from the original inhabitants of the place. The next objection, brought by some of Omura's friends, is one which will sound singular to Christian ears, "Very well," they say, "go on, become a Christian, and then see what will happen to you when you die!" The force of the appeal lies in this. The heathen dead are buried in the temple ground, and the surviving relations take great care of the grave. Visits are paid on stated days, year after year, and offerings of rice, and flowers, and incense, are made to the spirit of the departed. There are, as yet, no Christian burial-places in these little villages. In place of the trim well-kept temple ground, a solitary dishonored grave on some lonely hill-side is what awaits the Christian dead. In the Ito district there are three such graves in the neighborhood of villages, to which the catechist pays periodical visits, and keeps the graves neat and free from weeds.

Such are the conditions and circumstances of life under which it is necessary for the convert to break away from the ancient faith, and to realise them is to realise the difficulty of embracing Christianity in a country like Japan, which possesses a settled civilization and a comparatively high religion. And yet by God's mercy souls are found and led by His grace, who do for the sake of Christ break through all, and go out from home and kin in faith in the Unseen, exemplifying in themselves the words of their Saviour, brought up, indeed, to me in this very tour, as a difficulty by a heathen, "I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword."

And let me say, in conclusion, to any of my brethren who may read these words, and who are hesitating to obey a call they feel from God to give themselves to Him in the service of His Missions, that the Church of Christ has no happier or more blessed lot than that of him who is privileged to be God's instrument in leading these poor seeking hearts to the truth of Christ, and to assist in the travail of such a soul as that of which I have written, which is being led by God's Spirit from darkness and corruption into the light of everlasting life.—*S.P.G. Mission Field.*

THE "Old Hundredth" tune was known in England as early as 1561, when it appeared in the edition of Sternhold & Hopkins' Psalms of that year. From this time forth it was included in every edition of that work. It has been shown that most of the strains in the tune are taken from ancient hymn tunes of the early Church and had been sung by Christian voices not only a thousand years before Luther was born, but for centuries before the Papal system was developed.