

Museum of Antiquities
Edinburgh

4557

Oct. 22/88

Dear Sir,

I venture to write to you regarding your series of lectures on "Primitive Warfare", delivered before the United Service Institution, and to suggest for your consideration the advisableness of republishing them in a separate work

for the use of the rising
generation of anthropologists.

Through the kindness
of the Assistant Curator of
the Museum of Science and
Art I had the loan of
a set of the Journals con-
taining the lectures, and
they seemed to me well worth
 republication in book form.

Yours very truly

Geo. F. Black

P.S. I trust you will over-
look my forwardness in
writing to you.

Containing description of
Japanese Kakemono of
Heaven & Hell

71885

L552a

"St. Heliers,"

550

West Bank,

Stamford Hill, A.

Dear Sir

According to your wishes I
herewith beg to enclose you a few
descriptive remarks respecting your
picture, which information has
been gleaned by myself both from
the natives themselves abroad and
from several books I have from
time to time consulted written by
good authorities.

Any further information I can at
any time impart I shall be pleased
to give you if you will kindly
write or call and ask me.

For the present any letters addressed
to me at 160 New Bond St will be
sure to reach me at once.

I am dear Sir

Yours faithfully

John Sparks

Gen Pitt Rivers

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* Fine * Art * Publishers, *

160, NEW BOND STREET,

LONDON, W. Oct 22, 1888

TELEPHONE No. 3779.

Re. "Heaven & Hell."

The lower portion of picture (separated by the Golden Cloud, the cloud being used by Japanese Artists of that period instead of more formal lines to denote that the subjects on either side were a distinct or separate picture in themselves) represents the ordinary life of the Japanese on Earth.

The animal running in the foreground pierced by an arrow depicts a sport that was for many years practised in Japan; namely the hunting of dogs who were kept expressly for that purpose, the idea of thus depicting this pastime, is that

according to the rules and teachings of Buddhism, Cruelty to animals was one of the greatest of sins and anyone guilty of the crime received most condign punishment. In many instances the victim having to return to Earth after his death, in the form of the animal he tortured during his lifetime, and receiving tenfold the amount of pain he himself had inflicted.

The river on the right is supposed to represent the boundary twixt Life and Death, having crossed which the spirit of the departed one is led by the attendant priests (as shewn in the picture) before a Tribunal consisting of a number of Judges.

Over the head of the ~~Probationer~~ you will observe a species of canopy is borne, this is the ordinary covering for a dead body in the Japanese funerals and is given here by the artist to indicate that the figure over which it is being

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, 188

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carried is that of a person but very recently defunct.

On the left of the Tribunal is a hideous old hag who is apparently mutilating a victim, this is the Sodzu-gawa no Uba, or the Woman of the Three Paths whose avocation is to receive the earthly clothing from each new arrival and then according to the fiat of the Tribunal dispatch them on one of the Three Paths namely either to Nirvana (Paradise), Sijoku (Hell), or back again in some other form to Earth again.

In Hell itself are depicted the usual forms of punishment; amongst them may be noted the Liar + Slanderer

who is having his tongue torn out by the roots, The lustful sinner who is always seeing a gay courtesan close before him and yet when he rushes forward to seize upon her he falls and lacerates his body on the spikes that lay around.

The Unfaithful Women are being slowly drowned in a pool of blood (drawn from themselves during their lifetime, periodically).

The "Gaki", ~~are~~^{or} men who in life have been gluttonous, are here depicted as wretched starvelings craving for food which occasionally is tendered to them in tempting form by Demons, when immediately upon their placing it to their lips it turns into fire and burns their mouths etc.

The victim being held up by the hair of his head in the clutches of a large Demon is one who having

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denied his crime is being held up before the Magic Mirror whereupon he at once sees reflected, himself committing the crime he has just denied which in this instance was the setting fire to a Buddhist Temple.

The figure in the centre at whose feet children are seen, is one of the favourite deities or Saints of the Japanese, viz the god "Jizo" who is supposed to be ever on the watch to protect little children and who also at certain periods himself undergoes the tortures of Hell in order that those under sentence may be respited.

The other priestly figures surrounding the altar are Saints

residing in Purgatory and ^{who} are incessantly offering up prayers and penances, thus mitigating the severe sentences passed on the most unfortunate.

To the right of the whole picture is given a description of the hard wearisome journey made by the true Buddhist, together with the many devotions and purifications to be performed ere he can hope to reach "Nirvana" which is depicted on the Extreme Right by a representation of the Buddhist Trinity namely Buddha & his two sons surrounded by the Heavenly choir.

"Nirvana" being protected by a sea of a Dragons who prevent any one entering save through the medium of the Goddess of Mercy whose form may be seen at the very top of the High Mountains as if urging the Soiler to struggle on his upward path.