

of the power which a temporary majority possesses by having a hold on the administration.

The question is not without practical significance, and not being in the least disposed to suppress an opinion that might advocate a reform difficult of investigation or definite decision, we take pleasure in presenting Mrs. Parce's statement concerning the alleged shortcomings of the constitution.

EXORCISM AND SARDINE HEADS.

BY NORITAKE TSUDA.

THERE is an old religious custom in Japan still observed by some conservatives which consists in exposing a sardine's head together with a spray of hiiragi (*Osmanthus aquifolium*) at the



SARDINE'S HEAD AND HIIRAGI.

doors of the houses. The head is fastened on the end of a pointed beanstalk. An observer will note these strange adornments even in the streets of Tokyo for a short time following February 4. They

are exposed on that night every year, and are left until they fall away. The custom is connected with a popular ceremony called *Oniyarai* or *Tsuina* observed on February 4 at the Buddhist and Shinto temples to expel demons.

In the Buddhist temples the officiating priests celebrate by a service consisting of reading scriptures and so on. When they have finished this ceremony, the chief priest inaugurates a ritual known as the bean-strewing ritual. He cries "Luck in and demons out," and certain persons selected for the purpose follow him and, repeating the same cry, throw parched beans upon the multitude who are waiting for them.



ONIYARAI CEREMONY.

Held at a Shinto Temple in Tokyo on February 4, 1915.

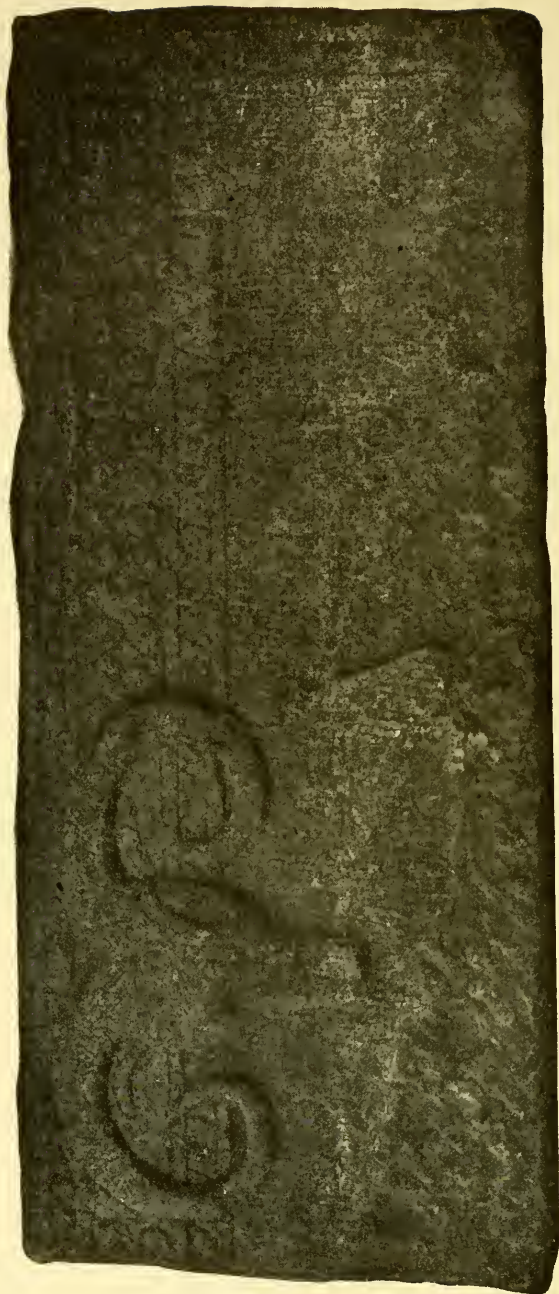
In the Shinto temples, persons disguised as demons (generally two in number) come out and the priest catechizes them. The demons, defeated in catechism, run away, whereupon the beans are thrown at them, or in some cases the demons instead are shot at with arrows by the priest, as seen in our illustration. On the same evening parched beans are also thrown in the homes, and the sardine's head and hiiragi spray are fastened at the doors as above explained.

The *Oniyarai*, or demon-dispelling ceremony, is very old in

Japan. The earliest extant record is that related in the *shokunihongi*, the imperial historical record compiled in the latter part of the eighth century, and it is mentioned that when the pestilence prevailed under the heavens and peasants died in great numbers in the last month of the year 706 A.D. oxen were modelled from terra-cotta and disease demons were exorcised at the imperial court for the purpose of suppressing the world-wide pestilence. The oxen were put at the gates of the court, according to other sources. According to the record found in the *Engishiki*, compiled early in the tenth century, the ceremony was to be performed by the officials of the imperial Yih and Yang institution; and the leader of the ceremony wore a mask with four yellow eyes and held a halberd in one hand and in the other a shield. When the ceremony was over the imperial prince and other high officials followed the leader in a procession to dispel the pseudo-demons from all the gates. The princes and nobles of the court carried bows of peach wood and reed arrows and leaned on peach sticks when they went forth to perform this duty. Since the principle of the Yin and Yang was indigenous in China, it is clear that the imperial Oniyarai ceremony was imported from there into Japan very early in her history. Further evidences as to the Chinese origin of this ceremony is to be found in the classics of the Chou dynasty.

It is not known, however, when the custom of exposing a sardine's head and a spray of hiiragi was first connected with the Oniyarai ceremony in Japan. The earliest instance known to us is a reference to the custom in a poem of the thirteenth century by Tameiye Fujiwara. But there was a similar custom of exposing a hiiragi spray, in another combination but for the same purpose, as early as the ninth century according to some contemporary records.

As to the meaning of the Oniyarai ceremonies, it will be understood that they were intended to exorcize demons of misfortune and disease before they should enter the house by using these symbols of terror, for the leaves of the hiiragi tree are thornset and the fish-head symbolizes the destruction of demons if they ever again pass through the door. This is a popular superstition in harmony with the Oniyarai ceremony. The same superstition can also be found in Sikhim: "The demons who produce disease, short of actual death, are called *ghshed* (pronounced *she*). These are exorcized by an elaborate ceremony in which a variety of images and offerings are made. And the officiating lama invoking his tutelary demon thereby assumes spiritually the dread guise of



HAN GRAVE SCULPTURE.

Found in Shangtung, China, and preserved in the Tokyo Imperial Museum, where Mr. Tsuda is employed as an "expert."

his favorite demon, and orders out the disease demon under the threat of being himself eaten up by the awful tutelary demon which now possesses the lama." (*The Gazetteer of Sikkim*. Issued by the Bengal Government secretariat in 1894, p. 375.)

We believe, however, that even preceding this superstition, there must have been a more primitive element of superstition connected with our fish-head, namely, animal sacrifice in the age of spiritism. By animal sacrifice we mean the superstition originally intended to appease the spirits of the evil demons. To justify this inference as to the origin of the fish-head superstition, we shall here introduce similar customs as held by foreign races.

When the late Prof. S. Tsuboi made his folk-lore research in Hokkaido, he discovered that the Ainu draws a picture with the blood of dogs on a beam when building a new home for the purpose of exorcism.

In ancient China a hen was killed on the first day of the new year and put at the door of the house. Or the dog's blood was smeared on the door beam; or the head of a ram was hung at the door—in each case for the purpose of exorcism. Such Chinese customs are recorded in the *Fung suh T'hung e* compiled in the Han period and furthermore are illustrated by some Han grave sculptures. One specimen is on view in the Tokyo Imperial Museum, and others are in the Berlin Museum and in private collections in China.

Lastly we would like to remind you of the records in the Old Testament. In the twelfth chapter of Exodus Jehovah's passover is recorded, in which it is mentioned that the blood of a lamb is taken and put on the two side-posts and on the lintel of the houses where it is to be eaten. Another record of animal sacrifice, the earliest extant, is found in Genesis iv. 3-4, in the case of Cain and Abel. Here it is mentioned that the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect; "so even in those early days in the history of the human race, the blood sacrifice, the oblation, and immolation of animals was deemed by the offerer more worthy of deity's acceptance than the fruits and flowers of the earth" (*Cyclopaedia of India*, Vol. III, p. 470).

The custom of animal sacrifice therefore originated in a primitive belief that the most precious thing should be offered, with the object of propitiating a wrathful being. Tiele also published the same idea of human sacrifice. He says: "They could not, however, have survived but for the fact that men honestly thought that the

deity was above the law, that he could require from his worshiper everything that really belonged to him; and that, in order to propitiate him, they must not hesitate to sacrifice to him their dearest possessions, the lives of their children and the chastity of their daughters." But we should say that human sacrifice developed from animal sacrifice.

Our inference may furthermore be affirmed by other exorcismal superstitions in Japan. During an epidemic some people paste on the entrance to their houses a piece of red paper a foot square, on which are written three Chinese ideographs of the word "horse." This custom was pretty wide-spread in Old Japan, and is still seen in some districts. There was a tradition that the deity of epidemics comes round on horseback and therefore we can see that the word "horse" is intended to signify the horses offered to the deity and red paper the blood sacrifice, though the people who observe this custom to-day do not know of any such meaning. An illustration of this phase of superstition is to be found in an imperial festival which has been observed ever since the eighth century.

This festival was called *Michi-aye-no-matsuri* (literally, "a feasting ceremony on the road"). It was celebrated outside the capital on the roads leading to its four gates, being intended as a peaceful defense against the intrusion of the epidemic deity into the capital. The feasting was thought to propitiate the deity.

Some days ago, while passing through a street in a suburb of Tokyo, I saw a square of paper on which were printed two small palms in black ink. This is a similar superstition intended to rid the house of disease.

It was also a very wide-spread superstition up to half a century ago that the deity of smallpox was propitiated with red offerings and utensils red in color or decorated with red paper.

Some votive relics from the Japanese prehistoric ages are likewise colored red. For example, some neolithic terra-cotta potteries have been found by Japanese archeologists who say they are clearly votive pottery. Some stone coffins are also smeared with red on the outside; they are excavated from Japanese dolmens built by the ancestors of the present Yamato race.

There is no need of enumerating other superstitions connected with the color red. But it may be instructive to mention some similar superstitions in other countries.

In Sikhim the *Zhi-dak* demons of monasteries and temples are always red demons, who usually are the spirits of diseased novices

or ill-natured lamas, and they are especially worshiped with bloody sacrifices and red-colored substances:

“Rowan tree and red threid,
Gars the witches tyne their speid.”

—*The Gazetteer of Sekhim*, p. 356.

Large stones in their natural position hold a high place among the sacred objects of the New Hebrides. Sometimes in the island Aurora a stone is smeared with new earth; in Pentecost and Lepers' Island a stone is anointed with the juice of a young coconut (Codrington, *Melanesian Anthropology and Folk-lore*, p. 183).

About American Indians, Mr. James W. Lynd says: “In the worship of their deities paint (with the Dakotas) forms an important feature. Scarlet or red is the religious color for sacrifice, while blue is used by women in many of the ceremonies in which they participate. The down of the female swan is colored scarlet and forms a necessary part of sacrifices” (C. Mallery, “Picture-writing of the American Indians” in *Annual Report of Bureau of Ethnology*, 1888-89).

As to stone axes found in Italy, Mr. Angelo Mosso says: “Among the votive axes which were in use in the stone age I present three stone axes found in Apulia. All these three axes are colored red by means of ferrous ochre, which adhere tenaciously to the surface; for this reason we must regard them as votive axes. In the tomb of Sgurgola were two arrows colored red with cinnabar” (*Dawn of Mediterranean Civilization*, p. 134).

Taking into consideration all the facts we have mentioned, we may safely conclude that the use of the fish-head in Japan is a survival of primitive animal sacrifice, as we inferred at the start, and thus we may realize how long religious cults continue after their original significance is lost, even though different meanings are assigned to them to meet the altered requirements of the time.

SLAV AND GOTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE *Dziennik Chicagoski*, the Polish Daily News of Chicago, has devoted to the June number of *The Open Court* an editorial review in its issue of June 11, 1917, which while recognizing our sympathy with Poland condemns our attitude as being too favorable for Germany. The author of this extensive review even goes