

Superiority of Chinese over English Law

**The one is mellifluous and fatherly; the other,
dry, commaless, incomprehensible legal twaddle.**



First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. IX, No. 50, October 1891, p. 124.
Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (FROGS AND CHINAMEN) XIII pp. 220-21.

Open your ears, ye kind, praiseworthy Societies for the protection of animal life and welfare; you shall not be put to the blush by the “heathen Chinese.” And you, ye reckless and improvident gardeners and nurserymen, by remaining blind to the yeoman services rendered you by the insectivorous toads and frogs, and allowing your sons and heirs to institute periodically crusades against these interesting batrachians, you show yourselves far below your Brethren, the Celestials, on both the intellectual and moral planes — not to mention the art of scientific gardening. In China where the usefulness of frogs in the fields and in gardens, both floral and vegetable, is a thing recognized ages ago, these interesting amphibians are under the protection of law. To remind the population of this fact, governmental orders are occasionally issued and distributed, in which the destruction of frogs is threatened with heavy penalty. Finding in the *Garden Messenger* one of such *Ukases*, [arbitrary edicts] we reproduce it. The prose poetry of the redaction of this official document — fathered upon Ning-Po Governor of some unpronounceable province, is very remarkable. In this again we are compelled to award the palm of superiority to the Chinese, over the English legal documents. Not for one moment would we think of comparing the dry, commaless, and incomprehensible legal twaddle of the British or any other European lawyer to the mellifluous and fatherly expostulation of the philobatrachian Ning-Po. Here it is:

Our fields and gardens are inhabited by frogs. Though but diminutive creatures, they are, nevertheless, not unlike human beings in their external form, and even in the moral nature. Thus, they preserve during the course of their life, a strong attachment to the land of their birth, while during the weariness of the dark nights, they gratify your hearing with their melodious vocalizations. Moreover, they preserve your future crops, by devouring grasshoppers, and are, thereby, entitled to your gratitude. Wherefore, then, should you emerge on dark nights from your abodes with lanterns and murderous weapons, in order to catch these useful and innocent beings? Most undeniably, when boiled with rice and spices, they offer a delicate dish. But why flay them previously alive? This is cruel and sinful. Henceforth this custom is forbidden by the law, and it becomes illegal from this date, to either sell or buy frogs, under the threat of severe penalty.

How beneficent it might be for the animal kind, were the Western vivisectors, the children of our heartless modern civilization, to be sent from time to time to the Chinese province under the sway of the benevolent and poetic Governor Ning-Po! Should not Europe and America — England especially — extend their protecting hand to annex this Eden of the frogs; to make it triply Edenic through the additional blessing of Christian civilization, with its — vivisection, lynching, rum, and fraternal feeling for “inferior” races?

