

**YÜ YEN TZU ÊRH CHI. A PROGRESSIVE
COURSE DESIGNED TO ASSIST THE
STUDENT OF COLLOQUIAL
CHINESE AS SPOKEN IN THE CAPITAL
AND THE METROPOLITAN DEPARTMENT,
IN TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Yü Yen Tzu Êrh Chi. A Progressive Course Designed to Assist the Student of Colloquial Chinese as Spoken in the Capital and the Metropolitan Department, in Two Volumes, Vol. I by Thomas Francis Wade & Walter Caine Hiller

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THOMAS FRANCIS WADE & WALTER CAINE HILLER

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(YÜ YEN TZŪ ÊRH CHI).

A

PROGRESSIVE COURSE

DESIGNED TO ASSIST THE STUDENT OF

COLLOQUIAL CHINESE

AS SPOKEN IN THE CAPITAL AND THE METROPOLITAN DEPARTMENT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

THIRD EDITION. (ABRIDGED.)

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VOL. I.



SHANGHAI—HONGKONG—YOKOHAMA—SINGAPORE
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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE TO THIRD (ABRIDGED) EDITION.

In producing the present reprint of Sir Thomas Wade's great work in an abridged form, the Publishers have acted upon advice which was approved by Sir Walter Hillier—the joint Author of the 2nd edition published in 1886—and also with the sanction of Sir Thomas Wade's executors.

Since 1886 so many new text-books on Colloquial Chinese have appeared, that much of the "Tzū Ērh Chi" has been superseded in the curriculum of studies prescribed for Student Interpreters in the British Legation. The "Hundred Lessons" and "Graduate's Wooing" have been abandoned for many years in favour of other works, and as the "Tzū Ērh Chi" was primarily intended for the use of Consular Students it was decided—for the time being at least—to reprint only those Parts which have continued to hold their own as a text-book.

The present reprint contains therefore only Parts I. to IV., that is to say, the introductory Parts on Pronunciation and the Radicals, followed by the Forty Exercises and Ten Dialogues. In the opinion of competent authorities the student of Colloquial Pekingese has in these four Parts an introduction to the language which will not fail to appear to him more and more valuable as he progresses. The collection of characters to which he is introduced has been so carefully made, that a sound knowledge of them will furnish a solid foundation upon which further studies of the language can securely rest.

So much has been said and written for and against Sir Thomas Wade's system of transliteration that we will here add no more to this perennial argument than a request to the tyro: and that is, to remember that it is the only system of romanisation which has so far attained any widespread and lasting success.

As was explained in the Preface to the original edition, the title "Yü Yen Tzū Ērh Chi" was suggested by a passage in the Confucian work known as "The Doctrine of the Mean," which implies that in the attainment of proficiency—as in the accomplishment of a journey—the start must be made from what is near. "Tzū Ērh" means "from what is near" while Yü Yen . . . chi means "expressions (or spoken words) . . . collection (or compilation)". The whole is therefore fairly rendered in the English title as a "Progressive Course in Colloquial Chinese."

SHANGHAI,

April 1903

PART I.

PRONUNCIATION.

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1. In order to attain correctness of pronunciation in Chinese, three conditions must be satisfied; there must be accuracy of Sound, of Tone, and of Rhythm.

Of these three conditions, accuracy of sound, as considered with reference to the expression of it, syllabically or alphabetically, is the least important. We run less chance of being misunderstood if we say *lan* for *nan*, for instance, provided that we preserve the correct tone, than if we were to say *nan*² when we should have said *nan*¹.

Still, we must have a distinct idea of the syllable we are to pronounce, and as Chinese furnishes, in comparison with our alphabets, nothing but the most imperfect aid to the end in view, we are forced to supply the deficiency by combinations of our own alphabetic symbols sometimes at the rate of their prescriptive values, sometimes reinforcing them by diacritic marks, or arbitrarily constraining them to do a duty for which there is little precedent.

2. **Sound.**—The values assigned to the letters of the alphabet employed in the spelling of the syllables given below are here considered independently of *tone*; but the syllable has been spelt generally in the form that appeared to approach nearest to an adequate representation of the spoken *sound*, and at the same time to admit, without change of the letters composing it, of an application to it of the inflections proper to a change of *tone*.

Vowels and Diphthongal Sounds.

- a. The *a* in *father*; when pronounced singly, in particular after words terminating in vowel-sounds, slightly nasalised, as though preceded by 'ng.
- ai. Nearly our sound *aye*, but better represented by the Italian *ai*, in *háí*, *amái*.
- ao. The Italian *ao* in *Aosta*, *Aorno*; but not infrequently inclining to *á-oo*, the Italian *au* in *cuato*.
- e. In *eh*, *ei*, as in *yet*, *lens*.
- ei. Nearly *ey* in *grey*, *whay*, but with greater distinctness of the vowels, as in the Italian *lei*, *contei*.
- é. Nearest approached in English by the vowel-sound in *earth*, in *perch*, or in any word where *e* is followed by *r*, and a consonant not *r*; as in *lurk*. Singly, or as an initial, it has the nasal prefix 'ng stronger than the syllable *a*.
- éi. The foregoing *é* followed enclitically by *y*. Strike out the *n* from the word *money*, and you have the syllable *méi*. If the syllable *néi* exist at all (which some Chinese, who pronounce it *nui*, dispute), the *éi* is most apparent in *néi*.
- érh. The *urr*, in *burr*, *purr*.
- i. As a single syllable, or as a final, the vowel-sound in *ease*, *tree*; in *ih*, *in*, *ing*, shortened as in *chick*, *chin*, *thing*.

- ia. With the vowels distinct; not *ya*, but as in the Italian *piazza*, *Maria*. In some syllables terminating in *ia*, *iang*, *iao*, the *ia* is in certain tones almost *éa* or *eyah*. This is oftener observable where the initial is *l*, *m*, or *n*; but even with these the usage is capricious.
- iai. The *iaj* in the Italian *vecchiaja*.
- iao. The vowels as in *ia* and *ao*, with the terminal peculiarity of the latter. This sound is also modified by the *tone*.
- ie. With the vowels distinct, as in the Italian *siesta*, *niente*. The *i* is modified, as in the case of *ia*, under similar circumstances; that is, in certain tones *ie* inclines to become *éé*, or *eyeh*, often making *lien*, *nien* almost *leyen*, *neyen*.
- io. Shorter than the Italian *io*; more nearly the French *io* in *pioche*.
- iu. As a final, nearly *eyew* or *eeoo*, at all times longer than our *ew*. Thus *chiu* is not *chew*, but rather *chyew*, and the tone may make the vowel sounds even more distinct. In the syllables *liu*, *niu*, the *i* is affected as in *ia*, *ie*; they become almost *leyew*, *neyew*. In *chiung*, *hsiung* (the only syllables ending in consonants into which I have introduced *iu*), it must be admitted that in most instances, though not in all, the *iung* is rather *eyōng* than *eyoong*, the *ō* representing *o* in *roll*.
- o. Something between the vowel-sound in *awe*, *paw*, and that in *roll*, *toll*. When single, it commences with a slight consonantal sound, part nasal and guttural, which the 'ng inadequately expresses, and is inflected at the close as if an *a* or *ah* were appended to it. The tones seriously modify this syllable. As a final the power of the vowel remains the same, with the same terminal inflection, and not altogether divested of the guttural peculiarity which it is not within the compass of our alphabet to reproduce. Let the reader, as an experiment, try to pronounce *lo* as *law*, prolonging the *aw* in his throat.
- ou. In reality *éō*; the vowel-sounds in *burrow* when all the consonants are withdrawn; in English, nearest the *ou* in *round*, *loud*.
- ü. When uttered alone, as it is at times for *yü*, or when a final, nearest the vowel-sound in the French *éü*, *tu*. In *ün* it is not so long as in the French *une*; but nearer the *ün* in the German *München*.
- üa. Occurs only in the final *üan*, which in some tones is *üen*; the *ü* as above, but the *a* much flatter than in the final *an*; nearer the *an* in *antic*.
- üe. The *ü* as above, the *e* as in *eh*; the vowel-sounds in the French *tu es* represent this combination perfectly.
- üo. A disputed sound, used, if at all, interchangeably with *io* in certain syllables.
- u. When single (as at times instead of *wu*), and when a final, the *oo* in *too*; in *wn* and *ung* it is shorter, as in the Italian *punto*, *lungo*. In the latter final it vacillates between *ung* and *ōng*, being nasalised at the close so as to produce a sound between the French *long* and *longue*.
- ua. As we pronounce it in *Juan*; nearly *ooa*, which in many instances contracts to *ua*. In the final *uan*, *uang* it is also sometimes *éa* or *od*, as the tones may rule.
- uai. As in the Italian *guai*; the above sound *ua*, with the *i* in *ai* appended to it; the *u* subject to the same changes as in *ua*.

- uei.* The *u* as in *ua, uai*, often in value *w*; the *ei* as in *ei* final; the vowel-sounds in the French *jouer* answer fairly to *uei*.
- ue.* The *u* as in *ua*; the *é* as explained before. It is found only in the final *uén*, which sounds as if written *ú-ún*, frequently *uén* or *wun*. It is in many cases difficult to distinguish *uén* from *un*; for instance, *kun* from *kuén*.
- ui.* The *u* as above, followed enclitically by *i*, as if *oo-y*; the vowel-sounds in *screw-y*; more, enclitic than in the French *Louis* or the Italian *lui*. It is in some tones *ui*.
- uo.* The *u* as above, the *o* as in *lone*; the Italian *uo* in *fuori*; often *wo*, and, at times, nearly *oo*.
- ú.* Between the *i* in *bit* and the *u* in *shut*; only found with the initials *ss, ts, tz'*, which it follows from the throat, almost as if the speaker were guilty of a slight eructation. We have no vowel-sound that fairly represents it.

Consonantal Sounds.

- ch.* Before any of the above finals except *ih*, simply as in *chair, chip*; before *ih* it is softened to *dj*; *chik* being in many cases pronounced *djih*.
- ch'.* A strong breathing intervening between the initial *ch* and the vowel-sound, but without reduplicating the latter. Drop the first vowel in *cháhá*, or the italicised letters in *much-harm*, and the *ch-ha* remaining will give a fair idea of the syllable *ch'a*. This may also be obtained if we contrast the smooth syllable *cha* with *tcha*, the breathing becoming apparent in the greater effort needed to utter the latter syllable. The *ch'* does sometimes soften like the unaspirated *ch* before *ih*, but much more rarely.
- f.* As in *farm*.
- h.* As the *ch* in the Scotch *loch*; the *ch* of the Welch and Gaelic.
- hs.* A slight aspirate preceding and modifying the sibilant, which is, however, the stronger of the two consonants. To pronounce *hsing* let the reader try to drop the first *s* in *hissing*. He will exaggerate both the aspirate and the sibilant, but the experiment will give him a clear idea of the process. The aspiration is effected by closing the middle of the tongue upon the back of the palate before the tip of the tongue is raised for the sibilation. It differs from *sh*, although this difference is less observable before the diphthongs *ia, ie*.
- j.* Most nearly the French *j* in *jaune*; our *s* in *fusion*, or *z* in *brazier*, are the nearest imitation of which our alphabet admits. Some foreigners read *j* as *r*, but this I hold to be entirely wrong.
- k.* As *c* in *car*, *k* in *king*; but when following other sounds, often softened to *g* in *go, gate*. In the word *ko*, for instance, the Numerative proper to many nouns, when this is preceded by *na*, that, or *ohé*, this, the *k* is softened, the two syllables being pronounced almost *nago, chégo*.
- k'.* The aspirate as in *ch'*. Drop the italicised letters in *kick-hard* and you will have *k'a*; in *kick-her*, and you have *k'é*.
- l.* As in English.
- m.* As in English.

- n. As in English.
- ng. A consonantal sound of partly nasal and partly guttural influence upon the vowels it precedes. To produce *nga*, take the italicised consonants in the French *mon galant*; for *ngai*, in *mon gaillard*; for *ngo*, in *son gosier*. It is never so evident in a syllable pronounced by itself as when following another syllable that terminates in a vowel or in *n*.
- p. As in English.
- p'. The aspirate as in *ch'*, *k'*. Observe the manner in which an Irishman pronounces *party*, *parliament*; or drop the italicised letters in *slap-harv*, and you will retain *p'a*.
- s. As in English.
- sh. As in English.
- ss. *ssŭ* is the only syllable in which this initial is found. The object of employing *ss* is to fix attention on the peculiar vowel sound *ŭ*, which, as stated above, it is so hard to reproduce.
- t. As in English.
- t'. As in *k'*, *p'*, etc. Observe an Irishman's pronunciation of *t* in *terror*, *torment*; or drop the italics in *hit-harv*, and you have *t'a*.
- ts. As in *jetsam*, *catsup*; after another word, often softened to *ds* in *gladsome*.
- ts'. The aspirate intervening as in *ch* and other initials. Let the reader drop the italicised letters in *bets-harv*, and he will retain *ts'a*.
- tz. Is employed to mark the peculiarity of the final *ŭ*, but is hardly of greater power than *ts*.
- tz'. Like *ts'* above. This and the preceding initial are, like *ss*, only used before the *ŭ*.
- w. As in English, but very faint before *u*, if indeed it exist at all.
- y. As in English, but very faint before *i* or *u*.

In the final *ao* I have followed the Manchu spelling, against MORRISON and WILLIAMS, who write *au*, *äu*. This, as I have admitted, is the approximate sound in certain tones.

The final *ch*, used only in *yeh*, may seem unnecessarily separated from *ieh*. In my opinion the consonant *y* is sufficiently plain to authorise it, and the tone-inflection is not less practicable in the syllable *yeh* than in *ieh*. So with the final *ên*.

In the final *é* some confusion with *o* is unavoidable. I have endeavoured to guide myself by the Manchu, but find that although native teachers consign them to different finals, it is next to impossible in many words to say whether *é* (or *ngé*), *ché*, *jé*, *ké*, *mé*, *lé*, or *o*, *cho*, *jo*, *ko*, *lo*, *mo*, *lo*, be the correct orthography. The same is true with the aspirated *oh*, *k*, *t*; but I think that after the aspirate, in general, the *o* prevails, also that while none of these syllables, sometimes sounded as ending in *é*, is exempt from the changes to *o*, there are many in *o* which never change to *é*. It will be found that some natives incline more to the one and some more to the other.

The final *éi* is of doubtful existence even in *néi*, which certainly ends in a sound somewhat different from the terminal of *lei*, *mei*. These have taken the place of *lui*, *mui*, the old orthography of the Mandarin as spoken in the South.

The finals *ên* and *êng* were originally substituted for *wn* and *ung* in syllables beginning with *f*, *m*, *p*, after the latest native works published at Canton to teach the Cantonese to talk