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“All the aids which a beginner needs”: James Summers’ (1828-1891) research on Chinese grammar

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Chapter 3. An introduction to Summers' works concerning China and its language

During his lifetime, Summers published many books and edited several journals. Below follows a list of his publications concerning the Chinese language and China in chronological order, which will be followed by an introduction to each item:

1853a: *Lecture on the Chinese Language and Literature Delivered in King's College London, April 13, 1853*

1853b: *The Gospel of Saint John in the Chinese Language, according to the Dialect of Shanghai, Expressed in the Roman Alphabetic Character with an Explanatory Introduction and Vocabulary*⁷⁶

1862: *The Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed* (in the dialect of Canton)

1863: *A Handbook of the Chinese Language. Part I and II, Grammar and Chrestomathy, Prepared with a View to Initiate the Student of Chinese in the Rudiments of This Language, and to Supply Materials for His Early Studies*

1863–1865: *Chinese and Japanese Repository of Facts and Events in Science, History and Art, Relating to Eastern Asia*

1864: *The Rudiments of the Chinese Language, with Dialogues, Exercises, and a Vocabulary*

1866–1870: *Flying Dragon Reporter*

1868: *Notes for English Outline Vocabulary*

1870–1873: *The Phoenix, a Monthly Magazine for China, Japan & Eastern Asia*

1872: *Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese, Japanese and Manchu Books in the Library of the India Office*

1884b: *On Chinese Lexicography, with Proposals for a New Arrangement of the Characters of That Language*

These are not all the works that Summers published. For example, Summers also wrote books and articles about Japan and the Japanese language. However, they are not relevant to the topic of this dissertation.⁷⁷ In what follows, I will briefly introduce each of the works listed above.

⁷⁶ The *Lecture on the Chinese Language and Literature* was published before *The Gospel of Saint John in the Chinese Language* though in the same year, since in the Preface of the latter, Summers asks his readers to refer to the former book (1853b, p. a).

⁷⁷ In one of his essays, Summers clarifies that Chinese and Japanese are totally different languages, without a lot of explanation (1873b, p. 2).

3.1 Lecture on the Chinese Language and Literature⁷⁸

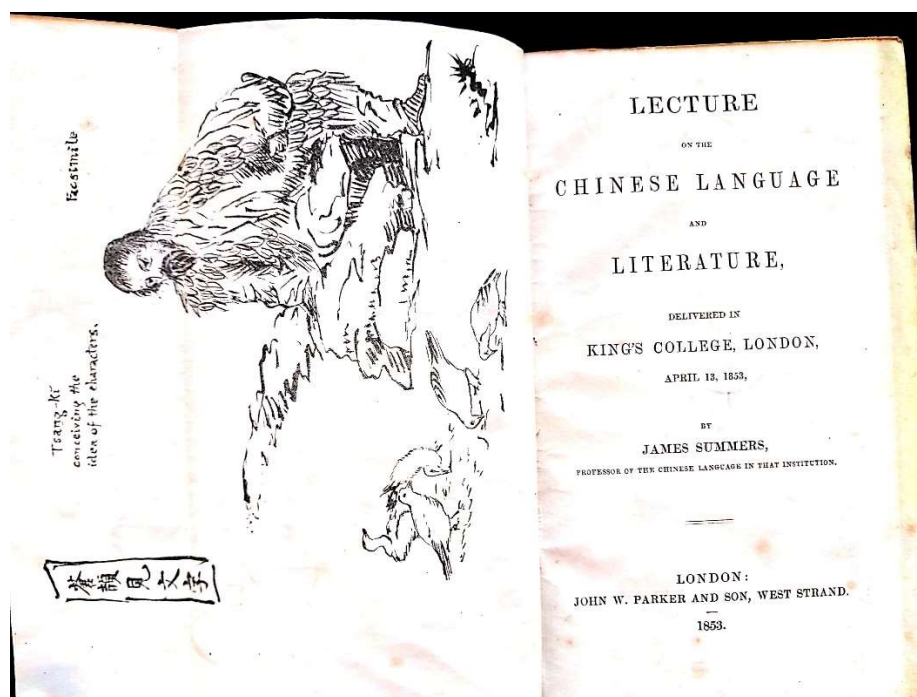


Figure 2: Title page of *Lecture*⁷⁹

Summers had to deliver an inaugural lecture four months after assuming the post of professor of Chinese literature at King's College London on 13 April 1853 (1853a, title page, see Figure 2). The topic was Chinese language and literature, and the speech was published in a small booklet of thirty-six pages, attached with seven plates about hand-written Chinese characters.

Summers started the lecture with a general introduction to human language that hinted at the special status of Chinese. His main focus was on Chinese characters and phonetics. He mentioned the grammar in a few short paragraphs, including morphology, classifiers, the essential criteria of classifying the words, and the importance of function words in Chinese. The second part of his lecture was on Chinese literature and the four traditional categories of Chinese works: *jīng* 經 'classical writings', *shǐ* 史 'historical writings', *zǐ* 子 'professional writings' and *jí* 集 'miscellanies'. Most of his assessments of the Chinese language and culture are rather superficial in this work. One reason is that his audience knew very little about this unfamiliar language and culture. Therefore, he could not discuss these topics in depth, and his purpose was only "to elucidate generally, and solicit attention to, the language and literature of China" (Summers 1853a, p. 10).

⁷⁸ Hereafter: *Lecture*.

⁷⁹ Leiden University Libraries SINOL. 15.200.14 (ESB).

3.2 *The Gospel of Saint John in the Chinese Language*⁸⁰

This book is one of the earliest translations of *The Gospel of Saint John* into Shanghainese. Summers wrote it not in Chinese characters but in the Roman alphabet. He mentioned several reasons for this decision. Firstly, Roman transcriptions will help the missionaries, who are not fluent in Shanghainese (1853b, Preface, p. v), and who, of course, have hardly any knowledge of Chinese characters. For those who only want to learn Shanghainese, this book can serve as an elementary guidebook in Summers' mind. Secondly, because the overwhelming majority of the Chinese population during those days was still illiterate (1853b, Preface, p. iv), a book with phonetic notations can help them to read the *Gospels* in their own language by themselves. From this final explanation, it becomes clear that Summers hoped to provide the foundation upon which a community with more native pastors and followers would grow. Therefore, in Summers' view, using the Roman alphabet to record Chinese topolects had great practicability.⁸¹

Gospel has three parts. The first part consists of a preface and a brief introduction to Summers' own orthography (1853b, Introduction, p. ii). Despite the fact that the book focuses on phonology, Summers also provided some grammatical advice. He described some word formation rules, for example "the repetition of the same syllable" (1853b, p. vii) and briefly introduced nouns, verbs, pronouns, numerals, particles, prepositions, and conjunctions. His analysis of the grammar remains superficial throughout this work.

The main concern of *Gospel* is the translation itself in the second part: twenty-one chapters with the title *Good News from Saint John*. It is followed by a list of the major vocabulary used in the first two chapters as the third part.

3.3 *The Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed*

Summers mentioned that he translated *The Lord's Prayer* and the *Apostles' Creed* into Cantonese to preach the Christian religion to coolies in Guyana (Summers 1863d, p. 115). The two texts were published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in 1862. I have not been able to find this particular publication. However, Summers has included these two pieces of works in his *Chinese and Japanese Repository* (1863d, pp. 115–116). They are in

⁸⁰ Kuiper claimed that Summers used the translation of parts of the *New Testament* as textbooks (2017, p. 162). *Gospel* could therefore be that which was used, but I did not find further support for this claim. Schott mentioned that he learned about Shanghainese from Summers' *Gospel* (Schott 1857, p. 3).

⁸¹ For more about the orthographic system used by Summers, see Chapter 10.

Roman letters with notations of the tones but without any characters or grammatical explanation.

3.4 *A Handbook of the Chinese Language*⁸²

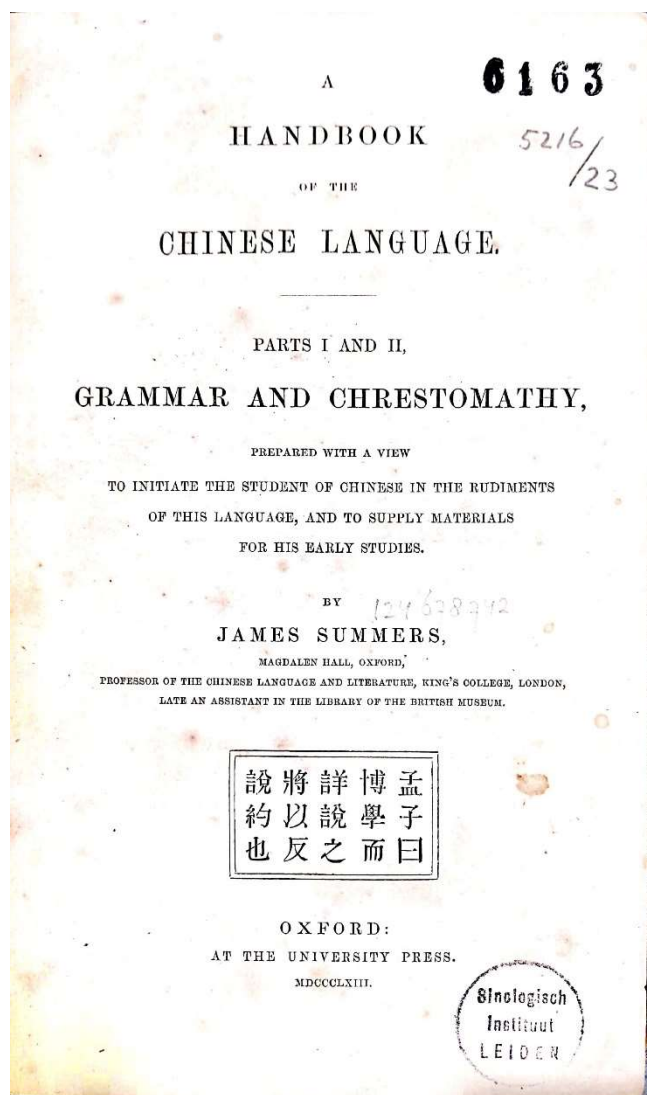


Figure 3: Title page of *Handbook*⁸³

Handbook served as a textbook for beginning Mandarin learners at King's College London (Summers 1863a, p. v, Part II, p. 20). The preparation of publishing this book had already started before February 1858 (Summers, 13 February 1858). John Francis Davis (1795–1890), the second Governor of Hong Kong, even read part of it in 1861 (Summers, 13 April 1861), and he regarded it as “one of the most useful [textbooks] to students” (Davis 1865, p. 60). It

⁸² When citing from this work, the marked pages are all from Part I of the book, unless otherwise indicated (e.g., “Part II, p. 20”).

⁸³ Leiden University Libraries 3 8691 G 16.

was also the first textbook for learning Chinese published in Britain (Summers 1863a, p. xv; Davis 1865, p. 60).⁸⁴

There are two quotations on the flyleaves of *Handbook*. The first is by the German linguist Becker: “linguistics does actually not teach people how they should speak but only how people speak [...]”.⁸⁵ The second one is by Chinese philosopher Mencius (327 BC–289 BC): “[s]tudy things profoundly, and investigate the precise meaning of what you learn, and then you will acquire the means of forming a comprehensive system of principles (博學而詳說之，將以反說約也)” (Lílóuzhāngjù Xià, *Mencius* 《孟子·離婁章句下》, see Figure 3).⁸⁶ Both quotations are about studying. The first one is about language and language teaching, which thus reflects the content of the *Handbook*. The quotation reveals that for Summers, linguistic research should be descriptive instead of prescriptive. The target of his *Handbook* is therefore to present the rules of Chinese and to describe them accurately. The second quotation from *Mencius* points to the methodology of study, which reflects that Summers’ intention was to write a detailed book to help students learn as many aspects of the Chinese language as possible within a carefully developed system of rules and principles. By presenting these two quotations, Summers also shows his attempt to integrate Chinese educational thoughts with western linguistic methodology in his *Handbook*.⁸⁷

The full title of this book is *A Handbook of the Chinese Language. Part I and II, Grammar and Chrestomathy, Prepared with a View to Initiate the Student of Chinese in the Rudiments of This Language, and to Supply Materials for His Early Studies* (see Figure 3). “Part III”, the exercises, and “Part IV”, the dictionary, were never published.⁸⁸

In the preface of *Handbook*, Summers commented on various sinological works. As a professor of Chinese, he had a good grasp of the literature. Summers argued that none of them were suitable for beginners to solve the most elementary problems, for example, how to write

⁸⁴ However, Summers’ *Handbook* is not a standard textbook in the vein of, for example, Edkins’ *Progressive Lessons in the Chinese Spoken Language* (1862, cf. Appendix 1) but, rather, a pedagogical grammar. Although *Progressive Lessons* has a lot of vocabulary and illustrated sentences arranged under themed topics, it only includes a few instructions, therefore leaving the teaching of grammar to instructors. *Handbook* dedicates considerable space to grammar with examples and explanations, which also serves self-learning purposes.

⁸⁵ Becker’s original text in German is: “[d]ie Sprachlehre lehrt nicht eigentlich, wie man sprechen soll, sondern nur, wie man spricht” (1841, p. 9, English translation mine).

⁸⁶ The translation is from Summers himself, and it differs from Legge’s (1861, p. 199) and Julien’s (1826, p. 45) translations, respectively. I do not want to judge whether the translation itself is accurate, but follow Summers’ own translation since it reflects Summers’ understanding about study.

⁸⁷ This is suggested to me by Prof. Nicola McLelland.

⁸⁸ The catalogue of Henri Cordier (1849–1925) also mentioned that the third part of the *Handbook* is about exercises while the fourth part is a dictionary. However, there is no introduction concerning the publication of these two parts (Cordier 2003 [1878], p. 765). Gabelentz also claimed that the last two parts of the *Handbook* were never published (1878, p. 628).

Chinese characters and where to obtain copies of writing (1863a, p. xi). Part of his motivation to write and publish the *Handbook* was therefore to provide solutions for these elementary problems. As it turned out, the book provides “all the aids which a *beginner* needs”, i.e., phonology, sections on grammar, vocabulary, and literature, etc. He stated that the book could even be used for self-learning (1863a, p. xii, p. xv). According to some terms that were employed in this book, such as “locative”, “ablative”, and “instrumental” cases (p. 107), the targeted reader of this book can be identified as those who have a general grammatical understanding of inflected languages, such as Latin. In addition, some examples and explanations in his book are in German, French, and other European languages. Hence, Summers also anticipated that his readers would know these languages.

The “Introduction” to *Handbook* includes a brief description of some basic knowledge of Chinese and China, such as Chinese characters, Chinese culture and the relationship between China and Britain. Summers highly praised the Chinese language and culture for their great influence in East Asia and their “endurance and steadfastness” (1863a, p. xviii) throughout history, and argued that studying Chinese would help China and Britain to understand each other and serve as a tool to spread British religious and political values within China (1863a, pp. xxiv–xxv).

In Part I of *Handbook*, Summers explained the basics of the Chinese language. This part mainly includes etymology (“Sect. I. Articulate sounds and their symbols” and “Sect. II. The forms of expression”) and syntax (“Sect. I. On simple constructions” and “Sect. II. On sentences”). There are also six appendices with vocabularies and expressions, such as Chinese surnames, dynasties, the commonly-used characters in reign titles, units of measurement, differences in pronunciation among the dialects, and synonyms and antonyms. Summers did not present the analysis of classical Chinese and vernacular Chinese separately.⁸⁹

This way of teaching grammar, i.e., introducing both “etymology” and “syntax”, fits in the European tradition. For example, the Roman grammarian Marcus Terentius Varro’s (116 BC–27 BC) *De lingua Latina* (ca. 47 BC – 45 BC) includes etymology, morphology and syntax (Robins 1997, p. 59). The first two of the eighteen volumes of Priscian’s *Institutiones Grammaticae* deal with phonology under the name of “orthography”; the third to the sixteenth volumes are about morphology and parts of speech, and the last two volumes are on syntax (Yáo Xiǎopíng 2011a, p. 75). The same outline was also adopted by Lindley Murray (1745–1826) in his well-known English grammar (1823 [1795]): the part of orthography focuses on

⁸⁹ However, he did state that classical Chinese and vernacular Chinese are different (cf. Chapter 4).

phonology and the writing system. Words, including parts of speech and morphology, are described under the name of “etymology” since the term *Etymologia* also refers to the inflections of words and parts of speech (Flynn 1943, p. 108; Law 2000, p. 77; Luhtala 2013, p. 350). The last part of the grammar is syntax. The structure of Murray’s English grammar is very similar to the *Handbook*. Actually, most of the early western books on the Chinese language shared a similar structure. What is special about the arrangement of the *Handbook* is that the sections on phonology, parts of speech and morphology are all classified under the chapter titled “Etymology”. Although they are divided into two parts in the chapter, the structure of the *Handbook* is still slightly different from previous works.

The second part of *Handbook* is a selection of literary works and some translations, for example, *Shàngshū* (尚書 *Book of Documents*, Warring States Period, 475 BC–221 BC), *Lúnyǔ* (論語 *The Analects*, Warring States Period), *Mèngzǐ* (孟子 *Mencius*, Warring States Period), *Shèngyù guǎngxùn yǎn* (聖諭廣訓衍 *Sacred Edict Expansion*, 1724), *Hǎoqiú zhuàn* (好逑傳 *The Fortune Union*, Late Ming and Early Qing), *Water Margin* and *Sānguó yǎnyì* (三國演義 *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, fourteenth century)⁹⁰. Aside from classic Chinese works, Summers also included the Chinese translation of *Aesop’s Fables*, a selection of proverbs, some classical poems, and some examples of letters written in different styles.⁹¹ Part II of *Handbook* covers a wide range of different types of essays in Chinese.⁹²

Lǐ Bǎojiā (2007, p. 138) claimed that books by Western scholars about the Chinese language typically embrace the following parts: (1) an introduction to the phonology and characters; (2) an explanation of parts of speech based on the Greco-Latin tradition, sometimes mentioning special parts of speech and particles in Chinese; (3) a morphological analysis, including the declension of nouns and the conjugation of verbs; (4) a syntactic analysis, with a focus on word order and particles; (5) a delineation of figures of speech and an introduction to different registers; and (6) a selection of Chinese works. Such categorisation likewise reflects the macrostructure of Summers’ *Handbook*. This arrangement can actually be traced back to Spanish-Roman educator Marcus Fabius Quintilian (ca. 35 AD– ca. 100 AD), who proposed a

⁹⁰ Summers stated that he selected several sections from *Sānguózhì* (三國志 *History of the Three Kingdoms*, ca. 280 AD), but actually, the quotations of these sections in *Handbook* is from *Sānguózhì tōngsú yǎnyì* (三國志通俗演義 *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*). For a detailed description of the work, see Mair (2001, pp. 621–622). Summers mentioned the difference between these two works, but he appeared to have mixed up their names (1863a, Part II, p. 17). Some works mentioned in this paragraph are written in literary Chinese, such as *Shàngshū*, *Lúnyǔ* and *Mèngzǐ*, which is different from colloquial Chinese.

⁹¹ Here, Summers referred to the translations by Medhurst, Davis, Bazin, etc. (Summers 1863a, p. xii).

⁹² Uchida (2007, p.187) stated that Summers’ selections are based on Robert Thom’s (1807–1846) classification of Chinese works in his *Esop’s Fables* (Mun Mooy and Thom 1840, p. v.).

three-level hierarchy of learning presented in his *Institutio oratoria* ('Educating the orator'). He argued that the students should be taught to read (phonology) and write (orthography) before they start learning grammar (morphology and syntax). At a later stage, they will be able to study passages and learn rhetoric (Harris and Taylor 1997, p. 66; Law 2003, p. 60).

The *Handbook* is Summers' most systematic work of Chinese linguistics. In it, he reflected on a multitude of issues, such as colloquial and literary Chinese, Mandarin and other varieties of the Chinese language, phonology, grammar, punctuation, and even calligraphy, rhetoric, and literature. In practice, students might only need this *Handbook* instead of several different manuals. This advantage was exactly what Summers had in mind. Since *Handbook* was also designed for self-learning, Summers provided many examples and explanations. *Handbook* served more as a pedagogical manual for beginners of the Chinese language from all linguistic angles, rather than a profound theoretical academic treatise on one specific area.

3.5 The Rudiments of the Chinese Language

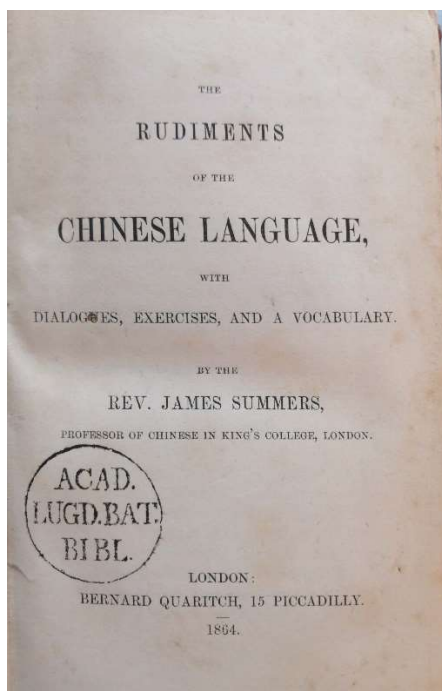


Figure 4: Title page of *Rudiments*⁹³

Rudiments is another manual of Mandarin. It is more concise and simpler than the *Handbook*, designed to help travellers to obtain some rudimentary knowledge of Chinese. In the preface, Summers stated that he is going to “put Chinese into a European dress by the use of Roman type” (1864a, p. i). Therefore, there are not many characters in the book, but transcriptions

⁹³ Leiden University Libraries SINOL. 15.410.86.

using the Roman alphabet are provided instead. This work is closer to a pure textbook than the *Handbook* in the sense that the instruction it provides is simpler, and it only covers the most important grammar points along with multiple examples.

The outline of *Rudiments* is very similar to that of the *Handbook*. The first part is *Etymology*, and it has eleven sections that discuss phonetics, characters, and parts of speech. The second part only consists of one section dedicated to explaining basic syntactic rules. Exercises can be found in the third part including lists of phrases, common expressions and translation exercises. The last part also lists some vocabulary, which is based on Edkins' book *Progressive Lessons* published in 1862 (Summers 1864a, p. ii). Summers rearranged the words alphabetically, but excluded characters from his list. The transcription is based on Summers' own system (see Chapter 10) instead of being copied from that of Edkins'. For example, the entry “有” in Edkins' book is rendered as “‘Yeu, have; there is” (p. 1),⁹⁴ whereas in *Rudiments*, it is “Have, yü” (1864a, p. 115).

3.6 Chinese and Japanese Repository⁹⁵

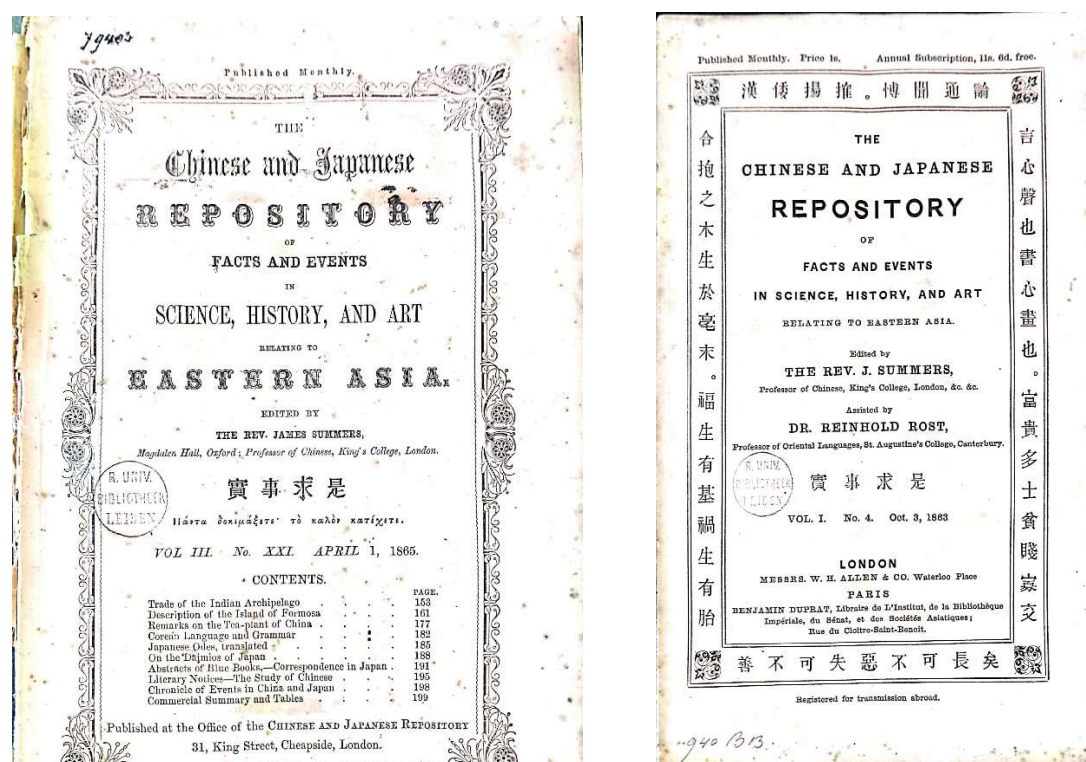


Figure 5: Title pages of two issues of *Repository*⁹⁶

⁹⁴ The inverted comma “” is one of the markers of the tone applied by Edkins (see Edkins 1862, p. 10).

⁹⁵ Hereafter: *Repository*.

⁹⁶ Leiden University Libraries 5 940 B 13.

Summers edited the monthly journal *Chinese and Japanese Repository*, which has twenty-nine issues in total, with the assistance of Orientalist Rheinhold Rost (1822–1896). The journal was published between June 1863 and December 1865 and is available in three volumes: the first volume includes the articles that were published from July 1863 to June 1864; the second contains articles from August 1864 to December 1864; and the third contains those from January 1865 to December 1865.

The title reveals its connection with *The Chinese Repository*, a noted journal that was issued between 1832 and 1851 in Canton. Elijah Coleman Bridgman (1801–1861) and Samuel Wells Williams (1812–1884) acted as the main editors. *The Chinese Repository* aimed at introducing every aspect of China to the West. It was discontinued due to financial problems and a loss of interest of the compiler (Tán Shùlín 1998, p. 115). Summers realized the importance and influence of this journal, but only few people in Britain had actually accessed it. This became the reason why Summers published the *Chinese and Japanese Repository* (1863c, pp. 1–12) and intended to reprint some essays from *The Chinese Repository*. However, in all the three volumes of his *Chinese and Japanese Repository*, only about five percent out of a total of 155 papers—eight essays to be exact (Yǐn Wénjuān 2020, p. 38)—were taken from *The Chinese Repository*. Some articles were reprinted from newspapers like *North China Herald*.

Chinese and Japanese Repository covers information on many aspects, for example, recent news,⁹⁷ business information⁹⁸ and the technology of agriculture.⁹⁹ The essays also touch on different literary genres, such as novels,¹⁰⁰ travel notes,¹⁰¹ and poetry.¹⁰² The journal not only focuses on China and Japan, it also extends its scope to other countries in East and Southeast Asia, such as the Philippines¹⁰³ and Korea.¹⁰⁴

In *Repository*, Summers published translations of essays from other languages,¹⁰⁵ but he only wrote five articles on the Chinese language himself, including a book list (Summers 1967 [1864c], pp. 167–168), reviews, and literary notices.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, only two of his essays focus on Chinese, namely, ‘On the application of the Roman alphabet to the language and various

⁹⁷ e.g., Anonymous (1967 [1865b], pp. 399–400).

⁹⁸ e.g., Anonymous (1967 [1864a], p. 126).

⁹⁹ e.g., Anonymous (1967 [1864b], pp. 199–209).

¹⁰⁰ e.g., H. C. trans. (1864, pp. 357–365).

¹⁰¹ e.g., Satow (1967 [1865], pp. 305–312, pp. 361–380, pp. 425–437, pp. 465–472, pp. 521–528, pp. 569–577).

¹⁰² e.g., Anonymous (1967 [1865c], pp. 484–487).

¹⁰³ e.g., Loney (1967 [1865], pp. 89–91).

¹⁰⁴ e.g., Anonymous (1967 [1865a], pp. 236–238).

¹⁰⁵ e.g., De Lauture (1863, pp. 32–36).

¹⁰⁶ e.g., Summers (1863e, pp. 36–42; 1967 [1864d], pp. 26–28; 1967 [1865b], pp. 195–196).

spoken dialects of China and Japan’ (Summers 1863d, pp. 112–124) and ‘Sketch of the Chinese language and literature’ (Summers 1865a, pp. 401–408).¹⁰⁷ The former essay explains how to use the Roman alphabet to record Chinese and Japanese texts, while the latter article provides a brief introduction to the Chinese language from phonetics to lexicology, following the path paved in his *Handbook*.

Many subscribers of the journal were also authors of the articles in the journal. This phenomenon reflects the limited audiences of the journal, probably due to its unaffordability to the general public in England. In order to earn more money for the publication, Summers offered to translate advertisements into Chinese to publish them in the *Repository*.¹⁰⁸ This anticipated his *Flying Dragon*, which will be discussed next.

¹⁰⁷ At the end of this essay, it says “to be continued”. However, this volume is the last one of the *Repository*, which shows a sudden closure of the journal.

¹⁰⁸ This paragraph about the readers and the problems of the *Repository* is summarized from Yǐn Wénjuān’s work (2020, p. 36).

3.7 Flying Dragon Reporter



Figure 6: Title page of the first issue of *Flying Dragon*¹⁰⁹

Flying Dragon is different from the other journals published by Summers. It is written mainly in Chinese (cf. Figure 6), and is a monthly commercial leaflet or newspaper. For example, the first issue includes information about banks, products of sugar companies and so on. There is also some recent European news, interesting general knowledge, such as an introduction to the ostrich (No. 14, 1867), and other articles in the paper. Its potential readers were East Asians, especially Chinese, who were interested in European products, but also Western people who lived in Singapore, Yokohama, Batavia, etc.¹¹⁰ This is the reason why it was at first published

¹⁰⁹ © British Library Board Asia, Pacific & Africa OP.711, General Reference Collection 1867–1870 LOU.LON 71A [1867] 14 Jan 1867–Dec 1870, 0001.

¹¹⁰ 'Trade with the far East', 'Supplement to the *Flying Dragon Reporter*', No. 14, 1867.

only in Chinese. It is said to be the first newspaper printed in Chinese in Europe (Huáng Hú and Fàn Shūjié 2004, p. 60; Kwan 2018, p. 58).¹¹¹

In the first twelve issues, the characters are hand-written vertically from right to left without punctuation, just like the composition of traditional Chinese literature. Issues No. 13 to No. 16 (1867), however, are partially printed and partially hand-written. Summers wrote that he bought metal fonts from Hong Kong with the funds that he received by selling the *Flying Dragon*. He then could print almost all the Chinese characters by himself.¹¹² Therefore, from issue No. 17 (1867) onwards, the newsletter is printed almost exclusively with movable type called *huózi* 活字. English translations begin to appear in later issues, for example, the “European news for Orientals” (No. 52, 1870), which may indicate the expansion or a change in the target reader. Figure 7 suggests that the *Flying Dragon* got orders from Singapore and some islands in the Southeast Asia. In the thirteenth issue (1867), Summers mentioned for the first time *Zhàwǎmǎlǐshuō* 乍瓦馬理說 and a text with an adaptation of Arabic script (see Figure 7).

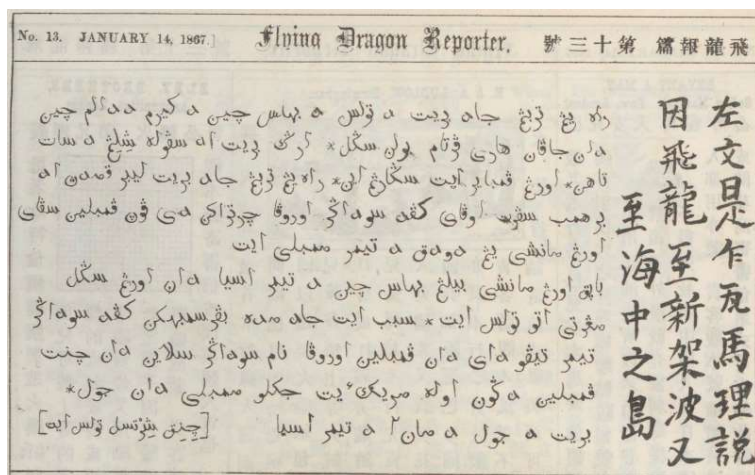


Figure 7: Javanese Pégon or Gundil in *Flying Dragon*¹¹³

These scripts are called Javanese *Pégon* or *Gundil*, used in Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries (Coulmas 1999, pp. 243–245). The *Pégon* text provides a brief introduction to the *Flying Dragon*, which might serve as the advertisement of the magazine in Indonesia.¹¹⁴ The Chinese text says (Figure 7):

¹¹¹ The first foreign journal published in Chinese was the *Chinese Monthly Magazine* (1815–1822) by Morrison in Malacca (Masini 1997, p. 13).

¹¹² This can be found in: ‘Editor’s notes for advertisement’, *Flying Dragon Reporter*, No. 13, 1867 and Whitaker (31 January 1867).

¹¹³ © British Library Board Asia, Pacific & Africa OP.711 General Reference Collection 1867–1870 LOU.LON 71A [1867] 14 Jan 1867–Dec 1870, 0049.

¹¹⁴ A special thanks to Dr. Kurstin Gatt (University of Malta) and Farda Ayu Sekar Rini. Dr Gatt identified the Arabic alphabet and some diacritics in the text and pointed out to the author that the latter are used to accommodate

左文是乍瓦馬理說 因飛龍至新架坡 又至海中之島

The scripts on the left are *Zhàwǎmǎlǐshuō*. [They are included in this issue] since the *Flying Dragon* has reached Singapore and islands in the sea. [English translation mine]

The number of pages of each issue in the *Flying Dragon* is not fixed. Some issues consist of only one page (for example, No. 1, 1866) while others contain eight (No. 16, 1867). Some of the same advertisements appear in different issues.

The writing style of the articles in the *Flying Dragon* is close to literary Chinese in general, even though some of the words are very colloquial. Many of the articles contain linguistic errors, but a few of them, for example “A collection of recent news” (No. 45, 1869, see below), are written in proper and elegant literary Chinese. Considering the stylistic inconsistencies in the texts, it is very likely that there was more than one author of these Chinese articles.

3.7.1 The authorship of the Chinese articles in the *Flying Dragon*

Summers was the only editor of the *Flying Dragon*. In issues No. 11 and No. 12, an article that introduces the journal clarifies that Summers compiled the *Flying Dragon* without anyone else’s help:

纂輯《飛龍》者，不過愚弟，姓申名雅客，或叫心麻士。先居在中國四年，學華語，[...] 要利於中華內地之民 (No. 11, 1866; No. 12, 1866)

The person who compiles *The Flying Dragon* is only me myself, with the surname *Shēn* and name *Yǎkè*. I can also be called *Xīnmáshì*. I lived in China for four years, and learnt Chinese... I would like to bring benefits to the Chinese people. [English translation mine]

The personal pronoun he used to refer to himself here is *yúdi* 愚弟 (see above). In his *Handbook*, Summers stated clearly (1863a, p. 66):

The substitutes for the personal pronoun *I* and *my* are, 小弟 lit. ‘small younger brother’, for *I* [...] 愚 lit. ‘stupid’, for *I*, especially in letters.

These self-abasing terms were acknowledged by Summers. Therefore, he himself wrote this small article and clarified that he was the only editor. Besides, the supplement of the *Flying*

non-Arabic sounds. Ms Rini and her friends helped the author to understand the main idea of the *Pégon* text.

Dragon also implies that there is only one editor (1867).¹¹⁵ However, he was not the author of all the Chinese articles published within it.

In the ‘Supplement to the *Flying Dragon Reporter*’, the following quotation is worth mentioning:

In ordering Advertisements to be inserted, a limit as to price for a series should be named. The particulars should be sent to Mr. G. Street (30, Cornhill, London), who will have a draft of translation prepared and submitted to the Advertisers. In case of no advertisement being inserted, 5 per cent. on the annual cost will be charged as a fee for the Translator. (No. 14, 1867)

Mr. G. Street was a publishing agency, which is mentioned as early as the fourth issue of the *Flying Dragon* (April 1866). The merchants that were interested in advertising with the journal had to contact the agency, which would also provide a Chinese translation of the advertisement. The translator would then receive a commission, which means that it was very likely that *Flying Dragon* had a regular translator.

One cannot ignore that most of the Chinese articles in the *Flying Dragon* are very poorly written, with many grammatically incorrect sentences and evidence of immature writing skills, just like the abovementioned self-introduction and the article shown in Figure 1 in Chapter 1. An early Chinese diplomat, Zhāng Déyí (1847–1919), claimed in his *Ouměi huányóu jì* (歐美環遊記 *Travel Notes in Europe and America*) when he travelled to Europe in 1867 that *Flying Dragon* was well printed, but the grammar of its articles is quite poor (“文法不甚佳”, 1981, p. 112).

However, there are two articles that are very well written. In issues No. 30 (June 1868, p. 137) and No. 36 (December 1868, p. 185), an article written from a first-person perspective by a Chinese man, Liú Xūndào (劉勳道), was published. Liú stated that he was from Dinghai, Zhejiang, and he came from a family of scholars. After the decline of his family, he had no choice but to work on British ships, and finally ended up in Britain. In the article, he stated that Britain is a great country with outstanding people. Considering the contents of this article, it could also be that Summers found a Chinese person to write about what a great country Britain was in order to propagandize the advertised products in his *Flying Dragon*. The full text is as follows:

¹¹⁵ The original text reads: “[i]t is edited by a gentleman” [emphasis mine] (‘Trade with the far East’, ‘Supplement to the *Flying Dragon Reporter*’, No. 14, 1867).

現今世界之人，或是往本地，或是往外國去者，都喜聽各樣新聞，知道各處物。吾本是中國浙江省寧波府定海人氏，居住在狀元橋東、官廟前，姓劉名勛道，字梅生。吾家本是世代書香，是從咸豐皇帝年間流落在上海，卻被賊子作亂，吾無路可走，只得到英船用工度日，赴倫敦，現多久居英國多年。英國地界有四拾洲，馬頭、府縣不計其數。有大京城，名叫倫敦。京城長闊週圍四拾餘里，縱橫大約十里。前有錦江之險，四面八方清山綠水，有樹木奇花之茂盛。若說風土，國富民貴。時有營紘之樂，歲無水旱之憂。所產之物，阜積如山。人物，文有相如之賦，武有伏波之才，醫有仲景之能，下有君平之穩。九流三教，出乎其類；天文地理，無所不知。其萃者，不可勝記。若說到京都富貴子弟豈能盡數！文官軍將，智勇作備，忠義慷慨。賢士才子之計其數。營伍軍容，人馬威儀，旌旗蔽目，劍戟森林。女有沉魚之容，閉月羞花之形。京都街上，其闊非凡：車馬轟轟，行人不直，在街方過，然妙景勝他鄉，無窮妙處，無窮處！真是風月無邊，妙不可言。此乃天下九州萬國第錦繡之京都也！戶口三百萬，屋宇三十一萬，街頭五家臺，灣一直共三千里。(No. 30, 1868, p. 137; No. 36, 1868, p. 185, punctuation marks added)

People who either travel domestically or abroad nowadays in the world all like to listen to different kinds of news and like to know different things. I was born in Dinghai, Ningbo, Zhejiang province, China. My house used to be in the east of Zhuangyuan bridge and in front of Guanmiao. My name is Liú Xūndào, Méishēng. My family used to be a scholars' family for generations. In the Xianfeng period, I was stranded in Shanghai and harassed by thugs. I had no other choice but to work on British ships to survive. I then went to London and have now stayed here for many years. There are forty stated in Britain with countless docks and counties. There is a big capital city called London. The perimeter of the city is about forty *li*, while its diameter is around ten *li*. In the front lies a beautiful river to guard it, with clear mountains and waters surrounding it from all directions and lush trees and beautiful

flowers. The country is prosperous and the people are wealthy. They are always happy about the environment, without worries of droughts and floods. They can produce a lot of goods. They have top literates, good soldiers, nice doctors and great thinkers. They know all things both in humanistic studies and natural sciences. The remarkable ones among them are too many to all be named. It is impossible to count the outstanding young people from the rich and noble families, too. Their generals and militaries are brave and loyal. There are countless wise men in the country. Their army is well equipped. The women in the country are beautiful and elegant. The streets of London are wide. Many carriages and horses pass by and a lot of pedestrians walk by. The wonderful scenery is better than any other places, which is impossible to describe. This is the most splendid capital in the world. It has three million households, three hundred thousand houses, five towers in the streets and three thousand miles in the bay. [English translation mine]

This article is well-worded with skillful figures of speech, that show an exquisite literary style. Despite a few minor errors, such as the last character in 旌旗蔽目, which should be *rì* 日 ‘sun’, it proves that its author, Liú Xūndào, was well-educated.

The other well-written article is the following:

近事輯聞

王紫詮廣文，中國吳郡人。前至倫敦京都時，曾來見余。言所刊《飛龍報篇》，采輯奇聞異事，美不勝收，茲已遍布中國各省，誠足以增廣智識，開拓見聞也。惜其時，王君忽一往北境蘇覺攔，未得縷談。茲蒙惠書於余，述其遊覽蘇覺亂京，名“勝爰爲略登”，數則，如左：蘇土之中，有村曰“都拉”。樹木蔥茂，泉澗潑洄，四圍皆山，一碧數里。附近有靈伯倫園，廣袤萬頃。每至夏時，士女往遊者，絡繹不絕。中有瀑布一條，從空下注，匯成巨池，尤為勝景。(No. 45, 1869, p. 260, punctuation added)

Recent events

Wáng Zǐquán, Guǎngwén, born in Wujun, China. When he arrived in London, he came to visit me. He said that the *Flying Dragon* collected anecdotes and interesting things. It is very good and has been diffused

all over China. It is enough to broaden one's knowledge. It is a pity that at that time, he suddenly went to North of Scotland. We could not chat with each other about details. He sent me letters to describe his tour in the capital of Scotland, named Edinburgh. Some [sentences] of [his letter] are as follows: in Scotland, there is a village called Dollar. There are lush trees, nice springs and curving brooks there. The village is surrounded by mountains, with miles of green plants. Castel Campbell is nearby, which stretches for ten thousand hectares. Every summer, many gentlemen and ladies travel there. There is a waterfall in the middle, pouring from the sky and converging into a giant pool, which is particularly spectacular. [English translation mine]

Wáng Zǐquán (1828–1897), i.e., Wáng Tǎo, was a Chinese scholar, who used to work at London Missionary Society Press run by Walter Henry Medhurst (1796–1857) in Shanghai, and helped Legge translate Chinese classics (cf. Appendix 1). He travelled in European countries like France and Britain (1867–1879), and wrote *Roaming Notes with Illustrations* (1890) to record his trips (Wáng Yīchuān 1999, pp. 58–66). In this book, he wrote that he had had a long conversation with Summers.¹¹⁶ The above article in the *Flying Dragon* introduces one part of Wáng's trip in Britain from the perspective of Summers. Not only is it grammatically and semantically correct, but it is also very sophisticated in its skill and style, even better than the first article by Liú Xūndào. Unfortunately, there is not enough material to know about the authorship of this article.

These articles suggest that Summers knew some Chinese people and even scholars in London. However, it remains a puzzle why he did not ask Liú Xūndào or other well-educated native Chinese speakers to translate or edit the translation of the articles in the *Flying Dragon*. One of the possibilities could be that he felt confident enough of his own Chinese proficiency, or that he wanted to save money and therefore translated most of the articles and advertisements himself.

3.7.2 The articles about linguistics in the *Flying Dragon*

In the *Flying Dragon*, there are several short articles educating its readers on some basic knowledge of European languages, especially English. Summers was not the first Westerner

¹¹⁶ The original text reads: “詹那以馬車來迓，同往見申雅客，坐談久之始別” (Wáng Tǎo 2004 [1890], p. 156). However, no sentence in this article in *Flying Dragon* is quoted from Wáng's book, and the latter was published much later.

who published materials about the English language in Chinese. Morrison did the same kind of work in his *A Grammar of the English Language* (1823), published in Macau for the students in his Anglo-Chinese college. In Boston, Massachusetts, *A Guide to Conversation in the English and Chinese Languages for the Use of Americans and Chinese in California and Elsewhere* (1854), a work similar in scope, was published by Stanislas Hernisz (1805–1866). However, Summers was very likely to have been the first who published on European linguistics in Chinese in Europe, although his articles are far from systematic.¹¹⁷

There are in total eight such articles, introducing the pronunciation of each English letter with a transliteration in Chinese characters (i.e., ‘寫番音以漢字之法’, No. 1, 1866 ; No. 2, 1866), English syllables and the kinship of European languages (i.e., ‘論及英話何樣’, No. 7, 1866), elementary words and a brief vocabulary (i.e., ‘論外國語’, No. 8, 1866), parts of speech (i.e., ‘論英國話語’, No. 9, 1866), numbers (i.e., ‘論及英國話歐洲數目字用’, No. 10, 1866), conjugation of verbs (i.e., ‘論大英國之言話’, No. 11, 1866), the order of reading English words (i.e., ‘論歐羅吧之話語讀法’, No. 20, 1867; No. 25, 1868) and a Chinese article with an English literal translation (i.e., ‘日風相賭’, No. 20, 1867). He wrote these articles mainly for Chinese merchants, because he stated:

中國人讀英國是甚緊為之，英人目下做大生意在中國。(No. 8, 1866)

It is very important for Chinese people to read about Britain, [since] the British now are doing big business in China. [English translation mine]

3.8 Notes on Writing Chinese with Roman Letters¹¹⁸

John Bellows (1831–1902) edited the book *English Outline Vocabulary*, and Summers’ *Notes* appears as the preface of the second edition (1868). Bellows’ own part only consists of a word list of essential English vocabulary on the one side and corresponding blank spaces on the other side of each page. The blank spaces were meant to be filled in by missionaries who wished to record local languages when they arrived at some new place (Bellows and Bellows 1904).

¹¹⁷ Aside from these examples, Chinese people also compiled and published some books for learning English in the nineteenth century (cf. Jì Yǎxī and Chén Wěimín 2007, pp. 275–323).

¹¹⁸ Hereafter: *Notes*.

Summers' *Notes* emphasises the importance of accurately transcribing the pronunciation of Chinese characters by employing the Roman alphabetic system. Summers argued that the tones are more important than any other element of the syllable in Chinese (1868, p. 3). He recommended to always use some established notation system, for example, Wade's system for the Peking dialect (1868, p. 6). By placing this essay before his word list, Bellows seems to suggest to his readers to use Summers' essay as a general guideline for transcribing sounds of unknown languages using the Roman alphabetic system.

3.9 *The Phoenix, a Monthly Magazine for China, Japan & Eastern Asia*¹¹⁹

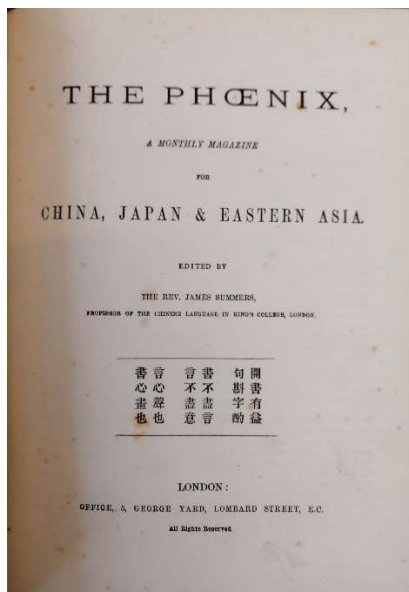


Figure 8: Title page of *Phoenix*¹²⁰

The *Phoenix* was published between July 1870 and June 1873. It was compiled into three volumes: Volume 1 binds the issues published from July 1870 to June 1871; Volume 2 contain issues from July 1871 to June 1872; and Volume 3 those from July 1872 to June 1873. When Summers resigned from his post at King's College London and went to Japan in 1873, the journal had to cease publication although he had planned more articles for it. For example, the British naturalist Brian Houghton Hodgson (ca. 1800–1894) had already prepared more essays to introduce Nepal and other areas for this journal and had to submit them elsewhere due to Summers' abrupt departure (Hodgson 1874, p. vi). The themes of the articles in this journal are similar yet broader in scope compared to those of the *Chinese and Japanese Repository*, discussed in Section 6. In Volumes 2 and 3, the title was changed to *The Phoenix, a Monthly*

¹¹⁹ Hereafter: *Phoenix*.

¹²⁰ Leiden University Libraries 5 328 D 17–19.

Magazine for India, Burma, Siam, China, Japan and Eastern Asia. Several essays in *Phoenix* discuss some lesser-known languages and cultures of Asia, such as the language of Nepal (Hodgson 1870, pp. 43–45, pp. 59–62). In this series of publications, Summers did not include many of his own essays, only a few book reviews regarding the topic of the Chinese language.

The journal was supported by many authors and scholars, who submitted their essays without asking for any remuneration (Summers 1870a, pp. iii–iv, p. iv). Some advertisements for the journal can also be found, for example, in the *Bedfordshire Times and Independent* (1872).

3.10 Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese, Japanese and Manchu Books in the Library of the India Office¹²¹

As stated in the preface of the *Catalogue* (Summers 1872, p. iv), Summers compiled this catalogue in 1872, with the help of elite European scholars Julien, Edkins, Ernst Johann Eitel (1838–1908), Wylie, and Samuel Beal (1825–1889). The difficulties that he encountered when editing this book include the translation of the book titles, the names of the authors, the confusion of the publication dates, and the correspondence between Chinese titles and the Sanskrit titles of the Buddhist collections (Summers 1872, p. iv). Summers selected some of the collections and introduced them briefly according to their categories. The books are divided into three types in the *Catalogue*, namely “Language”, “Philosophy and Religion”, and “Miscellaneous Works”.

The books listed under “Language” (1872, pp. 1–12) are divided into three sections: ancient inscriptions, dictionaries, and encyclopaedias. In the category of ancient inscriptions, Summers introduced the *Examples of Scrolls and Inscriptions on the Bells, Tripods, Vases, and Vessels of Successive Ages* (1797)¹²² and three more books. By mistake, Summers stated that *Siuen ho* 宣和 was the pseudonym of the author (1872, p. 2), but it was actually one of the reign titles of the Song Dynasty.

The second category is dictionaries. Summers argued that Chinese scholars arranged their dictionaries according to three methods: (1) the form of the characters (radical); (2) the “name” of the characters (rhyme); and (3) the meaning (1872, p. 3). He then introduced the dictionaries

¹²¹ The years of publication and transcriptions of all ancient books in this section are from the *Catalogue*, unless otherwise indicated.

¹²² Known as *Xuēshì zhōngdǐng kuǎnzhì* 薛式鐘鼎款識 or *Lìdài zhōngdǐng yìqì kuǎnzhì fǎtiè* 歷代鐘鼎彝器款識法帖, written by Xuē Shàngōng (薛尚功, Song dynasty). The text was engraved as lithoglyph in 1144. This book includes an ample collection of inscriptions on sacrificial vessels (Hú Yùshù 1992, pp. 373–374).

of *Tsz wei* (字彙 *Character's Collected*, 1615, Summers 1872, p. 5), *Kanghi's Code or Canon of Characters* (i.e., *Dictionary of Kāngxī*, Summers 1872, p. 6), etc. Most of the dictionaries in this category are about Chinese, but there are some on Japanese, Korean, and Manchu.

Summers introduced two books under the section of encyclopaedias: *Tsien kio lüi shu* (潛確類書 *Encyclopedia Written in House Tsienkio*, 1632, Summers 1872, p. 10) and *Yuen kien lüi han* (淵鑑類函 *The Fathomless Mirror*, 1710, Summers 1872, p. 11).

The category “Philosophy and Religion” (1872, pp. 13–48) includes ancient Chinese classics, Confucianist works and Buddhist works. Ancient Chinese classics consist of many editions and annotations of the Five Classics. Summers specially explained the sacredness of the Classics (*jīng* 經) in Chinese culture. Some works he mentioned here do not belong to the category of the Classics, for example, *Er ya yin t'u* (爾雅音圖 *The Words of the Er-ya, an Ancient Dictionary of Classical Synonyms, &c., with Plates*, dates unknown, Summers 1872, p. 20). The collection of texts on Confucianism contains various editions of the Four Books and *Hiau king* (孝經 *The Classic of Filial Piety*, dates unknown, Summers 1872, p. 23). There are twenty-seven books under the category of “Buddhist works”, including *Ta pan nyi po lo nu to king* (大般若波羅密多經 *Mahâ Prajnâ Pâramitâ Sûtra*, 630, Summers 1872, p. 24) translated into Chinese by Hiuen-ts'ang (玄奘, 602–664) etc., seventy-two in total. The Library of the India Office owned a considerable amount of Buddhist works (1872, p. iii).

The list of miscellaneous works (1872, pp. 49–65) contains texts which are difficult to classify. In this part, Summers introduced literary books, for example, *The Fortunate Union* (1872, p. 51); philosophical works such as *Chutsz tsuenshu* (朱子全書 *The Complete Works of Chutsz*, dates unknown, Summers 1872, pp. 49–50); works in translation, such as *Ching yin tsui yau* (正音撮要 *The Important Points of the True Sounds*, 1852, Summers 1872, p. 49) and *The Bible* (Summers 1872, p. 56, translated into Chinese by Joshua Marshman); a book about martial arts, i.e., *Wu kien tsi* (舞劍集 *On Fencing*, dates unknown, Summers 1872, p. 65); and even a book of pictures of beauties, one known as *Pe mei sin yung t'u chuen* (百美新詠圖傳 *Portraits and Accounts of Celebrated Beauties*, dates unknown, Summers 1872, p. 53), etc. There are twenty-three books in total.

The classification of the collection is problematic, because it leads to too many “Miscellaneous works”. The appendix of this catalogue (1872, pp. 66–70) is even less well categorised. It lists books on the Chinese language, such as *C'hu hio Yue yin tsi yau* (初學粵

音切要 *The Beginner's Requirements in the Canton Sounds*, 1855, Summers 1872, p. 66), as well as lists books on teaching English to Chinese students, for example, *Chi wan k'i mung* (智環啟蒙 *Graduated Reading*, 1856, Summers 1872, p. 66). There are also some Japanese books, such as *Ching pu kiau* (正卜考 *On Divination*, 1858, Summers 1872, p. 67). There are nineteen books in total listed in the appendix of *Catalogue*.

Summers' catalogue is the first of the East Asian collections of the India Office Library (Kwan 2018, p. 75), and it was quite an achievement. There are some mistakes in it. However, it must be regarded as the first attempt as a basis for further research.

3.11 On Chinese Lexicography, with Proposals for a New Arrangement of the Characters of That Language¹²³

In 1872, a number of Americans and Europeans who lived in Japan and wanted to learn more about Japanese culture decided to establish the Asiatic Society of Japan in Yokohama. Today, they are known as the pioneers of Japanology. They met frequently to discuss their views on Japan-related topics, and a journal was published in English carrying the title *The Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* since 1874.¹²⁴ On 23 January 1884, Summers delivered a lecture called *Lexicography* when the society met. It was afterwards published in their annual journal.

Summers started the speech by narrating the long history and continuity of the Chinese language and its characters. An introduction to the script followed, including its evolution and style. He discussed principles of arranging Chinese characters in various dictionaries in order to provide arguments for his own method, which he felt was to be preferred above all others. Summers stated that the users of his dictionary would be provided with an easy way to look up characters. They would need to firstly remove the radical parts from the rest of the character. The latter he called the “Root-key” (1884b, p. 179), and he continued to explain how to identify the “Root-key” by separating the characters into components. For example, if a character only consists of radicals, then the “Root-key” should be either the right or the bottom radical in the character, like 叫 jiào ‘to call’ in Summers’ own example (cf. Figure 9).

¹²³ Hereafter: *Lexicography*.

¹²⁴ This brief introduction to the society is based on Kendrick (1978, p. 13, p. 19).

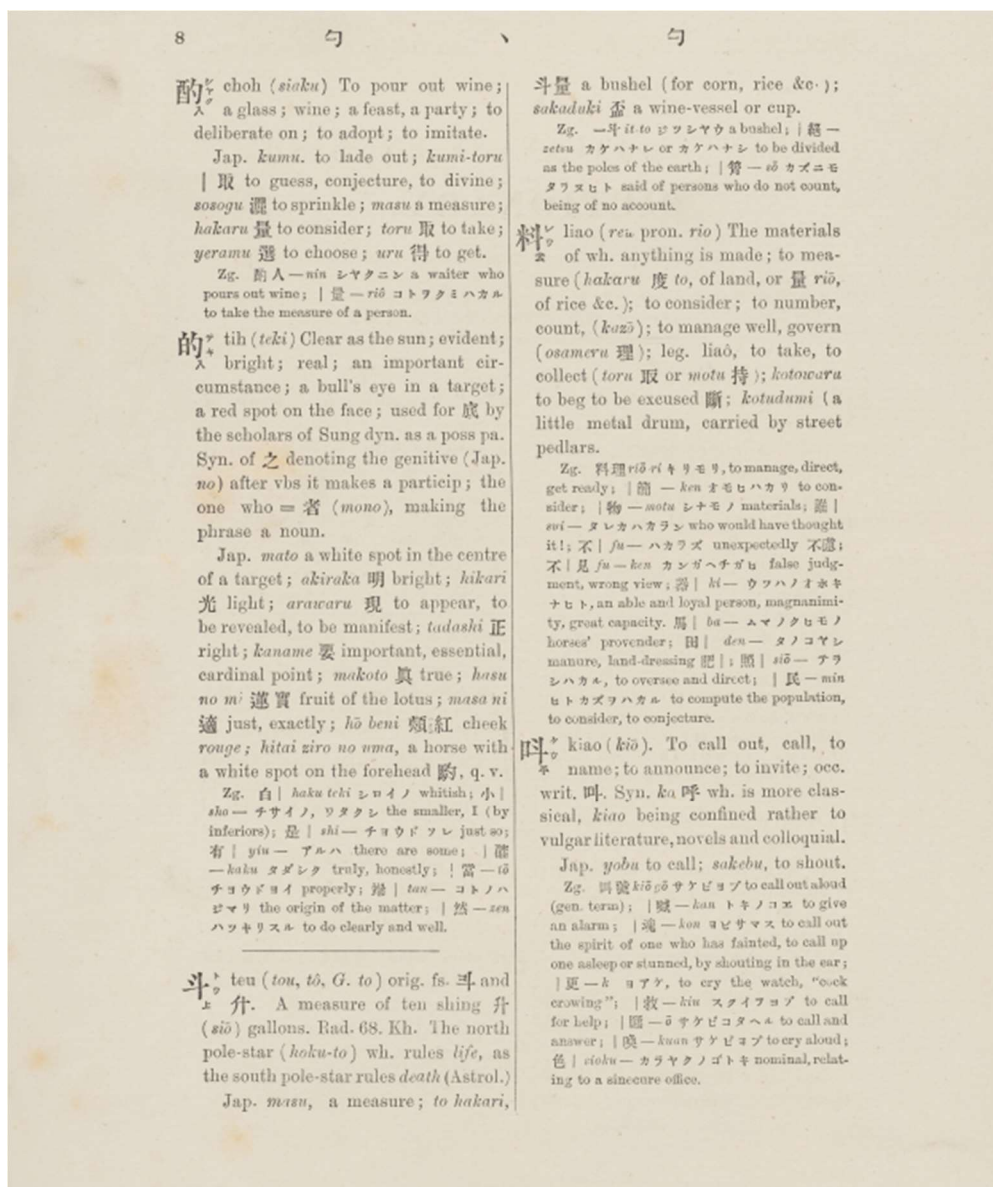


Figure 9: Specimen page of Summers' dictionary¹²⁵

The left part 斗 and the right part 斗 are both radicals, with 斗 being the “Root-key”. Afterwards, the “Root-keys” have to be broken down into strokes. The characters are arranged according to the first strokes of their “Root-keys”. Thus, the character 斗 is found under the index dot “、”. The task of identifying the strokes and memorizing the order of strokes is comparatively easy for students to grasp, according to Summers. This way of organizing characters would enable students to use the dictionary efficiently (1884b, p. 181).

In 1208, Hán Dào zhāo (韓道昭, ca. 1170–1230) sorted characters by removing their radicals first and arranging them according to the number of strokes of the rest of the character (Bottéro 2017, p. 591). Summers' method follows a similar routine, but instead of counting the

¹²⁵ ©Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library (reference code: GBR/0012/MS Parkes 9/13, MS-PARKES-00009-00013-000-00002).

number of strokes, one has to figure out the stroke order of the characters. It is debatable whether Summers' method makes the process of identifying characters easier for students who have no prior knowledge of radicals. Furthermore, Summers stated that his dictionary includes approximately 12,000 characters (1884a) arranged under six strokes (1884b, p. 178), which leads to another issue in Summers' approach: on average, 2000 characters are classified under the same category. Therefore, his method does not appear to be more efficient for finding characters compared to the method of classifying characters under two hundred radicals.

In the journal, it is reported that after the lecture, a lively discussion followed. An attendee argued that a dictionary is always useful but one cannot give a comment on Summers' methods before the publication of the dictionary. It seems that those present were confused and unsure about such a work. Summers never published a dictionary employing this method in the end, due to a lack of subscribers and funds (Summers, 14 August 1884).¹²⁶

From all the works presented in this chapter, it is evident that Summers was not only a Chinese teacher but also an editor and a publisher whose interests lay in the Chinese language and in cultures of East and Southeast Asia.

¹²⁶ Compiling a dictionary seemed to have been one of Summers' dreams. He also planned to compile a six- or eight-volume dictionary of the "complete 'thesaurus'" of the Chinese language between 1866 and 1869, but it was never published (*The London and China Telegraph*, 1865, p. 445; Cordier 2003 [1878], pp. 694–700, p. 765).