A NEW KEY TO DR CHALMERS' CONCISE KANG-HSI.

As a guide to the meaning of Chinese characters, Dr Chalmers' Concise Dictionary, *with its utter absence of illustration* and example, is not intended, as stated by the author himself, to replace the original native work. From this point of view it is avowedly inferior. But as a means of ascertaining with accuracy and expedition the sound and tone of any character, it leaves the original far behind, and the author deserves the best thanks of students for the years of drudgery he must have devoted to the successful completion of his task. The main points of superiority, though doubtless well known to such as use the book, may yet be reproduced here, for the benefit of those who do not avail themselves of a valuable privilege within their reach. These are the simplification of the system of spelling, by reducing and classifying accurately, by the help of roman letters, the initials and finals adopted by Kanghsi; and secondly, the clear indication of the Northern, Central, Southern, and Ancient pronunciations; the ingenuity of the author being shown by the circumstance that (apart from certain exceptional cases specially provided for in the body of the work), these four pronunciations are ascertainable from a single pair of spelling characters.

The end Dr. Chalmers kept in view was to enable the user of his dictionary to assign the exact sound to a character by the help of certain tables of initials and finals prefixed to the body of the work. That it is possible to obtain the required knowledge by the means afforded is unquestionable, but I think the system may be improved. The tables of initials are brief and to run any given *initial* to earth is a matter of not more than a minute. But with the finals it is not so easy to grapple, even with the assistance of the romanised table. The searcher must have at least a glimmering of idea as to the sound or he will have to search through pages of closely printed characters before he lights on it. Most of the finals used are, it is true, such as he early becomes acquainted with, but others are not met with in the course of ordinary reading, and, being unfamiliar, thereby involve a lengthened search, especially if the searcher requires the sound in more than one of the four dialects.

As a further simplification of Dr. Chalmers' system, I have tabulated* the finals employed by him under their radicals, setting opposite each three rows of figures, indicating the sound in the Northern, Central,

* We omit the Table, though valuable in itself, to save our space. But some hints borrowed from it have been embodied in Mr. Hartmann's Table, see above p. 160.—Ed. *China Review*.

and Southern dialects (the Ancient pronunciation I have not thought it necessary to include). Each row of finals consists of two figures; the first referring to another table of the finals romanised and numbered; the second gives the tone. The numbers used for the tones are 1 (even), 3 (ascending), 4 (departing) and 5 (entering). The series of the tones is indicated by the initial used; therefore a character marked 1 may, in the Northern Dialect, be either of the first or second tone of Wade's system, according to the initial. An example will make the working of my table clearer. Let us suppose the student turns up the character 湖. This is spelled by the characters 乎 枯. A glance at the initials for the Northern pronunciation will show that 乎 is under H and in the lower series; turning to the finals, 枯 will be found under the radical 木 and the Northern row is 53 1; that signifies that the final is Ŭ (Chalmers) or U (Wade), and the whole sound HU, in the even tone, lower series, and thus would be written in Pekinese hu^2. He learns at the same time with scarcely any additional trouble that it is pronounced ˛hu at Nanking and ˛wu at Canton.

An element of imperfection in the Concise Dictionary, which nothing short of a new edition will remedy, is indicated in the table of finals. It fortunately affects Pekinese only, so the disaster is not a general one. Certain finals, distinguished by an asterisk and twenty-four in number, are ambiguous, some in sound, most in tone. For instance, where a character is spelled with the final 合, we are in doubt whether (in Pekinese) it is pronounced in the even or in the departing tone. It is not impossible, I believe, to select twenty-four other characters to remove the ambiguity; to write for instance 郃 as the final when the character is of the departing tone and to reserve 合 for such as are of the even tone. But to apply the correction to the dictionary must perforce be reserved for a second edition and can be properly carried out by no one with less experience than the author himself. In the meanwhile I put on record here the emendations I would propose.

Original.	Substitute.	Original.	Substitute.
乞 1	吃	略 3	雀
乞 3	迄	岳 (-ÜEH)	燉
入 4	廾	得 1	刻
剔 1	撮	或 1	喊
合 4	郃	括 (-O)	末
哭 1	拙	日 (-Ê)	瑟
*橫 1	宏	羯 1	歇
*橫 4	哄	葛 3	渴
汁 4	蘗	角 3	崔
法 4	壓	郭 3	擉
沒 1	脖	陸 4	六
昊 4	闆	髮 1	筏

[* 橫 Having in Peking the sound *héng* is not well selected to represent the final UNG.]

There are certain other anomalies in the dictionary to which attention may be drawn. Some initials do a double duty, for instance 烏威 spells WEI, which is what was to be expected; but when we meet the combination 烏 雹, it is only after some thought we reject the impossible result WAO, and conclude that the initial is to be here neglected and that AO is the sound intended. Similarly 人 刃 reads JÊN, but 人 耳 is ÊRH, discarding the initial altogether. Then the spelling 丕 官 for 潘 results in P'WAN, which is good Southern Chinese but leaves the Pekinese pronunciation out in the cold. Some spellings are quite undecypherable in the Northern dialect, such as 並 得 for 蒿, which would give PÊ; and again 烏 橫 spelling the character 汪* which (from the value—

* 汪 with this spelling is the same as 泓 which in Cantonese is ˛*wang*, and ought to have no *h* in Mandarin though it actually has one both in Williams and in Wade—*hung*. J.C.

UNG assigned by Dr Chalmers to this final) would give WUNG; both impossible syllables.

These are but small blemishes, if so they can be called, and do not affect seriously the useful qualities of the dictionary as an authority on sounds and tones. If my present simplification of the labour of search stimulates the sale of the book and results in an imperative call for a second edition, I trust the learned author will find it possible to make his work as efficient a guide to Pekinese pronunciation as it now is to the sounds and tones of Central and Southern China.

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THE HALL OF LIGHT.

Dr. Chalmers has in his interesting review of Dr. Legge's Li Chi* adopted from his authors the translation 'hall of distinction' for *ming t'ang* 明堂. But in fact the commentators say that the name *ming t'ang* taught three things. It illustrated the government of the sovereign, the splendour of the sacrifices to Wen wang, and the distinctions between the higher and lower feudal barons.

I would prefer to translate the chapter heading in some such way as 'the positions in the hall of manifestation,' because the rendering 'hall of distinction' seems to apply only to the manifestation of the difference between feudal lords. This limitation is indeed favoured by the text of the Li Chi, and the translation 'hall of distinction' may be supported on the ground that such was the opinion of the author (writing about the third century before Christ) of this part of the Li Chi. But this does not shut off the other applications of the word *ming*. It was not the author that made the phrase, and the original intent of the name is much more likely to have embraced the other senses, and even some different from these. Why, for instance, should it not mean, as one author says, 'the hall for issuing the decrees of the sovereign?' The council of the sovereign is a secret assembly, but when he appears before his court and the subordinate princes and chiefs, all is public.

There can be no doubt that the editing of the Li Chi must be assigned to, the Han dynasty. Even parts which describe the early Chow contain such phrases as 古者周天子 'in ancient times the Chow emperor.' The translator and reviewer of the Li Chi agree with native scholars on the age of the book.

The chapter on the arrangement of the Ming T'ang has the marks of late authorship in the fulness of its style. Notice for example, when the feudal barons are all in their places in the great hall, the way in which the outside tribal chiefs, who all belong to races that are not Chinese, are mentioned. On the east were the nine Yi,* on the south the eight Man, on the west the six Jung, and the north the five Ti (Dik). Beside these there were outside the Ying gate the nine Tsai, and in addition certain supernumeraries called the four Sai. The Ying men here means a gate on the south, and as the other nations, mentioned by their race names, have a geographical position, we may assign to the Tsai people a southern locality. But the passage is a doubtful one, and as the word ts'ai means colour, we cannot safely adopt any definite conclusion about it.

The numbers of tribes are not to be taken literally. Thus they differ in the 周書

* July-Aug. Number of *China Review*.

* The chiefs of the nine Yi were outside the eastern door with their faces to the west inclining to the north. Legge, p. 30.