

# Interpretation and Translation of Chinese Ancient Primer Classics in *China Review*

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*China Review* was an important medium for cultural exchange between China and the West in the late 19th century. *China Review* was first published in Hong Kong. It mainly reports on languages, literature, local customs, and geography in the Far East, known as “the first genuine sinological journal in the Western World”. There are many translations and comments on Chinese Ancient Primer classics in *China Review*. Representative sinologists such as James Legge and Herbert Giles have and primer classics and published many research works. It had played a significant role in the overseas dissemination of primer classics in the century dissemination.

*Keywords:* Chinese primer classics, *China Review*, interpretation

*China Review* was founded by N. B. Dennys (1840-1900) in July 1872 and ceased publication in 1901, with 25 volumes and 150 issues. *China Review*, also known as *Notes and Queries on the Far East*, was a collection of scholarly articles. *China Review* was a comprehensive English-language journal that was both scholarly and informative, and its contributors mainly were missionaries and diplomats. As a genuine sinological journal, the articles published in *China Review* represent the highest level of Chinese study and research among Westerners. They came to China in the late Qing dynasty. The interpretation and translation of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics are of great research value.

## Relevant Studies in the Early Stages of *China Review*

In terms of academic history, between 1878 and 1885, *China Review* began to receive the attention of the famous French sinologist Gordy. As Henri Cordier (1849-1925) mentioned in *Six Years of Sinological Research: 1886-1891*, “Under the auspices of Dr. Eide, *China Review* in Hong Kong is still in circulation and has remained new for ages” (Wang, 2010, p. 17). Subsequently, *China Review* continued to be discovered by sinologists. For example, John Calvin Ferguson indexed *China Review*, and in the 1930s, the Japanese scholar いしだ みきのすけ introduced *China Review* in *In the Study of Sinology by Europeans*. But until the middle of the 20th century, scholars did not study *China Review* in depth. It was not until Wong Man Kong (2000), *Hong Kong and Sino-Western Cultural interaction :Earnest John Eitel and the China Review*, the first paper in the history of scholarship dedicated to the study of *China Review* proper, which introduced the missionary Ernest John Eitel’s interest in Chinese culture and thus published several articles. This is the first paper in the history of scholarship devoted to *China Review* proper, which describes how missionary Ernest John Eitel’s

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interest in Chinese culture led him to publish several articles on various aspects of China. Ge Guilu (2004) wrote a *chronicle of Sino-English academic relations* in which he cites several articles published in *China Review* to discuss literary exchanges between China and Britain. Duan Huaqing and Zhou Liling's (2005) *China Review and the Exchange of Chinese and English Studies in the Late Qing Dynasty* introduced the translations and studies of Chinese literature, novels, poetry, folk literature, and drama in *China Review*, as well as the translations of Chinese literature by representative sinologists, such as James Legge and Herbert Allen Giles. Later, Wang Guoqiang's (2010) book, *China Review (1872-1901) and Western Sinology*, examined the journal's contribution and position in Western sinology from the perspective of the history of sinology. From the articles published in recent years, for example, Li Haijun and Li Haijia (2021), *A Study of the Translation of the Wisdom Supplement by English Sinology Journals in the Nineteenth Century: Taking the "China Series" and "China Review" as Examples*, discussed the contribution and status of the journal in the history of Western sinology. This article studies from the perspective of the author's attitudes towards the original text, the way of translation and the quality of translation. Li Yang (2021), in *A Review of the Translation of the "Qing Laws" by the British Sinologist G. Jampieson in China Review*, detailed Jampieson's translation of the *Military Law-Guanjin* and the *Household Law* in the Qing Laws, based on his interests and the current situation. The translation of the chapters of the *Military Law*, the *Household Law* of the *Military Law*, and the *Marriage Law* of the *Military Law* is described in detail.

Although studies on *China Review* have become increasingly in-depth in recent years, they were still mainly conducted from scholarly communication to explore discussion. The author argues that the missionaries' exploration of Chinese culture began with the relevant Chinese Ancient Primer classics, hence the translation and annotation of related works. Starting with the interpretation and translation of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics is missing in the current study of *Chinese Review* and is also the significance of this study.

### Overview of the Chinese Ancient Primer Classics Published in *China Review*

Concerning the Chinese Ancient Primer, it is explained in the *Dictionary* as the today's primary school, referring to the education and learning of young children. In a broad sense, the Chinese Ancient Primer is a collective term for the traditional early childhood enlightenment education in China. In a narrow sense, it refers exclusively to the enlightenment teaching materials, i.e., the children's reading books; it also refers to the private school of enlightenment, i.e., the Mengguan, which is equivalent to the present-day kindergarten or primary school (Ren, Zhang, Chen, & Liu, 2019). In ancient China, there were a series of textbooks for teaching of the Chinese Ancient Primer education, such as *The Tri-Metrical Classic*, *The Thousand Words' Poem*, *Disciple Rules*, etc. Although they were written in different dynasties, they were widely recognized in the process of circulation and gradually formed a series of textbooks. The commonly used teaching materials for teaching of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

#### List of Common Monastic Texts

Name of the textbook	Book formation dynasty	Authors
<i>The Tri-Metrical Classic</i>	Song dynasty	Wang Yinglin
<i>Words given to Children</i>	Ming dynasty	Lv Desheng, Lv Kun
<i>A Collection of Famous Sages</i>	The Southern Song dynasty	
<i>Aphorisms in the Union</i>	Qing dynasty	Jin Lansen

Table 1 to be continued

<i>The Hundred Family Names</i>	The Northern Song dynasty	
<i>Disciple Rules</i>	Qing dynasty	Li Yuxiu
<i>The Shadow of the Dragon's Man</i>	Ming dynasty	
<i>The Encyclopedia of Early Childhood Learning</i>	Ming dynasty	Cheng Deng Gee
<i>The Sound of Music</i>	Qing dynasty	Che Wanyu
<i>A Thousand Poems</i>	The Southern Song dynasty	
<i>The Augmented Scriptures</i>	The Ming and Qing dynasties	
<i>The Rhyme of the Kastmaster</i>	Late Ming and early Qing dynasties	Li Yu
<i>The Discipline of Monk's Parallel</i>	Ming dynasty	Si Shouqian

Since the 19th century, the Western missionaries who entered China had the responsibility of spreading Western civilization. To preach better, the Chinese were a significant obstacle they were bound to encounter and had to solve when communicating between China and the West. Therefore, how to acquire the Chinese language faster and better was a topic of more significant concern to the missionaries, and it was adequate to start with the Chinese Ancient Primer classics. Therefore, we have compiled the literature on the Chinese Ancient Primer classics in Chinese Review, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

*List of the Chinese Ancient Primer Classics in Chinese Review*

Volume	Title	Authors
V.1-3	The song of the cloud table on Mount Hwa addressed to Yuen Tan-kiu, by Li Tai-pen	John Chalmers
V.2-3	A thousand character essay	Herbert Allen Giles
V.4-1	Classical rhymes	
V.4-2	Classical rhymes	
V.6-3	Translations of Chinese School-books	
V.6-6	Ti Tsz Kwei (discipleship rules) rules for sons and younger brothers	
V.7-1	Translations of Chinese school-books	
V.7-2	Translations of Chinese school-books	
V.7-4	Translations of Chinese school-books	
V.7-6	Translations of Chinese school-books	
V.8-1	Translations of Chinese school-books	
V.8-3	Translations of Chinese school-books	
V.8-5	Translations of Chinese school-books	Henry Balfour
V.12-4	The mother of Mencius	Arndt
V.14-6	Important hints as to the behavior of boys	T.S. Hong
V.15-4	Chinese poetry	Edward Harper
V.16-1	On the term 轉注 chuan chu as applied to Chinese characters	John Chalmers
V.16-1	Poems of the Tang dynasty	Edward Harper
V.16-3	Chinese poetry	Edward Harper
V.16-5	Ancient poems	Edward Harper
V.17-4	Metrical translations from the Shi King. The "Shang Min" Decade of Part III	W. Jennings
V.17-5	Metrical translations from the Shi King. the first seven Odes of the "Tang" Decade of Part III	W. Jennings
V.20-2	Chinese school-books	Ed
V.20-3	Chinese proverbial sayings	
V.20-6	Chinese proverbial sayings	C. M. Ricketts
V.25-6	Chinese nursery rhymes	A.J. May

As can be seen from Table 2, more articles related to the translation of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics studies and the study of education were published in *China Review*, indicating the concern of Westerners at that time, especially missionaries, for Chinese Ancient Primer classics.

### **Seeking More Effective Ways of Learning Chinese**

The late Qing society believed that “the language barrier between Chinese and foreigners would breed accidents”. If we were to look at the situation from the perspective of today’s society, we would have tried to solve these language barriers and make the communication between the two sides more smooth. However, officials at the time believed that the language blockade policy would be effective for the Qing court to resist foreign aggression, so the following rules were established: (1) Chinese were not allowed to teach Chinese to foreigners; (2) the flow of Chinese books was prevented; (3) foreign interpreters were prevented from having direct contact with the Chinese government; (4) the language and script used by the foreigners were strictly limited; and (5) strictly prohibit the people from having contact with foreign barbarians. For a long time, the only Chinese people who could contact with foreigners were merchants, general merchants, and buyers (Yue, 2017). Although foreigners wrote their own teaching materials, they did not circulate very much, such as Robert Morrison’s *Dictionary of the Chinese Language* and Thomas F. Wade’s *Yu yen tzu erh chi*, etc. The Qing government’s hindrance of Chinese and Western exchanges improved after the Opium War. As a result of the defeat, China continued to open its coastal ports and the interests of Western countries in China increased. Still, at the same time the exchanges between China and the outside world also increased. Those people from all walks of life who came to China needed to learn Chinese to communicate, and there was a boom in learning Chinese. Many Westerners found the Chinese language difficult because its phonetic, linguistic and grammatical writing systems differed from European languages. Therefore, the missionaries started translating the texts of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics studies, such as *The Tri-Metrical*, *The Hundred Family Names*, and *The Thousand Words’ Poem*. Then, they wrote their teaching materials, comparing their languages with Chinese, finding out the similarities and differences between the languages, seeking more suitable methods of learning Chinese in their own countries, and writing more effective teaching materials for learning Chinese. For example, in 1872, Herbert Allen Giles published *The Chinese Language Without a Teacher*, a short-term textbook for rapid learning of spoken Chinese. It is viral popular among learners because it adopted the English notation system from the learners’ point of view, did not overemphasize the learning of tones, was sentence-oriented, and downplayed the concept of grammar, allowing learners to imitate pronunciation to master basic conversation. This was one of the motives for the missionaries and Sinologists to translate and spread the Chinese Ancient Primer classics.

### **Evaluation of Basic Education in Ancient China**

When foreigners learn Chinese, they are first exposed to literacy textbooks. Among the vast amount of Chinese writings, the Mengxue canon is a primary education reading book for the Chinese Ancient Primer children derived from the Confucian canon, specifically for enlightenment and literacy, with extensive contents covering ethics, history, education, astronomy and many other aspects of general knowledge, which was the basis of early childhood enlightenment education in the feudal period and the best way to understand Chinese cultural education.

In ancient China, the main form of education was private school education, which began with literacy education, starting with recognizing square characters, after some time, reading other textbooks similar to

literacy. Therefore, literacy education could be initially completed in one or two years, and then reading education could be carried out in ancient times. From *The Four Books* to *The Five Classics*, and finally to *Mencius*. The missionaries did not agree that Chinese primary education was based on literacy and writing, studying *the Four Books* and *the Five Classics*. In their view, most of the textbooks used by children, such as *The Tri-Metrical Classic*, *The Hundred Family Names*, and *The Thousand Words' Poem*, were boring and difficult, unsuitable for children's physical and mental development, and unable to arouse students' interest in learning. In his article *The State of Education in China*, Elijah Bridgman argues that the existing education system in China is incapable of teaching students correct truth and knowledge, and that the current education system has caused the Chinese to fall behind in the arts and sciences, not to mention astronomy and geography, which are almost entirely blank.

The educational outlook of Western sinologists is to criticize traditional education in ancient China from the perspective of Western education. The criticism of traditional Chinese education is also expressed in the translations of *The Thousand Words' Poem* and *The Tri-Metrical Classic* published in *China Review*, where, in their view, the path of Western education is necessary to change this situation, and it is up to foreigners to make this change.

### **Critique of Traditional Chinese Culture**

The connotations of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics were consistent with those of traditional Chinese culture. For example, *The Tri-Metrical Classic* was taken from typical sources, including literature, history, philosophy, astronomy and geography, human morality and righteousness, loyalty, filial piety, righteousness of traditional Chinese culture, etc. At the same time, the core ideas included benevolence, righteousness, sincerity, respect and filial piety. Therefore, the translation and introduction of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics also helped the missionaries to understand the traditional Chinese culture. In the context of the West's desire to open the doors of China and thus to penetrate Christian culture, understanding and harmonizing with traditional Chinese culture, with Confucianism as its theme, was the primary issue that the missionaries needed to address. As the orthodox thought in China since ancient times, Confucianism has been revered by all dynasties. Its high status and vast influence cannot be compared with any theoretical doctrine. The regulation of people's behavior and the establishment of ethics and morality in feudal society followed Confucianism. To Westerners, Confucianism permeated all aspects of Chinese religion, society, and politics, so understanding China necessitated an understanding of Confucian culture to spread Christian thought better. As missionaries to the Western colonizers, they did not come to China because they were interested in Chinese culture, but to validate the ecumenical nature of Christianity. The missionaries searched for the defects of Chinese Confucian culture from a Christian perspective to highlight its negative influence in China through the Monastic canon, emphasize the superiority of Christianity, and thus spread Christian thought. James Legge once said, "I think it would be beneficial to the work of future missionaries if all Confucian classics could be translated and also published with commentaries" (Duan & Zhou, 2006, p. 34).

To sum up the above, these missionaries and diplomats translated Confucian texts to understand the roots of Chinese thought and culture as well as the sources of core Chinese thought, and to achieve the purpose of debasing Chinese education and traditional thought, thus making the necessary preparation for the spread of Christian culture and thus infiltrating Western thought.

## **Translation and Dissemination of the Chinese Ancient Primer Classics by Representative Sinologists in the Period of *China Review***

### **Ernest John Eitel's Interpretation of *The Tri-Metrical Classic* and *The Thousand Words' Poem***

Ernest John Eitel has been an active contributor to *China Review* since its inception. According to statistics, the number of articles published by Ernest John Eitel in *China Review* over about 20 years exceeded 95. Although Ou Deli's scholarly achievements are fruitful, they have rarely been noticed by the academic community. The following paper will introduce his research writings from the perspective of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics.

Ernest John Eitel translated ancient Chinese literary texts, not out of a love of Chinese literature, but out of his studies of Chinese schooling, especially textbooks, such as his translations of *The Tri-Metrical Classic* and *The Thousand Words' Poem*. One of the passages preceding his translation of the text of *The Tri-Metrical Classic* states the reason for the translation, "To provide English students studying Chinese with a translation of the text in pairs of characters to facilitate their learning of the Chinese language".<sup>1</sup> He argues that in *The Tri-Metrical Classic*, the original basic Chinese teaching is represented. According to its content, Ernest John Eitel divides *The Tri-Metrical Classic* into seven sections of 176 sentences, dividing the text into "Introduction" and "The Value of Education". In the translation hints of the text, the translation of sentences and words of the original text is explained, and "the order of words in the original text is strictly followed in the translation, sometimes even at the expense of some word expressions".<sup>2</sup> For example, the first three sentences of *The Tri-Metrical Classic*, whose corresponding translations are.

(1) 人之初，性本善。 *Man's Commencement* (of Life) is such that His nature is radically good.

(2) 性相近，习相远。 But as to nature, men are mutually near each other, Whilst in practice they are mutually far apart.

(3) 苟不教，性乃迁。 Suppose, however, that no education were given to a man, His nature would then be directed (in its tendency).

The italics in the translation correspond to the words of the original text, allowing the beginner to see the connection and difference between the original text and the translation. This type of translation is also reflected in *A Thousand Character Essay*, which has sixteen verses and a total of one hundred and twenty-five sentences in translation. *The Thousand Words' Poem* was an early Chinese textbook of prior learning. Because it covered various aspects of astronomy, geography, nature, society, and history, it was the best reading material for enlightening and educating children, as shown by the fact that *The Thousand Words' Poem* has been handed down for more than 1,400 years, making it both a widely circulated reading material for children and an integral part of traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, translating *The Thousand Words' Poem* will enable better acquisition of Chinese characters in the Chinese language.

### **Herbert Allen Giles and *A Thousand Character Essay***

A native of Oxford, England, he passed the student interpreter examination in 1876. Subsequently, he served as interpreter, assistant consul, acting consul, and vice-consul at the British consulates in Tiensin, Ningpoo, Hankow, Canton, Swatow, Amoy, and Fuzhou until he resigned and returned to England in 1893 for

<sup>1</sup> *The China Review*, 20(1), 1892, pp. 35-41.

<sup>2</sup> *The China Review*, 20(1), 1892, p. 35.

health reasons, a total of 25 years, all of which he spent in China except for five vacations back to England. Herbert Allen Giles published 24 relevant articles in *China Review* (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Summary of Published Articles by Herbert Allen Giles*

Number	Title	Volume
1	A thousand-character essay	Vol. 2, No. 3, 1873
2	The Hsi Yuan Lu, or instructions to coroners	Vol. 3, No. 1, 1874
3	The Hsi Yuan Lu, or instructions to coroners	Vol. 3, No. 2, 1874
4	The Hsi Yuan Lu, or instructions to coroners	Vol. 3, No. 3, 1874
5	A visit to the country of gentlemen	Vol. 6, No. 3, 1877
6	Chinese allegory	Vol. 6, No. 6, 1878
7	On the use of the character fan	Vol. 7, No. 1, 1878
8	The new testament in Chinese	Vol. 10, No. 3, 1881
9	Mr. Balfour's Chuang Tsze	Vol. 11, No. 1, 1882
10	The remains of Lao Tzu	Vol. 14, No. 5, 1886
11	The remains of Lao Tzu	Vol. 14, No. 6, 1886
12	Giles remains of Lao Tzu	Vol. 15, No. 4, 1887
13	Protest	Vol. 15, No. 4, 1887
14	The meaning of artifacts	Vol. 15, No. 4, 1887
15	The Tzu Erh Chi: Past and present	Vol. 16, No. 4, 1888
16	Dr. Legge's critical notice of the remains of Lao Tzu	Vol. 16, No. 4, 1888
17	The remains of Lao-Tzu	Vol. 17, No. 5, 1889
18	Botanicon Sinicum, by E. Bretschneider, M. D.	Vol. 20, No. 2, 1892
19	Giles' dictionary	Vol. 21, No. 1, 1894
20	Lockhart's manual of Chinese quotations	Vol. 21, No. 6, 1895
21	Mr. Lockhart's "manual of Chinese quotations"	Vol. 22, No. 2, 1896
22	Mr. Parker as a translator	Vol. 22, No. 2, 1896
23	The musk deer	Vol. 22, No. 6, 1897
24	Mr. Parker and the mailed fist	Vol. 25, No. 6, 1901

These essays are divided into four main areas in terms of content, the first being an exposition of Herbert Allen Giles and his compilation of the *Chinese-English Dictionary* had done; the second being a debate with James Legge, John Chalmers, Joseph Edkins, and others on Lao Tzu's *The Tao Teh-King*; the third being a discussion of translations of the Bible; and finally, Herbert Allen Giles's translation of ancient Chinese texts. The principal translations are the abridged translation of *A Visit to the Country Gentleman*, the complete translation of *A Thousand Character Essay*, and the full translation of *The Hsi Yuan Lu, or Instructions to Coroners*.

Herbert Allen Giles and *China Review* began with a translation of the popular book on home education, The Thousand Character Text on Boudoir Training. *A Thousand Character Essay* (闺训 boudoir in the old days, where women lived was called the boudoir; here it is used to refer to women. 训: to teach) is the warning to women. Herbert Allen Giles's translation of the *A Thousand Character Essay* is based on a thorough understanding of the original documents. According to Herbert Allen Giles, many Chinese translations have many errors and flaws because they lack a thorough understanding of the original text. In *A Thousand Character Essay* and the later published work *The Tri-Metrical Classic*, we can see the rigor of Herbert Allen

Giles's translation, which positively affects the overseas dissemination of the Montessori texts. At the same time, when it comes to translating different ideas from the East and the West, Herbert Allen Giles emphasizes the need to follow the original text's independence, uniqueness and self-sufficiency. This is fully reflected in *A Thousand Character Essay*.

*Hear, every girl and future wife. The leading principles in Life!*

凡为女子，大理须明；

*Above all be gentle and refined; Four virtues and three duties mind:*

温柔典雅，四德三从。

*Hearken to what your parents say, And then with promptitude obey;*

孝顺父母，唯令是行。

*At morn, at eve, at meal-times stand, Respectfully with downcast hand.*

言辞庄重，举止消停。

Herbert Allen Giles's masterful translations and interpretations of the *A Thousand Character Essay* and other Chinese texts have led to a greater understanding in the West of Chinese monastic texts and the Chinese culture they embody.

### John Chalmers and *The Shi King*

In 1852, John Chalmers was sent by the London Missionary Society to Hong Kong to assist James Legge in the administration and teaching of the Anglo-Chinese College. When he first arrived in Hong Kong, John Chalmers had little knowledge of the Chinese language or even sinology, but later acquired knowledge of the Chinese language through his work in the printing office of the Anglo-Chinese College and his interactions with his Chinese colleagues. In 1858, John Chalmers took over from James Legge at the Hong Kong mission station, and in 1859, John Chalmers left Hong Kong for Guangzhou, where he stayed for 20 years. John Chalmers's Chinese studies covered the fields of language, literature, history, religion, customs and traditions. In a dictionary compilation, John Chalmers compiled the *Concise Kangxi Dictionary* and the *Pocket Dictionary of Guangzhou Dialect* called "milestone contributions". In Chinese character research, John Chalmers's most outstanding achievements are his *Structure of Chinese Characters* and his interpretation of the *Shuowen*.

John Cham's research was also abundant, with 31 articles published in just the sixteen years 1872-1888, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

#### *Summary of Articles Published by John Chalmers*

Number	Published article	Volume
1	Rhymes from the Chinese	Vol. 1, No. 1, 1872
2	The song of the cloud table on Mount Hwa	Vol. 1, No. 3, 1872
3	Tauism	Vol. 1, No. 4, 1873
4	Han Wan-Kung	Vol. 1, No. 5, 1873
5	The Foo on pheasant shooting	Vol. 1, No. 5, 1873
6	Han Wan-Kung	Vol. 1, No. 6, 1873
7	Chinese songs from the harp	Vol. 2, No. 1, 1873
8	Confucian cosmogony	Vol. 3, No. 6, 1875
9	One page from Choo Foo-Tsze	Vol. 4, No. 4, 1876
10	Chinese spelling tables	Vol. 4, No. 5, 1876



Table 4 to be continued

11	Watching spirits	Vol. 5, No. 4, 1877
12	Chinese natural theology	Vol. 5, No. 5, 1877
13	Chinese etymology, with a list of primitives and key to Sh-woh-Wan	Vol. 5, No. 5, 1877
14	Review of a Chinese manuscript new testament	Vol. 5, No. 6, 1877
15	The rhymes of the Shi-King	Vol. 6, No. 2, 1877
16	The rhymes of the Shi-King	Vol. 6, No. 3, 1877
17	Chinese running hand	Vol. 7, No. 5, 1879
18	The rhymes of the Shi-King	Vol. 9, No. 3, 1880
19	The rhymes of the Shi-King	Vol. 9, No. 5, 1881
20	Chinese mythology	Vol. 14, No. 1, 1885
21	The theory and practices of tuning pipes	Vol. 14, No. 1, 1885
22	Wind instruments	Vol. 13, No.6, 1885
23	The Tau Teh King remains	Vol. 14, No. 6, 1886
24	The history of foreigners in China	Vol. 14, No. 4, 1886
25	The sacred books of the East	Vol. 15, No. 1, 1886
26	List of characters used in spelling in the concise dictionary of Dr. Chalmers with their pronunciation in Pekingese and Cantonese	Vol. 15, No. 3, 1886
27	The prayer of the viceroy	Vol. 15, No. 3, 1886
28	The six modes of development of the Chinese written language—six books	Vol. 16, No. 1, 1887
29	On the term 转注 chuan chu as applied to Chinese characters	Vol. 16, No. 1, 1887
30	Dr. Edkins' criticisms	Vol. 16, No. 2, 1887
31	Report by Mr. F. S. A. bourne of a journey in South-Western China blue book-China	Vol. 17, No. 3, 1888

The literature mentioned, in terms of content, consists mainly of the Chinese language and literature. John Chalmers also published a phonetic study of the related Poetic Edda in *China Review*. Regarding Chinese phonetics, he mainly refers to Duan Yuche's *Six categories of rhyme table* to identify Chinese characters in terms of spelling, pronunciation, and classification, and uses appropriate methods for the phonetic identification of the Poetic Edda. In contrast, John Chalmers's discernment of the phonetic and explanatory aspects of Chinese characters, his outstanding contribution lies in its application to the textual examination and discernment of the text of *Shi King*. For example, he applies the Beijing pronunciation of the poem *Shi King*. For example, he compares the Beijing pronunciation and the Guangzhou pronunciation of *Guan Ju* with the "ancient pronunciation" marked by Joseph Edkins. Furthermore, in his subsequent articles, John Chalmers notes the modern phonetic meaning of the words in *Shi King*, and the ancient phonetic meaning. This will be of great use to the Western reader in understanding the Psalms from the perspective of the combination of sound and meaning, ancient and modern.

Professor Fei Zhengqing has commented that missionaries strove to make themselves scholars as they went about their missionary work, trying to change China from a cultural perspective, but in the process of spreading the word, they found that the impact went both ways. "They shaped the Chinese view of the outside world while conveying an image of China to the West", and "their historical merit was instead to act as a bridge between East and West" (Fairbank, 2004, p. 121).

### Concluding Remarks

*China Review*, an essential chronological journal from its inception to its final publication in the late nineteenth century, contained a handful of articles on the Chinese primary classics. Ernest John Eitel's

translations of *The Tri-Metrical Classic* and *The Thousand Words' Poem* facilitated the learning of Chinese characters in the West. Jam James Legge's lean translation and interpretation of the *A Thousand Character Essay* made the traditional Chinese canon and its embedded Chinese culture more accessible to Westerners. The study of Chinese's ancient and modern sounds of Chinese in John Chalmers' *Shih King* has provided Westerners with the possibility of learning Chinese from the perspective of combining sound and meaning, the modern and the ancient. As an important research content on *China Review*, the interpretation and translation of the Chinese Ancient Primer classics canonical texts have a non-negligible role in the cultural exchange between China and the West and deserves our more attention.

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