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THE
STEWART LOCKHART
COLLECTION OF
CHINESE COPPER COINS

BY

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PREFACE

In the first Journal issued by the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for June, 1858,¹ there was an important paper by Alexander Wylie on the coins of the Manchu dynasty, with 232 specimens figured. In the Journal for 1880 Dr. S. W. Bushell gave a further study of the same subject, with engravings of 259 coins. These are the only papers on Chinese numismatics published by the Society.

My first intention was that part of Sir James Stewart Lockhart's Collection should fill half the Journal for 1915, but it was soon seen that the size of the Collection and the size of many of the coins made it impossible to carry out this plan. The alternative was to publish as a separate volume, and the Council decided to undertake this work in the belief that Members of the Society and many others would appreciate it.

Two important Collections have been published in English: The Catalogue of Coins in the British Museum, by Terrien de Lacouperie, and the Glover Collection (1895). The former is of great value for those who collect the more ancient coins but not for the general collector. The latter has been long out of print.

The present work will be very useful to many collectors or would-be collectors who need guidance and the assurance which comes from finding one's own coins already figured and authoritatively described in a book; but it will also be most valuable to advanced students and collectors as the latest thing by a numismatist of repute.

While the author and the engraver were working at Weihaiwei the book was being printed piecemeal in Shanghai. The distance created much difficulty, but it is hoped that no mistakes of importance will be found. Proof-reading and getting the work through the press have made a heavy holiday task in spite of author's courtesy and printer's resourcefulness: it is hoped the book will be so received as to encourage the Society to publish other works of similar interest and value.

SAMUEL COULING,
Hon. Secretary and Editor of Journal.

¹ It was then the Shanghai Literary and Scientific Society.

INTRODUCTION

The history of the currency of China is one containing many chapters, the last of which is still unwritten. The question of Currency Reform still engages the attention of the Government of China, and there is at present in existence a Currency Reform Commission of the Ministry of Finance which is reported to be considering the unification of Currency and the means of restricting the number of new Republican coins now being minted. The material for the study of currency in China is very plentiful but it has received comparatively little attention from foreign students of Chinese. A few have interested themselves in Chinese coins from the numismatic point of view, and it is to them that it is hoped the publication of this Collection of coins with the description and illustration of its contents may be of some interest and of some help.

The Collection of Chinese copper Coins, with the exception of recent issues of coins, was made many years ago and has for long remained in its cabinet practically undisturbed. There it might have rested unhonoured and unknown had not Mr. Couling, the energetic Honorary Secretary of the Society, aroused it from its slumbers and arranged with the Council of the Society for its publication.

The currency of China has been dealt with by SSŪ-MA CH' IEN 司馬遷 in his *Shih Chi* 史記 or Historical Records, and by other Chinese historians in the Section on Economics, *Shih Huo Chih* 食貨志, which is found in all the histories of the many dynasties of China from the Han up to the end of the Ming dynasty, B.C. 206 to A.D. 1628. It has also been treated in the *Chou Li* which details the administrative system of the Chou dynasty, B.C. 1122 to B.C. 255, and in the work of KUAN CHUNG 管仲 known as KUAN TZŪ 管子, who lived in the fifth century B.C.; and though doubts exist as to the genuineness of the *Chou Li* and *Kuan Tzŭ*, it seems to be agreed that those works embody traditions which had been transmitted from very early times. In addition to many other works such as the 通志 *T'ung Chih*¹ by CH'ENG CH'IAO 鄭樵 of the Sung dynasty and the 文獻通考 *Wên Hsien T'ung K'ao* by MA TUAN-LIN 馬端臨² which contain sections on its history, there is also a special class of work called *Ch'ien P'u* 錢譜 confined solely to coinage from the numismatic point of view. A lot of such works is given in the *Ku Ch'üan Hui*³ 古泉匯, which is itself one of the most reliable of the books of this class. The first work of this kind was the *Ch'ien Chih* 錢志 by LIU SHIH 劉氏. It is not known in what dynasty he lived, but his *Ch'ien Chih*

Authorities on
Chinese Currency.

¹ 通志食貨畧第二錢幣 chüan XII, p. 1.

² 文獻通考錢幣考 chüan VIII, p. 45v°

³ Ku Ch'üan Hui, Shou III, p. 1-9.

is referred to KU YÜAN 顧烜 of the Liang dynasty, A.D. 502-556, who wrote the *Ch'ien P'u* 錢譜 which is mentioned in the Literary Annals of the Sui dynasty (隋書經籍志) but of which practically nothing remains but the title. The first special work on numismatics that has been handed down to the present time is the *Ch'üan Chih* 泉志 by HUNG TSUN 洪遵 styled CHING YEN 景巖 of the Sung dynasty, published in A.D. 1149. It contains 15 *chüan* 卷 (chapters), and divides the coins it describes and illustrates into nine classes:—

1. *Chêng Yung P'in* 正用品
Coins issued by the recognised rulers.
2. *Wei P'in* 僞品
Coins issued by usurpers, rebels, etc.
3. *Pu Chih Nien Tai P'in* 不知年代品
Coins of which the period of issue is unknown.
4. *T'ien P'in* 天品
Coins from heaven.
5. *Tao Pu P'in* 刀布品
Knife and Pu coins.
6. *Wai Kuo P'in* 外國品
Coins of foreign countries.
7. *Ch'i P'in* 奇品
Unusual coins (chiefly amulets, charms, etc.).
8. *Shên P'in* 神品
Supernatural coins.
9. *Ya Shêng P'in* 壓勝品
Charm coins.

This work is mentioned in the *Ssu K'ü Ch'üan Shü* 四庫全書 which states that it is a useful work of reference, though it contains many coins that have never been met with, but that its statements as to Celestial and Supernatural Coins can only be regarded as gross error. This criticism of Classes 4 and 8 seems not unjustified when it is found that among Celestial coins are included specimens of one of the 10,000 coins lent by T'ien Ti 天帝 to the Spinster (織女) and Cowherd (牛郎) on the occasion of their marriage, and of coins that were sent in showers from heaven (天雨寶錢), whilst amongst the Supernatural class is given a specimen of a coin which was presented to Wên Ti 文帝 of the Han dynasty by two mysterious youths who appeared to that Emperor in the shape of ducks!

The work of HUNG TSUN has been reprinted in the collection styled *Chin Ti Pi Shu* 津逮祕書 and also partly if not entirely in the *T'u Shu Chi Ch'êng* 圖書集成 (see 食貨典 *chüan* No. 352 錢鈔部彙考八之六).

During the Ming dynasty, A.D. 1368—1644, the most important work on numismatics was the *Ch'ien T'ung* 錢通 in 30 *chüan* by HU WO-K'UN 胡我琨 styled Tzŭ-Yŭ 自玉. During the Ch'ing dynasty, A.D. 1644—1911, the numbers of writers was large but the two best known are LI TSO-HSIEN 李左賢 and CH'U SHANG-LING 初尙齡 who wrote respectively the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* 古泉匯 published in 1864 and the *Chi Chin So Chien Lu* 吉金所見錄 published in 1827. The *Ku Ch'üan Hui* is generally recognised as the most reliable and complete work of its kind, and as reference is made to it throughout the description of the coins in this Collection, it may not be out of place to describe its contents.

Among the prefaces with which the work commences are two by PAO K'ANG 鮑康, a well known *littérateur* of the Ch'ing dynasty and an enthusiastic numismatist. It was at his instigation that LI TSO-HSIEN compiled the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* and he does not fail to acknowledge the great assistance PAO K'ANG rendered to him by giving him the benefit of his experience, criticism and advice. There is also an interesting preface by LI TSO-HSIEN himself which might be styled the *apologia* of a coin collector in which he explains his devotion to his hobby of coin-collecting.

After the prefaces follow the first four *chüan* (首集四卷) which contain:—

- (1) A general introduction 凡例.
- (2) A table of contents 目錄.
- (3) A list of the various writers on numismatics from the earliest times down to the Ch'ing dynasty 歷代著錄.
- (4) The opinions of various authors on vexed points connected with coins 古泉臆說諸家泉說.

The general body of the work is divided into four sections:—*Yüan* 元: *Hêng* 亨: *Li* 利: *Chêng* 貞. The *Yüan* section, containing 14 *chüan*, deals with the *Ku Pu* 古布, or ancient wedge-shaped coins.

The *Hêng* section, containing 14 *chüan*, with *Ku Tao* 古刀 or ancient knife coins.

The *Li* section, containing 18 *chüan*, with *Yüan Fa* 圓法 or round-shaped currency.

The *Chêng* section, containing 14 *chüan*, is divided as follows:

Chüan 1-3, unclassified and unusual forms.

Chüan 4-12, *Ya Shêng* 壓勝錢, charm coins.

Chüan 13-14 *Ch'üan Fan* 泉範, coin moulds.

The coins described in the *Ku Ch'üan Hui*, which do not include the coins of the Ch'ing dynasty, number 5003. A Supplement—*Hsü Ch'üan Hui* 續泉匯 was published in 1875, eleven years after the issue of the original work, in which 984 varieties of coins are described, thus bringing the total number of coins described in the original work and the Supplement up to 5987. It is probable that no nation has had a greater variety of

coinage than China, as the total number of Imperial, State and private issues amounts to about ten thousand.¹

Early Barter.

The primitive mode of exchange in China as elsewhere was barter, when people, as the *Shu Ching*² says, exchanged what they had for what they had not, (遷有無) and to such barter can be traced the ultimate origin of Chinese coinage. Among other races there was a primitive currency showing a hunting and pastoral stage when furs and cattle were bartered. For example among the Romans the use of the word *pecunia* for money is a trace of the latter stage. Of such stages the currency of China reveals no trace,³ its earliest coinage such as the *Fu* and Knife types showing traces of an agricultural stage when agricultural implements were bartered. In the earliest times people no doubt simply exchanged between each other the tools, implements and commodities they possessed and did not require, for those they wanted. In B.C. 2838 SHÊN NUNG 神農 is said to have established a central mart in which business was transacted by day. It was attended by the people of the state who exchanged the commodities they had for those they did not possess.⁴ As time went on, the necessity for having some common commodity as a standard of comparison arose. Among such commodities used as *Pi* 幣 or media of exchange were cloth (布); silk (帛); tortoise shells (龜); pearls (珠); jade (玉); metals (金); grain (穀) and salt (鹽). In *Kuan Tzū*⁵ it is stated that the feudal princes brought gold 金; pearls 珠, jade 玉, the five kinds of grain 五穀; ornamental fabrics 文采; and currency 布泉 to pay to the State of Ch'i in exchange for its stone tokens 石璧. In the *Shu Ching* Copper (金) is mentioned as being received for redeemable offences (金作贖刑)⁶ and the character 鍰 *Huan* is used in the sense of a weight of six ounces in which fines were paid.⁷ Gold, Silver and Copper (三金) are given among the articles of tribute.⁸

Early media of exchange.

In the 史記 *Shih Chi* or Historical Records of SSŪ-MA CH' IEN it is stated that the media of exchange of YŪ 虞, the Emperor SHUN 舜, B.C. 2255, and of the Hsia dynasty, B.C. 2205—1818, were three kinds of metal—yellow (gold); white (silver); and red (copper); *Chien* 錢; *Pu* 布; *Tao* 刀; tortoise shells; *Kuei* 龜 and cowries *Pei* 貝.⁹ Cowries and gems are also mentioned in the *Shu Ching*. "Here are those ministers of my government who share with me the offices of the state and yet only think of hoarding up cowries and gems (貝玉)."¹⁰ Salt cakes have also been used as currency even up to modern times on the borders of Yünnan.

¹ *Ancient Chinese Coinage*, p. 38, by Rev. FRANK H. CHALFANT, D.D., forming Chap. III of *Shantung*, compiled and edited by R. C. FORSYTH.

² LEGGE, *Shu*, p. 78.

³ W. VISSERING, *Chinese Currency*. Ch. I. p. 1

⁴ 文獻通考 Ch. VIII, p. 45v°.

⁵ *Kuan Tzū*, *Chüan* 24 p. 10v°.

⁶ *Shu*, LEGGE p. 38-39.

⁷ *Shu*, LEGGE p. 605.

⁸ *Shu*, LEGGE p. 110.

⁹ 史記平準書 Ch. 30, p. 8.

¹⁰ *Shu*, LEGGE p. 240.

It would, therefore, appear that copper money of three kinds, *Ch'ien*; *Pu*; and *Tao*—were in use as media of exchange, at the same time as other exchange values which were gradually supplanted by money. It is stated by MA TUAN-LIN that at the beginning of the Han dynasty (B.C. 206) gold and copper currency had taken the place of pearls, jade, tortoise shells and silver, which, made into ornaments or utensils, were regarded as valuables but not used as currency.¹ It is stated by some Chinese authorities that metallic money was originally cast only to meet a temporary emergency, and when the emergency was over the casting of money ceased. For example, the author of the *Pên Ts'ao Kang Mu* 本草綱目 says that the origin of money (錢) was the casting of *Pi* 幣 by the Emperor Yü 禹, B.C. 2205—2197, to relieve the distress caused by five years of drought, and that when the drought was over the casting of money ceased. In any case metallic money appears to have existed in China in very early times, but it seems impossible to fix exactly when it first came into existence. Chinese authorities hold very different views on this point.

Early Copper money.

According to one authority, money existed from the time of T'AI HAO 太昊 B.C. 2953 onwards.² According to another, HUANG TI 黃帝, B.C. 2698, cast metal into *Huo* 貨 or money; made metal Knives 金刀; instituted the five *Pi* or media of exchange 五幣:—Gold 金: Knife coins 刀: *Pu* coins 泉: Cloth 布: Silk 帛.³ This attribution of a metallic currency to the pre-historic age of China has received the support of writers on currency even up to the present day. One of the best known of those who have supported this tradition is LO PI 羅泌 of the Sung dynasty who wrote a work entitled *Lu Shih* 路史 which contains a chapter on money in which he assigns to TAI HAO 太昊 (B.C. 2953) specimens of metallic currency which he alleges had survived up to his time. The views of Lo Pi have been adopted among others by the compilers of the *Hsi Ch'ing Ku Chien* 西清古鑑, published in A.D. 1750 under the patronage of the Emperor CH' IEN LUNG, which has a supplement on coins. This supplement has been published separately under the title of *Ch'in Ting Ch'ien Lu* 欽定錢錄, and is an illustrated description of the coins in the Imperial Palace at Peking. The first coin described and illustrated in it is attributed to T'AI HAO 太昊 FU HSI 伏羲, B.C. 2953, and the second to YEN TI 炎帝 (SHÊN NUNG 神農), B.C. 2838, on the authority of the *Lu Shih* 路史. But more critical writers, such as the authors of the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* and the *Chi Chin So Chien Lu* 吉金所見錄 have abandoned the views of Lo Pi which have no real historical evidence to support them, and have adopted a more reasonable attitude. The author of the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* whilst he rejects the views of Lo Pi attributes the oldest Coins of the *Pu* 布 pattern to the Emperor SHUN, B.C. 2255, whilst the author of the *Chi Chin So Chien Lu* is of opinion that the earliest period to which coins of the *Pu* 布 type can be assigned is about B.C. 770.

Period at which Copper money came into existence.

¹ See 文獻通考 *Chüan* 8, p. 46.

² 文獻通考 Ch. 8, p. 45.

³ 通鑑輯覽 Ch. 1, p. 3v.

Date of Knife
and Round Coins.

Whilst such difference of opinion exists regarding the date of the earliest *Pu* 布 coins, authorities seem to be agreed in referring the earliest *Tao* 刀 or Knife coins to the Feudal Period between B.C. 770 and 470, and the first inscribed round coins to the time of CH'ÉNG WANG (成王), B.C. 1115—1079, of the Chou dynasty (see Collection, No. 94).

Origin of the
shapes of ancient
coins.

Spade-Money.

As regards the origin of the forms of the *Ku Pu* or wedge-shaped metallic currency (see Collection, No. 1 to No. 37), Chinese authorities do not give any definite or satisfactory information. One of the oldest forms of the *Ku Pu* or wedge-shaped type of coins is termed *Ch'an Pi* 鑿幣 or *Ch'an Pu* 鑿布, Spade Money, (see Collection, No. 1—22), from their spade-like shape. They have also been called Plane Money as the definition of *Ch'an* in the *Shuo Wên* and *Liu Shu Ku* points to a plane or chisel rather than to a spade.¹ Spades were no doubt used in primitive times as barter and Spade-money no doubt owes its origin to that early barter.² As regards the origin of the other forms of *Ku Pu* (see Collection No. 27—33), it has been held by some that as one of the meanings of *Pu* is cloth and as cloth was a common medium of exchange, the form of the *Pu* coins is an imitation of the character 布 *Pu* for cloth. But as cloths used as media of exchange, were long strips of uniform length and breadth, it is not easy to understand how the character *Pu* can be regarded as an imitation of such cloths or how the shape of *Pu* coins can have originated in an imitation of that character. A more plausible theory is that advanced by HOPKINS³ who is of opinion that the original sense of *Pu* was to spread and not *cloth* and that, like the Spade-shaped coins, the form of the *Pu* or wedge-shaped coins had its origin in an agricultural instrument of the nature of a hoe or spade.

Coins resembling
seal form of
Ch'üan.

The shape of coins Nos. 23 and 25 in the Collection is held by some to represent the seal form of the character 泉 *Ch'üan*. The term *Ch'üan*, as will be seen later on, was one of the oldest terms for money, and it is said to have been applied originally to coins which in shape resembled its own seal form.

Knife Coins.

The origin of Knife coins called *Chin Tao* 金刀, *Tao Ch'ien* 刀錢 and *Tao Pi* 刀幣 is uncertain. According to the opinion of the author of the *Ku Ch'üan Hui*,⁴ based on a passage in *Huai Nan Tzū* 淮南子, they had their origin in a regulation introduced by DUKE HUAN (桓公) of Ch'i 齊 who, being afraid that his stock of arms would be insufficient, ordered that petty offences should be redeemed with a metal Knife 金刀 *Chin Tao*. But as HOPKINS⁵ has pointed out, the two characters in *Huai Nan Tzū* are 金分 *Chin Fên* and not 金刀 *Chin Tao*, the passage stating that for petty offences the culprit should redeem his offence with a portion of metal (輕罪贖以金分) and the passage in *Kuan Tzū* 管子, on which that

¹ *On the Origin and Earlier History of the Chinese Coinage*, by L. C. HOPKINS, M.R.A.S., Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, April 1895, page 324.

² *Chinese Early Barter and Inscribed Money*, by H. A. RAMSDEN, F. R. N. S., p. 7-10.

³ See *Op: Cit:* p. 361-366.

⁴ *Ku Ch'üan Hui*, Hêng, II, 1.

⁵ *Op: Cit:* p. 369-372.

in *Huai Nan Tzū* is based, stating that for offences committed by misadventure, fines of metal were inflicted (過罪以金). It seems, therefore, that the origin of Knife money was not such as the author of the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* believed it to have been. A more probable explanation of its origin is that it was derived and copied from Knives which were used for domestic and other purposes such as hunting, incising characters in bone or bamboo, etc., and which were exchanged in barter.¹

As regards round-shaped coins, some think that they were evolved from the ring Round coins. which is found at the end of the Knife coins, but as round coins were cast at the beginning of the Chou dynasty, B.C. 1122, this opinion does not appear to be tenable. HOPKINS² suggests that they were a reproduction in metal of the *Pi* 璧, a jade-stone token used under the Chou dynasty as a badge of rank, a proof of diplomatic authority and a sacrificial symbol. A *Pi* was round in shape with a hole in the centre and was divided into three classes. When the field (肉) was double the width of the hole, it was called a *Pi* 璧: when the field and hole were equal in breadth, a *Huan* (環): and when the hole was double the field, a *Yüan* (援). HOPKINS' suggestion receives support from the dictionary of K'ANG HSI in which under the character *Ch'ien* 錢 it is said:—“The cash” *i.e.* the *Pao Huo* 寶貨 coins cast by the Emperor *Ching* 景,—see Collection Nos. 95-96—“were in shape like *Pi*, so the terms field and hole were applied to them.” (錢形似璧故亦稱肉好). Ramsden³ is of opinion that the *Pi* were “originally derived from primitive rings or armlets made either of stone or metal and worn as ornaments on the person, constituting accordingly treasure objects, which went to make up the riches of archaic periods,” and he classifies into two groups the circular metal objects which were used in barter or as as a currency medium previous to the inscribed money:—“A.—Those resembling rings or armlets for adornment or other requirements and which were probably the most primitive. B.—Those having the shape of a flat disc, similar in all respects to the *Pi*, but in metal, and which were probably the immediate precursors of the inscribed round money.”

The terms used for money are various. In the *T'ung Chih* 通志⁴ it is stated, Terms used for Money. “From the time of T'AI HAO, B.C. 2953 onwards, money *Ch'ien* 錢 has existed. In the time of T'AI HAO 太昊 and KAO YANG 高陽, B.C. 2514, it was called *Chin* 金; in that of HSIUNG SHIH 熊氏, B.C. 2698, and KAO HSIN SHIH 高辛氏, B.C. 2436, *Huo* 貨; in that of T'AO T'ANG SHIH 陶唐氏, B.C. 2357, *Ch'üan* 泉; in the Shang 商 and Chou 周 dynasties, B.C. 1766—255, *Pu* 布; by the natives of Ch'i 齊 and Chü 莒 (in the modern Shantung) *Tao* 刀.”

One of the oldest terms, which is not included in the list given in the passage *Pi* 幣 from the *T'ung Chih*, used in the sense of “an equivalent for commodities and for which individuals readily exchange their products and services” is *Pi* 幣. AS CHAVANNES has

¹ See RAMSDEN, *Op: cit:* p. 10-13. ² *Op: cit:* p. 330. ³ *Op: cit:* p. 26-27. ⁴ 通志 Ch. 62 p. 1.

stated: "Le mot *Pi* désigne non seulement les monnaies mais tout objet susceptible de devenir un moyen d'échange; je crois le mot 'Valeur' le traduit assez exactement.¹" YEN SHIH-KU 顏師古 defines the term as that whereby goods are made convertible and exchange effected (凡言幣者皆所以通貨物易有無). The combination *Ch'ien Pi* 錢幣 means copper money, and *Chin Pi* 金幣, *T'ung Pi* 銅幣, *Chih Pi* 紙幣 are now commonly used for gold, copper and paper currency respectively.

Ch'üan 泉 as a term for money.

As regards the term *Ch'üan* 泉 one of the Nine Treasuries 九府 in the *Chou Li* is termed 泉府 *Ch'üan Fu*, and it is said that *Ch'üan* means money paid in or in reserve, as opposed to *Pu* 布 money in circulation. Whilst there appears to be a general consensus of opinion among authorities that the primary meaning of *Ch'üan* is a spring of water or a pool fed by a stream, and that it was used in a secondary sense for money or currency, CH'ENG CH'IAO 鄭樵 the author of the *T'ung Chih*² 通志 holds that money was called *Ch'üan* in allusion to the shape (謂之泉言其形) and that the original meaning of *Ch'üan* was money and not a spring or pool. He states that the shape of ancient money is that of the seal character for *Ch'üan* 𠂔 (see Collection, Coins No. 23-25); that the word *Ch'ien* 錢 was subsequently used for *Ch'üan*, which was then borrowed to write the word *Ch'üan* a spring, though the lower part of the seal character for *Ch'üan* does not, as is commonly supposed, consist of water. The character *Ch'üan* in the sense of money or coin appears on coins issued by the Usurper Wang Mang (see Collection Nos. 136-145 and 162-182) and the combinations *Ch'üan Fa* 泉法, Coinage; *Ch'üan Pi* 泉幣, Metal money; *Ch'üan Pu* 泉布 and *Pu Ch'üan* 布泉, Currency are also found.

Ch'ien 錢 as a term for money.

The word *Ch'ien* 錢, which has become the common term for money, is supposed to have been a later term for money than *Ch'üan* 泉 and not to have come into use until the beginning of the Chou dynasty, B.C. 1122, when it was applied to round copper coins with a hole, the weight of which was reckoned in *Shu* 銖. *Ch'ien* seems to have originally meant a hoe, and as hoes were no doubt bartered like other agricultural implements in ancient times, the term *Ch'ien* ultimately came to be used as a term for money.

Huo 貨 as a term for money.

Another term for money is *Huo* 貨 which is made up of *Hua* 化 to exchange and *Pei* 貝 Cowries. The *Ku Ch'üan Hui*³ says that it was anciently the general term for Knife and *Pu* coins. The *Liu Shu Ku* states that its meaning is *Hua* 化 to exchange, and that as exchange began with cowries the character for cowries 貝 *Pei* has been added.

Special names applied to coins.

Chia Ch'ien 莢錢

In addition to the general terms for money, there are also special names applied to different kinds of coins. One of the earliest of these is the name *Yü Chia Ch'ien* 榆莢錢 or *Chia Ch'ien* 莢錢,⁴ elm-seed-vessel money, which was applied to small cash, three *Shu* 銖 in weight, and which were also termed *Wu Fên Ch'ien* 五分錢. They were

¹ *Les Mémoires Historiques de Se-ma Ts'ien*, Vol. III., p. 563. ² See 通志食貨略二錢幣 p. 1.

³ *Ku Ch'üan Hui*, Yüan XII, 2.

⁴ 文獻通考 chüan 8, p. 460.

issued at the beginning of the Han dynasty, B.C. 206 because the copper coin of the Ch'in dynasty was found to be too heavy and not handy, and they were so called from their resemblance to the small, thin seed-vessel of the elm.

During the YUNG KUANG (永光) period (A.D. 465) of the Emperor HSIAO WU TI 孝武帝, the currency was greatly debased and the small debased coins were styled *Ê Yen Ch'ien* 鷺眼錢 'Goose-eye coins' and *Yen Huan Ch'ien* 緹環錢.¹ *Yen* was the term applied to the circular jade ornaments of which the twelve pendants of the sacrificial cap *Mien* 冕 of the Emperor consisted² and *Yen Huan Ch'ien* were cash resembling in shape those circular jade ornaments. The *Ku Ch'üan Hui*³ says that coins were chiselled close to the hole in order to make two coins out of one, the outside portion being called *Yen Huan*. During the reign of FEI TI 廢帝, A.D. 465, when the debasement of the currency which prevailed during the time of his predecessor, HSIAO WU TI continued, coins were called *Lai Tzū* 來子 or 萊子 and *Hsing Yeh*, 荇葉, leaves of the *Limnanthemum nymphoides*, which are very light and float on the surface of water.⁴

The name *Nan Ch'ien* 男錢 was given to the *Fêng Huo Ch'ien* 豐貨錢 issued by the Emperor WU TI 武帝, A.D. 502-548, of the Liang dynasty because if worn by a woman, she would give birth to a son.⁵ The same name for the same reason was given to the *Pu Ch'üan* 布泉 coins of WANG MANG 王莽 (see Collection, Coin No. 182)⁶

The name *Kung Shih Nü Ch'ien* 公式女錢 was applied to the *Wu Shu* 五銖 cash cast by WU TI of the Liang dynasty. The *Ku Ch'üan Hui* states that according to CHANG T'AI 張台, an authority on currency, the *Kung Shih Nü Ch'ien* had a rim round the hole on the reverse, whereas cash called *Nü Ch'ien* 女錢 had no rim round the hole on the reverse.

The following technical terms are used in numismatic works. The obverse of a coin is called *Mien* 面, the face, and the reverse, *Pei* 背, the back, and 幕 *Man*, even and uninscribed (平而無文 *P'ing Erh Wu Wên*). The field is termed 肉 *Jou*, the flesh; the hole, 好 *Hao*, the combination 肉好 *Jou Hao* meaning the field and the hole. The raised rim or edge of a coin is styled *Kuo* 郭, an outer wall; *Chou Kuo* 周郭, a surrounding outer wall and *Lun Kuo* 輪郭, the felloe of a wheel. The inscription or legend is called *Wên* 文, the writing or ornament. *Ku Chu* 鼓鑄 is the expression used for casting coins. *Chu* 柱, a pillar, is the term for short perpendicular marks, and *Hsing* 星, a star, the term for dots on coins.

All coins, prior to the establishment in the various provinces of mints with modern machinery, were not 'struck' or 'stamped' but cast in moulds. Specimens of such moulds are given in works on numismatics, and *Ch'üan* 13, 14 of the *Ku Ch'üan Hui*

Ê Yen Ch'ien
鷺眼錢

Yen Huan Ch'ien
緹環錢

Lai Tzū Ch'ien
萊子錢

Hsing Yeh Ch'ien
荇葉錢

Nan Ch'ien
男錢

Kung Shih Nü Ch'ien
公式女錢

Nü Ch'ien
女錢

Technical
Terms

Casting of
coins.

¹ 文獻通考 chüan 8, p. 49v° ² Legge Li Ki Vol. II p. i.

³ Ku Ch'üan Hui, Shou III. 15v°. ⁴ 文獻通考 chüan 8, p. 49. ⁵ 文獻通考 chüan 8, p. 50.

⁶ Ku Ch'üan Hui, Shou III, p. 15. ⁷ Ku Ch'üan Hui, Li VI, 9.

specially treat of coin moulds, *Ch'ien Fan* 錢範. The following description of moulds is given by Chalfant¹: "At first the moulds were made for the obverse only. These were placed against a plane surface when casting, which resulted in a coin with a flat reverse. Such was the process until the Han dynasty when moulds were prepared for the reverse side also. The standard patterns were of bronze, copper and stone from which the clay moulds were made. The original patterns occur as positive and negative. The negative patterns were more easily engraved, but required the intermediary of wax to obtain a negative clay mould for use in casting. The standard metal patterns readily imprinted their counterparts on the wax, which was easily detached. Clay was then applied to the surface and by burning in a kiln, the wax was melted from the clay, leaving a clear duplicate of the pattern. The positive metal patterns must have been applied directly to the clay to obtain a negative mould." Moulds were engraved with the title of the period of the reign of the Emperor during which they were cast and the dates of coins have been ascertained by the discovery of moulds on the sites of ancient mints.²

Modern Mints
and Modern
Copper coins.

The first mint with modern machinery established in China was that set up by the British Government of Hongkong in 1866 in which were minted dollar, half dollar, twenty, ten, and five-cent pieces.

This mint was closed in 1868 and the machinery was sold to the Government of Japan which established it in a mint at Osaka. China did not follow the example set by Hongkong and Japan until 張之洞 CHANG CHIH-TUNG who was Viceroy of the two Kuang from 1884 to 1889, established a mint at Canton, and subsequently mints were set up in the other provinces. From these mints have been issued in addition to a silver coinage the following denominations of copper coins—20, 10, 5 and 1 cent and 1 cash pieces—which have not a hole in the centre like the former cash and which, in addition to an inscription in Chinese, have also one in English. Modern copper coins have been issued in very large quantities. "Of the cents it is estimated that 12,500,000 were issued up to the end of 1906."³ It is said that, in 1912 and 1913, there were issued at Nanking alone, 357,913,000 and 493,774,000 ten-cash pieces, and it has been stated that the total number of ten-cash pieces coined throughout the Republic in 1914 amounted to 667,897,114.

Metals used for
coining.
Gold.

The metals used for media of exchange have been gold, silver, copper, iron, white metal and lead. No gold coins have been cast, but in the Chou dynasty there were gold pieces an inch square and weighing one *Chin* 斤 or 16 *Liang* or ounces, from which they were called either 一 斤 *I Chin*, one Chin, or 一 金 *I Chin*—one gold piece. In the Ch'in dynasty the gold unit was one 鎰 *I* or 20 *Liang* or ounces and was called 上 幣 *Shang Pi*, money of higher value, copper coins being designated *Hsia Pi*, 下 幣 money of lower value. The Han dynasty reverted to the *Chin* 斤 or gold unit of the Chou dynasty and

¹ & ² See Chalfant *Op : cit* : p. 38 and p. 1.

³ See MORSE, *The Trade and Administration of China*. p. 127.

in the year B.C. 95 the Emperor HSIAO WU TI 孝武帝 had gold pieces made into the shape of the foot of a unicorn and the hoof of a horse to celebrate the auspicious appearance in that year of a white unicorn, of a famous horse and of gold in the Mountain of T'ai Shan.¹ It appears, therefore, that during the Chou, Ch'in and Han dynasties there was a gold standard of value represented by a certain weight, as well as a copper currency. As time went on the gold standard was replaced by a silver standard, though Morse² states that "the standard introduced by the T'ang dynasty and continuing in theory until to-day was a part of a bi-metallic system, or even (although gold formed no part of the currency) of a trimetallic system, by which, in value, 1 gold=10 silver=1,000 copper, these being the metallic exchange equivalents in China thirteen centuries ago."

Lin Chih Chin
麟趾金
Niao T'i Chin
驀蹄金

No silver coins were issued in China until the establishment of the mints with modern machinery which, as has been stated already, minted silver dollars and silver subsidiary coins of the value of twenty, ten, and five cents. It is stated³ that LIU KUANG-SHIH 劉光世 when governor of Hupeh cast gold and silver as well as copper coins (see Collection, No. 801), but such coins were more in the nature of tokens and cannot be regarded as a regular Government issue. Previous to the minting of dollars and subsidiary silver coins, silver was practically entirely current in ingots or Shoes which are called *Yüan Pao* 元寶. The standard ingot weighs about 50 taels and the silver it contains is called Sycee from the Cantonese pronunciation of 細絲 *Hsi Ssü*, Sycee. Fine Silk. GILES in his "Glossary of Reference" thus explains the term, "細絲紋銀" (literally, fine silk line silver). The term *Sycee* (fine silk) originated in the five Northern Provinces (Chihli, Shantung, Shansi, Shensi and Honan). When the Shansi Bankers melt silver into ingots, after it has been liquified and poured into the mould, and before it has again solidified, the mould is lightly tapped, when there appear on the surface of the silver fine, silklike, circular lines. The higher the 'touch' of the metal, the more like fine silk are these 'circlings' on the surface of the silver. Hence ingots of full quality are classified as sycee." Those who desire to learn full particulars regarding ingots and the Tael Currency should consult the fifth Chapter of *The Trade and the Administration of China*, by MORSE. Tael Currency.

Copper is the ordinary metal out of which the coinage of China has been and is still made. As has been stated above, the theory is that 1000 copper cash are equal to 10 silver and 1 gold. But it is not necessary to live long in China to learn that theory and practice as elsewhere seldom agree, and to become acquainted with the vagaries of the value of cash. It is soon discovered that a string of 1000 cash—a 吊 *Tiao* or 串 *Ch'üan*—is only such in name, containing sometimes 980 and sometimes 970 only, and that in parts of the north of China one cash counts for two. It is also soon realised that the

¹ 圖書集成金部彙考—*Chüan* 335 p. i. ² See MORSE *Op. cit.*: p. 122. ³ 宋史 *Chüan* 369 p. 6.

exchange value of cash as measured in silver is an ever varying quantity and as fickle as the white metal on which its value mainly depends.

Iron.

Iron has not been commonly used for coining money. Recourse was had to it only occasionally when the currency happened to be in a more disorganized state than usual. For example KUNG-SUN SHU 公孫述, who rebelled against KUANG WU TI 光武帝 of the After Han dynasty in A.D. 25 and conquered the modern Ssüch'uan, setting himself up as Emperor under the title of PAI TI 白帝, coined iron coins. Again during the the Liang dynasty, in the year A.D. 525, iron coins became so plentiful that they were moved about in cart loads. The last occasion on which iron coins were issued by the Government was in the reign of HSIEN FENG 咸豐, A.D. 1851—1861, of the Ch'ing dynasty, who on account of the troubled state of the country due to the T'aip'ing rebellion, and of the inability to procure supplies of copper, was driven to issue iron money (see Collection, Coins Nos. 1680-1825, 1826 and 1828) and copper token coins. In 1857 there was a rising owing to the iron coins and they were withdrawn.

White Metal.

Coins of white metal (白金) were made by HSIAO WU TI (孝武帝) in the year B.C. 120 but only lasted till B.C. 115. They were of three kinds. The first kind was round in shape and called 白選 *Pai Hsüan*. It was ornamented with a dragon and was worth 3000 *ch'ien*. The second kind was square in shape, ornamented with a horse and worth 500 *ch'ien*. The third kind was oblong, ornamented like the shell of a tortoise and worth 300 *ch'ien*.

Lead.

Lead was seldom used. In the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* a specimen is given of a lead coin issued in A.D. 579 by the Emperor HSUAN TI 宣帝 of the Northern Chou dynasty, which is stated to be the first specimen of a coin made of lead.

Inscriptions on Coins.

Inscriptions on Chinese coins date from the very earliest times. It is held by some authorities that the most ancient coins were not inscribed, and this view receives support from a specimen of the Spade Money (see Collection, No. 1) which is uninscribed and which bears no sign of ever having had an inscription. The inscriptions on the earliest coins are in seal script and are most difficult to decipher. The inscriptions on the *Ch'i Tao* 齊刀, Knife coins of Ch'i, (see Collection, No. 34—44), regarding which authorities differ so much, are a good illustration of such difficulty. The inscriptions on the oldest coins do not give any information regarding their date of issue but generally merely state their place of issue. (See Collection, Spade Money No. 2—22: Knife coins of Ch'i, No. 34—44: of the City of Ming, No. 45—74 and of the States of Yen and Chao, No. 75—93). The value of the coin is also sometimes indicated, one of the earliest specimens of this kind being the wedge-shaped Coin No. 32 which is inscribed 當十化 *Tang Shih Hua*, equal to ten coins, on the obverse, and 十貨 *Shih Huo*, 10 coins,

¹ For illustrations of these coins see Chavannes, *Op. cit.*: p. 566.

² *Ku Ch'üan Hui*, Li VI. p. 17.

on the reverse. The first round coins with an inscription are those of the Chou dynasty (see Collection No. 94-96) which bear the inscriptions 寶化 *Pao Hua*, valuable coin, and 寶四化 *Pao Ssü Hua*, 寶六化 *Pao Liu Hua*, valuable four coins and valuable six coins, that is, valuable coin equal in weight to four and six units as stated above. 化 *Hua* is said to be an abbreviation of 貨 *Huo*, Coin. These coins are interesting as being the first on which appears the character 寶 *Pao* which became ultimately one of the terms in the combinations 通寶 *T'ung Pao*, current valuable coin, which is still used on the most modern coins, 重寶 *Chung Pao*, heavy coin, and 元寶 *Yüan Pao*, original coin, These combinations have been translated as "Currency," "Heavy Currency" and "Original Currency" in the description of those coins in the Collection on which those terms are inscribed.

As regards the meaning of the terms *T'ung Pao* and *Chung Pao*, there appears to be no difficulty, but that of *Yüan Pao* is not so obvious. According to WÈNG SHU-P'EI 翁樹培 *alias* I CH'ÜAN 宜泉, an authority on numismatics who contributed to the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* a collection of notes on ancient money entitled 古泉彙考 *Ku Ch'üan Hui K'ao*, the meaning of the word *Yüan* 元 in the combination *Yüan Pao* has no special signification and *Yüan Pao* is merely a phrase dating from the time of the *K'ai T'ung* 開通 issue of coins (see Collection, No. 261-328) about A.D. 622¹. He adds that at that time *Yüan Pao* was a name for a Cræsus, that during the *Chung T'ung* 中統 period of the *Yüan* dynasty, A.D. 1260—1264 it was used as a name for paper money, *Ch'ao* 鈔, and that in more recent times it has been applied to silver ingots, *Yin Ting* 銀錠. In the History of the T'ang dynasty² it is stated that the inscription on *K'ai T'ung* coins, which was written by OU-YANG HSUN 歐陽詢, can be read with a meaning either as *K'ai Yüan T'ung Pao* 開元通寶 or as *K'ai T'ung Yüan Pao* 開通元寶 but that the coins were commonly called *K'ai T'ung Yüan Pao* coins (流俗謂之開通元寶) It seems probable that *Yüan Pao* may have been intended originally to apply to coins first issued during a reign, but that as time went on its original meaning was not adhered to and it came to be used for currency generally, regardless of the time of its issue.

As regards the *Pao Ssü Hua* and *Pao Liu Hua* (Coins No. 95 and 96), it is stated that Ching Wang 景王, B.C. 544—519, continued to coin *Pao Hua* coins 'with children and mothers mutually balancing' (子母相權 *tzü mu hsiang ch'üan*), which means that each of the higher denominations corresponds in weight with the number of units with which it is inscribed. Thus two of the coins inscribed six 六化 *Liu Hua* should weigh the same as three of those marked four 四化 *Ssü Hua*, and an actual experiment by Chalfant³ proved that such was the weight of the coins tested. In this connection it is important to remember that the copper coinage of China in theory is supposed to weigh

¹ See *Ku Ch'üan Hui*, Shou, IV. p. 4.

² See 舊唐書 *Chüan* 48. p. 5.

³ CHALFANT, *Op: Cit: p.* 37

a certain weight, which is meant to represent its intrinsic value. Thus the copper coins of the Ch'in and Han dynasties (B.C. 220-86) incised 半兩 *Pan Liang* (see Collection, No. 103—135A) and the 五銖 *Wu Shu*, Five Shu coins (see Collection, No. 186—249) issued between B.C. 118 and A.D. 618 were supposed to weigh respectively half a tael and 5 *Shu* or $\frac{5}{24}$ of a tael, as 24 *Shu* were equal to one *liang* or tael in weight. A glance at the specimens of these two types of coins in the Collection will show that theory and practice differed widely and that though the coins were duly inscribed with the statutory weight, they became depreciated and fell far short of it. From the beginning of the T'ang dynasty, A.D. 618 onwards, standard copper coins were supposed to weigh $\frac{1}{10}$ of a tael and to be in value $\frac{1}{1000}$ of a tael of silver.¹ This theory has been maintained up to recent times and is given expression to on one of the issues of coins in the reign of the Emperor SHUN CHIH 順治 of the Ch'ing dynasty which is inscribed 一厘 *I Li*—one *li*—one *li* being the $\frac{1}{1000}$ part of a tael of silver (See Collection, No. 1327—1350).

Nien Hao or
Year Titles
of reign.

It has long been the custom in China to inscribe coins with the *Nien Hao* 年號 or title of the period of the reign of the Emperor during which they are issued. The earliest instance of a change of the title of a reign *Kai Yüan* 改元 was that made by HUI WANG 惠王 of the State of Wei 魏 in B.C. 334.² But this was an exceptional case and there was no regular system of *Nien Hao* until the time of WU TI 武帝 of the Han dynasty, B.C. 140—86, who changed the title of his reign no fewer than eleven times. The earliest coins in the Collection bearing a *Nien Hao* are No. 185 of the *Chien Shih* 建始 period B.C. 32—29 : No. 250 of the *Yung An* 永安 period, A.D. 528 : No. 253 of the *Ta Tung* 大通 period, A.D. 527—529. The practice of inscribing *Nien Hao* on coins regularly commenced from the beginning of the T'ang dynasty, A.D. 618, and continued until the end of the Ch'ing dynasty, A.D. 1911. The *Nien Hao* of each Emperor was frequently changed until the end of the Yüan dynasty A.D. 1357, and each change involved a new issue of coins inscribed with the new title of the reign, a practice which makes it possible to fix approximately the dates of the various coins issued during a reign. From the Ming dynasty, A.D. 1368, up to the end of the Ch'ing dynasty, A.D. 1911, the Emperor assumed only one title or *Nien Hao*, with the exception of the Emperor YING TSUNG 英宗 of the Ming dynasty who reigned from A.D. 1436—1450 under the title CHENG T'UNG 正統 and from 1457—1464 under the title T'IENT SHUN 天順. This makes it impossible, in the absence of other evidence, to fix even approximately the exact year in which a coin was issued in the reigns of these two dynasties.

Script used in
writing
Inscriptions.

Inscriptions are in Chinese characters, seal, cursive or ordinary script. But on the coins of the Yüan dynasty (see Coins Nos. 1021—1034) and of the Ch'ing dynasty

¹ See MORSE *Op : cit :* 122.

² See *Synchronismes chinois* par le P. MATHIAS TCHANG, S.J., Introduction p. IV.

Mongolian and Manchurian script are used as well as Chinese characters, whilst on the modern copper coins there is in addition to an inscription in Chinese, one in English.

Inscriptions generally read top, bottom, right, left, and throughout the description of coins in the Collection all inscriptions are to be read in that manner unless it is specially stated that they are to be read in a different order. How Inscriptions
are to be read.

As a general rule the issue of coins has been monopolised by the Government and the penalties inflicted on those who make false coins and who melt down government issues have been drastic. But the profits derived from these illicit practices being great, such penalties have not been sufficient to act as a complete deterrent to the false coiner, who throughout the history of China has been a very prominent and notorious character. The quantity of false coins that have appeared from time to time has been enormous. At intervals free coinage by the people has been permitted by the government, but the disastrous effects of such a departure from the usual course have generally resulted in the government speedily resuming its monopoly. Coining a
Government
Monopoly.

Throughout the description of coins in the Collection, up to the end of the Ming dynasty, references are given under each variety of coin to the section, chapter, and page of the *Ku Ch'üan Hui* and its Supplement, an explanation of the references being given at the head of the Description, p. 1.

The plates are exact representations of the coins in the Collection. They have been printed from wooden blocks cut by the Weihaiwei firm of TING YIN HSING 丁仁興 with the exception of some of the modern issue of cash pieces which have been lithographed by MESSRS. KELLY & WALSH, LIMITED.

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART.

Government House, Weihaiwei,

25th August 1915.