

a knowledge of which it is impossible that they can converse with their superiors or inferiors. This dialect, thus constantly employed in conversation of an elevated character, has probably been improved to the extent of its capabilities, but even thus it is but ill-fitted for its work. Notwithstanding all the additions received from the written language, it is still too meagre in its vocabulary; and its want of inflections is fatal to accuracy of structure and clearness and precision in style.

The Amoy dialect has never received this special culture bestowed upon that of Nankin, and is therefore every way inferior in fulness and even in perspicuity. Fewer "book-phrases" have been introduced into common use, and it is therefore much less fitted for elevated conversation.

Phonetic Elements of the Amoy Dialect.

The consonant sounds of the Amoy dialect are, for the most part, readily represented by Roman letters with their English utterance. They are B, Ch (as in "Church"), Chh (or Ch aspirated), G (as in "Gog"), H, J, K, Kh (aspirated K), L, M, N, Ng, P, Ph (aspirated P), S (as in "sister"), T and Th (aspirated T). The vowel-sounds are A (as in "father"), E (like A in "fate"), I (like E in "mete"), O (as in "note"), Ô (like "awe" or au in "author"), U (like O in "prove"). The compound vowel-sounds are ai (much like I in "fine"), au (like ou in "house"), ia (like ya in "yard"), io (like yeo in "yeoman"), iö (like yaw in "yaw") and iu (like "yew"). K, M, N, Ng, P and T, are either initials or finals; B, Ch, Chh, G, H, J, Kh, L, Ph, S and Th, are always initials.

The twenty-nine monosyllables under the initial B:

Ba	Bat	Bi	Bin	Boe	Bua
Bai	Bau	Bia	Bio	Bö	Buan
Bak	Be	Bian	Bit	Bök	Bun
Ban	Bek	Biat	Biu	Bóng	But
Bang	Beng	Biau	Bo	Bu	

A, I, Ô, are often nasalized, thus giving three new elementary sounds; Iu is also nasalized.

Besides the aspirated vowels (indicated by an H prefixed), there are four consonants aspirated (Ch, K, P and T). These must be distinctly marked by an aspiration preceding the following vowels, thus:—A, Ha; Ta, Tha; Pa, Pha; Ka, Kha; Cha, Chha.