

ideas and not sounds ; but in the use of the Arabic numerals in all European languages, there is an exact parallel to the Chinese method. The numerals 1, 2, 3, represent ideas of numbers, and though a Frenchman, German, and Englishman alike understand them when written, when reading them aloud they use different sounds as equivalents, and would not understand one another unless specially instructed.

So it is exactly in the case of Chinese characters, only the system is extended to all ideas, and not confined to numerals. Some at least of our numerals, and all the Roman numerals, correspond even further with Chinese characters in having been derived originally from graphic representations of the numbers themselves.

Though English words are expressed by series of letters strictly representing sounds, yet, nevertheless, when the resulting words are taken as a whole, they are read very differently by the little educated in the various dialects. So much so, that a book read aloud in broad Scotch, would be little understood by an uneducated Englishman at least. Just in the same manner two educated Chinamen, but speaking different dialects, can each read a Chinese book to himself with perfect understanding ; but neither can comprehend it if it be read aloud to him by the other.

A Chinese book is very interesting in its construction. The back of the book has its edges cut, instead of the front as with us, and the front is left doubled in the condition in which we leave the backs of books. The numbering of the pages and the title of the Chinese book are placed on the front edge of each leaf, where the paper is doubled, so that half of each character is upon one side of the edge, and half on the other ; and the folded edge has to be straightened out if the entire characters are required to be seen.

All the leaves in a Chinese book are double, and only one side of the paper is printed on. The back surface of the paper is blank and wasted. The idea of cutting the pages and printing on both sides of the paper seems never to have been attained. Sometimes Japanese picture books, drawing books, and song books, have drawings or printed pictures on both sides of the paper ; but even then, the pages are not cut, so that the two sides of each leaf should follow one another consecutively.

Such a book is merely a folded roll. After the folded pages on one side have been looked at, the book must be reversed and opened afresh at what before acted as the back, and thus the opposite sides of the folds are brought into view. If the pages only follow one another in the requisite order, there is