Manual of colloquial Tibetan

by

Charles Alfred Bell

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Manual of
Colloquial Tibetan.

BY
C. A. BELL.
INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

"It is only from its roots in the living generation of men that language can be reinforced with fresh vigour for its seed. What may be called a literate dialect grows ever more and more pedantic and foreign till it becomes at last as unsuited a vehicle for living thought as Monkish Latin."

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Calcutta:
BAPTIST MISSION PRESS, 41, LOWER CIRCULAR ROAD.
1905.
PREFACE.

1. The object of this little work is to provide a practical handbook for those who wish to acquire a speedy knowledge of Colloquial Tibetan. It, therefore, does not deal with the written language, which differs widely from the colloquial, and is useless for conversational purposes.

2. Notwithstanding the political and commercial importance of Tibet it is remarkable that so few Europeans are able to converse with the people in their own tongue. The language is undoubtedly a hard one to acquire on account of the complexity of the grammar, the intricacy of the spelling, the fine shades of pronunciation, the different terminology, known as the honorific, employed in addressing the higher classes, the variety of dialects, and the distinction, already noted, between the literary and spoken language. To minimise these difficulties and to make the approach to the colloquial as easy as possible, is the aim of this handbook. It seeks to do so by giving a minimum of grammatical notes, fully explained by examples, a clear statement of the rules of pronunciation, a simple system of phonetic spelling in the Roman character, a set of conversational exercises and a sufficiently full vocabulary of both common and honorific words to meet the ordinary requirements of conversation with all classes.

3. Tibet is essentially a country of dialects. A well-known proverb says—

[Translation of the Tibetan text]

"Every district its own dialect;
Every lama his own doctrine."
Under these circumstances it was necessary to select the dialect most widely spoken, and that of Lhasa has been chosen accordingly. It is not only the dialect of the Central Province, but may be said to be also the lingua franca of the whole of Tibet. It is more generally spoken than any other, and is recognized as the most correct form of speech by all.

4. The Vocabulary contains somewhat less than ten thousand Tibetan words, the number of separate English words being some seven thousand or about twice as many as those contained in any colloquial Tibetan vocabulary up to date. The remaining three thousand words are made up of about two thousand honorific words and one thousand extra Tibetan words. Where two or more Tibetan words are given for one English equivalent, all are in common colloquial use and the one placed first is the commonest. It is hoped that the honorific words given may be found useful. Existing vocabularies give but few. A knowledge of honorific words is essential for talking to or of Tibetans of good position. It is hoped also that the exercises in Tibetan handwriting given in Part I, Chapter XVII, may assist any student, who so desires, to learn how to write Tibetan letters and other documents in a clear and correct style.

5. It is recommended that the grammar be used as follows: The rules of each Chapter should be perused and their accompanying examples learnt by heart. The Words at the end of the Chapter should then be committed to memory as far as possible, and the exercise (for reading and copying) should be read aloud to the teacher to ensure correct pronunciation, and every word should be understood. After this the other Exercise (for translation) should be translated *vivo voce* and then written down, care being taken, when writing, to verify the spelling, as very few Tibetan teachers can spell correctly. On the following day the Tibetan half of the reading exercise should be covered up, and the English half re-translated into Tibetan, first *vivo voce* and then in writing. If the above plan is followed the student will gain the
soundest possible knowledge of the language. But if the student has not time for the above thorough system, he should omit the writing of both exercises and limit himself to the \textit{viv{e}d voce}.

6. As regards teachers it is best to obtain at first one who speaks English. If the teacher can speak the Lhasa language also, so much the better, but very few of the English-speaking Tibetans in the Darjeeling district or in Sikkim are really proficient in the latter. As soon as he can converse a little, the student should change to a Lhasa man that speaks Tibetan only, so as to be certain of always speaking in Tibetan. When the teacher knows English or Hindustani there is always a tendency for the conversation to drop into the latter languages. The Lhasa teacher should of course be as well educated a man as is procurable. The student should also, when he is able to understand and converse a little, call in Tibetans of the Lhasa province to talk to him, one at a time, and changing them every two or three weeks. Tibetans are generally ready to talk; they have not the formal constraint of manner which characterizes so many of the Indian races. The more he calls in thus, the better will he be able to understand and reply to any chance Tibetan he meets.

7. A word as to the system of romanization. In this, which is believed to be as phonetic as possible, I had reluctantly to differ from the various systems of my predecessors, as none of them seemed to me to reproduce the sounds in the dialect of Lhasa, though some reproduced those in the Sikkimese and other dialects. The system followed in this book is nearly the same as that recommended to Government for official reports, etc., by Captain O'Connor, C.I.E., Trade Agent at Gyantse, and the author, but distinguishes the different sounds with greater accuracy than was considered necessary in the Government system.

8. The Tibetan words and syllables in brackets are those used in the simple form of book-language. Where the pronunciation of the literary and spoken form of a word is the same, the literary form alone is given, since the sole object of entering the spoken form is to show the exact pronunciation of the word.
9. In conclusion, I must acknowledge my obligations to the Government of Bengal for their patronage, to the Grammars of the Rev. Graham Sandberg, the Rev. H. A. Jäschke and the Rev. Father A. Desgodins, and especially to Mr. Henderson’s Tibetan Manual, which marks a great advance in the Tibetan colloquial over any of its predecessors. And most of all are my thanks due to Mr. David Macdonald, who has revised this book throughout, and to whose unrivalled knowledge of both colloquial and literary Tibetan are largely due whatever merits the work may possess.

CHUMBI, TIBET: }  
March, 1905.  

C. A. BELL.
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PART II.

English-Tibetan Vocabulary ... ... 1–451
ABBREVIATIONS.

Adj. = adjective.
Adv. = adverb.
Art. = article.
Ch. = Chinese.
Conj. = conjunction.
C.T. = Central Tibet, i.e., the provinces of U and Tsang.
Def. = definite.
Do. = ditto.
E.G. = for instance.
F. = female, feminine.
Hin. = Hindi.
Hon. = honorific.
H. hon. = high honorific.
Imp. = imperative.
Inf. = inferior.

Interj. = interjection.
Inter. = interrogative.
M. = male, masculine.
Mon. = Mongolian.
Neg. = negative.
Opp. = opposed.
Post. = postposition.
Pron. = pronoun.
Rel. = relative.
S. = substantive.
Sik. = Sikkimese.
Sup. = superior.
Ts. = Tsang province.
V.I. = verb intransitive.
V.T. = verb transitive.
W. = with.
ERRATA.

PART I.

Page 16, line 1, read ོགས་ for ོགས་
" 24 " 14 " that " taht.
" 31 " 17 delete ཞ
" 108 " 20 read སུ་ " སུ་

PART II.

Page 9, column 3, line 14, read трö for тро.
" 25 " 1 " 12 " Assault, to " Assault.
" 26 " 3 " 18 " pa " pa.
" 28 " 2 " 11 " བ ཆ " བ ཆ
" 30 " 3 " 17 " ngem " ngen.
" 40 " 2 " 11 " བ ཆ " བ ཆ
" 43 " 2 " 19 " ལུག " ལུག
" 50 " 3 " 1 " chha " chha.
" 51 " 3 " 18 " tong " tang.
" 54 " 2 " 11 " ཆུ " ཆུ
" 56 " 1 " 21 " Burnt " rnt.
" 56 " 1 " 22 " sheep " antelope.
" 57 " 2 " 12 " ལུག " ལུག
" 58 " 3 " 7 " thup " thup.
" 60 " 3 " 23 " sup " sup.
<table>
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<th>Page</th>
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<th>Line</th>
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<th>Meaning</th>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>for elect.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Come</td>
<td>ome.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>pa</td>
<td>pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>pa-ru</td>
<td>pa-ru.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>tre-ra</td>
<td>tre-la.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<td>be</td>
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<td>mem</td>
<td>men.</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>146</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>mìk</td>
<td>mìk.</td>
</tr>
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<td>155</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>kha</td>
<td>kh.</td>
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<td>163</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>165</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>168</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>231</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>shap</td>
<td>shap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>248</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>271</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>tshö</td>
<td>tsho.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>307</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>ka</td>
<td>ka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>313</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>317</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>321</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Page 322, column 2, line 23, read མོང་ for མོང་

" 323 " 2 " 12, insert ༅། ། རྒྱལ་ ། after རྒྱལ་

" 323 " 2 " 13, read བོད་ ། for བོད་

" 324 " 2 " 4 " གངས་ ། གངས་

" 324 " 2 " 20 " རྟོག་ ། རྟོག་

" 327 " 1 " 11 " Ransom " Ramsom.

" 327 " 2 " 16 " ཕེས། ། ཕེས།

" 332 " 3 " 15 " nyem " nyen.

" 336 " 2 " 8 " འབྲུག་མཆོག ། འབྲུག་མཆོག

" 340 " 3 " 16 " sim " sim.

" 341 " 3 " 19 " lok " lok.

" 342 " 3 " 2 " shu " shu.

" 342 " 3 " 3 " ta " ta.

" 343 " 2 " 9 " སྲིད་པོ་ ། སྲིད་པོ་

" 351 " 2 " 17 " སོགས་ ། སོགས་

" 352 " 2 " 18 " ཤ ། ཤ་

" 353 " 2 " 11 " བཤེད་ ། བཤེད་

" 354 " 2 " 5 " དྲ་ ། དྲ་

" 355 " 2 " 17 " རྒྱལ་ ། རྒྱལ་

" 356 " 2 " 10 " མོ་ ། མོ་

" 356 " 3 " 12 " delete the semi-colon.
Page 361, column 2, line 4, read แฉ for แฉ

361 3 15 ical ical
364 2 2 เจ แช
365 2 5 นิ นิ
365 3 6 insert semi-colon after ผา
368 2 14 เจ for แช
378 2 13 หา หา
383 3 6 ผา ผา
383 1 6 Sprinkle Sprinkle
386 2 9 แช แช
400 3 22 me ม.
406 3 2 ตัง ตัง.
420 1 2 True True.
429 3 4 ผา ผา
437 3 23 ตัง ตัง.
450 2 14 ผา ผา
450 3 23 ผา ผา
TIBETAN GRAMMAR.

PART I.

Note.—Where the colloquial and the literary form differs, the latter is given in brackets in the Tibetan character. In the Romanized Tibetan the colloquial forms alone are given.

CHAPTER I.

THE ALPHABET AND ITS PRONUNCIATION.

1. The Tibetan Alphabet was originally taken from the Sanskrit Devanagari in the 7th century A.D., but many of the letters, especially in Central Tibet, now represent sounds different from their prototypes. Both the Sanskrit and the Tibetan pronunciations have changed considerably during this period.

2. The Tibetan letters are as follow:—

Consonants and their romanized equivalents.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ᾫ k</td>
<td>ᾫ kh</td>
<td>ᾫ k</td>
<td>ᾫ ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ᾫ ch</td>
<td>ᾫ chh</td>
<td>ᾫ ch</td>
<td>ᾫ ny</td>
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<tr>
<td>ᾫ t</td>
<td>ᾫ th</td>
<td>ᾫ t</td>
<td>ᾫ n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ᾫ p</td>
<td>ᾫ ph</td>
<td>ᾫ p</td>
<td>ᾫ m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ᾫ ts</td>
<td>ᾫ tsh</td>
<td>ᾫ ts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-vowels ᾫ w</td>
<td>ᾫ sh</td>
<td></td>
<td>ᾫ (not romanized)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ᾫ y</td>
<td>ᾫ r</td>
<td>ᾫ l</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ᾫ sh</td>
<td>ᾫ s</td>
<td>ᾫ ᾫ h</td>
<td>ᾫ (not romanized)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. In this Chapter I endeavour to give as nearly as possible the sound represented by each Tibetan letter. The romanization throughout is intended only as a rough guide to the pronunciation for those who are unable to give the time for studying the exact pronunciation. The consonants when used as initials, i.e., when immediately preceding the vowel of a syllable are pronounced as below.

\( \text{ṃ} \) The \( k \) in the Hindustani word *kam*. To be pronounced with the tongue between the teeth and without breathing.

\( \text{ṃ} \) an aspirated \( k \), e.g., *block-head*, pronounced in one breath.

The same as the aspirated \( k \) in Hindustani words, e.g., *khana*.

\( \text{ṃ} \) also a \( k \) but pronounced through the throat and more forcibly than \( \text{ṃ} \)

\( \text{ṃ} \) like the \( ng \) in *coming*. Say *coming in* eliminating the first four letters “comi.”

\( \text{ch} \) in *chin*. To be pronounced with the tongue between the teeth and without breathing.

\( \text{ṃ} \) \( ch \) aspirated, e.g., *touch hands* pronounced in one breath, i.e., like the aspirated \( ch \) in Hindustani.

\( \text{ṃ} \) is also a \( ch \) pronounced through the throat and more forcibly than \( \text{ch} \)

\( \text{ṃ} \) as the initial sound in *nuisance*. 
CHAPTER I.

vara Dental \( t \) to be pronounced with the tongue between the teeth and without breathing. This \( .CG \) and \( 5 \) differ from the English \( t \) and \( n \), in that the English letters require the tongue to be placed against the roof of the mouth and so have a heavier sound.

\( 9 \) aspirated \( t \), e.g., \( thora \) in Hindustani or, subject to the difference noted under \( 5 \) \( pat \) hard pronounced in one breath. Not to be confused with the English \( th \) sound, in words like \( the \).

\( 9 \) is like \( 5 \) but pronounced through the throat and more forcibly than \( 5 \).

\( 7 \) is like the English \( n \), e.g., in \( nest \) subject to the difference noted under \( 5 \).

\( 9 \) like English \( p \) as in \( pear \), to be pronounced with the tongue between the teeth and without breathing.

\( 9 \) aspirated \( p \), e.g., \( stop \) \( here \) pronounced as one word. Not to be confused with \( ph \) sound occurring in English words like \( phantasy \), etc.

\( 9 \) is also a \( p \) but pronounced through the throat and more forcibly than \( 9 \) If it forms the second syllable of a word whose first syllable ends with a vowel or with \( 9 \) or \( 9 \) it is pronounced as \( w \).
as English m, e.g., in man.

ts is pronounced like weights eliminating the letters weigh.

To be pronounced with the tongue between the teeth and without breathing.

as ts aspirated, e.g., in pats hard pronounced as one word.

is also a ts but pronounced through the throat and more forcibly than ָ

like w in English, e.g., in wing.

Something like sh in English, but pronounced more forcibly and more through the throat.

Something like s in English, but pronounced more forcibly and more through the throat.

has no pronunciation of its own. When it precedes ֶ or ֶ; these letters are pronounced respectively like g in gun, j in jam, d in den, b in bend, and ds in pads. See also para. 22.

like y in English, e.g., in yacht.

is short like r in English, e.g., in rat. It is never rolled.

like l in English, e.g., in linger.

like sh in English, but pronounced sharply and through the teeth.
like s in English, but pronounced sharply and through the teeth.

like h aspirated in English, e.g., in hand.

When a vowel is initial either उ or ऐ is used as its base. The difference in pronunciation of these two is (as explained by Jäckke) that the throat is opened for उ and kept closed for ऐ. The result is that उ carries the ordinary vowel sound, whatever the vowel may be; while ऐ in the case of उ or उ gives a slight, but very slight sound उ; e.g., उँग noise = something between ur and wur though more like ur.

4. ई ऊ ऋ ऎ ऐ

Every consonant implies a following a, unless another vowel is attached. This a is sounded like the English u in rub.

named किकु, like ई in इन or तिन, e.g., खिक man = मिक.

named सकप-क्यु, like oo in root when initial or final.

Like u in pull, when medial, e.g., खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू खू
5. **Final Consonants.**—The preceding paragraph shows the ordinary pronunciation of the vowels which is, however, further affected by some of the final consonants. Of final consonants there are only ten; that is to say, though any consonant may begin a syllable only one of these ten consonants may end it. These ten final consonants are as follow:

Let us briefly consider the pronunciation of each as a final and its effect upon the pronunciation of the preceding vowel.

- **is pronounced so slightly as hardly to be heard and shortens the preceding vowel. When followed, however, by another consonant in a second syllable of the same word it is clearly pronounced and does not affect the pronunciation of the preceding vowel, thus **eye**—mi, but **to hit**—phok-pa.

- **is pronounced more sharply than when an initial. It does not affect the pronunciation of the preceding vowel, e.g., **name**—ming, but sounded sharply. The sound of final **and** can be obtained from the teacher with but little practice.

These all modify the sounds of the preceding vowels a, u and o; i.e., a into é (in French les); u into ü (in French sur); o into ö (e.g., hören in German or eu in French peu). These modified sounds will, therefore, be romanized into e, ö, ü respectively.

The final consonant itself is not pronounced; e.g., **
CHAPTER I.

manure = lü, नू wool = p̌, खम to flee = tru-pa.

ॉ makes the preceding vowel short; अ and ॉ make it long, thus ङु manure = lü (short u); but ङु body = lü (long u).

ॉ modifies vowels as ङम and अ modify them, but is itself pronounced, e.g., अ अ answer = len. When followed by ङम or अ in the same word it is pronounced as m, e.g., ङमका precious = rim-po-chhe.

Do not affect the pronunciation of the vowel, and are themselves pronounced the same as when initial, e.g., ङम delegate = tshap, ङम bridge = sam-pa, ङर corner = sur. But ॉ like र is sometimes pronounced so lightly as hardly to be heard.

ॉ is not itself pronounced but lengthens the sound of the vowel preceding it. No vowel except the indirect a precedes it, e.g., ङमआँ sky = nam-khā.

6. Affix.—The letter ङ also occurs as a second final consonant or affix after either of the four letters ध.

It is not pronounced, but in the case of ङ preceded by a, it has the effect of lengthening the a, e.g., अनालि
yes=lā-sī. It is sometimes written in an incomplete form below the final consonant thus མན་

7. Sanskrit Letters.—The following four letters taken from the Sanskrit are occasionally used in the Colloquial language, namely:

 psychologically tra thra tra na.
 psychologically

 psychologically is known as ta-lo-tra, e.g., t reversed equals tra; and so on.

8. Examples.

[The student is recommended to cover the romanized Tibetan letters with a piece of paper and thus to test his knowledge of the alphabet and its pronunciation.]

 psychologically leather=ko-va. psychologically earth=sa.
 psychologically encampment=gar. psychologically to eat=sa-va.
 psychologically tree=shing. psychologically faith=te-pa.
 psychologically water=chhu. psychologically and=lān.
 psychologically mother=a-ma. psychologically work=le-ka.
 psychologically light, s.=ö. psychologically sheep=lā.
 psychologically profit=phēn. psychologically hand=lak-pa.
 psychologically to ride=sköm-pa. psychologically lord=cho-wo.

9. Diphthongs.—There are no real diphthongs, but under this head may be classed the combination ai, oi, ui, occurring when the one syllable of a word ends in a, o, or u,
and the next begins with \( i \); e.g., रै and रै of the body = रै, pronounced almost like रे, but with a slight sound of \( i \); similarly ख and ख of the mouth = खा-ि and almost = खे; भ and भ of the son = पू-ि and almost = पू. In fact the भ modifies the preceding vowels in practically the same way as भ would do.

The other combinations of vowels are आ, इ, उ, ऊ, ऋ, ए, ऐ, ऒ, ओ, औ, ई, उै; e.g., अै, एै, उै, ऊै, ऋै, एै, उै, ऊै, ऋै, एै, उै, ऋै.

They are not often used in the colloquial and are not really diphthongs, as each vowel is clearly though rapidly pronounced.

Note that ख and not ख is always used as the base of the second vowel; that is, the letter over which the second vowel must be written; e.g., ख and ख and not ख and ख.

10. Compound Consonants. — These are of two kinds, namely Subjoined and Superadded. These subjoined consonants are:

य and य. They are known respectively as याैर, "ya on the edge"; याैर, "ya subjoined"; याैर, "ra subjoined"; याैर, "la subjoined"; and याैर, "ha subjoined."
11. **Wasurs.**—Wasur may be joined to sixteen consonants, viz.:

\[त न भ ड ण त्त द्द ढ ण त्त द्द ढ ण त्त द्द ढ ण \]

The effect on the pronunciation is to lengthen the sound of the vowel in the same way as final ऑ but not quite so much, e.g., श्रृङ्खला—tshā.

12. Of **yatas** there are seven, which are joined to the following letters, thus—

\[त्य क्या, ख्या, क्या, च्या, छ्या, च्या, न्या. \]

Note the pronunciation of the last four.

Thus ख्या—hard=kyong-po.

च्छम—to go=chhim-pa.

च्छम—bird=chā.

13. **Rata** is joined to fourteen consonants, namely:

\[त त्रा, थ ठ्रा, त्र त्रा, त्र ठ्रा, ठ्रा, ठ्रा, ठ्रा, \]

and occasionally pa, ठ्रा, ठ्रा and occasionally pa or ra.

Note that gutturals and labials take the sound of dentals.

**Rata** is also joined to ड़ na, ड़ ma, ठ शा, ड़ sa or ठra or hrā, ठ्रा, e.g., ठ्रा—blood—thra, ठ्रा—boat—tru,
CHAPTER I.

bell—tri-pu, बिंवा (बिंवा) to write—tri-pa, मूर्त
son—se, जुर bridle—trap.

Note that where any of the first nine rataś are followed by
the vowels ओ or ऋ the r is pronounced less strongly
than when followed by the other vowels. And in no
case is the r pronounced as strongly as in English.

14. Hata in the colloquial language is not used except with
" e.g., जँ a god=hla, the h being pronounced before the
l. It is also joined to उगेङ and जँ and is then written
उसें and जँ respectively, but these last five cases only
occur in transcribing Sanskrit words and are of little use for
colloquial purposes.

15. La-ta is joined to six consonants, thus—

These are all sounded as la in a high tone,
extcept ल ं which is pronounced da, e.g., जँ song—lu; जँ
month—da-wa.

16. Examples.

कस्त rock=tra.

मस्त reed-pen=nyu-gu.

ब्रक्ष basket=le-ko.

मुद्र my bridle=nge trap.
17. **Superscribed Consonants.**—There are three of these, namely, དབ and ས. They are placed on the tops of other letters.

ões is placed on the top of twelve consonants, thus:

\[
\hat{ka} \ ga \ nga \ ja \ nya \ ta \ da \ na \ ba \ ma \ tsa \ dza.
\]

Note that the ôes is written as öh; except with Ľ when the full ôes is written. Note also that ô is pronounced as ga, Ľ as ja, ô as da, ô as bu and Ľ as dza.

The others differ from the ordinary Ľ, etc., in that they are pronounced in a higher tone.

18. **Examples.**

- ཀང་པ། foot—kang-pa,
- སྒྲ་ལྟོ་ old man—ge-po,
- གྱེན་ ornament—gyen,
- སྡོ་ stone—do,
- སྟབ་ sharp—no-po,
- དྲ་ root—tsa-wa,
- དཔེ་shepherd—luk-dzi.

The ô itself is
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not pronounced except sometimes when occurring in the second syllables of words; e.g., ḍोर-垈, sacred thunder-bolt—
dor-je. When ཆ ། surmounts a consonant as above, the latter is said to be "tied on" or "subjoined" as the ya-tas, rata-s, etc., above. Thus ཆ ། is named ra-ka-ta, i.e., ra with ka subjoined, ཆ ། is named ra-ga-ta and so on.

19. ཆ ། is superadded to ten consonants as follow:—

\[\text{헣 ལ བ ས ཛ ཞ འ ར ཧ ཡ} \]

◝ is pronounced hla. The rest are pronounced in the same way as the corresponding consonants with superadded ཆ ། and ཆ ། are pronounced in a high tone as cha and pa respectively.

20. ཆ ། is superadded to eleven consonants as follow:—

\[\text{Петер ཝ ར ཧ ལ ས ཚ ཝ འ ར ཧ} \]

These are pronounced in the same way as the corresponding consonants with superadded ཆ ། or ཆ །.


 ejaculation— nga.

 མཐ ལུ ལུ morning— nga-tro.

 བཤེས ར ལུ iron—cha.
TIBETAN GRAMMAR.

\[ \text{to soar (in the air)} = \text{ding-wa} \]
\[ \text{sin} = \text{dik-pa} \]
\[ \text{medicine} = \text{men} \]

22. **Prefixed Letters.**—The five letters \( \text{s} \), \( \text{n} \), \( \text{n} \), \( \text{m} \), \( \text{e} \) are found in many words before the initial consonant. These prefixes are not themselves pronounced, but affect the pronunciation in the same way as a superadded \( \text{h} \) or \( \text{s} \).

\( \text{s} \) occurs before \( \text{c} \), \( \text{n} \), \( \text{m} \), \( \text{e} \)

\( \text{n} \) before \( \text{c} \), \( \text{m} \), \( \text{e} \)

\( \text{m} \) before \( \text{c} \), \( \text{e} \)

\( \text{e} \) before \( \text{c} \), \( \text{e} \)

**Examples.**

| \( \text{Chi} \) | \( \text{one} = \text{chi} \) | \( \text{Den} \) | \( \text{bolster} = \text{den} \)
| \( \text{Sar-pa} \) | \( \text{new} = \text{sar-pa} \) | \( \text{Ngiu} \) | \( \text{silver} = \text{ngiu} \)
| \( \text{Tang-wa} \) | \( \text{to send} = \text{tang-wa} \) | \( \text{Dun} \) | \( \text{seven} = \text{dun} \)
| \( \text{Khe-po} \) | \( \text{skilful} = \text{khe-po} \) | \( \text{Dzo} \) | \( \text{to assemble} = \text{dzom-} \)

23. Confusion might arise in the case of one of the prefixed letters making a word with one of the final consonants,
CHAPTER I.

the vowel being the inherent a, e.g., ग़ा as to whether it represents ता or गा. The confusion is obviated as follows. If it is the initial ग़ as the word is written ग़ा तা. If it is the prefix, ग़ is added thus, ग़ाग गा.

24. When ग़ as initial consonant follows ग़ as prefix, the combination is either sounded as व or not sounded at all. If accompanied by a vowel sign, it is not sounded at all; e.g., ग़ा ब्रेथ—उ. If not accompanied by a vowel sign, it is pronounced as व, e.g., ग़ा त वर्ग—वांग.

25. Sentences for Pronunciation.

बृक्षिण (ढिरी) ग न च्हु त्शा-पो खे शो। Bring some hot water.

ढूङ्गिलामिनुमु च्हु दी त्शा-पो मिन-दुङ्क। This water is not hot.

त्रांग-मौ रे। It is cold.

ताद्रो च्होक-की-रे। You can go now.

26. Irregular Sounds.—In the following cases the pronunciation is modified for the sake of euphony.

(a) ए and ए sounds.—When one syllable is followed by another beginning with a prefixed letter the sound of ए or ए is often introduced. This occurs especially when the first syllable ends in ए e.g.
key, hon. = chhan-di.

grain, hon. = chhan-dru.

is not = min-duk.

clothes, hon. = nam-ta.

1 (b) Reduplicated Sounds. — Certain consonants especially k, r and l are often reduplicated, e.g., နန်း (နန်း) to hinder, hon. = ka-ka nang-wa; နန်း to take care of, hon. = nyar-ra nang-wa; နန်း fat = ishil-lu.

(c) སྤ following a vowel or སྤ. When སྤ follows a vowel its sound is sometimes omitted altogether, e.g., སྤ goitre = ba-a.

pillar = ka-a.

after སྤ is often pronounced as r, e.g.,

နန်း to conquer, hon. = gye-ra nang-wa.

(d) Other changed sounds.

spoon = ship-thu.

sweet-buck-wheat = gyap-ra.

27. The Tones. — In Tibetan the tone, that is to say the pitch of the voice, varies, each word in this language having a tone in which it should be pronounced. It is very
important for the student to render these tones with substantial accuracy; otherwise the pronunciation becomes uncertain and many of his words will assume meanings which he does not intend for them.

28. For practical purposes we must discriminate between three tones, viz., the high, the medium and the low. The initial letter and the prefix govern the tone.

*High Tone.*—Use this in a word beginning with a prefix except when the initial letter is ་ or ད་. Use it also with any of the following initials, viz., དཀ དཀ དེ་

*Medium Tone.*—Use this in a word beginning with དཀ དཀ དེ་ as initials whether with or without prefixes.

*Low Tone.*—Use this in a word beginning with any of the following letters as initials དཀ དཀ དེ་ also in words in which a prefix precedes the initials དཀ དཀ དེ་. Such initials are, in this case, as previously noted in paragraph 22, pronounced as ḡ, j, d, b and dz, respectively. For effect of དཀ དཀ དེ་ in lengthening or shortening the preceding vowel see above paras. 5 and 6.

**Examples.**

leather = ko-wa, high tone.

incense = pö, high tone and lengthened.
brick = pā, high tone and shortened.
cold (in the head) = chham-pa, medium tone.
opportunity = thaṅ, medium tone.
rope = thāk-pa, medium tone and shortened.
to (postposition) = la, low tone.
yes (a polite affirmative) = lā, low tone and lengthened.
Tibet = pö, low tone and shortened.

Note the difference in above examples between བོད་ and བོད་
and between བོད་ and བོད་

29. Sentences.

khyö ka-pa dro-ki yim-pa? Where are you going to?
lā nga Dor-je-ling lā dro-ki yin.
I am going to Darjiling, Sir.
dok-thre nang-la ka-re yö-pa?
What is that you are carrying?
lā cha-lā na-tsho yö: Different kinds of things, Sir.
te-ci nang-la kho-ting yö-pa? Do you a tea-pot among them?
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lā-yü—yes Sir, I have.

kong ka-ishi yim-pa ?—What is its price?
lā gor-mo nyi-shu tham-pa yin.

Twenty rupees.
gor-moche-ngal la tong-ki yim-pa? Will you let me have it for fifteen rupees?
la-men. No, Sir.

o-na ka-le gyu. Well, good-day!
ta o-na ka-le chhip-gyu-nang. Good-
day, Sir!
CHAPTER II.

THE ARTICLE.

1. *The Indefinite Article.*

1. This is the same as the numeral *one* without the prefix 
   ए, namely एकः.

2. The final एकः is very slightly pronounced (see above
   Cap. I, para. 5.)

3. It is placed after the noun or adjective, which it quali-
   fies; thus, मैनुः A man.

4. It also takes any case-inflection instead of its noun or
   adjective, which latter in such case are not inflected. The
   method of case-inflection will be dealt with later under the
   chapter relating to nouns.

5. एकः is often omitted where we should use "a" or "an"
   in English. *If there might otherwise be doubt as to whether
   more than one is meant use एकः.*

6. In the case of *weights* and *measures* or in other cases
   where something *full* is implied, भनम् is used instead of एकः

WORDS.

मैन = man.

मनुः (मनुकः) = woman.

मौ = dog.

पिनेशु = cat.
CHAPTER II.

please give. pleasant.
rupee. is.
to me. wood.
and. armful.
o noise. he.
do not make (of noise). to him.
country. Tibetan.

Note that the verb comes at the end of the sentence.

Exercise No. 1. (for reading and copying).

A man.

A woman.

A dog and a cat.

Please give me a dog. (Lit. To me a dog please give).

Please give him a rupee.

Do not make noise.

It is a pleasant country. (Lit. country pleasant is).
Please give me an armful of wood. (Lit. To me wood an armful please give).

He is a Tibetan.

Exercise No. 2. (for translation).

A dog. A man and a dog. A woman and a cat. Please give me a rupee. Please give him a cat.

II. The Definite Article.

7. As in the case of the indefinite article, so also in that of the definite article, the in English is often left unexpressed in Tibetan. Where expressed, ཞིན་ this and ཡི་ that are used, though these represent demonstrative pronouns rather than the definite article. It follows therefore that ཞིན་ or ཡི་ should not be used unless the in the sentence really represents this or that.

8. Where the refers to a noun previously mentioned, ཡི་ is used.

Note.—As the pronunciation has been fully explained in Chapter I, the transliteration into Roman character will, not henceforth be given unless the Tibetan word may be pronounced in more than one way, e.g., ཞིན་ (Cap. I., para. 13), or the pronunciation is irregular, e.g., བོད་པ་ [Cap. I., para. 26 (a)]. The student will get a much better grip of the language by reading words in the Tibetan character.
CHAPTER II.

9. As in the case of ཀན། so also both གླིང་ and གུ་are placed after the noun or adjective which they qualify and take the case-inflection instead of the noun or adjective.

Words.

་གི་ who. གླིང་ wind.
་དགུ་ boy. རྒྱི་ strong (of wind).
བསྟན་ good. དེ་ལེགས་ (དོན་ཅན།) bring!
བུད་པའི་ Bhutanese. རབ་ food.

Exercise No. 3.

སྡེ་བྱུར་དཔེར་བོ། The dog and the cat.
སྡེ་བྱུར་ ཡི་གཞུངས། ཡི་ཞིག་པོད་པོ། Who is the man? (Lit. The
man who is?) The man (i.e., the man just mentioned)
is a Tibetan.
སྡེ་བྱུར་ རྒྱུར། The boy is good.
སྡེ་བྱུར་ རྒྱུར་ རྒྱུར་ རྒྱུར། རྒྱུར་ རྒྱུར་ རྒྱུར། Who is the boy? The
boy is a Bhutanese.
སྡེ་བྱུར་ རྒྱུར། The wind is strong.
སྡེ་བྱུར་ (བཅུར་) ཟོ། Bring the wood (or some wood).
སྡེ་བྱུར་ (བཅུར་) ཟོ། Bring the food.

Exercise No. 4.

The man. The man is a Bhutanese. Please give me wood. Lit. (To me the wood please give.) The wind is good.
CHAPTER III.

The Noun.

1. Abstract Nouns though used in the literary language are frequently avoided in the colloquial by the phrase being turned and an adjective employed instead of the abstract noun. Thus, the cleverness of this doctor is known to all, ስን་ཉིད་ཉིད་གཞན་ཁས་ཉིད་པར་བཞིན་ནོ། Lit. རང་ཚོ་
doctor, གཞན་ཉིད་this, རུས་པ་clever, སེམས་པ་that·he·is,
སངས་སེམས་all, འཇིག་ཤེས་རིས་know.

When expressed སེམས་ is generally added to the adjectival root; e.g., དམེན་greatness; འཁོར་པ་thickness. Certain abstract nouns are formed by joining together two contradictory words, thus, size—ཐོ་རུ་lit. large—small; temperature དང་ཆུབ་lit. hot—cold; qualityཁོང་ཁ་lit. good—bad.

Thus, what is the size of that house, ངདོན་པ་ཐོ་རུ་བཞིན་ནོ། རོ། ! lit. ངདོན་ house, གཞན་ཉིད་taht, དམེན་size, རོ་ན་of what kind, གཞན་is.

2. Nouns denoting membership of a certain country, religion, profession, etc., are formed by adding གཞན་ཞིག རང་ or གཞན་ to the name of the country, religion, etc., concerned.
CHAPTER III.

Thus, Bhutanese—བུད་ལེགས།; carpenter—ཉེ་བརྗེར།; inhabit-
ant of Chumbi Valley (Tromo)—ཐུམ་ཐོར; servant—གསུམ་པོའི་
chief—ཉེནཔོ།; ལ་ and སླ་ when used in this connection
sometimes denote the feminine gender, e.g., སློ་མ་=king,
བོད་མོ་=queen. But, as noted below (para. 6) feminines are
often denoted by one of the particles ལ་མོ་ or སྐེ་ thus,
this woman is a Tibetan, ལ་མོ་རིགས་པ་ཅིག་བེད་བྱེད། ལ་ and སྐེ་
are used instead of ལ་ and སྐེ་ respectively when the
preceding syllable ends in a vowel.

3. Nouns denoting the agent are usually formed by
adding ལ་མོ་ to the root of the verb, e.g., ལེ་རོ། to come,
ལ་མོ་the person who comes. This termination ལ་མོ་
corresponds to the termination wala in Hindustani, e.g., ane-
wala. More rarely ཝྫ་ is used.

4. Diminutives.—These are not only formed by the addition
of the words རྣ་ or རྣ་དྱོན་small, to the noun, but in
some cases also by the terminations རྣ་ དུ་ or རྣ་ དུ་ e.g., རྣ་
bullet, i.e., little stone from དྭ་ stone; རྣ་ ངོ། boy from ངོ།
son; རྣ་ དཀྲུབ། chicken from དཀྲུབ། fowl.

5. Gender.—Rules as to gender are but loosely observed
in colloquial Tibetan. In names of animals, trees, etc., the

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genders can be distinguished by the particles བསོད་ for masculine and སརེ། for feminine. These precede the root of the noun, e.g., སྒྲིག་ male tree, སྒྲིག་ female tree. They are also used by themselves as nouns; e.g., སྒྲིག་ males and females.

6. In a limited number of words སྒྲིག་ denote the masculine and སྒྲིག་ the feminine, the particles in such cases following the noun, e.g., སུ་ནོར་ se-po=son, སུ་ནོར་ se-mo= daughter. But in numerous cases these six particles are used without denoting gender at all: e.g., སི་ནོར་ priest; སི་ནོར་ fox, both male and female; སྒྲིག་ སྒྲིག་ (kyi-men) ལེ་ཞེ་ཐོ་ཝུ་ this woman is an inhabitant of the Chumbi Valley, སྒྲིག་ being used both for male and female.

7. Declension.—The declension is simple, and is effected as in Hindustani by means of postpositions. Thus the accusative is the same as the nominative, the genitive takes སྒྲིག་ or when the noun ends in a vowel more usually སྒྲིག་, the dative སྒྲིག་ the agentive སྒྲིག་ or when the noun ends in a vowel more usually སྒྲིག་ and the ablative སྒྲིག་ It will thus be seen that nouns ending in a consonant are declined somewhat...
differently from those ending in a vowel. One example of each is therefore given:

Nom. and Acc. नवपत्र a yak.
Gen. नवपत्री of a yak.
Dat. नवपत्रम to a yak.
Agent. नवपत्रीर by a yak.
Abl. नवपत्रक्र from a yak.

8. In the literary language, if the noun ends in नँ or ऩ the genitive is formed by नँ and the agentive by ऩमः; if the noun ends in ऩँ or ऩ the genitive is formed by नँ and the agentive by ऩमः. It is only when the noun ends in ऩ or ऩ that the genitive is formed by ऩ and the agentive by ऩमः. But in the colloquial ऩ and ऩमः respectively are as a rule used for all, especially by the lower classes, though it is more elegant to give the forms used in the literary language.

Gen. नममारी of a servant.
Dat. नममारम to a servant.
Agent. नममारिर by a servant.
Abl. नममारारकर from a servant.