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Eduard Kann (1880-1962) was the world's leading authority on Chinese coins and on the Chinese monetary system.

He was a banker who lived in China for 47 years, during which he both collected coins and served as a top adviser to the ministry that controlled the Chinese monetary system. He writes that "I had to leave China in a hurry" during the takeover by Mao in 1949. The New York Times for May 23, 1971, page D37, reports: "The finest collection of Chinese coins [is] the collection of Eduard Kann, a banker who lived in China for 47 years. During his long numismatic career, Mr. Kann compiled the Catalog of Chinese Coins which was published in 1953." This book does not merely contain pictures of the coins and descriptions thereof. Included are biographies of the emperors, war lords, and sometimes even petty bureaucrats whose likenesses were depicted on these coins. Included are biographies of men whose identities have otherwise been lost to history. Thus, this book is must reading not only for coin collectors but for serious students of the history of China. The massive original was one volume of 700 pages in length. This reprint divides the book into three volumes. The photographs and illustrations that are at the end of the book in the original have been moved up to be next to or close to the coins that are being described. As China was not a unified country at that time, this book is divided into regions and into the type of metal, Gold, Silver, Nickel and Aluminum, that was used to make the coins. This first volume starts at the beginning and ends with Silver Szechuen Rupees of 1912.

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