

A Taoist Notebook

by Edward Herbert

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Wisdom
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East
Series



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By

EDWARD HERBERT



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With a Foreword by Lin Yutang

Taoism, with its message of an intuitively arrived at "Way" to a true knowledge of the universe, continues to exert its impact to this day, chiefly through its survival in Zen Buddhism. Edward Herbert, in a companion volume to his **A Confucian Notebook**, opens the road to an understanding of the Taoist spirit and substance with a delightful and knowledgeable journey of exploration.

Herbert's collection of "Notes"—really very short essays—compresses into a few pages the insights into Taoism he gained from his wide reading and keen observation of Chinese philosophy. He shows the reader Taoism not as a cult, but as a rival school of thought to the Confucian teachings—a school that eschews words as a means of teaching truth. "Those who know do not speak; those who speak do not know." This statement by the Fathers of Taoism illustrates the Taoist's belief in the subtle power of Nature's example.

Selecting the key-points of the Taoist system, Herbert goes directly to the great Taoist classics, the **Tao Tê Ching** and the **Chuang Tzu**, which illustrate their teachings with such examples as that of the master-cook of King Hui who, familiar by long habit with each bone and sinew of the carcass to be cut up, could arrest his sight and other senses and wield the carving knife with his mind. He discusses the techniques of trance, describing how the Taoist, by methodically shedding the veils of consciousness, liberated the spirit within. At the same time, he relates the Taoist teachings to the other schools of thought in ancient China, and examines the teachings of Zen to discover in it the elements it has in common with Taoism.

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