

said to have early manifested an aptitude for learning, and great reverence for the lore and religious customs of his country. At the time Confucius lived China was divided into many petty States, and morals were at a very low ebb. He was appointed to an important official position early in life. He held many public trusts; but, owing to misrule and disorders, he retired to private life, and left his native State. He became a public teacher, and earnestly inculcated the same ethics as he sought to govern his own life by.

After many vicissitudes abroad, and in his native State of Loo, he again resigned his trust. He contended with poverty and sickness, and suffered keenly the neglect of rulers and statesmen. In his retreat he wrote and taught and edited the sacred classics.

We do not offer this little volume as an exposition of the teachings of the great Sage, nor as a history of Confucianism, but merely as a pointer to some of the salient features of the Sage, and the religious thoughts of the people, which have crystallized around his system of philosophy.

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