

JEREMY TAYLOR'S GOLDEN SAYINGS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649008285

Jeremy Taylor's golden sayings by John Dennis

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN DENNIS

**JEREMY TAYLOR'S
GOLDEN SAYINGS**

JEREMY TAYLOR'S GOLDEN SAVINGS.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S
///
GOLDEN SAYINGS.

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

JOHN DENNIS,

AUTHOR OF "STUDIES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE," ETC.

London :

A. D. INNES & CO.,

31 & 32, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND.

—
1893.

PR3729

T39A62

PREFACE.

JEREMY TAYLOR belongs to the select band of authors who have a life beyond life. Every critic of our great prose writers mentions his name with honour; every student of our literature knows that he is the most eloquent and one of the most erudite of English divines. The titles at least of his principal works are familiar to most readers, and no doubt there are still many devout souls who feed with delight in the green pastures of his "Holy Living" and "Holy Dying."

Probably this is the utmost popularity that can now be claimed for Taylor. The greatest poets use a universal language upon which time has no power; the ear is never closed to their music, the heart will always respond to their charm. Poetry of the highest order cannot grow obsolete, and time has had no influence on Homer and Dante, on Shakespeare and on Milton. The prose writer, on the other hand, is at a disadvantage; and the few that after the lapse of many years retain their

full vitality, do so for the most part through perfection of style and by thoughts borne on the wings of imagination—the very qualities that are most akin to poetry. Perfection of style cannot be claimed for Jeremy Taylor, but the magic of style may be, and he has also an inexhaustible wealth of language. Of all our prose writers on serious subjects he has the liveliest fancy and perhaps the sweetest turns of expression. Of this I am sure, that the more we dig in his mine the more gold shall we extract, and the more shall we be conscious of the depth as well as fertility of his genius. The exuberance of his fancy is never an indication of poverty of thought. The most poetical of divines is assuredly also one of the weightiest. If he rambles to pluck flowers by the way, he has always the cunning art of extracting from them medicine or fragrance.

Knowing a little of Taylor's great and versatile powers, I feel how inadequate any gleanings from so illustrious an author must be—inadequate, but not, I trust, ill-judged. Whatever makes such a writer better known must be of some service to his memory, and, which he would have desired far more, may prove of benefit to readers unacquainted with the fifteen volumes whence these "Golden Sayings" are extracted. This is the editor's aim, and will be regarded, it may be hoped, as a justification of this selection.

INTRODUCTION.

JEREMY TAYLOR was born at Cambridge in 1613. The day of his birth is uncertain, but he was baptised on the 15th of August in that year. His father, Nathaniel Taylor, a barber in the town, was, to quote his son's words, "reasonably learned," and boasted his descent from Dr. Rowland Taylor, the well-known martyr, who died at the stake in the third year of Queen Mary, "with a courageous and kindly cheerfulness which has scarcely its parallel even in those days of religious heroism."¹ At the age of thirteen Jeremy entered Caius College as a sizar, a humble position which enabled many a poor student to gain a university education. Twelve months before, John Milton, then in his seventeenth year, had gone up to

¹ Heber's "Life of Jeremy Taylor," p. 4.