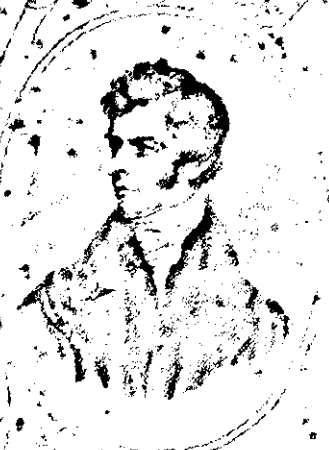


JEREMY TAYLOR

FRANCIS HOOKER



THE TREASURY  
OF  
British Almanac



THE NEW PALACE AT WESTMINSTER.  
THE SEAT OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

EDINBURGH,  
W. P. NIMMO, HAY, & MITCHELL.

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THE  
TREASURY OF BRITISH ELOQUENCE

SPECIMENS  
OF BRILLIANT ORATIONS BY THE MOST EMINENT  
STATESMEN, DIVINES, ETC.  
OF GREAT BRITAIN  
OF THE LAST FOUR CENTURIES

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES  
AND INDEX

Compiled and Arranged by  
ROBERT COCHRANE  
EDITOR OF THE "ENGLISH ESSAYISTS," ETC.

EDINBURGH:  
W. P. NIMMO, HAY, & MITCHELL  
1885.

*"Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue. . . . Do not too lame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor; suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you forget not the modesty of nature."*—**HAMLET TO THE PLAYERS.**

*"Eloquence, in this empire, is poorer. Give a man nerve, a presence, roay over languages, and, above all, enthusiasm, or the skill to simulate it; start him in the public arena with these requisites, and ere many years, perhaps many months, have passed, you will either see him in high station, or in a fair way of rising to it. . . . Unless you have the art of clothing your ideas in clear and captivating diction, of identifying yourself with the feelings of your hearers, and uttering them in languages more forcible, or terse, or brilliant, than they can themselves command; or unless you have the power—still more rare—of originating, of commanding their intellects, their hearts, of drawing them in your train by the irresistible magic of sympathy—of making their thoughts your thoughts, or your thoughts theirs, . . . never hope to rule your fellow-men in these modern days."*—**G. H. FRANCIS IN "ORATORS OF THE AGE"**

*"To be a great orator does not require the highest faculties of the human mind, but it requires the highest exertion of the common faculties of our nature. He has no occasion to dive into the depths of science, or to soar aloft on angels' wings. He keeps upon the surface, he stands upon the ground, but his form is majestic, and his eye sees far and near; he moves among fellows, but he moves among them as a giant among common men. He has no need to reach the heavens, to unfold the system of the universe, or create new worlds for the delighted soul to dwell in; it is enough that he sees things as they are; that he knows and feels and remembers common circumstances and daily transactions that are passing in the world around him. He is not raised above others by being superior to the common interests, prejudices, and passions of men's kind, but by feeling them in a more intense degree than they do."*—**WILLIAM HAZLITT.**

## PREFACE.

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AMONGST the multitude of speeches, sermons, and addresses annually delivered in the United Kingdom, only a few are permanently preserved. As Charles Dickens once remarked, "No sooner do the leaves begin to fall from the trees than pearls of great price begin to fall from the lips of the wise men of the east, and north, and west, and south; and anybody may have them by the bushel for the picking up." That many of these pearls are worth picking up and re-setting no one will doubt. The curtain of oblivion will fall soon enough over the remainder. But when utterances are given by men who express the mind of the time, lend a stimulus to every good and great enterprise, speak in language generally understood and clothed with grace and truthfulness, we have here one plea for their preservation.

Some may hear a great orator and find both stimulus and refreshment in his words; but he serves a much higher purpose than this. The impartial student, when he has read and mastered the history of his own country as written by the ordinary historian, may yet be very far from any direct illumination as to the ordinary life of the people, and the hidden springs and motives which led to a certain national or individual course of action. In many cases he has been dealing with but the outer life of the time, and with generalities. He requires something which will give life and reality to his knowledge, and this he may find in a correct acquaintance with the life of a particular period, as found in its eloquence, or in its statute-books. It is here that the utterances of the divines and statesmen will commend themselves to the mind of the

student. They have had their share in moulding the national life. They are now exponents to us through the printed page, as they were face to face with the men of their own age—of the common passions and tendencies of their times, and as such their utterances are of high historical value. The reader may here glean some of the important facts of history, and the mind of the time, not as these appeared to some remote historian who unconsciously carries into his work many prejudices and preconceived notions. Here also he finds the very words of the men who were actors in, and who helped to make the history of the country. Their words found, and may still find, an echo in the life of the nation; they were thrilled through and through with the forces and vitalities of their age; and by their words they helped to mould the destinies of coming generations. As they were true to the realities of religion, of the national and individual life, so will the force and permanence of their speaking be. Read in this light we are not in a position to despise the orators of our country. In this way, perhaps, Carlyle has termed his biography of Oliver Cromwell "The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell."

Although correct parliamentary reporting, as a system, was not fully organised until after 1815, yet we have many notable speeches preserved to us of a much earlier date. In the time of Sir John Eliot (1590-1632), and much later, it was common for speakers in Parliament to impart their speeches to their friends, who caused them to be transcribed. In this way parliamentary intelligence was circulated in MS. to certain parts of the kingdom where otherwise it might never have reached. Lord Macaulay tells us that in 1685 the newspaper, for the most part, consisted of perhaps a royal proclamation, two or three formal addresses or notices of promotion, a description of a highwayman, of a cock-fight, or an advertisement regarding a strayed dog. The most important parliamentary debates and State trials were passed over in profound silence. In the way already mentioned private notes were kept of Queen Elizabeth's Parliaments, of those of James I. and II., and of the Long Parlia-

ment. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, in August 1735, began to give a monthly synopsis of the debates in Parliament. These debates are said to have been done for this magazine from 1740 to 1743 by Dr Johnson, who, with his well-known political bias, "took care that the Whig dogs should not have the best of it." Thirty years after this time the same plan was adopted by the newspapers. Still in the earlier part of this volume the pulpit is perhaps best represented, owing to the scarcity of reported speeches.

The leading idea in the present compilation has been to furnish specimens of the speeches, sermons, and addresses of some of the greatest statesmen, divines, and others, of the last four centuries, arranged in chronological order, with brief biographies and notes. The term eloquence has been limited to spoken utterances, otherwise the field might have been practically limitless. The specimens given are sought to be either interesting in themselves, or as read in the light of history. For example, the progress of the Eastern Question may be traced from the allusion of Latimer (p. 17), that "thou shalt first kill the great Turks, and discomfort and thrust them down," through the speeches of Fox, R. L. Sheil, on to the statesmen of recent times. Considerable space has been given to the great speeches of Edmund Burke, William Pitt, Sheridan, Brougham, Disraeli, Gladstone, etc. The great divines will also be found well represented. It was the advice of a noted speaker to a young orator that he should deeply meditate on the "beauties of our old English authors, the poets, the moralists, and perhaps more than all these, the preachers of the Augustan age of English letters." The speeches of Sir John Eliot and Cromwell, of Lord Belhaven on the union between England and Scotland, throw light on special periods of the history of our country. The great lawyers are also represented. The addresses of Lord Lytton, Carlyle, Maurice, J. A. Froude, etc., on literary and educational topics, from the eminence of the speakers, not less than the intrinsic merit of the utterances, will be found worthy of all attention. Although seventy-four names are included, yet fully to represent the great



speakers in the political, legal, or ecclesiastical world, was impossible in the present case, even had it been desirable. The Editor is aware, that had the volume been twice its present size only relative completeness would have been gained. The length of the specimens is in no sense intended to be representative of the eminence or public worth of the speakers. Through want of space and other reasons some names have been omitted, which, as originally intended, would have found a place in the collection. These omissions, it is hoped, however, are both few and unimportant. Except in the case of Jeremy Taylor, whose sermons are overloaded with classical allusions, no liberties have been taken with the text, which stands as given by the best authorities. In the preparation of the earlier part of the volume, Dr Goodrich's "Select British Eloquence" has been freely drawn upon.

The best thanks of Publisher and Compiler are here accorded to those authors or publishers who have very kindly permitted the use of much copyright matter,—to Dean Stanley, Mr J. A. Froude, and Rev. C. H. Spurgeon; to Messrs Longman & Co., Macmillan & Co., Henry S. King and Co., Daldy, Isbister, & Co., and Messrs Passmore & Alabaster.

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