



Dictionary of Quotations: From Ancient and Modern English and Foreign Sources (Classic Reprint)

James Wood

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Excerpt from Dictionary of Quotations: From Ancient and Modern English and Foreign Sources

The present "Book of Quotations" was undertaken in the belief that, notwithstanding the many excellent compilations of the kind already in existence, there was room for another that should glean its materials from a wider area, and that should have more respect to the requirements, both speculative and practical, of the times we live in. The wide-spread materials at command had never yet been collected into a single volume, and certain modern writings, fraught with a wisdom that supremely deserves our regard, had hardly been quarried in at all.

The Editor has therefore studied to compile a more comprehensive collection; embracing something of this wisdom, which naturally bears more directly on the interests of the present day. To these interests the Editor has all along had an eye, and he has been careful to collect, from ancient sources as well as modern, sayings that seem to reveal an insight into them, and bear pertinently upon them; they are such as are specified on the title-page, and they are one and all more than passing ones. The aphorisms which wise men have uttered on these vital topics can never fail to deserve our regard, and they will prove edifying to us, even should we, led by a higher wisdom, be inclined to say nay to them. For, as it has been said, "The errors of a wise man are more instructive than the truths of a fool. The wise man travels in lofty, farseeing regions; the fool in low-lying, high-fenced lanes; retracing the footsteps of the former, to discover where he deviated, whole provinces of the universe are laid open to us; in the path of the latter, granting even that he has not deviated at all, little is laid open to us but two wheel-ruts and two hedges."

The quotations collected in this book, (particularly those bearing on the vital interests referred to,) are, it will be generally admitted, the words of wise men; therefore the Editor has endeavoured to ascertain and give the names of their authors, when not known.

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