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Quotes by Emerson, Ralph Waldo

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Ralph Waldo Emerson (May 25, 1803 April 27, 1882) was a famous American essayist and one of America's most influential thinkers and writers.

Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Out of love and hatred, out of earnings and borrowings and leadings and losses; out of sickness and pain; out of wooing and worshipping; out of traveling and voting and watching and caring; out of disgrace and contempt, comes our tuition in the serene and beautiful laws.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Most of the shadows of this life are caused by standing in one's own sunshine

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man is a god in ruins.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The moment we indulge our affections, the earth is metamorphosed, there is no winter

and no night; all tragedies, all ennuis, vanish, all duties even.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We do not count a man's years until he has nothing else to count.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nature is full of freaks, and now puts an old head on young shoulders, and then takes a young heart heating under fourscore winters.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is said that the world is in a state of bankruptcy, that the world owes the world more than the world can pay.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Once you make a decision, the universe conspires to make it happen.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The ship of heaven guides itself and will not accept a wooden rudder.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is nothing capricious in nature and the implanting of a desire indicates that its gratification is in the constitution of the creature that feel it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Can anything be so elegant as to have few wants, and to serve them one's self?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Fate, then, is a name for facts not yet passed under the fire of thought; for causes which are unpenetrated.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

'Tis a superstition to insist on a special diet. All is made at last of the same chemical atoms.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

When it is dark enough, you can see the stars.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe your critics are right.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Can anybody remember when the times were not hard, and money not scarce?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Bad times have a scientific value. These are occasions a good learner would not miss.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Self-command is the main discipline.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If a man knew anything, he would sit in a corner and be modest; but he is such an ignorant peacock, that he goes bustling up and down, and hits on extraordinary discoveries.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All diseases run into one. Old age.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There are three wants which never can be satisfied: that of the rich, who wants something

more; that of the sick, who wants something different; and that of the traveler, who says,
Anywhere but here.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I have heard with admiring submission the experience of the lady who declared that the sense of being perfectly well dressed gives a feeling of inward tranquility which religion is powerless to bestow.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Tobacco and opium have broad backs, and will cheerfully carry the load of armies, if you choose to make them pay high for such joy as they give and such harm as they do.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do that which is assigned to you and you cannot hope too much or dare too much.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Commerce is a game of skill which everyone cannot play and few can play well.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I pay the schoolmaster, but it is the school boys who educate my son.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Respect the child. Be not too much his parent. Trespass not on his solitude.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The secret in education lies in respecting the student.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are shut up in schools and college recitation rooms for ten or fifteen years, and come out at last with a belly-full of words and do not know a thing. The things taught in schools and colleges are not an education, but the means of education.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The pest of society are the egotist, they are dull and bright, sacred and profane, coarse and fine. It is a disease that like the flu falls on all constitutions.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The eloquent man is he who is no eloquent speaker, but who is inwardly drunk with a certain belief.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

An empire is an immense egotism.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Coal is a portable climate. It carries the heat of the tropics to Labrador and the polar circle; and it is the means of transporting itself whithersoever it is wanted. Watt and Stephenson whispered in the ear of mankind their secret, that a half-ounce of coal will draw two tons a mile, and coal carries coal, by rail and by boat, to make Canada as warm as Calcutta, and with its comfort brings its industrial power.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is due to the triumph of enthusiasm. Nothing great was ever achieved without it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Enthusiasm is the leaping lightning, not to be measured by the horse-power of the understanding.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Enthusiasm is the mother of effort, and without it nothing great was ever achieved.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Envy is the tax which all distinction must pay.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Some will always be above others. Destroy the inequality today, and it will appear again tomorrow.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no one who does not exaggerate!

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

'Tis a rule of manners to avoid exaggeration.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The world is upheld by the veracity of good men: they make the earth wholesome. They who lived with them found life glad and nutritious. Life is sweet and tolerable only in our belief in such society.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is always a best way of doing everything.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Few people know how to take a walk. The qualifications are endurance, plain clothes, old shoes, an eye for nature, good humor, vast curiosity, good speech, good silence and

nothing too much.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Intellectual tasting of life will not supersede muscular activity.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

How much of human life is lost in waiting.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our knowledge is the amassed thought and experience of innumerable minds.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The more experiments you make the better.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I hate the giving of the hand unless the whole man accompanies it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The eye is easily frightened.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The eyes indicate the antiquity of the soul.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man finds room in the few square inches of the face for the traits of all his ancestors; for the expression of all his history, and his wants.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If a man will kick a fact out of the window, when he comes back he finds it again in the chimney corner.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every fact is related on one side to sensation, and, on the other, to morals. The game of thought is, on the appearance of one of these two sides, to find the other; given the upper, to find the under side.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Time dissipates to shining ether the solid angularity of facts.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No facts are to me sacred; none are profane; I simply experiment, an endless seeker, with no past at my back.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our faith comes in moments... yet there is a depth in those brief moments which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All that I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The course of everything goes to teach us faith.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The faith that stands on authority is not faith.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Fame is proof that the people are gullible.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The hues of the opal, the light of the diamond, are not to be seen if the eye is too near.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The first farmer was the first man. All historic nobility rests on the possession and use of land.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Whatever limits us we call fate.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If you believe in fate, believe in it, at least, for your good.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Fate is nothing but the deeds committed in a prior state of existence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man's personal defects will commonly have with the rest of the world precisely that importance which they have to himself. If he makes light of them, so will other men.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Fear defeats more people than any other one thing in the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Fear always springs from ignorance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do the thing we fear, and the death of fear is certain.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Always do what you are afraid to do.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We estimate the wisdom of nations by seeing what they did with their surplus capital.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Earth laughs in flowers.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Flowers are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty out-values all the utilities of the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Concentration is the secret of strength in politics, in war, in trade, in short, in all the management of human affairs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The only prudence in life is concentration.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I can reason down or deny everything, except this perpetual Belly: feed he must and will, and I cannot make him respectable.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Let the stoics say what they please, we do not eat for the good of living, but because the meat is savory and the appetite is keen.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nature magically suits a man to his fortunes, by making them the fruit of his character.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Liberty is slow fruit. It is never cheap; it is made difficult because freedom is the accomplishment and perfectness of man.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

For what avail the plough or sail, Or land or life, if freedom fail?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

So far as a person thinks; they are free.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing is more disgusting than the crowing about liberty by slaves, as most men are, and the flippant mistaking for freedom of some paper preamble like a Declaration of Independence, or the statute right to vote, by those who have never dared to think or to act.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Go oft to the house of thy friend, for weeds choke the unused path.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The ornament of a house is the friends who frequent it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We talk of choosing our friends, but friends are self-elected

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

He who has a thousand friends has not a friend to spare, And he who has one enemy will meet him everywhere.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Friends, such as we desire, are dreams and fables.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A true friend is somebody who can make us do what we can.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him, I may think aloud.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is one of the blessings of old friends that you can afford to be stupid with them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The glory of friendship is not in the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is in the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when he discovers that someone else believes in him and is willing to trust him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A day for toil, an hour for sport, but for a friend is life too short.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The only way to have a friend is to be one.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I do then with my friends as I do with my books. I would have them where I can find them, but I seldom use them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I didn't find my friends; the good Lord gave them to me.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every man passes his life in the search after friendship.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The chief mourner does not always attend the funeral.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is always so pleasant to be generous, though very vexatious to pay debts.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Only an inventor knows how to borrow, and every man is or should be an inventor.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The greatest genius is the most indebted person.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The hearing ear is always found close to the speaking tongue; and no genius can long or often utter anything which is not invited and gladly entertained by men around him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men -- that is genius.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

When Nature has work to be done, she creates a genius to do it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Coffee is good for talent, but genius wants prayer.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Accept your genius and say what you think.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man of genius is privileged only as far as he is genius. His dullness is as insupportable as any other dullness.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Repose and cheerfulness are the badge of the gentleman -- repose in energy.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The only gift is a portion of thyself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

People with great gifts are easy to find, but symmetrical and balanced ones never.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Big jobs usually go to the men who prove their ability to outgrow small ones.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We do not quite forgive a giver. The hand that feeds us is in some danger of being bitten.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is this to be said in favor of drinking, that it takes the drunkard first out of society, then out of the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Without ambition one starts nothing. Without work one finishes nothing. The prize will not

be sent to you. You have to win it. The man who knows how will always have a job. The man who also knows why will always be his boss. As to methods there may be a million and then some, but principles are few. The man who grasps principles can successfully select his own methods. The man who tries methods, ignoring principles, is sure to have trouble.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In America the geography is sublime, but the men are not; the inventions are excellent, but the inventors one is sometimes ashamed of.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I hate this shallow Americanism which hopes to get rich by credit, to get knowledge by raps on midnight tables, to learn the economy of the mind by phrenology, or skill without study, or mastery without apprenticeship.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are a puny and fickle folk. Avarice, hesitation, and following are our diseases.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The intellectual man requires a fine bait; the sots are easily amused. But everybody is drugged with his own frenzy, and the pageant marches at all hours, with music and banner and badge.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Good breeding, a union of kindness and independence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The angels are so enamoured of the language that is spoken in heaven, that they will not distort their lips with the hissing and unmusical dialects of men, but speak their own, whether there be any who understand it or not.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We aim above the mark to hit the mark.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Those who cannot tell what they desire or expect, still sigh and struggle with indefinite thoughts and vast wishes.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

'Tis the old secret of the gods that they come in low disguises.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The dice of God are always loaded.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is a crack in everything God has made.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The meaning of good and bad, of better and worse, is simply helping or hurting.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is very hard to be simple enough to be good.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The less government we have the better.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and new.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No great man ever complains of want of opportunity.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The essence of greatness is the perception that virtue is enough.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The measure of a master is his success in bringing all men around to his opinion twenty years later.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The search after the great men is the dream of youth, and the most serious occupation of manhood.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To be great is to be misunderstood.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A great man stands on God. A small man on a great man.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Great people are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force, that thoughts rule the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

He is great who is what he is from nature, and who never reminds us of others.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

My evening visitors, if they cannot see the clock should find the time in my face.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To fill the hour -- that is happiness.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I look on that man as happy, who, when there is question of success, looks into his work for a reply.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Happiness is a perfume which you cannot pour on someone without getting some on yourself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Health is the condition of wisdom, and the sign is cheerfulness -- an open and noble temper.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory of a wrong.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Great hearts steadily send forth the secret forces that incessantly draw great events.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Many might go to Heaven with half the labor they go to hell.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every hero becomes a bore at last.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The characteristic of genuine heroism is its persistency. All men have wandering impulses, fits and starts of generosity. But when you have resolved to be great, abide by yourself, and do not weakly try to reconcile yourself with the world. The heroic cannot be the common, nor the common the heroic.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver five minutes longer.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Heroism feels and never reasons, and therefore is always right.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our best history is still poetry.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is impossible for a man to be cheated by anyone but himself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Be true to your own act and congratulate yourself if you have done something strange and extravagant to break the monotony of a decorous age.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The louder he talked of his honor, the faster we counted our spoons.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The end of the human race will be that it will eventually die of civilization.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is this benefit in brag, that the speaker is unconsciously expressing his own ideal. Humor him by all means; draw it all out, and hold him to it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are prisoners of ideas.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is a lesson which all history teaches wise men, to put trust in ideas, and not in circumstances.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Ideas must work through the brains and the arms of good and brave men, or they are no better than dreams.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no prosperity, trade, art, city, or great material wealth of any kind, but if you trace it home, you will find it rooted in a thought of some individual man. --

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

That man is idle who can do something better.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What is the imagination? Only an arm or weapon of the interior energy; only the precursor of the reason.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The quality of the imagination is to flow and not to freeze.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We live by our imagination, our admirations, and our sentiments.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Science does not know its debt to imagination.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There are no days in life so memorable as those which vibrate to some stroke of the imagination.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Imagination is not a talent of some people but is the health of everyone.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Imitation is suicide.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Higher than the question of our duration is the question of our deserving. Immortality will come to such as are fit for it, and he would be a great soul in future must be a great soul now.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every man is an impossibility until he is born.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our expenses are all for conformity.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man must consider what a rich realm he abdicates when he becomes a conformist.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Who shall set a limit to the influence of a human being?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The best efforts of a fine person is felt after we have left their presence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every thought which genius and piety throw into the world alters the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Of course, money will do after its kind, and will steadily work to unspiritualize and unchurch the people to whom it was bequeathed.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The torpid artist seeks inspiration at any cost, by virtue or by vice, by friend or by fiend, by prayer or by wine.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A few strong instincts and a few plain rules suffice us.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In failing circumstances no one can be relied on to keep their integrity.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Intellect annuls fate. So far as a man thinks, he is free.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A sage is the instructor of a hundred ages.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If a man's eye is on the Eternal, his intellect will grow.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

One definition of man is an intelligence served by organs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We lie in the lap of immense intelligence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Everything intercepts us from ourselves.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Man is a shrewd inventor, and is ever taking the hint of a new machine from his own structure, adapting some secret of his own anatomy in iron, wood, and leather, to some required function in the work of the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If you shoot at a king you must kill him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I would have the studies elective. Scholarship is to be created not by compulsion, but by awakening a pure interest in knowledge. The wise instructor accomplishes this by opening to his pupils precisely the attractions the study has for himself. The marking is a system for schools, not for the college; for boys, not for men; and it is an ungracious work to put on a professor.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Knowledge is knowing that we cannot know.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Knowledge is the only elegance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Knowledge comes by eyes always open and working hands; and there is no knowledge that is not power.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I like to be beholden to the great metropolitan English speech, the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Language is the archives of history.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Language is a city to the building of which every human being brought a stone.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Good men must not obey the laws too well.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The laws of each are convertible into the laws of any other.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The wise know that foolish legislation is a rope of sand, which perishes in the twisting.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The good lawyer is not the man who has an eye to every side and angle of contingency, and qualifies all his qualifications, but who throws himself on your part so heartily, that he can get you out of a scrape.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my own constitution; the only wrong what is against it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our chief want in life is somebody who will make us do what we can.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The measure of a great leader, is their success in bringing everyone around to their opinion twenty years later.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The first thing a great person does, is make us realize the insignificance of circumstance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are reformers in the spring and summer, but in autumn we stand by the old.

Reformers in the morning, and conservers at night.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In every man there is something wherein I may learn of him, and in that I am his pupil.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We learn geology the morning after the earthquake.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The years teach us much the days never knew.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The studious class are their own victims: they are thin and pale, their feet are cold, their heads are hot, the night is without sleep, the day a fear of interruption --pallor, squalor, hunger, and egotism.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man's library is a sort of harem.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Be a little careful about your library. Do you foresee what you will do with it? Very little to be sure. But the real question is, What it will do with you? You will come here and get books that will open your eyes, and your ears, and your curiosity, and turn you inside out or outside in.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries, when they wrote these books. Hence, instead of Man Thinking, we have the book-worm.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every violation of truth is not only a sort of suicide in the liar, but is a stab at the health of human society.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The life of man is the true romance, which when it is valiantly conducted, will yield the imagination a higher joy than any fiction.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Life is a perpetual instruction in cause and effect.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If we live truly, we shall see truly.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Life too near paralyses art.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Like bees, they must put their lives into the sting they give.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Live, let live, and help live

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing is beneath you if it is in the direction of your life.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is not length of life, but depth of life.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man makes inferiors his superiors by heat; self-control is the rule.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We boil at different degrees.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Who can guess how much industry and providence and affection we have caught from the pantomime of brutes?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Some of your grief you have cured, and lived to survive; but what torments of pain have you endured that haven't as yet arrived.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

'Tis very certain that each man carries in his eye the exact indication of his rank in the immense scale of men, and we are always learning to read it. A complete man should need no auxiliaries to his personal presence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The silence that accepts merit as the most natural thing in the world is the highest applause.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The wonder is always new that any sane man can be a sailor.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The most advanced nations are always those who navigate the most.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Light is the first of painters. There is no object so foul that intense light will not make it beautiful.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is then creative reading as well as creative writing. When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

People do not deserve to have good writings; they are so pleased with the bad.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Columbus discovered no isle or key so lonely as himself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All mankind loves a lover.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The power of love, as the basis of a State, has never been tried.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Love and you shall be loved. All love is mathematically just, as much as the two sides of an algebraic equation.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

He who is in love is wise and is becoming wiser, sees newly every time he looks at the object beloved, drawing from it with his eyes and his mind those virtues which it possesses.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no chance, and no anarchy, in the universe. All is system and gradation. Every god is there sitting in his sphere.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Shallow people believe in luck and in circumstances; Strong people believe in cause and effect.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

By his machines man can dive and remain under water like a shark; can fly like a hawk in the air; can see atoms like a gnat; can see the system of the universe of Uriel, the angel of the sun; can carry whatever loads a ton of coal can lift; can knock down cities with his fist of gunpowder; can recover the history of his race by the medals which the deluge, and every creature, civil or savage or brute, has involuntarily dropped of its existence; and divine the future possibility of the planet and its inhabitants by his perception of laws of nature.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Good manners are made up of petty sacrifices.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Manners are the happy way of doing things; each once a stroke of genius or of love --now repeated and hardened into usage. They form at last a rich varnish, with which the routine of life is washed, and its details adorned. If they are superficial, so are the dewdrops which give such depth to the morning meadows.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Manners require time, and nothing is more vulgar than haste.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The basis of good manners is self-reliance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There are men whose manners have the same essential splendor as the simple and awful sculpture on the friezes of the Parthenon, and the remains of the earliest Greek art.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Is not marriage an open question, when it is alleged, from the beginning of the world, that such as are in the institution wish to get out, and such as are out wish to get in?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The betrothed and accepted lover has lost the wildest charms of his maiden by her acceptance. She was heaven while he pursued her, but she cannot be heaven if she

stoops to one such as he!

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The torments of martyrdom are probably most keenly felt by the bystanders.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The masses have no habit of self reliance or original action.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Leave this hypocritical prating about the masses. Masses are rude, lame, unmade, pernicious in their demands and influence, and need not to be flattered, but to be schooled. I wish not to concede anything to them, but to tame, drill, divide, and break them up, and draw individuals out of them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men are what their mothers made them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men cease to interest us when we find their limitations.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Let us treat the men and women well: treat them as if they were real: perhaps they are.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

My chief want in life is someone who shall make me do what I can.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We boast our emancipation from many superstitions; but if we have broken any idols, it is through a transfer of idolatry.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

He then learns that in going down into the secrets of his own mind he has descended into the secrets of all minds.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We cannot see things that stare us in the face until the hour comes that the mind is ripened.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Shall we judge a country by the majority, or by the minority? By the minority, surely.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All history is a record of the power of minorities, and of minorities of one.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The mob is man voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys, who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The world is his who has money to go over it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Money often costs too much.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Money is the representative of a certain quantity of corn or other commodity. It is so much warmth, so much bread.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It requires a great deal of boldness and a great deal of caution to make a great fortune, and when you have it, it requires ten times as much skill to keep it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Money, which represents the prose of life, and which is hardly spoken of in parlors without an apology, is, in its effects and laws, as beautiful as roses.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The fatal trait of the times is the divorce between religion and morality.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If you would lift me up you must be on higher ground.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Murder in the murderer is no such ruinous thought as poets and romancers will have it; it does not unsettle him, or fright him from his ordinary notice of trifles; it is an act quite easy to be contemplated.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Music causes us to think eloquently.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I find that the Americans have no passions, they have appetites.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nature is an endless combination and repetition of a very few laws. She hums the old

well-known air through innumerable variations.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man is related to all nature.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nature is a mutable cloud which is always and never the same.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nature has made up her mind that what cannot defend itself shall not be defended.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Everything in Nature contains all the powers of Nature. Everything is made of hidden stuff.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In nature nothing can be given. All things are sold.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The rich mind lies in the sun and sleeps, and is Nature.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We fly to beauty as an asylum from the terrors of finite nature.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To the dull mind all nature is leaden. To the illumined mind the whole world burns and sparkles with light.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nature... She pardons no mistakes. Her yea is yea, and her nay, nay.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Make yourself necessary to somebody.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote. In fact it is as difficult to appropriate the thoughts of others as it is to invent.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Necessity does everything well.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We do what we must, and call it by the best names.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No orator can top the one who can give good nicknames.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The reason why men do not obey us is because they see the mud at the bottom of our eye.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

As long as a man stands in his own way, everything seems to be in his way.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Stay at home in your mind. Don't recite other people's opinions. I hate quotations. Tell me what you know.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The only sin that we never forgive in each other is a difference in opinion.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Be an opener of doors.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything that is beautiful; for beauty is God's handwriting -- a wayside sacrament. Welcome it in every fair face, in every fair sky, in every fair flower, and thank God for it as a cup of blessing.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mousetrap, than his neighbor, though he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every wall is a door.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every sweet has its sour; every evil its good.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence, then, this worship of the past?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Passion, though a bad regulator, is a powerful spring.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Adopt the pace of nature; her secret is patience.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Peace cannot be achieved through violence, it can only be attained through understanding.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself; nothing, but the triumph of principles.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The people are to be taken in small doses.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Other men are lenses through which we read our own minds. Each man seeks those of different quality from his own, and such as are good of their kind; that is, he seeks other men, and the rest.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is hard to go beyond your public. If they are satisfied with cheap performance, you will not easily arrive at better. If they know what is good, and require it, you will aspire and burn until you achieve it. But from time to time, in history, men are born a whole age too soon.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run up

hill, to twist a rope of sand.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

By persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little, you gain the great.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

That which we do not believe, we cannot adequately say; even though we may repeat the words ever so often.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The worst of charity is that the lives you are asked to preserve are not worth preserving.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated about among men of thought.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Genius Borrows nobly.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Few people have any next, they live from hand to mouth without a plan, and are always at the end of their line.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Whenever you are sincerely pleased you are nourished.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It does not need that a poem should be long. Every word was once a poem. Every new relationship is a new word.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Only poetry inspires poetry.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Painting was called silent poetry and poetry speaking painting.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Poetry must be as new as foam and as old as the rock.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sooner or later that which is now life shall be poetry, and every fair and manly trait shall add a richer strain to the song.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is a certain satisfaction in coming down to the lowest ground of politics, for we get rid of cant and hypocrisy.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume, and do not invigorate men.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The true poem is the poet's mind.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sculpture and painting have the effect of teaching us manners and abolishing hurry.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Perpetual modernness is the measure of merit in every work of art.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

New arts destroy the old.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Classic art was the art of necessity: modern romantic art bears the stamp of caprice and chance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Art is a jealous mistress; and if a man have a genius for painting, poetry, music, architecture or philosophy, he makes a bad husband and an ill provider.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Art is the path of the creator to his work.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Each work of art excludes the world, concentrates attention on itself. For the time it is the only thing worth doing --to do just that; be it a sonnet, a statue, a landscape, an outline head of Caesar, or an oration. Presently we return to the sight of another that globes itself into a whole as did the first, for example, a beautiful garden; and nothing seems worth doing in life but laying out a garden.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The True Artist has the planet for his pedestal; the adventurer, after years of strife, has nothing broader than his shoes.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every artist was first an amateur.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Artists must be sacrificed to their art.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To different minds, the same world is a hell, and a heaven.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is long ere we discover how rich we are. Our history, we are sure, is quite tame: we have nothing to write, nothing to infer. But our wiser years still run back to the despised recollections of childhood, and always we are fishing up some wonderful article out of that pond; until, by and by, we begin to suspect that the biography of the one foolish person we know is, in reality, nothing less than the miniature paraphrase of the hundred volumes of the Universal History.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Infancy conforms to nobody: all conform to it, so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play to it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If government knew how, I should like to see it check, not multiply, the population. When it reaches its true law of action, every man that is born will be hailed as essential.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Some men are born to own, and can animate all their possessions. Others cannot: their owning is not graceful; seems to be a compromise of their character: they seem to steal

their own dividends.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We have more than we use.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The power which resides in man is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every man believes that he has greater possibilities.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Oh man! There is no planet sun or star could hold you, if you but knew what you are.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Poverty consist in feeling poor.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The greatest man in history was the poorest.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The creation of a thousand forest in one acorn.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nature arms each man with some faculty which enables him to do easily some feat impossible to any other.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The stupidity of men always invites the insolence of power.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A good indignation brings out all one's powers.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do the thing and you will have the power. But they that do not the thing, had not the power.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Wherever there is power there is age.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no knowledge that is not power.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

When I was praised I lost my time, for instantly I turned around to look at the work I had thought slightly of, and that day I made nothing new.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Some natures are too good to be spoiled by praise.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Preaching is the expression of moral sentiments applied to the duties of life.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The good rain, like a bad preacher, does not know when to leave off.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Today is a king in disguise.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Those who live to the future must always appear selfish to those who live to the present.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Give me insight into today and you may have the antique and future worlds.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Finish each day before you begin the next, and interpose a solid wall of sleep between the two. This you cannot do without temperance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The President has paid dear for his White House. It has commonly cost him all his peace, and the best of his manly attributes. To preserve for a short time so conspicuous an appearance before the world, he is content to eat dust before the real masters who stand erect behind the throne.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The walking of Man is falling forwards.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All our progress is an unfolding, like a vegetable bud. You have first an instinct, then an opinion, then a knowledge as the plant has root, bud, and fruit. Trust the instinct to the end, though you can render no reason.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All promise outruns performance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No man acquires property without acquiring with it a little arithmetic also.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If a man owns land, the land owns him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Property is an intellectual production. The game requires coolness, right reasoning, promptness, and patience in the players.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I know of no such unquestionable badge and ensign of a sovereign mind as that of tenacity of purpose...

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men achieve a certain greatness unawares, when working to another aim.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The crowning fortune of a man is to be born to some pursuit which finds him employment and happiness, whether it be to make baskets, or broadswords, or canals, or statues, or songs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The artists must be sacrificed to their art. Like the bees, they must put their lives into the

sting they give.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The next best thing to saying a good thing yourself, is to quote one.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The profoundest thought or passion sleeps as in a mine, until an equal mind and heart finds and publishes it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I hate quotations. Tell me what you know.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it. Many will read the book before one thinks of quoting a passage. As soon as he has done this, that line will be quoted east and west.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The adventitious beauty of poetry may be felt in the greater delight with a verse given in a happy quotation than in the poem.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

He presents me with what is always an acceptable gift who brings me news of a great

thought before unknown. He enriches me without impoverishing himself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our best thoughts come from others.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless; it is not loving; it has no ulterior and divine ends; but is destructive only out of hatred and selfishness.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every reform was once a private opinion, and when it shall be a private opinion again, it will solve the problem of the age.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Dear to us are those who love us... but dearer are those who reject us as unworthy, for they add another life; they build a heaven before us whereof we had not dreamed, and thereby supply to us new powers out of the recesses of the spirit, and urge us to new and unattempted performances.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The religion that is afraid of science dishonors God and commits suicide.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men are respectable only as they respect.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every revolution was first a thought in one man's mind.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If there is any period one would desire to be born in, is it not the age of Revolution; when the old and the new stand side by side, and admit of being compared; when the energies of all men are searched by fear and by hope; when the historic glories of the old can be compensated by the rich possibilities of the new era?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The reward of a thing well done is to have done it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is one of the most beautiful compensations in life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Man was born to be rich, or grow rich by use of his faculties, by the union of thought with

nature. Property is an intellectual production. The game requires coolness, right reasoning, promptness, and patience in the players.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I dip my pen in the blackest ink, because I am not afraid of falling into my inkpot.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We must set up a strong present tense against all rumors of wrath, past and to come.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In skating over thin ice, our safety is in our speed.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I cannot forgive a scholar his homeless despondency.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The office of the scholar is to cheer, to raise, and to guide men by showing them facts amidst appearances. He plies the slow, unhonored, and unpaid task of observation. He is the world's eye.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What terrible questions we are learning to ask! The former men believed in magic, by which temples, cities, and men were swallowed up, and all trace of them gone. We are

coming on the secret of a magic which sweeps out of men's minds all vestige of theism and beliefs which they and their fathers held and were framed upon.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do what we can, summer will have its flies.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The sea, washing the equator and the poles, offers its perilous aid, and the power and empire that follow it... Beware of me, it says, but if you can hold me, I am the key to all the lands.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No one has a prosperity so high and firm that two or three words can't dishearten it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing is secure but life, transition, the energizing spirit.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Whatever games are played with us, we must play no games with ourselves.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is very easy in the world to live by the opinion of the world. It is very easy in solitude to be self-centered. But the finished man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with

perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is easy to live for others, everybody does. I call on you to live for yourselves.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half possession.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The never-ending task of self improvement.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide: him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him, because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him, because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods loved him because men hated him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A low self-love in the parent desires that his child should repeat his character and fortune.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

This gives force to the strong -- that the multitude have no habit of self-reliance or original action.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The best lightning rod for your protection is your own spine.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No one can cheat you out of ultimate success but yourself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Self-sacrifice is the real miracle out of which all the reported miracles grow.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Self-trust is the first secret to success.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Society is infested by persons who, seeing that the sentiments please, counterfeit the expression of them. These we call sentimentalists--talkers who mistake the description for the thing, saying for having.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

He is great who confers the most benefits.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No man can help another without helping himself.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Let us be silent that we may hear the whispers of the gods.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing is more simple than greatness; indeed, to be simple is to be great.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It the proof of high culture to say the greatest matters in the simplest way.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

That which we call sin in others, is experiment for us.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sincerity is the luxury allowed, like diadems and authority, only to the highest rank. Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sincerity is the highest complement you can pay,

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Skepticism is unbelief in cause and effect.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The sky is the daily bread of the eyes.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Slavery is an institution for converting men into monkeys.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. Society acquires new arts, and loses old instincts.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Society is a hospital of incurables.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Society always consists in the greatest part, of young and foolish persons.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members.

The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Society is a masked ball, where every one hides his real character, and reveals it by hiding.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinions; it is easy in solitude to live after your own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Solitude is impractical and yet society is fatal.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We walk alone in the world.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We never touch but at points.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Conversation enriches the understanding; but solitude is the school of genius.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sorrow makes us children again.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The only thing grief has taught me is to know how shallow it is.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sorrow makes us all children again, destroys all differences of intellect. The wisest knows nothing.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The soul's emphasis is always right.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All the great speakers were bad speakers at first.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Condense some daily experience into a glowing symbol and an audience is electrified.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel. It is to bring another out of his bad sense into your good sense.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The foundations of a person are not in matter but in spirit.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our spontaneous action is always the best. You cannot, with your best deliberation and heed, come so close to any question as your spontaneous glance shall bring you.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The State must follow, and not lead, the character and progress of the citizen.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We acquire the strength we have overcome.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is always room for a person of force and they make room for many.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The key to the age may be this, or that, or the other, as the young orators describe; the key to all ages is -- Imbecility; imbecility in the vast majority of men, at all times, and, even in heroes, in all but certain eminent moments; victims of gravity, custom, and fear.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Often a certain abdication of prudence and foresight is an element of success.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A strenuous soul hates cheap success.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If man has good corn, or wood, or boards, or pigs to sell, or can make better chairs or knives, crucibles, or church organs, than anybody else, you will find a broad, hard-beaten road to his house, though it be in the woods.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no way to success in art but to take off your coat, grind paint, and work like a digger on the railroad, all day and every day.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is a tendency for things to right themselves.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do not be too timid and squeamish about your actions. All life is an experiment.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Act, if you like, but you do it at your peril. Men's actions are too strong for them. Show me a man who has acted and who has not been the victim and slave of his action.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The German intellect wants the French sprightliness, the fine practical understanding of the English, and the American adventure; but it has a certain probity, which never rests in

a superficial performance, but asks steadily, To what end? A German public asks for a controlling sincerity.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Let us, if we must have great actions, make our own so. All action is of infinite elasticity, and the least admits of being inflated with celestial air, until it eclipses the sun and moon.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men's actions are too strong for them. Show me a man who has acted, and who has not been the victim and slave of his action.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The ancestor of every action is thought.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Real action is in silent moments.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are taught by great actions that the universe is the property of every individual in it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Thought is the blossom; language the bud; action the fruit behind it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are always getting ready to live, but never living.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Why should we be cowed by the name of Action?.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man's action is only a picture book of his creed.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We ascribe beauty to that which is simple; which has no superfluous parts; which exactly answers its end; which stands related to all things; which is the mean of many extremes.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The line of beauty is the line of perfect economy.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Beauty rests on necessities.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

As soon as beauty is sought not from religion and love, but for pleasure, it degrades the seeker.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Beauty is the mark God sets on virtue. Every natural action is graceful; every heroic act is also decent, and causes the place and the bystanders to shine.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Beauty is the pilot of the young soul.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A beautiful form is better than a beautiful face; it gives a higher pleasure than statues or pictures; it is the finest of the fine arts.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The great majority of men are bundles of beginnings.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Belief consists in accepting the affirmations of the soul; unbelief, in denying them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are born believing. A man bears beliefs as a tree bears apples.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All the great ages have been ages of belief.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Religion is as effectually destroyed by bigotry as by indifference.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Great geniuses have the shortest biographies.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is properly no history; only biography.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There are books which take rank in your life with parents and lovers and passionate experiences, so medicinal, so stringent, so revolutionary, so authoritative.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If we encounter a man of rare intellect, we should ask him what books he reads.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Never read any book that is not a year old.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our high respect for a well read person is praise enough for literature.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Books are the best of things if well used; if abused, among the worst. They are good for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than be warped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

'Tis the good reader that makes the good book; in every book he finds passages which seem to be confidences or sides hidden from all else and unmistakably meant for his ear; the profit of books is according to the sensibility of the reader; the profound thought or passion sleeps as in a mine, until it is discovered by an equal mind and heart.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are too civil to books. For a few golden sentences we will turn over and actually read a volume of four or five hundred pages.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Some books leave us free and some books make us free.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is creative reading as well as creative writing.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If I cannot brag of knowing something, then I brag of not knowing it; at any rate, brag.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is also this benefit in brag, that the speaker is unconsciously expressing his own ideal. Humor him by all means, draw it all out, and hold him to it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every man is a consumer and ought to be a producer.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The right merchant is one who has the just average of faculties we call common sense; a man of a strong affinity for facts, who makes up his decision on what he has seen. He is thoroughly persuaded of the truths of arithmetic. There is always a reason, in the man, for his good or bad fortune in making money. Men talk as if there were some magic about this. He knows that all goes on the old road, pound for pound, cent for cent -- for every effect a perfect cause -- and that good luck is another name for tenacity of purpose.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every calamity is a spur and valuable hint.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

People wish to be settled. It is only as far as they are unsettled that there is any hope for them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Judge of your natural character by what you do in dreams.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Character is higher than intellect. A great soul will be strong to live as well as think.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

People seem not to see that their opinion of the world is also a confession of character.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

That which we call character is a reserved force which acts directly by presence, and without means. It is conceived of as a certain undemonstrable force, a familiar or genius, by whose impulses the man is guided, but whose counsels he cannot impart.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Gross and obscure natures, however decorated, seem impure shambles; but character gives splendor to youth, and awe to wrinkled skin and gray hairs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do what you know and perception is converted into character.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza; read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Give no bounties: make equal laws: secure life and prosperity and you need not give alms.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do not tell me of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they my poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent, I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

So of cheerfulness, or a good temper, the more it is spent, the more it remains.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sympathy is a supporting atmosphere, and in it we unfold easily and well.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every man has his own vocation, talent is the call.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is a happy talent to know how to play.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Talent alone cannot make a writer. There must be a man behind the book; a personality which, by birth and quality, is pledged to the doctrines there set forth, and which exists to see and state things so, and not otherwise.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Talent for talent's sake is a bauble and a show. Talent working with joy in the cause of

universal truth lifts the possessor to new power as a benefactor.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Talent is commonly developed at the expense of character.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man is known by the books he reads, by the company he keeps, by the praise he gives, by his dress, by his tastes, by his distastes, by the stories he tells, by his gait, by the notion of his eye, by the look of his house, of his chamber; for nothing on earth is solitary but every thing hath affinities infinite.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every advantage has its tax.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The man who can make hard things easy is the educator.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Knowledge exists to be imparted.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men lose their tempers in defending their taste.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What your heart thinks is great, is great. The soul's emphasis is always right.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

If a man sits down to think, he is immediately asked if has a headache.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Life consists in what a person is thinking of all day.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Some thoughts always find us young, and keep us so. Such a thought is the love of the universal and eternal beauty.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The key to every man is his thought. Sturdy and defying though he look, he has a helm which he obeys, which is the idea after which all his facts are classified. He can only be reformed by showing him a new idea which commands his own.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The revelation of Thought takes men out of servitude into freedom.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The soul of God is poured into the world through the thoughts of men.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no thought in any mind, but it quickly tends to convert itself into power.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Thought makes every thing fit for use.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

To think is to act.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A sect or party is an incognito devised to save man from the vexation of thinking.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man's what he thinks about all day long

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are ashamed of our thoughts and often see them brought forth by others.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker on this planet.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What is the hardest thing in the world? To think.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

One of the illusions of life is that the present hour is not the critical, decisive hour. Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year. No man has learned anything rightly, until he knows that every day is Doomsday.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

These times of ours are serious and full of calamity, but all times are essentially alike. As soon as there is life there is danger.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The surest poison is time.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

So much of our time is spent in preparation, so much in routine, and so much in retrospect, that the amount of each person's genius is confined to a very few hours.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The greatest meliorator of the world is selfish, huckstering Trade.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We rail at trade, but the historian of the world will see that it was the principle of liberty; that it settled America, and destroyed feudalism, and made peace and keeps peace; that it will abolish slavery.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I do not hesitate to read all good books in translations. What is really best in any book is translatable -- any real insight or broad human sentiment.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I am not much an advocate for traveling, and I observe that men run away to other countries because they are not good in their own, and run back to their own because they pass for nothing in the new places. For the most part, only the light characters travel. Who are you that have no task to keep you at home?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Traveling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Travel is a fools paradise.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No man should travel until he has learned the language of the country he visits. Otherwise he voluntarily makes himself a great baby-so helpless and so ridiculous.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Trust instinct to the end, even though you can give no reason.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The highest compact we can make with our fellow is --Let there be truth between us two forevermore.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Self-trust is the essence of heroism.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All I have seen teaches me to trust the creator for all I have not seen.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Truth is the property of no individual but is the treasure of all men.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Truth is the summit of being; justice is the application of it to affairs.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Truth is beautiful, without doubt; but so are lies.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The greatest homage we can pay truth is to use it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every mind has a choice between truth and repose. Take which you please you can never have both.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All necessary truth is its own evidence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The secret of ugliness consists not in irregularity, but in being uninteresting.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No man thoroughly understands a truth until he has contended against it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fullness and completion?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

I suffer whenever I see that common sight of a parent or senior imposing his opinion and way of thinking and being on a young soul to which they are totally unfit. Cannot we let people be themselves, and enjoy life in their own way? You are trying to make that man another you. One's enough.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is always safety in valor.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Valor consists in the power of self recovery.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The value of a principle is the number of things it will explain; and there is no good theory of disease which does not at once suggest a cure.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Wherever work is done, victory is attained.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The god of victory is said to be one-handed, but peace gives victory on both sides.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

No matter how often you are defeated, you are born to victory.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men talk as if victory were something fortunate. Work is victory.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

As there is a use in medicine for poisons, so the world cannot move without rogues.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The virtues of society are vices of the saint. The terror of reform is the discovery that we must cast away our virtues, or what we have always esteemed such, into the same pit that has consumed our grosser vices.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The virtue in most request is conformity.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The only reward of virtue is virtue.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The less a man thinks or knows about his virtues, the better we like him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Hitch your wagon to a star. Let us not fag in paltry works which serve our pot and bag

alone.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Commerce is of trivial import; love, faith, truth of character, the aspiration of man, these are sacred.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Do not follow where the path may lead. Go, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man's style is his mind's voice. Wooden minds, wooden voices.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Want is a growing giant whom the coat of Have was never large enough to cover.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The triumphs of peace have been in some proximity to war. Whilst the hand was still familiar with the sword-hilt, whilst the habits of the camp were still visible in the port and complexion of the gentleman, his intellectual power culminated; the compression and tension of these stern conditions is a training for the finest and softest arts, and can rarely be compensated in tranquil times, except by some analogous vigor drawn from occupations as hardy as war.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Our strength grows out of our weakness.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The first wealth is health.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Without a rich heart, wealth is an ugly beggar.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Wealth is in applications of mind to nature; and the art of getting rich consists not in industry, much less in saving, but in a better order, in timeliness, in being at the right spot.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The education of the will is the object of our existence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Raphael paints wisdom; Handel sings it, Phidias carves it, Shakespeare writes it, Wren builds it, Columbus sails it, Luther preaches it, Washington arms it, Watt mechanizes it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Wisdom is like electricity. There is no permanently wise man, but men capable of wisdom, who, being put into certain company, or other favorable conditions, become wise for a

short time, as glasses rubbed acquire electric power for a while.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Let us be poised, and wise, and our own, today.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Life is a festival only to the wise.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is a time when a man distinguishes the idea of felicity from the idea of wealth; it is the beginning of wisdom.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no beautifier of complexion or form of behavior like the wish to scatter joy, and not pain, around us.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Beware what you set your heart upon. For it shall surely be yours.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Wit makes its own welcome, and levels all distinctions. No dignity, no learning, no force of character, can make any stand against good wit.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A man's wife has more power over him than the state has.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Slavery it is that makes slavery; freedom, freedom. The slavery of women happened when the men were slaves of kings.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men love to wonder and that is the seed of our science.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It makes a great difference in the force of a sentence, whether a man be behind it or no.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Words are alive; cut them and they bleed.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

See only that thou work and thou canst not escape the reward.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We must hold a man amenable to reason for the choice of his daily craft or profession. It is not an excuse any longer for his deeds that they are the custom of his trade. What business has he with an evil trade?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Work and thou canst escape the reward; whether the work be fine or coarse, planting corn or writing epics, so only it be honest work, done to thine own approbation, it shall earn a reward to the senses as well as to the thought.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Work is victory.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The mark of the man of the world is absence of pretension. He does not make a speech; he takes a low business-tone, avoids all brag, is nobody, dresses plainly, promises not at all, performs much, speaks in monosyllables, hugs his fact. He calls his employment by its lowest name, and so takes from evil tongues their sharpest weapon. His conversation clings to the weather and the news, yet he allows himself to be surprised into thought, and the unlocking of his learning and philosophy.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Little minds have little worries, big minds have no time for worries.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is no luck in literary reputation. They who make up the final verdict upon every book are not the partial and noisy readers of the hour when it appears; but a court as of angels, a public not to be bribed, not to be entreated, and not to be overawed, decides upon every

man's title to fame.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The thirst for adventure is the vent which Destiny offers; a war, a crusade, a gold mine, a new country, speak to the imagination and offer swing and play to the confined powers.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There never was a child so lovely, but his mother was glad to get him asleep.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The child with his sweet pranks, the fool of his senses, commanded by every sight and sound, without any power to compare and rank his sensations, abandoned to a whistle or a painted chip, to a lead dragoon, or a gingerbread dog, individualizing everything, generalizing nothing, delighted with every new thing, lies down at night overpowered by the fatigue, which this day of continual pretty madness has incurred. But Nature has answered her purpose with the curly, dimpled lunatic. She has tasked every faculty, and has secured the symmetrical growth of the bodily frame, by all these attitudes and exertions --an end of the first importance, which could not be trusted to any care less perfect than her own.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Trust your instinct to the end, though you can render no reason.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are as much informed of a writer's genius by what he selects as by what he originates.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Cities force growth and make people talkative and entertaining, but they also make them artificial.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Cities give us collision. 'Tis said, London and New York take the nonsense out of a man.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The city is recruited from the country.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

As long as our civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions. Our riches will leave us sick; there will be bitterness in our laughter; and our wine will burn our mouth. Only that good profits, which we can taste with all doors open, and which serves all men.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Sunday is the core of our civilization, dedicated to thought and reverence.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Civilization depends on morality.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

One of the benefits of a college education is to show the boy its little avail.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Universities are of course hostile to geniuses, which, seeing and using ways of their own, discredit the routine: as churches and monasteries persecute youthful saints.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The colleges, while they provide us with libraries, furnish no professors of books; and I think no chair is so much needed.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The perception of the comic is a tie of sympathy with other men, a pledge of sanity, and a protection from those perverse tendencies and gloomy insanities in which fine intellects sometimes lose themselves. A rogue alive to the ludicrous is still convertible. If that sense is lost, his fellow-men can do little for him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All great masters are chiefly distinguished by the power of adding a second, a third, and perhaps a fourth step in a continuous line. Many a man had taken the first step. With every additional step you enhance immensely the value of your first.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Common sense is genius dressed in its working clothes.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing astonishes people so much as common sense and plain dealing.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

When the eyes say one thing, and the tongue another, a practiced man relies on the language of the first.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

For everything you have missed, you have gained something else; and for everything you gain, you lose something else.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

There is one topic peremptorily forbidden to all well-bred, to all rational mortals, namely, their distempers. If you have not slept, or if you have slept, or if you have headache, or sciatica, or leprosy, or thunder-stroke, I beseech you, by all angels, to hold your peace, and not pollute the morning.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Solvency is maintained by means of a national debt, on the principle, If you will not lend me the money, how can I pay you?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We know better than we do. We do not yet possess ourselves...

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are the prisoners of ideas.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

One lesson we learn early, that in spite of seeming difference, men are all of one pattern. We readily assume this with our mates, and are disappointed and angry if we find that we are premature, and that their watches are slower than ours. In fact, the only sin which we never forgive in each other is difference of opinion.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All successful men have agreed in one thing -- they were causationists. They believed that things went not by luck, but by law; that there was not a weak or a cracked link in the chain that joins the first and last of things.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

All conservatives are such from personal defects. They have been effeminated by position or nature, born halt and blind, through luxury of their parents, and can only, like invalids, act on the defensive.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men are conservatives when they are least vigorous, or when they are most luxurious. They are conservatives after dinner, or before taking their rest; when they are sick or aged. In the morning, or when their intellect or their conscience has been aroused, when they hear music, or when they read poetry, they are radicals.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In every society some men are born to rule, and some to advise.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Wise men are not wise at all hours, and will speak five times from their taste or their humor, to once from their reason.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Let me never fall into the vulgar mistake of dreaming that I am persecuted whenever I am contradicted.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valor of the enemy he kills

passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Nothing external to you has any power over you.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

He who would be a man must therefore be a non-conformist.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Things said for conversation are chalk eggs. Don't say things. What you are stands over you the while, and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In conversation the game is, to say something new with old words. And you shall observe a man of the people picking his way along, step by step, using every time an old boulder, yet never setting his foot on an old place.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Conversation is an art in which a man has all mankind for competitors.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Shall we then judge a country by the majority, or by the minority? By the minority, surely.

'Tis pedantry to estimate nations by the census, or by square miles of land, or other than

by their importance to the mind of the time.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Courage charms us, because it indicates that a man loves an idea better than all things in the world, that he is thinking neither of his bed, nor his dinner, nor his money, but will venture all to put in act the invisible thought of his mind.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Courage consists in equality to the problem before us.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A great part of courage is the courage of having done the thing before.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

When a resolute young fellow steps up to the great bully, the world, and takes him boldly by the beard, he is often surprised to find it comes off in his hand, and that it was only tied on to scare away the timid adventurers.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide upon, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs. Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What a new face courage puts on everything!

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Half a man's wisdom goes with his courage.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We must be as courteous to a man as we are to a picture, which we are willing to give the advantage of a good light.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Life is short, but there is always time for courtesy.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Courtesy Life be not so short but that there is always time for courtesy.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

It is the privilege of any human work which is well done to invest the doer with a certain haughtiness. He can well afford not to conciliate, whose faithful work will answer for him.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

That which builds is better than that which is built.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that, unsuspected, ripens with the flower of the pleasure that concealed it.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Blame is safer than praise.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Criticism should not be querulous and wasting, all knife and root-puller, but guiding, instructive, inspiring.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Men over forty are no judges of a book written in a new spirit.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Culture is one thing and varnish is another.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Curiosity is lying in wait for every secret.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them. If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Don't be a cynic and disconsolate preacher. Don't bewail and moan. Omit the negative propositions. Challenge us with incessant affirmatives. Don't waste yourself in rejection, or bark against the bad, but chant the beauty of the good.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

A cynic can chill and dishearten with a single word.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half. Never run away from anything. Never!

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

As soon as there is life there is danger.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The wise man in the storm prays to God, not for safety from danger, but for deliverance from fear.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The most dangerous thing is illusion.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Every great achievement is the victory of a flaming heart.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The key to every man is his thought. He can only be reformed by showing him a new idea which commands his own.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

O friend, never strike sail to a fear! Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Europe extends to the Alleghenies; America lies beyond.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Is not every man sometimes a radical in politics? Men are conservatives when they are

least vigorous, or when they are most luxurious. They are conservatives after dinner, or before taking their rest; when they are sick, or aged. In the morning, or when their intellect or their conscience has been aroused; when they hear music, or when they read poetry, they are radicals.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Dont say things. What you are stands over you the while, and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Of all debts men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on government! Everywhere they think they get their moneys worth, except for these.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Englands genius filled all measure
Of heart and soul, of strength and pleasure,
Gave to the mind its emperor,
And life was larger than before:
Nor sequent centuries could hit
Orbit and sum of Shakespeares wit. The men who lived with him became
Poets, for the air was fame.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Mr. Emerson visited Thoreau at the jail, and the meeting between the two philosophers must have been interesting and somewhat dramatic. The account of the meeting was told me by Miss Maria Thoreau [Henry Thoreaus aunt] Henry, why are you here? Waldo, why are you not here?

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The two parties which divide the state, the party of Conservatism and that of Innovation, are very old, and have disputed the possession of the world ever since it was made.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Not gold but only men can make
A people great and strong;
Men who for truth and honors
sake
Stand fast and suffer long. Brave men who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others fly
They build a nations pillars deep
And lift them to the sky.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

What is life but the angle of vision? A man is measured by the angle at which he looks at objects. What is life but what a man is thinking of all day? This is his fate and his employer. Knowing is the measure of the man. By how much we know, so much we are.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

Republics abound in young civilians who believe that the laws make the city, that grave modifications of the policy and modes of living and employments of the population, that commerce, education and religion may be voted in or out; and that any measure, though it were absurd, may be imposed on a people if only you can get sufficient voices to make it a law. But the wise know that foolish legislation is a rope of sand which perishes in the twisting; that the State must follow and not lead the character and progress of the citizen; that the form of government which prevails is the expression of what cultivation exists in the population which permits it. The law is only a memorandum.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo



QuotationsBook