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# Quotes by Twain, Mark

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Samuel Langhorne Clemens (November 30, 1835 April 21, 1910), better known by his pen name Mark Twain, was a famous and popular American humorist, novelist, writer and lecturer.

By trying we can easily learn to endure adversity. Another man's, I mean.

- Twain, Mark

Annihilation has no terrors for me, because I have already tried it before I was born --a hundred million years --and I have suffered more in an hour, in this life, than I remember to have suffered in the whole hundred million years put together. There was a peace, a serenity, an absence of all sense of responsibility, an absence of worry, an absence of care, grief, perplexity; and the presence of a deep content and unbroken satisfaction in that hundred million years of holiday which I look back upon with a tender longing and with a grateful desire to resume, when the opportunity comes.

- Twain, Mark

Why is it that we rejoice at birth and grieve at a funeral? It is because we are not the person involved.

- Twain, Mark

Whoever has lived long enough to find out what life is, knows how deep a debt of

gratitude we owe to Adam, the first great benefactor of our race. He brought death into the world.

- Twain, Mark

We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Adam, the first great benefactor of the human race: he brought death into the world.

- Twain, Mark

We never become really and genuinely our entire and honest selves until we are dead -- and not then until we have been dead years and years. People ought to start dead and then they would be honest so much earlier.

- Twain, Mark

Let us endeavor so to live that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry.

- Twain, Mark

All say, How hard it is that we have to die -- a strange complaint to come from the mouths of people who have had to live.

- Twain, Mark

When a person cannot deceive himself the chances are against his being able to deceive other people.

- Twain, Mark

Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but you have ceased to live.

- Twain, Mark

I am a democrat only on principle, not by instinct -- nobody is that. Doubtless some people say they are, but this world is grievously given to lying.

- Twain, Mark

Denial ain't just a river in Egypt.

- Twain, Mark

I can teach anybody how to get what they want out of life. The problem is that I can't find anybody who can tell me what they want.

- Twain, Mark

It is a time when one's spirit is subdued and sad, one knows not why; when the past seems a storm-swept desolation, life a vanity and a burden, and the future but a way to death.

- Twain, Mark

What is there that confers the noblest delight? What is that which swells a man's breast with pride above that which any other experience can bring to him? Discovery! To know

that you are walking where none others have walked; that you are beholding what human eye has not seen before; that you are breathing a virgin atmosphere. To give birth to an idea, to discover a great thought -- an intellectual nugget, right under the dust of a field that many a brain-plough had gone over before. To find a new planet, to invent a new hinge, to find a way to make the lightning carry your messages. To be the first -- that is the idea.

- Twain, Mark

The rule is perfect: in all matters of opinion our adversaries are insane.

- Twain, Mark

He has been a doctor a year now and has had two patients, no, three, I think -- yes, it was three; I attended their funerals.

- Twain, Mark

Be careless in your dress if you must, but keep a tidy soul.

- Twain, Mark

Duties are not performed for duty's sake, but because their neglect would make the man uncomfortable. A man performs but one duty --the duty of contenting his spirit, the duty of making himself agreeable to himself.

- Twain, Mark

Do something every day that you don't want to do. This is the golden rule for acquiring the

habit of doing your duty without pain.

- Twain, Mark

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.

- Twain, Mark

Soap and education are not as sudden as a massacre, but they are more deadly in the long run. Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond; cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.

- Twain, Mark

We must annex those people. We can afflict them with our wise and beneficent government. We can introduce the novelty of thieves, all the way up from street-car pickpockets to municipal robbers and Government defaulters, and show them how amusing it is to arrest them and try them and then turn them loose -- some for cash and some for political influence. We can make them ashamed of their simple and primitive justice. We can make that little bunch of sleepy islands the hottest corner on earth, and array it in the moral splendor of our high and holy civilization. Annexation is what the poor islanders need. Shall we to men benighted, the lamp of life deny?

- Twain, Mark

The first half of life consists of the capacity to enjoy without the chance; the last half consists of the chance without the capacity.

- Twain, Mark

Man will do many things to get himself loved; he will do all things to get himself envied.

- Twain, Mark

We are all alike, on the inside.

- Twain, Mark

Evolution is the law of policies: Darwin said it, Socrates endorsed it, Cuvier proved it and established it for all time in his paper on The Survival of the Fittest. These are illustrious names, this is a mighty doctrine: nothing can ever remove it from its firm base, nothing dissolve it, but evolution.

- Twain, Mark

I believe that our Heavenly Father invented man because he was disappointed in the monkey.

- Twain, Mark

There is nothing so annoying as a good example!!

- Twain, Mark

Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example.

- Twain, Mark

I have never taken any exercise except sleeping and resting.

- Twain, Mark

We should be careful to get out of an experience only the wisdom that is in it -- and stop there; lest we be like the cat that sits down on a hot stove-lid. She will never sit down on a hot stove-lid again -- and that is well; but also she will never sit down on a cold one anymore.

- Twain, Mark

The cat, having sat upon a hot stove lid, will not sit upon a hot stove lid again. But he won't sit upon a cold stove lid, either.

- Twain, Mark

Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please.

- Twain, Mark

Faith is believing what you know ain't so.

- Twain, Mark

It was the schoolboy who said, Faith is believing what you know ain't so.

- Twain, Mark

Familiarity breeds contempt; and children.

- Twain, Mark

We are always too busy for our children; we never give them the time or interest they deserve. We lavish gifts upon them; but the most precious gift, our personal association, which means so much to them, we give grudgingly.

- Twain, Mark

Adam was the luckiest man; he had no mother-in-law.

- Twain, Mark

Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.

- Twain, Mark

He does not care for flowers. Calls them rubbish, and cannot tell one from another, and thinks it is superior to feel like that.

- Twain, Mark

When one has tasted it 'Watermelon'; he knows what the angels eat.

- Twain, Mark

I was young and foolish then; now I am old and foolisher.

- Twain, Mark

It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.

- Twain, Mark

Forget and forgive. This is not difficult when properly understood. It means forget inconvenient duties, then forgive yourself for forgetting. By rigid practice and stern determination, it comes easy.

- Twain, Mark

Forgiveness is the fragrance the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it.

- Twain, Mark

Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it

- Twain, Mark

Fortune knocks at every man's door once in a life, but in a good many cases the man is in a neighboring saloon and does not hear her.

- Twain, Mark

It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to

practice either.

- Twain, Mark

Good friends, good books and a sleepy conscience: this is the ideal life. The conviction of the rich that the poor are happier is no more foolish than the conviction of the poor that the rich are.

- Twain, Mark

Grief can take care of itself; but to get the full value of a joy you must have somebody to divide it with.

- Twain, Mark

The holy passion of friendship is of so sweet and steady and loyal and enduring a nature that it will last through a whole lifetime, if not asked to lend money.

- Twain, Mark

Where a blood relation sobs, an intimate friend should choke up, a distant acquaintance should sigh, a stranger should merely fumble sympathetically with his handkerchief.

- Twain, Mark

I did not attend his funeral; but I wrote a nice letter saying I approved of it. 'About a politician who had recently died';

- Twain, Mark

He is useless on top of the ground; he ought to be under it, inspiring the cabbages.

- Twain, Mark

Thousands of geniuses live and die undiscovered -- either by themselves or by others.

- Twain, Mark

I am admonished in many ways that time is pushing me inexorably along. I am approaching the threshold of age; in 1977 I shall be 142. This is no time to be flitting about the earth. I must cease from the activities proper to youth and begin to take on the dignities and gravities and inertia proper to that season of honorable senility which is on its way.

- Twain, Mark

Let us not be too particular; it is better to have old secondhand diamonds than none at all.

- Twain, Mark

Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen.

- Twain, Mark

Methuselah lived to be 969 years old . You boys and girls will see more in the next fifty years than Methuselah saw in his whole lifetime.

- Twain, Mark

The older we grow the greater becomes our wonder at how much ignorance one can contain without bursting one's clothes.

- Twain, Mark

When your friends begin to flatter you on how young you look, it's a sure sign you're getting old.

- Twain, Mark

A man cannot be made comfortable without his own approval.

- Twain, Mark

Sometimes too much drink is barely enough.

- Twain, Mark

Water, taken in moderation, cannot hurt anybody.

- Twain, Mark

Keep away from small people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

- Twain, Mark

In Boston they ask, How much does he know? In New York, How much is he worth? In Philadelphia, Who were his parents?

- Twain, Mark

It was wonderful to find America, but it would have been more wonderful to miss it.

- Twain, Mark

There isn't a single human characteristic that can be safely labeled as American.

- Twain, Mark

Good breeding consists in concealing how much we think of ourselves and how little we think of the other person.

- Twain, Mark

Golf is a good walk spoiled.

- Twain, Mark

It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress.

- Twain, Mark

We have the best government that money can buy.

- Twain, Mark

Damn the subjunctive. It brings all our writers to shame.

- Twain, Mark

If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you; that is the principal difference between a dog and a man.

- Twain, Mark

What is the most rigorous law of our being? Growth. No smallest atom of our moral, mental, or physical structure can stand still a year. It grows -- it must grow; nothing can prevent it.

- Twain, Mark

A habit cannot be tossed out the window; it must be coaxed down the stairs a step at a time.

- Twain, Mark

Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time.

- Twain, Mark

To stop smoking is the easiest thing I ever did. I ought to know; I've done it a thousand times.

- Twain, Mark

Happiness ain't a thing in itself --it's only a contrast with something that ain't pleasant. And so, as soon as the novelty is over and the force of the contrast dulled, it ain't happiness any longer, and you have to get something fresh.

- Twain, Mark

There are people who can do all fine and heroic things but one: keep from telling their happiness to the unhappy.

- Twain, Mark

Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.

- Twain, Mark

The way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd rather not.

- Twain, Mark

Heaven goes by favor; if it went by merit, you would stay out and your dog would go in.

- Twain, Mark

The trouble with you Chicago people is that you think you are the best people down here, whereas you are merely the most numerous.

- Twain, Mark

History is strewn thick with evidence that a truth is not hard to kill, but a lie, well told, is immortal.

- Twain, Mark

One may make their house a palace of sham, or they can make it a home, a refuge.

- Twain, Mark

Honesty is the best policy -- when there is money in it.

- Twain, Mark

It is better to deserve honors and not have them than to have them and not deserve them.

- Twain, Mark

There is a great deal of human nature in people.

- Twain, Mark

If man had created man, he would be ashamed of his performance.

- Twain, Mark

There are times when one would like to hang the whole human race, and finish the farce.

- Twain, Mark

The human race was always interesting and we know by its past that it will always continue so, monotonously.

- Twain, Mark

Man is a creature made at the end of the week's work when God was tired.

- Twain, Mark

Such is the human race. Often it does seem such a pity that Noah and his party did not miss the boat.

- Twain, Mark

The secret source of humor itself is not joy but sorrow. There is no humor in heaven.

- Twain, Mark

Humor must not professedly teach and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live forever.

- Twain, Mark

A crank is someone with a new idea -- until it catches on.

- Twain, Mark

In the first place God made idiots. This was for practice. Then he made School Boards.

- Twain, Mark

I would rather have my ignorance than another man's knowledge, because I have so much of it.

- Twain, Mark

When I was fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have him around. When I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.

- Twain, Mark

It isn't safe to sit in judgment upon another person's illusion when you are not on the inside. While you are thinking it is a dream, he may be knowing it is a planet.

- Twain, Mark

You cannot depend on your judgments when your imagination is out of focus.

- Twain, Mark

Apparently there is nothing that cannot happen today.

- Twain, Mark

I must have a prodigious quantity of mind; it takes me as much as a week, sometimes, to make it up.

- Twain, Mark

Let us consider that we are all partially insane. It will explain us to each other; it will unriddle many riddles; it will make clear and simple many things which are involved in haunting and harassing difficulties and obscurities now.

- Twain, Mark

When we remember that we are all mad, the mysteries disappear and life stands explained.

- Twain, Mark

The way it is now, the asylums can hold the sane people but if we tried to shut up the insane we would run out of building materials.

- Twain, Mark

As a thinker and planner the ant is the equal of any savage race of men; as a self-educated specialist in several arts she is the superior of any savage race of men; and in one or two high mental qualities she is above the reach of any man, savage or civilized!

- Twain, Mark

Monarchies, aristocracies, and religions are all based upon that large defect in your race -- the individual's distrust of his neighbor, and his desire, for safety's or comfort's sake, to stand well in his neighbor's eye. These institutions will always remain, and always flourish, and always oppress you, affront you, and degrade you, because you will always be and

remain slaves of minorities. There was never a country where the majority of the people were in their secret hearts loyal to any of these institutions.

- Twain, Mark

The fact that man knows right from wrong proves his intellectual superiority to the other creatures; but the fact that he can do wrong proves his moral inferiority to any creatures that cannot.

- Twain, Mark

Accident is the name of the greatest of all inventors.

- Twain, Mark

True irreverence is disrespect for another man's god.

- Twain, Mark

In the real world, nothing happens at the right place at the right time. It is the job of journalists and historians to correct that.

- Twain, Mark

You can't depend on your judgment when your imagination is out of focus.

- Twain, Mark

All I say is, kings is kings, and you got to make allowances. Take them all around, they're

a mighty ornery lot. It's the way they're raised.

- Twain, Mark

We have not the reverent feeling for the rainbow that a savage has, because we know how it is made. We have lost as much as we gained by prying into that matter.

- Twain, Mark

The trouble with the world is not that people know too little, but that they know so many things that ain't so.

- Twain, Mark

Between us, we cover all knowledge; he knows all that can be known and I know the rest.

- Twain, Mark

A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn in no other way.

- Twain, Mark

There is no such thing as the Queen's English. The property has gone into the hands of a joint stock company and we own the bulk of the shares!

- Twain, Mark

The human race has but one really affective weapon, and that is laughter.

- Twain, Mark

Laughter is the greatest weapon we have and we, as humans, use it the least.

- Twain, Mark

Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand.

- Twain, Mark

To succeed in the other trades, capacity must be shown; in the law, concealment of it will do.

- Twain, Mark

We have a criminal jury system which is superior to any in the world; and its efficiency is only marred by the difficulty of finding twelve men every day who don't know anything and can't read.

- Twain, Mark

Never let formal education get in the way of your learning.

- Twain, Mark

Never learn to do anything. If you don't learn, you will always find someone else to do it for you.

- Twain, Mark

A wise man does not waste so good a commodity as lying for naught.

- Twain, Mark

A lie can run around the world six times while the truth is still trying to put on its pants.

- Twain, Mark

I have a higher and grander standard of principle than George Washington. He could not lie; I can, but I won't.

- Twain, Mark

One of the striking differences between a cat and a lie is that the cat has only nine lives.

- Twain, Mark

Life does not consist mainly, or even largely, of facts and happenings. It consists mainly of the storm of thought that is forever flowing through one's head.

- Twain, Mark

Let us so live that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry.

- Twain, Mark

When angry, count four; when very angry, swear.

- Twain, Mark

Barring that natural expression of villainy which we all have, the man looked honest enough.

- Twain, Mark

It is nobler to be good, and it is nobler to teach others to be good -- and less trouble!

- Twain, Mark

That's what an army is -- a mob; they don't fight with courage that's born in them, but with courage that's borrowed from their mass, and from their officers.

- Twain, Mark

There is no God, no universe, no human race, no earthly life, no heaven, no hell. It is all a dream, a grotesque and foolish dream. Nothing exists but you. And you are but a thought --a vagrant thought, a useless thought, a homeless thought, wandering forlorn among the empty eternities!

- Twain, Mark

Be good and you will be lonely.

- Twain, Mark

Nothing that grieves us can be called little: by the eternal laws of proportion a child's loss of a doll and a king's loss of a crown are events of the same size.

- Twain, Mark

Whenever you find that you are on the side of the majority, it is time to reform.

- Twain, Mark

The highest perfection of politeness is only a beautiful edifice, built, from the base to the dome, of ungraceful and gilded forms of charitable and unselfish lying.

- Twain, Mark

Both marriage and death ought to be welcome: The one promises happiness, doubtless the other assures it.

- Twain, Mark

Martyrdom covers a multitude of sins.

- Twain, Mark

The master minds of all nations, in all ages, have sprung in affluent multitude from the mass of the nation, and from the mass of the nation only -- not from its privileged classes.

- Twain, Mark

Any so-called material thing that you want is merely a symbol: you want it not for itself, but because it will content your spirit for the moment.

- Twain, Mark

There are only two forces that can carry light to all the corners of the globe... the sun in the heavens and the Associated Press down here.

- Twain, Mark

When I was younger, I could remember anything, whether it had happened or not.

- Twain, Mark

If you are speaking the truth you don't have to remember anything.

- Twain, Mark

Temperate temperance is best; intemperate temperance injures the cause of temperance.

- Twain, Mark

The man who is ostentatious of his modesty is twin to the statue that wears a fig-leaf.

- Twain, Mark

The lack of money is the root of all evils.

- Twain, Mark

I am opposed to millionaires, but it would be dangerous to offer me the position.

- Twain, Mark

His money is twice tainted: taint yours and taint mine.

- Twain, Mark

My mother had a great deal of trouble with me, but I think she enjoyed it.

- Twain, Mark

From his cradle to his grave a man never does a single thing which has any FIRST AND FOREMOST object but one -- to secure peace of mind, spiritual comfort, for HIMSELF.

- Twain, Mark

There are German songs which can make a stranger to the language cry.

- Twain, Mark

Nations do not think, they only feel. They get their feelings at second hand through their temperaments, not their brains. A nation can be brought -- by force of circumstances, not argument -- to reconcile itself to any kind of government or religion that can be devised; in time it will fit itself to the required conditions; later it will prefer them and will fiercely fight for them.

- Twain, Mark

France has neither winter nor summer nor morals. Apart from these drawbacks it is a fine country.

- Twain, Mark

Switzerland is simply a large, lumpy, solid rock with a thin skin of grass stretched over it.

- Twain, Mark

Warm summer sun, shine kindly here. Warm southern wind, blow softly here. Green sod above, lie light, lie light. Good night, dear Heart, Good night, good night.

- Twain, Mark

Necessity is the mother of taking chances.

- Twain, Mark

Obscurity and competence: That is the life that is worth living.

- Twain, Mark

The banging and slamming and booming and crashing were something beyond belief.

&#91;On Lohengrin&#93;

- Twain, Mark

Hardly a man in the world has an opinion upon morals, politics or religion which he got otherwise than through his associations and sympathies. Broadly speaking, there are none but corn-pone opinions. And broadly speaking, Corn-Pone stands for Self-Approval. Self-approval is acquired mainly from the approval of other people. The result is Conformity.

- Twain, Mark

It is difference of opinion that makes horse races.

- Twain, Mark

It is not best that we should all think alike; it is a difference of opinion that makes horse races.

- Twain, Mark

Public opinion is held in reverence. It settles everything. Some think it is the voice of God.

- Twain, Mark

There is no sadder sight than a young pessimist, except an old optimist.

- Twain, Mark

The man who is a pessimist before 48 knows too much; if he is an optimist after it, he knows too little.

- Twain, Mark

The man with a new idea is a crank until the idea succeeds.

- Twain, Mark

Do not undervalue the headache. While it is at its sharpest it seems a bad investment; but when relief begins, the unexpired remainder is worth \$4 a minute.

- Twain, Mark

My parents were neither very poor nor conspicuously honest.

- Twain, Mark

Stars are good too. I wish I could get some to put in my hair. But I suppose I never can. You would be surprised to find how far off they are, for they do not look it. When they first showed last night I tried to knock some down with a pole, but it didn't reach, which astonished me. Then I tried clods till I was all tired out, but I never got one. I did make some close shots, for I saw the black blot of the clod sail right into the midst of the golden clusters forty or fifty times, just barely missing them, and if I could've held out a little longer, maybe I could've got one.

- Twain, Mark

The miracle, or the power, that elevates the few is to be found in their industry, application, and perseverance under the prompting of a brave, determined spirit.

- Twain, Mark

There is nothing sadder than a young pessimist.

- Twain, Mark

Pessimism is only the name that men of weak nerve give to wisdom.

- Twain, Mark

If He Tom Sawyer had been a great and wise philosopher, like the writer of this book, he would now have comprehended that Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do and Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do.

- Twain, Mark

If they had not landed there would be some reason for celebrating the fact.

- Twain, Mark

Pity is for living, envy is for dead.

- Twain, Mark

What a good thing Adam had. When he said a good thing, he knew nobody had said it before.

- Twain, Mark

War talk by men who have been in a war is always interesting; whereas moon talk by a poet who has not been in the moon is likely to be dull.

- Twain, Mark

The cross of the Legion of Honor has been conferred on me. However, few escape that distinction.

- Twain, Mark

A soiled baby, with a neglected nose, cannot be conscientiously regarded as a thing of beauty.

- Twain, Mark

We have not all had the good fortune to be ladies. We have not all been generals, or poets, or statesmen; but when the toast works down to the babies, we stand on common ground.

- Twain, Mark

A banker is a fellow who lends his umbrella when the sun is shining and wants it back the minute it begins to rain.

- Twain, Mark

When the doctrine of allegiance to party can utterly up-end a man's moral constitution and make a temporary fool of him besides, what excuse are you going to offer for preaching it, teaching it, extending it, perpetuating it? Shall you say, the best good of the country demands allegiance to party? Shall you also say it demands that a man kick his truth and his conscience into the gutter, and become a mouthing lunatic, besides?

- Twain, Mark

In statesmanship get the formalities right, never mind about the moralities.

- Twain, Mark

Fleas can be taught nearly anything that a Congressman can.

- Twain, Mark

Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself.

- Twain, Mark

By common consent of all the nations and all the ages the most valuable thing in this world is the homage of men, whether deserved or undeserved.

- Twain, Mark

He liked to like people, therefore people liked him.

- Twain, Mark

Under certain circumstances, profanity provides a relief denied even to prayer.

- Twain, Mark

More than once I had seen a noble who had gotten his enemy at a disadvantage stop to pray before cutting his throat.

- Twain, Mark

You can't pray a lie.

- Twain, Mark

Few sinners are saved after the first twenty minutes of a sermon.

- Twain, Mark

To do something, say something, see something, before anybody else -- these are things that confer a pleasure compared with which other pleasures are tame and commonplace, other ecstasies cheap and trivial.

- Twain, Mark

I find that principles have no real force except when one is well fed.

- Twain, Mark

Prosperity is the best protector of principle.

- Twain, Mark

Principles aren't of much account anyway, except at election time. After that you hang them up to let them season.

- Twain, Mark

Never put off until tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow.

- Twain, Mark

When you ascend the hill of prosperity, may you not meet a friend.

- Twain, Mark

Prosperity is the surest breeder of insolence I know.

- Twain, Mark

There are many scapegoats for our sins, but the most popular is providence.

- Twain, Mark

Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits.

- Twain, Mark

I cannot see how a man of any large degree of humorous perception can ever be religious  
-- except he purposely shut the eyes of his mind and keep them shut by force.

- Twain, Mark

It is a good and gentle religion, but inconvenient.

- Twain, Mark

In his private heart no man much respects himself.

- Twain, Mark

When people do not respect us we are sharply offended; yet deep down in his private

heart no man much respects himself.

- Twain, Mark

No God and no religion can survive ridicule. No political church, no nobility, no royalty or other fraud, can face ridicule in a fair field, and live.

- Twain, Mark

Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.

- Twain, Mark

A monarch, when good, is entitled to the consideration which we accord to a pirate who keeps Sunday School between crimes; when bad, he is entitled to none at all.

- Twain, Mark

It is a good idea to obey all the rules when you're young just so you'll have the strength to break them when you're old.

- Twain, Mark

Out of the unconscious lips of babes and sucklings are we satirized.

- Twain, Mark

I refused to attend his funeral. But I wrote a very nice letter explaining that I approved of it.

- Twain, Mark

Scientists have odious manners, except when you prop up their theory; then you can borrow money of them.

- Twain, Mark

Everyone is like a moon, and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody.

- Twain, Mark

What do we call love, hate, charity, revenge, humanity, forgiveness? Different results of the master impulse, the necessity of securing one's self-approval.

- Twain, Mark

The most difficult We do not deal in facts when we are contemplating ourselves.

- Twain, Mark

The law of God, as quite plainly expressed in woman's construction, is this: There shall be no limit put upon your intercourse with the other sex sexually, at any time of life. During twenty-three days in every month (in the absence of pregnancy) from the time a woman is seven years old till she dies of old age, she is ready for action, and competent. As competent as the candlestick is to receive the candle. Competent every day, competent every night. Also, she wants that candle -- yearns for it, longs for it, hankers after it, as commanded by the law of God in her heart.

- Twain, Mark

The Pause; that impressive silence, that eloquent silence, that geometrically progressive silence which often achieves a desired effect where no combination of words, however so felicitous, could accomplish it.

- Twain, Mark

It takes an enemy and a friend, working together, to hurt you to the heart. The one to slander you, and the other to get the news to you.

- Twain, Mark

Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been.

- Twain, Mark

To cease smoking is the easiest thing I ever did, I ought to know because I've done it a thousand times.

- Twain, Mark

I could have become a soldier if I had waited; I knew more about retreating than the man who invented retreating.

- Twain, Mark

If you have nothing to say, say nothing.

- Twain, Mark

There is nothing in the world like a persuasive speech to fuddle the mental apparatus.

- Twain, Mark

There are two times in a man's life when he should not speculate: when he can't afford it, and when he can.

- Twain, Mark

It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech.

- Twain, Mark

There are lies, damned lies, and statistics.

- Twain, Mark

October. This is one of the peculiarly dangerous months to speculate in stocks in. The others are July, January, September, April, November, May, March, June, December, August, and February.

- Twain, Mark

All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence, and then Success is sure.

- Twain, Mark

Let us be thankful for the fools. But for them the rest of us could not succeed.

- Twain, Mark

We need not worry so much about what man descends from; it's what he descends to that shames the human race.

- Twain, Mark

There's always something about your success that displeases even your best friends.

- Twain, Mark

A man's house burns down. The smoking wreckage represents only a ruined home that was dear through years of use and pleasant associations. By and by, as the days and weeks go on, first he misses this, then that, then the other thing. And when he casts about for it he finds that it was in that house. Always it is an essential -- there was but one of its kind. It cannot be replaced. It was in that house. It is irrevocably lost. It will be years before the tale of lost essentials is complete, and not till then can he truly know the magnitude of his disaster.

- Twain, Mark

Biographies are but the clothes and buttons of the man. The biography of the man himself cannot be written.

- Twain, Mark

There was never yet an uninteresting life. Such a thing is an impossibility. Inside of the dullest exterior there is a drama, a comedy, and a tragedy.

- Twain, Mark

She was not quite what you would call refined. She was not quite what you would call unrefined. She was the kind of person that keeps a parrot.

- Twain, Mark

Man is the only animal that blushes -- or needs to.

- Twain, Mark

A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.

- Twain, Mark

People are much more willing to lend you books than bookcases.

- Twain, Mark

My books are water; those of the great geniuses are wine -- everybody drinks water.

- Twain, Mark

The man who does not read books has no advantage over the man that can not read them.

- Twain, Mark

A big leather-bound volume makes an ideal razor strap. A thin book is useful to stick

under a table with a broken caster to steady it. A large, flat atlas can be used to cover a window with a broken pane. And a thick, old-fashioned heavy book with a clasp is the finest thing in the world to throw at a noisy cat.

- Twain, Mark

There comes a time in every rightly constructed boy's life when he has a raging desire to go somewhere and dig for hidden treasure.

- Twain, Mark

Of all God's creatures there is only one that cannot be made the slave of the lash. That one is the cat. If man could be crossed with a cat it would improve man, but it would deteriorate the cat.

- Twain, Mark

Put all your eggs in one basket and then watch that basket.

- Twain, Mark

Education is the path from cocky ignorance to miserable uncertainty.

- Twain, Mark

To arrive at a just estimate of a renowned man's character one must judge it by the standards of his time, not ours.

- Twain, Mark

The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up.

- Twain, Mark

There it is: it doesn't make any difference who we are or what we are, there's always somebody to look down on! somebody to hold in light esteem, somebody to be indifferent about.

- Twain, Mark

Let me make the superstitions of a nation and I care not who makes its laws or its songs either.

- Twain, Mark

I don't know of a single foreign product that enters this country untaxed, except the answer to prayer.

- Twain, Mark

I know all those people. I have friendly, social, and criminal relations with the whole lot of them.

- Twain, Mark

To be good is noble, but to teach others how to be good is nobler and less trouble.

- Twain, Mark

It is easier to stay out than get out.

- Twain, Mark

There was never a century nor a country that was short of experts who knew the Deity's mind and were willing to reveal it.

- Twain, Mark

Man is the only creature who has a nasty mind.

- Twain, Mark

We like a man to come right out and say what he thinks, if we agree with him.

- Twain, Mark

A man can seldom -- very, very, seldom -- fight a winning fight against his training; the odds are too heavy.

- Twain, Mark

Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond; cauliflower is nothing, but cabbage with a college education.

- Twain, Mark

You perceive I generalize with intrepidity from single instances. It is the tourist's custom.

- Twain, Mark

I have found out that there ain't no surer way to find out whether you like people or hate them than to travel with them.

- Twain, Mark

I am an old man and have known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened.

- Twain, Mark

A joke, even if it be a lame one, is nowhere so keenly relished or quickly applauded as in a murder trial.

- Twain, Mark

Never tell the truth to people who are not worthy of it.

- Twain, Mark

Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't.

- Twain, Mark

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

- Twain, Mark

I never could tell a lie that anybody would doubt, nor a truth that anybody would believe.

- Twain, Mark

Often the surest way to convey misinformation is to tell the strict truth.

- Twain, Mark

Truth is neither alive nor dead; it just aggravates itself all the time.

- Twain, Mark

No real gentleman will tell the naked truth in the presence of ladies.

- Twain, Mark

There are no grades of vanity, there are only grades of ability in concealing it.

- Twain, Mark

I have not a particle of confidence in a man who has no redeeming vices.

- Twain, Mark

Be virtuous and you will be eccentric.

- Twain, Mark

Virtue has never been as respectable as money.

- Twain, Mark

There are no people who are quite so vulgar as the over-refined.

- Twain, Mark

The true charm of pedestrianism does not lie in the walking, or in the scenery, but in the talking. The walking is good to time the movement of the tongue by, and to keep the blood and the brain stirred up and active; the scenery and the woodsy smells are good to bear in upon a man an unconscious and unobtrusive charm and solace to eye and soul and sense; but the supreme pleasure comes from the talk.

- Twain, Mark

O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief... for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts.

Amen.

- Twain, Mark

If you don't like the weather in New England, just wait a few minutes.

- Twain, Mark

Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it.

- Twain, Mark

A man never reaches that dizzy height of wisdom that he can no longer be lead by the nose.

- Twain, Mark

Wit is the sudden marriage of ideas which, before their union, were not perceived to have any relation.

- Twain, Mark

Wit and Humor -- if any difference, it is in duration -- lightning and electric light. Same material, apparently; but one is vivid, and can do damage -- the other fools along and enjoys elaboration.

- Twain, Mark

I repeat, sir, that in whatever position you place a woman she is an ornament to society and a treasure to the world. As a sweetheart, she has few equals and no superiors; as a cousin, she is convenient; as a wealthy grandmother with an incurable distemper, she is

precious; as a wet-nurse, she has no equal among men. What, sir, would the people of the earth be without woman? They would be scarce, sir, almighty scarce.

- Twain, Mark

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.

- Twain, Mark

I don't give a damn for man that can spell a word only one way.

- Twain, Mark

An average English word is four letters and a half. By hard, honest labor I've dug all the large words out of my vocabulary and shaved it down till the average is three and a half...

I never write metropolis for seven cents, because I can get the same money for city. I never write policeman, because I can get the same price for cop.... I never write valetudinarian at all, for not even hunger and wretchedness can humble me to the point where I will do a word like that for seven cents; I wouldn't do it for fifteen.

- Twain, Mark

A powerful agent is the right word. Whenever we come upon one of those intensely right words... the resulting effect is physical as well as spiritual, and electrically prompt.

- Twain, Mark

The right word may be effective, but no word was ever as effective as a rightly timed

pause.

- Twain, Mark

Let us be grateful to Adam, our benefactor. He cut us out of the blessing of idleness and won for us the curse of labor.

- Twain, Mark

Intellectual work is misnamed; it is a pleasure, a dissipation, and is its own highest reward.

- Twain, Mark

Work and play are words used to describe the same thing under differing conditions.

- Twain, Mark

I do not like work even when someone else does it.

- Twain, Mark

Thunder is impressive, but it is lightning that does the work.

- Twain, Mark

Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do, and play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do.

- Twain, Mark

Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.

- Twain, Mark

Most writers regard the truth as their most valuable possession, and therefore are economical in its use.

- Twain, Mark

Write without pay until somebody offers to pay you. If nobody offers within three years, sawing wood is what you were intended for.

- Twain, Mark

As to the adjective, when in doubt strike it out.

- Twain, Mark

Never do wrong when people are looking.

- Twain, Mark

It is better to be a young June-bug than an old bird of paradise.

- Twain, Mark

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than

by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

- Twain, Mark

Civilization is a limitless multiplication of unnecessary necessities.

- Twain, Mark

I don't like to commit myself about heaven and hell -- you see, I have friends in both places.

- Twain, Mark

If to be interesting is to be uncommonplace, it is becoming a question, with me, if there are any commonplace people.

- Twain, Mark

I think a compliment ought to always precede a complaint, where one is possible, because it softens resentment and insures for the complaint a courteous and gentle reception.

- Twain, Mark

Noise proves nothing, Often a hen who has laid an egg cackles as if she had laid an asteroid.

- Twain, Mark

When you cannot get a compliment in any other way pay yourself one.

- Twain, Mark

There is nothing you can say in answer to a compliment. I have been complimented myself a great many times, and they always embarrass me --I always feel that they have not said enough.

- Twain, Mark

If you can't get a compliment any other way, pay yourself one.

- Twain, Mark

I have been complimented many times and they always embarrass me; I always feel that they have not said enough.

- Twain, Mark

I can live for two months on a good compliment.

- Twain, Mark

We are discreet sheep; we wait to see how the drove is going, and then go with the drove.

- Twain, Mark

Reader, suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I

repeat myself.

- Twain, Mark

Loyalty to petrified opinions never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul in this world -- and never will.

- Twain, Mark

The radical invents the views. When he has worn them out, the conservative adopts them.

- Twain, Mark

The radical of one century is the conservative of the next. The radical invents the views. When he has worn them out, the conservative adopts them.

- Twain, Mark

What, then, is the true Gospel of consistency? Change. Who is the really consistent man? The man who changes. Since change is the law of his being, he cannot be consistent if he stick in a rut.

- Twain, Mark

A good memory and a tongue tied in the middle is a combination which gives immortality to conversation.

- Twain, Mark

Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear -- not absence of fear.

- Twain, Mark

It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world, and moral courage so rare.

- Twain, Mark

It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog.

- Twain, Mark

The human race is a race of cowards; and I am not only marching in that procession, but carrying a banner.

- Twain, Mark

There are several good protections against temptation, but the surest is cowardice.

- Twain, Mark

Why was the human race created? Or at least why wasn't something creditable created in place of it? God had His opportunity. He could have made a reputation. But no, He must commit this grotesque folly -- a lark which must have cost Him a regret or two when He came to think it over and observe effects.

- Twain, Mark

Man was made at the end of the week's work when God was tired.

- Twain, Mark

Beautiful credit! The foundation of modern society. Who shall say that this is not the golden age of mutual trust, of unlimited reliance upon human promises? That is a peculiar condition of society which enables a whole nation to instantly recognize point and meaning in the familiar newspaper anecdote, which puts into the mouth of a distinguished speculator in lands and mines this remark: -- I wasn't worth a cent two years ago, and now I owe two millions of dollars.

- Twain, Mark

A crime persevered in a thousand centuries ceases to be a crime, and becomes a virtue. This is the law of custom, and custom supersedes all other forms of law.

- Twain, Mark

The public is the only critic whose opinion is worth anything at all.

- Twain, Mark

Often, the less there is to justify a traditional custom, the harder it is to get rid of it.

- Twain, Mark

Sacred cows make the best hamburger.

- Twain, Mark

By law of periodical repetition, everything which has happened once must happen again and again -- and not capriciously, but at regular periods, and each thing in its own period, not another's and each obeying its own law.

- Twain, Mark

On with dance, let joy be unconfined, is my motto; whether there's any dance to dance or any joy to unconfined.

- Twain, Mark

The people of those foreign countries are very, very ignorant. They looked curiously at the costumes we had brought from the wilds of America. They observed that we talked loudly at table sometimes. They noticed that we looked out for expenses and got what we conveniently could out of a franc, and wondered where in the mischief we came from. In Paris they just simply opened their eyes and stared when we spoke to them in French! We never did succeed in making those idiots understand their own language.

- Twain, Mark

We should be careful to get out of an experience only the wisdom that is in it and stop there; lest we be like the cat that sits down on a hot stove-lid. She will never sit down on a hot stove-lid again and that is well; but also she will never sit down on a cold one anymore.

- Twain, Mark

The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter it is the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning.

- Twain, Mark

Say the report is exaggerated.

- Twain, Mark

A jay hasnt got any more principle than a Congressman. A jay will lie, a jay will steal, a jay will deceive, a jay will betray; and four times out of five, a jay will go back on his solemnest promise.

- Twain, Mark

To my mind Judas Iscariot was nothing but a low, mean, premature Congressman.

- Twain, Mark

I think I can say, and say with pride, that we have some legislatures that bring higher prices than any in the world.

- Twain, Mark

When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.

- Twain, Mark

When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God the Father fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen! O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle be Thou near them! With them in spirit we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with an availing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen.

- Twain, Mark

The teacher reminded us that Rome's liberties were not auctioned off in a day, but were bought slowly, gradually, furtively, little by little; first with a little corn and oil for the exceedingly poor and wretched, later with corn and oil for voters who were not quite so poor, later still with corn and oil for pretty much every man that had a vote to sell exactly

our own history over again.

- Twain, Mark

Of all Gods creatures there is only one that cannot be made the slave of the lash. That one is the cat. If man could be crossed with the cat it would improve man, but it would deteriorate the cat.

- Twain, Mark

By his father he is English, by his mother he is American to my mind the blend which makes the perfect man.

- Twain, Mark

So I became a newspaperman. I hated to do it but I couldnt find honest employment.

- Twain, Mark

It ain't so much what we know that gets us into trouble. It's what we know that just ain't so.

- Twain, Mark

History may not repeat itself, but it does rhyme a lot

- Twain, Mark





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