

Baron de Montesquieu

Quotes

*Men, Law, Philosophical, Government, Liberty, People, War, Republic, Country,
Thinking, Passion, States, Luxury, Writing, Believe, Reading, Abuse,
Democracy, Favors, Two*

It is necessary from the very nature of things that power should be a check to power.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The deterioration of every government begins with the decay of the principles on which it was founded.

~Baron de Montesquieu

We receive three educations, one from our parents, one from our school-masters, and one from the world. The third contradicts all that the first two teach us.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There is no crueller tyranny than that which is perpetuated under the shield of law and in the name of justice.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Every man who has power is impelled to abuse it.

~Baron de Montesquieu

In the state of nature... all men are born equal, but they cannot continue in this equality. Society makes them lose it, and they recover it only by the protection of the law.

~Baron de Montesquieu

To become truly great, one has to stand with people, not above them.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Religious wars are not caused by the fact that there is more than one religion, but by the spirit of intolerance... the spread of which can only be regarded as the total eclipse of human reason.

~Baron de Montesquieu

A nation may lose its liberties in a day and not miss them in a century.

~Baron de Montesquieu

For a country, everything will be lost when the jobs of an economist and a banker become highly respected professions.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Liberty... is there only when there is no abuse of power.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There is no nation so powerful, as the one that obeys its laws not from principals of fear or reason, but from passion.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Knowledge humanizes mankind, and reason inclines to mildness; but prejudices eradicate every tender disposition.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Democracy is corrupted not only when the spirit of equality is corrupted, but likewise when they fall into a spirit of extreme equality.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Power ought to serve as a check to power.

~Baron de Montesquieu

That anyone who possesses power has a tendency to abuse it is an eternal truth. They tend to go as far as the barriers will allow.

~Baron de Montesquieu

But constant experience shows us that every man invested with power is apt to abuse it, and to carry his authority as far as it will go.

~Baron de Montesquieu

An injustice committed against anyone is a threat to everyone.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Law should be like death, which spares no one.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Solemnity is the shield of idiots

~Baron de Montesquieu

Useless laws weaken the necessary laws.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The Ottoman Empire whose sick body was not supported by a mild and regular diet, but by a powerful treatment, which continually exhausted it.

~Baron de Montesquieu

To succeed in the world we must look foolish but be wise.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Do you think that God will punish them for not practicing a religion which he did not reveal to them?

~Baron de Montesquieu

The tyranny of a prince in an oligarchy is not so dangerous to the public welfare as the apathy of a citizen in a democracy.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Men, who are rogues individually, are in the mass very honorable people.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There is only one thing that can form a bond between men, and that is gratitude... we cannot give someone else greater power over us than we have ourselves.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The harshest tyranny is that which acts under the protection of legality and the banner of justice.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Never create by law what can be accomplished by morality.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There are countries where a man is worth nothing; there are others where he is worth less than nothing.

~Baron de Montesquieu

When a government lasts a long while, it deteriorates by insensible degrees. Republics end through luxury, monarchies through poverty.

~Baron de Montesquieu

I like peasants-they are not sophisticated enough to reason speciously.

~Baron de Montesquieu

An injustice to one is a threat made to all

~Baron de Montesquieu

The false notion of miracles comes of our vanity, which makes us believe we are important enough for the Supreme Being to upset nature on our behalf.

~Baron de Montesquieu

In republican governments, men are all equal; equal they are also in despotic governments: in the former, because they are everything; in the latter, because they are nothing.

~Baron de Montesquieu

I shall be obliged to wander to the right and to the left, that I may investigate and discover the truth.

~Baron de Montesquieu

It is rare to find learned men who are clean, do not stink and have a sense of humour.

~Baron de Montesquieu

If the triangles made a god, they would give him three sides.

~Baron de Montesquieu

If we only wanted to be happy, it would be easy; but we want to be happier than other people, and that is almost always difficult, since we think them happier than they are.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The incomparable stupidity of life teaches us to love our parents; divine philosophy teaches us to forgive them.

~Baron de Montesquieu

An empire founded by war has to maintain itself by war.

~Baron de Montesquieu

To love to read is to exchange hours of ennui for hours of delight.

~Baron de Montesquieu

I have ever held it as a maxim never to do that through another which it was impossible for me to execute myself

~Baron de Montesquieu

Love of reading enables a man to exchange the weary hours, which come to every one, for hours of delight.

~Baron de Montesquieu

In bodies moved, the motion is received, increased, diminished, or lost, according to the relations of the quantity of matter and velocity; each diversity is uniformity, each change is constancy.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Virtue in a republic is the love of one's country, that is the love of equality.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The sublimity of administration consists in knowing the proper degree of power that should be exerted on different occasions.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The less men think, the more they talk.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There is a very good saying that if triangles invented a god, they would make him three-sided.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The reason the Romans built their great paved highways was because they had such inconvenient footwear.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The state of slavery is in its own nature bad.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Passion makes us feel, but never see clearly.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Study has been for me the sovereign remedy against all the disappointments of life. I have never known any trouble that an hour's reading would not dissipate.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The less luxury there is in a republic, the more it is perfect.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Lunch kills half of Paris, supper the other half.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There are three species of government: republican, monarchical, and despotic.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Countries are well cultivated, not as they are fertile, but as they are free.

~Baron de Montesquieu

I should like to abolish funerals; the time to mourn a person is at his birth, not his death.

~Baron de Montesquieu

When one wants to change manners and customs, one should not do so by changing the laws.

~Baron de Montesquieu

...when the laws have ceased to be executed, as this can only come from the corruption of the republic, the state is already lost.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Slavery, properly so called, is the establishment of a right which gives to one man such a power over another as renders him absolute master of his life and fortune.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Liberty itself has appeared intolerable to those nations who have not been accustomed to enjoy it.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Not to be loved is a misfortune, but it is an insult to be loved no longer.

~Baron de Montesquieu

What orators lack in depth they make up for in length.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The state is the association of men, and not men themselves; the citizen may perish, and the man remain.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There is something in animals beside the power of motion. They are not machines; they feel.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There have never been so many civil wars as in the Kingdom of Christ.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Wonderful maxim: not to talk of things any more after they are done.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Honor is unknown in despotic states.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Political liberty is to be found only in moderate governments.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Although born in a prosperous realm, we did not believe that its boundaries should limit our knowledge, and that the lore of the East should alone enlighten us.

~Baron de Montesquieu

False happiness renders men stern and proud, and that happiness is never communicated. True happiness renders them kind and sensible, and that happiness is always shared.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The prejudices of superstition are superior to all others, and have the

strongest influence on the human mind.

~Baron de Montesquieu

It is not the young people that degenerate; they are not spoiled till those of mature age are already sunk into corruption.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Coffee renders many foolish people temporarily capable of wise actions

~Baron de Montesquieu

A really intelligent man feels what other men only know.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Power should be a check on power.

~Baron de Montesquieu

A good writer does not write as people write, but as he writes.

~Baron de Montesquieu

With truths of a certain kind, it is not enough to make them appear convincing: one must also make them felt. Of such kind are moral truths.

~Baron de Montesquieu

There is as yet no liberty if the power of judging be not separated from legislative power and the executrix

~Baron de Montesquieu

This punishment of death is the remedy, as it were, of a sick society.

~Baron de Montesquieu

In the infancy of societies, the chiefs of state shape its institutions; later the institutions shape the chiefs of state.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The history of commerce is that of the communication of the people.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Love of the republic in a democracy, is a love of the democracy; love of the democracy is that of equality. Love of the democracy is likewise that of frugality.

~Baron de Montesquieu

It is unreasonable ... to oblige a man not to attempt the defense of his own life.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Talent is a gift which God has given us secretly, and which we reveal without perceiving it.

~Baron de Montesquieu

It is always the adventurous who accomplish great things.

~Baron de Montesquieu

When virtue is banished, ambition invades the minds of those who are disposed to receive it and avarice possesses the whole community.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The life of man is but a succession of vain hopes and groundless fears.

~Baron de Montesquieu

The success of most things depends upon knowing how long it will take to succeed.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Success in the majority of circumstances depends on knowing how long it takes to succeed.

~Baron de Montesquieu

An author is a fool who, not content with boring those he lives with, insists on boring future generations.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Republics end through luxury; monarchies through poverty.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Mediocrity is a hand-rail.

~Baron de Montesquieu

When a government is arrived to that degree of corruption as to be incapable of reforming itself, it would not lose much by being new moulded.

~Baron de Montesquieu

As men are affected in all ages by the same passions, the occasions which bring about great changes are different, but the causes are always the same.

~Baron de Montesquieu

People here argue about religion interminably, but it appears that they are competing at the same time to see who can be the least devout.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Raillery is a mode of speaking in favor of one's wit at the expense of one's better nature.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Virtue has needs of limits.

~Baron de Montesquieu

Experience constantly proves that every man who has power is

impelled to abuse it; he goes on till he is pulled up by some limits. Who would say it! virtue even has need of limits.

~Baron de Montesquieu

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