

Harriet Martineau

Quotes

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Readers are plentiful; thinkers are rare.

~Harriet Martineau

Women, like men, must be educated with a view to action, or their studies cannot be called education.

~Harriet Martineau

I certainly had no idea how little faith Christians have in their own faith till I saw how ill their courage and temper can stand any attack on it.

~Harriet Martineau

Marriage ... is still the imperfect institution it must remain while women continue to be ill-educated, passive, and subservient.

~Harriet Martineau

You had better live your best and act your best and think your best today; for today is the sure preparation for tomorrow and all the other tomorrows that follow.

~Harriet Martineau

The imagination, once awakened, must and will work, and ought to work

~Harriet Martineau

My own feeling of concern arises from seeing how much moral injury and suffering is created by the superstitions of the Christian mythology.

~Harriet Martineau

It is hard to tell which is worse; the wide diffusion of things that are not true, or the suppression of things that are true.

~Harriet Martineau

it matters infinitely less what we do than what we are.

~Harriet Martineau

I saw no poor men, except a few intemperate ones. I saw some very poor women; but God and man know that the time has not come for women to make their injuries even heard of.

~Harriet Martineau

influence which is given on the side of money is usually against truth.

~Harriet Martineau

Happiness consists in the full employment of our faculties in some pursuit.

~Harriet Martineau

I never did a right thing or abstained from a wrong one from any consideration of reward or punishment.

~Harriet Martineau

It is characteristic of genius to be hopeful and aspiring.

~Harriet Martineau

The sum and substance of female education in America, as in England, is training women to consider marriage as the sole object in life, and to pretend that they do not think so.

~Harriet Martineau

The progression of emancipation of any class usually, if not always, takes place through the efforts of individuals of that class.

~Harriet Martineau

All people interested in their work are liable to overrate their vocation. There may be makers of dolls' eyes who wonder how society would go on without them.

~Harriet Martineau

I have no sympathy for those who, under any pressure of

circumstances, sacrifice their heart's-love for legal prostitution.

~Harriet Martineau

Any one must see at a glance that if men and women marry those whom they do not love, they must love those whom they do not marry.

~Harriet Martineau

If a test of civilization be sought, none can be so sure as the condition of that half of society over which the other half has power.

~Harriet Martineau

What office is there which involves more responsibility, which requires more qualifications, and which ought, therefore, to be more honorable, than that of teaching?

~Harriet Martineau

It never enters the lady's head that the wet-nurse's baby probably dies.

~Harriet Martineau

I am sure that no traveler seeing things through author spectacles can see them as they are.

~Harriet Martineau

The highest condition of the religious sentiment is when. . . the worshiper not only sees God everywhere, but sees nothing which is not full of God.

~Harriet Martineau

Scarcely anything that I observed in the United States caused me so much sorrow as the contemptuous estimate of the people entertained by those who were bowing the knee to be permitted to serve them.

~Harriet Martineau

I would not exchange my freedom from old superstition, if I were to be

burned at the stake next month, for all the peace and quiet of orthodoxy, if I must take the orthodoxy with peace and quiet.

~Harriet Martineau

Moral excellence has no regard to classes and professions.

~Harriet Martineau

Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last.

~Harriet Martineau

Day-thoughts feed nightly dreams; And sorrow tracketh wrong, As echo follows song.

~Harriet Martineau

For my own part, I had rather suffer any inconvenience from having to work occasionally in chambers and kitchen than witness the subservience in which the menial class is held in Europe.

~Harriet Martineau

Fidelity to conscience is inconsistent with retiring modesty. If it be so, let the modesty succumb. It can be only a false modesty which can be thus endangered.

~Harriet Martineau

There have been few things in my life which have had a more genial effect on my mind than the possession of a piece of land.

~Harriet Martineau

It is my deliberate opinion that the one essential requisite of human welfare in all ways is scientific knowledge of human nature.

~Harriet Martineau

Men who pass most comfortably through this world are those who

possess good digestions and hard hearts.

~Harriet Martineau

I think that few people are aware how early it is right to respect the modesty of an infant.

~Harriet Martineau

If there is any country on earth where the course of true love may be expected to run smooth, it is America.

~Harriet Martineau

Religion is a temper, not a pursuit. It is the moral atmosphere in which human beings are to live and move. Men do not live to breathe: they breathe to live.

~Harriet Martineau

I romanced internally about early death till it was too late to die early.

~Harriet Martineau

A soul occupied with great ideas performs small duties.

~Harriet Martineau

. . . is it to be understood that the principles of the Declaration of Independence bear no relation to half of the human race?

~Harriet Martineau

The instruction furnished is not good enough for the youth of such a country ... There is not even any systematic instruction given on political morals: an enormous deficiency in a republic.

~Harriet Martineau

The lesson taught us by these kindly commentators on my present experience is that dogmatic faith compels the best minds and hearts to narrowness and insolence.

~Harriet Martineau

We do not believe in immortality because we can't prove it, but we try to prove it because we cannot help believing it.

~Harriet Martineau

I want to be a free rover on the breezy common of the universe.

~Harriet Martineau

Who is apt, on occasion, to assign a multitude of reasons when one will do? This is a sure sign of weakness in argument.

~Harriet Martineau

If the national mind of America be judged of by its legislation, it is of a very high order ... If the American nation be judged of by its literature, it may be pronounced to have no mind at all.

~Harriet Martineau

Authorship has never been with me a matter of choice. I have not done it for amusement, or for money, or for fame, or for any reason but because I could not help it.

~Harriet Martineau

Religion is a temper, not a pursuit.

~Harriet Martineau

There is no death to those who perfectly love-only disappearance, which in time may be borne.

~Harriet Martineau

[I] wish that the land-tax went a little more according to situation than it does. 'Tis really ridiculous, how one has to pay five times as much as another, without any reason that ever I heard tell.

~Harriet Martineau

Goodness and simplicity are indissolubly united.-The bad are the most sophisticated, all the world over, and the good the least.

~Harriet Martineau

The voice of a whole people goes up in the silent workings of an institution.

~Harriet Martineau

Leisure, some degree of it, is necessary to the health of every man's spirit.

~Harriet Martineau

it is a testament to the strength and purity of the democratic sentiment in the country, that the republic has not been overthrown by its newspapers.

~Harriet Martineau

it is the worst humiliation and grievance of the suffering, that they cause suffering.

~Harriet Martineau

[On being deaf:] We must struggle for whatever may be had, without encroaching on the comfort of others.

~Harriet Martineau

There is no theory of a God, of an author of Nature, of an origin of the Universe, which is not utterly repugnant to my faculties. . .

~Harriet Martineau

The clergy complain of the enormous spread of bold books, from the infidel tract to the latest handling of the miracle question.

~Harriet Martineau

I loved, as I still love, the most monotonous life possible.

~Harriet Martineau

The last thing it [government] ought to do is to ground its proceedings on the ignorance of the people, - to yield them that which they will hereafter despise the donors for granting them.

~Harriet Martineau

His subject is the "Origin of Species," & not the origin of Organization; & it seems a needless mischief to have opened the latter speculation at all.

~Harriet Martineau

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