

Henry Adams

Quotes

*Men, History, Political, Mind, Science, Education, Teacher, Years, Friendship,
Politics, Order, Marriage, Play, Philosophy, War, President, Love, Women,
Children, Church*

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

~Henry Adams

All experience is an arch, to build upon.

~Henry Adams

The Indian Summer of life should be a little sunny and a little sad, like the season, and infinite in wealth and depth of tone, but never hustled.

~Henry Adams

One friend in a life-time is much; two are many; three are hardly possible. Friendship needs a certain parallelism of life, a community of thought, a rivalry of aim.

~Henry Adams

Chaos was the law of nature; Order was the dream of man.

~Henry Adams

One friend in a lifetime is much; two are many; three are hardly possible.

~Henry Adams

Chaos often breeds life, when order breeds habit.

~Henry Adams

They know enough who know how to learn.

~Henry Adams

The American President resembles the commander of a ship at sea. He must have a helm to grasp, a course to steer, a port to seek.

~Henry Adams

Some day science may have the existence of mankind in its power, and the human race commit suicide, by blowing up the world.

~Henry Adams

Thank God, I never was cheerful. I come from the happy stock of the Mathers, who, as you remember, passed sweet mornings reflecting on the goodness of God and the damnation of infants.

~Henry Adams

There is no such thing as an underestimate of average intelligence.

~Henry Adams

The proper study of mankind is woman.

~Henry Adams

Unity is vision; it must have been part of the process of learning to see.

~Henry Adams

Knowledge of human nature is the beginning and end of political education.

~Henry Adams

The world is coming to an end in 1950.

~Henry Adams

The Jewish question is really the most serious of our problems.

~Henry Adams

Friends are born, not made.

~Henry Adams

Simplicity is the most deceitful mistress that ever betrayed man.

~Henry Adams

Morality is a private and costly luxury.

~Henry Adams

Society is immoral and immortal; it can afford to commit any kind of folly, and indulge in any sort of vice; it cannot be killed, and the fragments that survive can always laugh at the dead.

~Henry Adams

A friend in power is a friend lost.

~Henry Adams

As for piracy, I love to be pirated. It is the greatest compliment an author can have. The wholesale piracy of Democracy was the single real triumph of my life. Anyone may steal what he likes from me.

~Henry Adams

The effect of power and publicity on all men is the aggravation of self, a sort of tumor that ends by killing the victim's sympathies.

~Henry Adams

Practical politics consists in ignoring facts.

~Henry Adams

[Adams] supposed that, except musicians, everyone thought Beethoven a bore, as every one except mathematicians thought mathematics a bore.

~Henry Adams

Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts.

~Henry Adams

The capacity of women to make unsuitable marriages must be considered as the cornerstone of society.

~Henry Adams

It is always good men who do the most harm in the world.

~Henry Adams

I am an anarchist in politics and an impressionist in art as well as a symbolist in literature. Not that I understand what these terms mean, but I take them to be all merely synonyms of pessimist.

~Henry Adams

The press is the hired agent of a monied system, and set up for no other purpose than to tell lies where their interests are involved. One can trust nobody and nothing.

~Henry Adams

Silence alone is respectable and respected. I believe God to be silence.

~Henry Adams

I think that Lee should have been hanged. It was all the worse that he was a good man and a fine character and acted conscientiously... It's always the good men who do the most harm in the world.

~Henry Adams

The progress of evolution from President Washington to President Grant was alone evidence to upset Darwin.

~Henry Adams

Accident counts for as much in companionship as in marriage.

~Henry Adams

I would rather starve and rot and keep the privilege of speaking the truth as I see it, than of holding all the offices that capital has to give from the presidency down.

~Henry Adams

Chaos breeds life; Order creates habit.

~Henry Adams

History will die if not irritated. The only service I can do to my profession is to serve as a flea.

~Henry Adams

Every man should have a fair-sized cemetery in which to bury the faults of his friends.

~Henry Adams

A senator is like a begonia - showy but useless.

~Henry Adams

Absolute liberty is absence of restraint; responsibility is restraint; therefore, the ideally free individual is responsible to himself.

~Henry Adams

At best, the renewal of broken relations is a nervous matter.

~Henry Adams

Every man who has at last succeeded, after long effort, in calling up the divinity which lies hidden in a woman's heart, is startled to find that he must obey the God he summoned.

~Henry Adams

History is only a catalogue of the forgotten.

~Henry Adams

Everyone carries his own inch rule of taste, and amuses himself by applying it, triumphantly, wherever he travels.

~Henry Adams

He too serves a certain purpose who only stands and cheers.

~Henry Adams

The woman who is known only through a man is known wrong.

~Henry Adams

No man means all he says, and yet very few say all they mean, for words are slippery and thought is viscous.

~Henry Adams

No man, however strong, can serve ten years as schoolmaster, priest, or Senator, and remain fit for anything else.

~Henry Adams

Politics, as a practise, whatever its professions, has always been the systematic organization of hatreds.

~Henry Adams

The historian must not try to know what is truth, if he values his honesty; for if he cares for his truths, he is certain to falsify his facts.

~Henry Adams

Young men have a passion for regarding their elders as senile.

~Henry Adams

American society is a sort of flat, fresh-water pond which absorbs silently, without reaction, anything which is thrown into it.

~Henry Adams

A society in stable equilibrium is-by definition-one that has no history and wants no historians.

~Henry Adams

You can't use tact with a Congressman! A Congressman is a hog! You must take a stick and hit him on the snout!

~Henry Adams

No man likes to have his intelligence or good faith questioned, especially if he has doubts about it himself.

~Henry Adams

Politics are a very unsatisfactory game.

~Henry Adams

A congressman is a pig. The only way to get his snout from the trough is to rap it sharply with a stick.

~Henry Adams

Politics is simply the organization of hatreds.

~Henry Adams

Man is an imperceptible atom always trying to become one with God.

~Henry Adams

Power when wielded by abnormal energy is the most serious of facts.

~Henry Adams

I tell you the solemn truth, that the doctrine of the Trinity is not so difficult to accept for a working proposition as any one of the axioms of physics.

~Henry Adams

Average human nature is very coarse, and its ideals must necessarily be average. The world never loved perfect poise. What the world does love is commonly absence of poise, for it has to be amused.

~Henry Adams

Energy is the inherent effort of every multiplicity to become unity.

~Henry Adams

The social side of Washington was to be taken for granted as

three-fourths of existence. Politics and reform became the detail, and waltzing the profession

~Henry Adams

He never labored so hard to learn a language as he did to hold his tongue, and it affected him for life. The habit of reticence " of talking without meaning " is never effaced.

~Henry Adams

A parent gives life, but as parent, gives no more. A murderer takes life, but his deed stops there. A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

~Henry Adams

The chief wonder of education is that it does not ruin everybody concerned in it, teachers and taught.

~Henry Adams

I have written too much history to have faith in it; and if anyone thinks I'm wrong, I am inclined to agree with him.

~Henry Adams

One does every day and without a second thought, what at another time would be the event of a year, perhaps of a life.

~Henry Adams

All taxation is an evil, but heavy taxes, indiscriminately levied on every everything are one of the greatest curses that can afflict a people

~Henry Adams

American politics is a struggle, not of men but of forces. The men become every year more and more creatures of force, massed about central power houses.

~Henry Adams

Power is poison. Its effect on Presidents had always been tragic.

~Henry Adams

As a historian, he felt it his duty to respect everything that had ever been respected, except for the occasional statesman.

~Henry Adams

The proof that a philosopher does not know what he is talking about is apt to sadden his followers before it reacts on himself.

~Henry Adams

It is impossible to underrate human intelligence - beginning with one's own.

~Henry Adams

We combat obstacles in order to get repose, and when got, the repose is insupportable.

~Henry Adams

If one shed tears, they must be shed on one's pillow.

~Henry Adams

The work of internal government has become the task of controlling the thousands of fifth-rate men.

~Henry Adams

Every one who marries goes it blind, more or less.

~Henry Adams

Modern politics is, at bottom, a struggle not of men but of forces.

~Henry Adams

Boys naturally look on all force as an enemy.

~Henry Adams

Politics cannot stop to study psychology Its methods are rough; its judgments rougher still.

~Henry Adams

[P]hilosophy . . . consists chiefly in suggesting unintelligible answers to insoluble problems.

~Henry Adams

Henry James chews more than he bites off.

~Henry Adams

That the American, by temperament, worked to excess, was true; work and whiskey were his stimulants; work was a form of vice; but he never cared much for money or power after he earned them.

~Henry Adams

I want to be advertised and the easiest way is to do something obnoxious and do it well.

~Henry Adams

Whenever a man reaches the top of the political ladder, his enemies unite to pull him down. His friends become critical and exacting.

~Henry Adams

During an election campaign the air is full of speeches and vice versa.

~Henry Adams

American art, like the American language and American education, was as far as possible sexless.

~Henry Adams

Of all studies, the one he would rather have avoided was that of his own mind. He knew no tragedy so heartrending as introspection.

~Henry Adams

Only on the edge of the grave can man conclude anything.

~Henry Adams

His brothers were the type; he was the variation.

~Henry Adams

The photograph is a coarse fraud, and seems to delight only in taking the whole beauty out of the picture.

~Henry Adams

Analogies are figures intended to serve as fatal weapons if they succeed, and as innocent toys if they fail.

~Henry Adams

In the history of the United States, there is no continuity at all. You can cut through it anywhere and nothing on this side of the cut has anything to do with anything on the other side.

~Henry Adams

If I grapple with sin in my own strength, the devil knows he may go to sleep.

~Henry Adams

By nature, man is lazy, working only under compulsion; and when he is strong we will always live, as far as he can, upon the labor or the property of the weak.

~Henry Adams

A boy's will is his life, and he dies when it is broken, as the colt dies in harness, taking a new nature in becoming tame.

~Henry Adams

For reasons which many persons thought ridiculous, Mrs. Lightfoot Lee decided to pass the winter in Washington.

~Henry Adams

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