

Irving Babbitt Quotes

*Democracy, Men, Self, Sentimental, Imperialism, Standards, Mind, Balance,
Revolution, Today, Humanitarian, Desire, Leader, Sympathy, Humanity, Unity,
Needs, Degrees, Excellence, Becoming*

Anyone who thus looks up has some chance of becoming worthy to be looked up to in turn.

~Irving Babbitt

For behind all imperialism is ultimately the imperialistic individual, just as behind all peace is ultimately the peaceful individual.

~Irving Babbitt

The humanities need to be defended today against the encroachments of physical science, as they once needed to be against the encroachment of theology.

~Irving Babbitt

Furthermore, America suffers not only from a lack of standards, but also not infrequently from a confusion or an inversion of standards.

~Irving Babbitt

Democracy is now going forth on a crusade against imperialism.

~Irving Babbitt

The industrial revolution has tended to produce everywhere great urban masses that seem to be increasingly careless of ethical standards.

~Irving Babbitt

The humanitarian lays stress almost solely upon breadth of knowledge and sympathy.

~Irving Babbitt

If a man went simply by what he saw, he might be tempted to affirm that the essence of democracy is melodrama.

~Irving Babbitt

Since every man desires happiness, it is evidently no small matter whether he conceives of happiness in terms of work or of enjoyment.

~Irving Babbitt

A man needs to look, not down, but up to standards set so much above his ordinary self as to make him feel that he is himself spiritually the underdog.

~Irving Babbitt

A democracy, the realistic observer is forced to conclude, is likely to be idealistic in its feelings about itself, but imperialistic about its practice.

~Irving Babbitt

An American of the present day reading his Sunday newspaper in a state of lazy collapse is one of the most perfect symbols of the triumph of quantity over quality that the world has yet seen.

~Irving Babbitt

A remarkable feature of the humanitarian movement, on both its sentimental and utilitarian sides, has been its preoccupation with the lot of the masses.

~Irving Babbitt

We may affirm, then, that the main drift of the later Renaissance was away from a humanism that favored a free expansion toward a humanism that was in the highest degree disciplinary and selective.

~Irving Babbitt

We must not, however, be like the leaders of the great romantic revolt who, in their eagerness to get rid of the husk of convention, disregarded also the humane aspiration.

~Irving Babbitt

According to the new ethics, virtue is not restrictive but expansive, a sentiment and even an intoxication.

~Irving Babbitt

Very few of the early Italian humanists were really humane.

~Irving Babbitt

Yet Aristotle's excellence of substance, so far from being associated with the grand style, is associated with something that at times comes perilously near jargon.

~Irving Babbitt

The papacy again, representing the traditional unity of European civilization, has also shown itself unable to limit effectively the push of nationalism.

~Irving Babbitt

The true humanist maintains a just balance between sympathy and selection.

~Irving Babbitt

The human mind, if it is to keep its sanity, must maintain the nicest balance between unity and plurality.

~Irving Babbitt

If we are to have such a discipline we must have standards, and to get our standards under existing conditions we must have criticism.

~Irving Babbitt

If quantitatively the American achievement is impressive, qualitatively it is somewhat less satisfying.

~Irving Babbitt

It is well to open one's mind but only as a preliminary to closing it ... for the supreme act of judgment and selection.

~Irving Babbitt

The humanitarian would, of course, have us meddle in foreign affairs as

part of his program of world service.

~Irving Babbitt

Tell him, on the contrary, that he needs, in the interest of his own happiness, to walk in the path of humility and self-control, and he will be indifferent, or even actively resentful.

~Irving Babbitt

Inasmuch as society cannot go on without discipline of some kind, men were constrained, in the absence of any other form of discipline, to turn to discipline of the military type.

~Irving Babbitt

The ultimate binding element in the medieval order was subordination to the divine will and its earthly representatives, notably the pope.

~Irving Babbitt

The democratic idealist is prone to make light of the whole question of standards and leadership because of his unbounded faith in the plain people.

~Irving Babbitt

Perhaps as good a classification as any of the main types is that of the three lusts distinguished by traditional Christianity - the lust of knowledge, the lust of sensation, and the lust of power.

~Irving Babbitt

Robespierre, however, was not the type of leader finally destined to emerge from the Revolution.

~Irving Babbitt

To say that most of us today are purely expansive is only another way of saying that most of us continue to be more concerned with the quantity than with the quality of our democracy.

~Irving Babbitt

To harmonize the One with the Many, this is indeed a difficult adjustment, perhaps the most difficult of all, and so important, withal, that nations have perished from their failure to achieve it.

~Irving Babbitt

Act strenuously, would appear to be our faith, and right thinking will take care of itself.

~Irving Babbitt

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