

Thomas B. Macaulay

Quotes

Men, Government, Book, People, History, Mean, Mind, Country, May, Character, Poetry, War, Law, Age, Art, Self, Evil, Order, Atheism, Thinking

The object of oratory alone is not truth, but persuasion.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The measure of a man's real character is what he would do if he knew he would never be found out.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

To sum up the whole, we should say that the aim of the Platonic philosophy was to exalt man into a god.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

It is possible to be below flattery as well as above it. One who trusts nobody will not trust sycophants. One who does not value real glory will not value its counterfeit.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Finesse is the best adaptation of means to circumstances.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

People crushed by law have no hopes but from power. If laws are their enemies, they will be enemies to laws.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

I would rather be poor in a cottage full of books than a king without the desire to read.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Nothing except the mint can make money without advertising.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

A good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Ye diners out from whom we guard our spoons.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The best portraits are those in which there is a slight mixture of caricature.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

And how can man die better than facing fearful odds, for the ashes of his fathers, and the temples of his Gods?

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Nothing is so galling to a people not broken in from birth as a paternal, or, in other words, a meddling government, a government which tells them what to read, and say, and eat, and drink and wear.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Your Constitution is all sail and no anchor.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

I have seen the hippopotamus, both asleep and awake; and I can assure you that, awake or asleep, he is the ugliest of the works of God.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The conformation of his mind was such that whatever was little seemed to him great, and whatever was great seemed to him little.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The temple of silence and reconciliation.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Men of great conversational powers almost universally practise a sort of

lively sophistry and exaggeration which deceives for the moment both themselves and their auditors.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

A man who should act, for one day, on the supposition that all the people about him were influenced by the religion which they professed would find himself ruined by night.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

A history in which every particular incident may be true may on the whole be false.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The impenetrable stupidity of Prince George (son-in-law of James II) served his turn. It was his habit, when any news was told him, to exclaim, "Est il possible?"-"Is it possible?"

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The Orientals have another word for accident; it is "kismet,"--fate.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Nothing is so useless as a general maxim.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

He had a head which statuaries loved to copy, and a foot the deformity of which the beggars in the streets mimicked.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

A page digested is better than a volume hurriedly read.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

He was a rake among scholars, and a scholar among rakes.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

There were gentlemen and there were seamen in the navy of Charles the Second. But the seamen were not gentlemen; and the gentlemen were not seamen.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

That wonderful book, while it obtains admiration from the most fastidious critics, is loved by those who are too simple to admire it.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The most beautiful object in the world, it will be allowed, is a beautiful woman.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Our judgment ripens; our imagination decays. We cannot at once enjoy the flowers of the Spring of life and the fruits of its Autumn.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

We know no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

We hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilized age.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Few of the many wise apothegms which have been uttered have prevented a single foolish action.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

That is the best government which desires to make the people happy, and knows how to make them happy.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Generalization is necessary to the advancement of knowledge; but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

This is the highest miracle of genius, that things which are not should be as though they were, that the imaginations of one mind should become the personal recollections of another.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Politeness has been well defined as benevolence in small things.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Parent of sweetest sounds, yet mute forever.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

By poetry we mean the art of employing of words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination; the art of doing by means of words, what the painter does by means of colors.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

What proposition is there respecting human nature which is absolutely and universally true? We know of only one,--and that is not only true, but identical,--that men always act from self-interest.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

And to say that society ought to be governed by the opinion of the

wisest and best, though true, is useless. Whose opinion is to decide who are the wisest and best?

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The hearts of men are their books; events are their tutors; great actions are their eloquence.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

It is good to be often reminded of the inconsistency of human nature, and to learn to look without wonder or disgust on the weaknesses which are found in the strongest minds.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Turn where we may, within, around, the voice of great events is proclaiming to us, Reform, that you may preserve!

~Thomas B. Macaulay

History begins in novel and ends in essay.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

A church is disaffected when it is persecuted, quiet when it is tolerated, and actively loyal when it is favored and cherished.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The gallery in which the reporters sit has become a fourth estate of the realm.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

We must judge of a form of government by its general tendency, not by happy accidents

~Thomas B. Macaulay

A system in which the two great commandments are to hate your neighbor and to love your neighbor's wife.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The English doctrine that all power is a trust for the public good.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The whole history of Christianity proves that she has little indeed to fear from persecution as a foe, but much to fear from persecution as an ally.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

He [Charles II] was utterly without ambition. He detested business, and would sooner have abdicated his crown than have undergone the trouble of really directing the administration.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

History distinguishes what is accidental and transitory in human nature from what is essential and immutable.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Reform, that we may preserve.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The effect of violent dislike between groups has always created an indifference to the welfare and honor of the state.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Logicians may reason about abstractions. But the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

In Plato's opinion, man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion, philosophy was made for man.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

I have long been convinced that institutions purely democratic must, sooner or later, destroy liberty or civilization, or both.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The highest intellects, like the tops of mountains, are the first to catch and to reflect the dawn.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Men are never so likely to settle a question rightly as when they discuss it freely.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The business of everybody is the business of nobody.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

She thoroughly understands what no other Church has ever understood, how to deal with enthusiasts.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

I shall cheerfully bear the reproach of having descended below the dignity of history.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The knowledge of the theory of logic has no tendency whatever to make men good reasoners.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The reluctant obedience of distant provinces generally costs more than it - The Territory is worth. Empires which branch out widely are often more flourishing for a little timely pruning.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Everybody's business is nobody's business.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

I don't mind your thinking slowly; I mind your publishing faster than you think.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The sweeter sound of woman's praise.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Genius is subject to the same laws which regulate the production of cotton and molasses.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The real object of the drama is the exhibition of human character.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

People who take no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote descendants.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

No man in the world acts up to his own standard of right.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Even the law of gravitation would be brought into dispute were there a pecuniary interest involved.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Books are becoming everything to me. If I had at this moment any choice in life, I would bury myself in one of those immense libraries...and never pass a waking hour without a book before me.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

More sinners are cursed at not because we despise their sins but because we envy their success at sinning.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

We never could clearly understand how it is that egotism, so unpopular in conversation, should be so popular in writing.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The Saviour of mankind Himself, in whose blameless life malice could find no act to impeach, has been called in question for words spoken.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

If the Sunday had not been observed as a day of rest during the last three centuries, I have not the slightest doubt that we should have been at this moment a poorer people and less civilized.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The history of nations, in the sense in which I use the word, is often best studied in works not professedly historical.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

No man who is correctly informed as to the past will be disposed to take a morose or desponding view of the present.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

I shall not be satisfied unless I produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Men naturally sympathize with the calamities of individuals; but they are inclined to look on a fallen party with contempt rather than with pity.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The highest eulogy which can be pronounced on the Revolution of 1688 is this that this was our last Revolution.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Great minds do indeed react on the society which has made them what they are; but they only pay with interest what they have received.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Half-knowledge is worse than ignorance.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

No particular man is necessary to the state. We may depend on it that, if we provide the country with popular institutions, those institutions will provide it with great men.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The end of government is the happiness of the people.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

A kind of semi-Solomon, half-knowing everything, from the cedar to the hyssop.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Temple was a man of the world amongst men of letters, a man of letters amongst men of the world.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

He had done that which could never be forgiven; he was in the grasp of one who never forgave.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

In truth it may be laid down as an almost universal rule that good poets are bad critics.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

The opinion of the great body of the reading public is very materially influenced even by the unsupported assertions of those who assume a right to criticize.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Sense can support herself handsomely in most countries on some eighteen pence a day; but for fantasy, planets and solar systems, will not suffice.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

Ambrose Phillips . . . who had the honor of bringing into fashion a species of composition which has been called, after his name, Namby Pamby.

~Thomas B. Macaulay

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