

Walter Bagehot Quotes

*Men, People, Political, Government, Life, Real, Mind, Long, War, Art, Stupidity,
Writing, Philosophy, Military, Religious, Book, Interesting, Intellectual, Politics,
Simple*

A great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do.

~Walter Bagehot

You may talk of the tyranny of Nero and Tiberius; but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbor.

~Walter Bagehot

A severe though not unfriendly critic of our institutions said that the cure for admiring the House of Lords was to go and look at it.

~Walter Bagehot

The best reason why Monarchy is a strong government is, that it is an intelligible government. The mass of mankind understand it, and they hardly anywhere in the world understand any other.

~Walter Bagehot

Progress would not have been the rarity it is if the early food had not been the late poison.

~Walter Bagehot

Royalty is a government in which the attention of the nation is concentrated on one person doing interesting actions.

~Walter Bagehot

Nothing is more unpleasant than a virtuous person with a mean mind.

~Walter Bagehot

One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea.

~Walter Bagehot

It is often said that men are ruled by their imaginations; but it would be truer to say they are governed by the weakness of their imaginations.

~Walter Bagehot

A Parliament is nothing less than a big meeting of more or less idle people.

~Walter Bagehot

Life is a school of probability.

~Walter Bagehot

Poverty is an anomaly to rich people; it is very difficult to make out why people who want dinner do not ring the bell.

~Walter Bagehot

An inability to stay quiet is one of the conspicuous failings of mankind.

~Walter Bagehot

The cure for admiring the House of Lords is to go and look at it.

~Walter Bagehot

No great work has ever been produced except after a long interval of still and musing meditation.

~Walter Bagehot

A schoolmaster should have an atmosphere of awe, and walk wonderingly, as if he was amazed at being himself.

~Walter Bagehot

Life is a compromise of what your ego wants to do, what experience tells you to do, and what your nerves let you do.

~Walter Bagehot

The being without an opinion is so painful to human nature that most people will leap to a hasty opinion rather than undergo it.

~Walter Bagehot

What impresses men is not mind, but the result of mind.

~Walter Bagehot

Writers like teeth are divided into incisors and grinders.

~Walter Bagehot

Dullness in matters of government is a good sign, and not a bad one - in particular, dullness in parliamentary government is a test of its excellence, an indication of its success.

~Walter Bagehot

The whole history of civilization is strewn with creeds and institutions which were invaluable at first, and deadly afterwards

~Walter Bagehot

The reason why so few good books are written is that so few people who can write know anything.

~Walter Bagehot

The real essence of work is concentrated energy.

~Walter Bagehot

A slight daily unconscious luxury is hardly ever wanting to the dwellers in civilization; like the gentle air of a genial climate, it is a perpetual minute enjoyment.

~Walter Bagehot

Conquest is the missionary of valor, and the hard impact of military virtues beats meanness out of the world.

~Walter Bagehot

The mystic reverence, the religious allegiance, which are essential to a true monarchy, are imaginative sentiments that no legislature can manufacture in any people.

~Walter Bagehot

Civilized ages inherit the human nature which was victorious in barbarous ages, and that nature is, in many respects, not at all suited to civilized circumstances.

~Walter Bagehot

Business is really more agreeable than pleasure; it interests the whole mind, the aggregate nature of man more continuously, and more deeply. But it does not look as if it did.

~Walter Bagehot

An element of exaggeration clings to the popular judgment: great vices are made greater, great virtues greater also; interesting incidents are made more interesting, softer legends more soft.

~Walter Bagehot

An ambassador is not simply an agent; he is also a spectacle.

~Walter Bagehot

The cardinal maxim is, that any aid to a present bad Bank is the surest mode of preventing the establishment of a future good Bank.

~Walter Bagehot

A family on the throne is an interesting idea. It brings down the pride of sovereignty to the level of petty life.

~Walter Bagehot

It is good to be without vices, but it is not good to be without temptations.

~Walter Bagehot

So long as there are earnest believers in the world, they will always wish to punish opinions, even if their judgment tells them it is unwise and their conscience that it is wrong.

~Walter Bagehot

Adventure is the life of commerce, but caution is the life of banking.

~Walter Bagehot

Public opinion is a permeating influence, and it exacts obedience to itself; it requires us to drink other men's thoughts, to speak other men's words, to follow other men's habits.

~Walter Bagehot

A man's mother is his misfortune, but his wife is his fault.

~Walter Bagehot

So long as war is the main business of nations, temporary despotism - despotism during the campaign - is indispensable.

~Walter Bagehot

Women--one half the human race at least--care fifty times more for a marriage than a ministry.

~Walter Bagehot

A constitutional statesman is in general a man of common opinions and uncommon abilities.

~Walter Bagehot

The most melancholy of human reflections, perhaps, is that, on the whole, it is a question whether the benevolence of mankind does most good or harm.

~Walter Bagehot

A princely marriage is the brilliant edition of a universal fact, and, as such, it rivets mankind.

~Walter Bagehot

The best history is but like the art of Rembrandt; it casts a vivid light on certain selected causes, on those which were best and greatest; it

leaves all the rest in shadow and unseen.

~Walter Bagehot

No real English gentleman, in his secret soul, was ever sorry for the death of a political economist.

~Walter Bagehot

We see but one aspect of our neighbor, as we see but one side of the moon; in either case there is also a dark half, which is unknown to us. We all come down to dinner, but each has a room to himself.

~Walter Bagehot

Capital must be propelled by self-interest; it cannot be enticed by benevolence.

~Walter Bagehot

The habit of common and continuous speech is a symptom of mental deficiency. It proceeds from not knowing what is going on in other people's minds.

~Walter Bagehot

If you have to prove you are worthy of credit, your credit is already gone.

~Walter Bagehot

Go ahead and do the impossible. It's worth the look on the faces of those who said you couldn't.

~Walter Bagehot

Money is economic power.

~Walter Bagehot

We must not let daylight in upon the magic.

~Walter Bagehot

To a great experience one thing is essential, an experiencing nature.

~Walter Bagehot

In every particular state of the world, those nations which are strongest tend to prevail over the others; and in certain marked peculiarities the strongest tend to be the best.

~Walter Bagehot

Every banker knows that if he has to prove that he is worthy of credit, however good may be his arguments, in fact his credit is gone: but what we have requires no proof.

~Walter Bagehot

Stupidity is nature's favorite resource for preserving consistency of opinion.

~Walter Bagehot

All people are most credulous when they are most happy.

~Walter Bagehot

The greatest mistake is trying to be more agreeable than you can be.

~Walter Bagehot

The most essential mental quality for a free people, whose liberty is to be progressive, permanent and on a large scale, is much stupidity.

~Walter Bagehot

The best security for people's doing their duty is that they should not know anything else to do.

~Walter Bagehot

Most men of business think "Anyhow this system will probably last my time. It has gone on a long time, and is likely to go on still.

~Walter Bagehot

Persecution in intellectual countries produces a superficial conformity, but also underneath an intense, incessant, implacable doubt.

~Walter Bagehot

The less money lying idle the greater is the dividend.

~Walter Bagehot

Life is not a set campaign, but an irregular work, and the main forces in it are not overt resolutions, but latent and half-involuntary promptings.

~Walter Bagehot

When great questions end, little parties begin.

~Walter Bagehot

The great pleasure of life is doing for pleasure things I do not like to do.

~Walter Bagehot

In the faculty of writing nonsense, stupidity is no match for genius.

~Walter Bagehot

Men who do not make advances to women are apt to become victims to women who make advances to them.

~Walter Bagehot

In my youth I hoped to do great things; now I shall be satisfied to get through without scandal.

~Walter Bagehot

No man has come so near our definition of a constitutional statesman - the powers of a first-rate man and the creed of a second-rate man.

~Walter Bagehot

But of all nations in the world the English are perhaps the least a nation of pure philosophers.

~Walter Bagehot

It has been said that England invented the phrase, 'Her Majesty's Opposition'.

~Walter Bagehot

The purse strings tie us to our kind.

~Walter Bagehot

Great and terrible systems of divinity and philosophy lie round about us, which, if true, might drive a wise man mad.

~Walter Bagehot

The Ethiop gods have Ethiop lips, Bronze cheeks, and woolly hair; The Grecian gods are like the Greeks, As keen-eyed, cold and fair.

~Walter Bagehot

Throughout the greater part of his life George III was a kind of 'consecrated obstruction'.

~Walter Bagehot

A political country is like an American forest; you have only to cut down the old trees, and immediately new trees come up to replace them.

~Walter Bagehot

What we opprobriously call stupidity, though not an enlivening quality in common society, is nature's favorite resource for preserving steadiness of conduct and consistency of opinion.

~Walter Bagehot

One cannot make men good by Act of Parliament.

~Walter Bagehot

Whenever two people meet, there are really six people present. There

is each man as he sees The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do.

~Walter Bagehot

Not only does a bureaucracy tend to under-government in point of quality; it tends to over-government in point of quantity.

~Walter Bagehot

Nations touch at their summits.

~Walter Bagehot

A democratic despotism is like a theocracy: it assumes its own correctness.

~Walter Bagehot

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