

Wilhelm von Humboldt

Quotes

*Men, Real, Feelings, Character, May, Spring, Language, Numbers, Important,
Mean, Beautiful, Degrees, Life, Doe, Fate, Eye, Happiness, Nature, Sorrow,
Results*

I am more and more convinced that our happiness or our unhappiness depends far more on the way we meet the events of life than on the nature of those events themselves.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Absolutely nothing is so important for a nation's culture as its language.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Governmental regulations all carry coercion to some degree, and even where they don't, they habituate man to expect teaching, guidance and help outside himself, instead of formulating his own.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

If we glance at the most important revolutions in history, we see at once that the greatest number of these originated in the periodical revolutions of the human mind.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Language makes infinite use of finite media.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

To inquire and to create; these are the grand centres around which all human pursuits revolve, or at least to these objects do they all more or less directly refer.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The more a man acts on his own, the more he develops himself. In large associations he is too prone to become merely an instrument.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

If the mind loves solitude, it has thereby acquired a loftier character, and it becomes still more noble when the taste is indulged in.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

To judge a man means nothing more than to ask: What content does he give to the form of humanity? What concept should we have of humanity if he were its only representative?

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongueperhaps the deepest and loftiest thing the world has to show.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Sanskrit is the unsurpassed zenith in the whole development of languages yet known to us.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

How a person masters his or her fate is more important than what that fate is.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

However great an evil immorality may be, we must not forget that it is not without its beneficial consequences. It is only through extremes that men can arrive at the middle path of wisdom and virtue.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Life, in all ranks and situations, is an outward occupation, an actual and active work.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

It is a characteristic of old age to find the progress of time accelerated. The less one accomplishes in a given time, the shorter does the retrospect appear.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Coercion may prevent many transgressions; but it robs even actions which are legal of a part of their beauty. Freedom may lead to many

transgressions, but it lends even to vices a less ignoble form.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Among men who are really free, every form of industry becomes more rapidly improved - all the arts flourish more gracefully - all the sciences extend their range.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Only what we have wrought into our character during life can we take with us.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Faith can be interested in results only, for a truth once recognized as such puts an end to the believer's thinking.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The finest fruit earth holds up to its Maker is a finished man.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The government is best which makes itself unnecessary.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Wherever the citizen becomes indifferent to his fellows, so will the husband be to his wife, and the father of a family toward the members of his household.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Real inward devotion knows no prayer but that arising from the depths of its own feelings.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The sorrow which calls for help and comfort is not the greatest, nor does it come from the depths of the heart.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

War seems to be one of the most salutary phenomena for the culture of human nature; and it is not without regret that I see it disappearing more and more from the scene.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Even by means of our sorrows we belong to the eternal plan.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

It is usually more important how a man meets his fate than what it is.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Women are in this respect more fortunate than men, that most of their employments are of such a nature that they can at the same time be thinking of quite different things.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The legislator should keep two things constantly before his eyes: 1. The pure theory developed to its minutest details; 2. The particular condition of actual things which he designs to reform.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

A man must seek his happiness and inward peace from objects which cannot be taken away from him.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The State is not in itself an end, but is only a means towards human development.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Even sleep is characteristic. How beautiful are children in their lovely innocence! how angel-like their blooming features! and how painful and anxious is the sleep of the guilty!

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The price of apparent happiness and enjoyment is the neglect of the spontaneous active energies of the acting members.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

If we reason that we want happiness for others, not for ourselves, then we ought justly to be suspected of failing to recognize human nature for what it is and of wishing to turn men into machines.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

All translating seems to me to be simply an attempt to accomplish an impossible task.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Possession, it is true, crowns exertion with rest; but it is only in the illusions of fancy that it has power to charm us.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Government, religion, property, books, are nothing but the scaffolding to build men. Earth holds up to her master no fruit like the finished man.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

In the moral world there is nothing impossible if we can bring a thorough will to it. Man can do everything with himself, but he must not attempt to do too much with others.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

It is almost more important how a person takes his fate than what it is. And the best way is with gratitude while trying to improve it for the good of others and themselves.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

It is continued temperance which sustains the body for the longest period of time, and which most surely preserves it free from sickness.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Results are nothing; the energies which produce them and which again spring from them are everything.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

The inquiry into the proper aims and limits of State agency must be of the highest importance nay, that it is perhaps more vitally momentous than any other political question.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

When we ... devote ourselves to the strict and unsparing performance of duty, then happiness comes of itself.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

All situations in which the interrelationships between extremes are involved are the most interesting and instructive.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Fancy brings us as many vain hopes as idle fears.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Happiness is so nonsynonymous with joy or pleasure that it is not infrequently sought and felt in grief and deprivation.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Joy mingled with sadness, even with grief, is the deepest human joy. It winds itself about the soul with indescribable sweetness, with a dim but unerring sense for what will some day be born of it.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Language is the spiritual exhalation of the nation.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

No matter how good or great a man may be, there is yet a better and a greater man within him.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

Providence certainly does not favor just certain individuals, but the deep wisdom of its counsel, instruction and ennoblement extends to all.

~Wilhelm von Humboldt

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