

# William Godwin

## Quotes

*Men, Mind, Government, Book, Thinking, Atheism, Evil, Children, Parent, Desire, Justice, Philosophy, Two, Statistics, Real, Revolution, Imagination, Education, Youth, Taken*

He that loves reading has everything within his reach.

~William Godwin

Whenever government assumes to deliver us from the trouble of thinking for ourselves, the only consequences it produces are those of torpor and imbecility.

~William Godwin

Revolution is engendered by an indignation with tyranny, yet is itself pregnant with tyranny.

~William Godwin

Above all we should not forget, that government is an evil, an usurpation upon the private judgment and individual conscience of mankind.

~William Godwin

The philosophy of the wisest man that ever existed, is mainly derived from the act of introspection.

~William Godwin

The great model of the affection of love in human beings is the sentiment which subsists between parents and children.

~William Godwin

Revolutions are the produce of passion, not of sober and tranquil reason.

~William Godwin

The wise man is satisfied with nothing.

~William Godwin

The proper method for hastening the decay of error is by teaching every man to think for himself.

~William Godwin

To conceive that compulsion and punishment are the proper means of reformation is the sentiment of a barbarian.

~William Godwin

The first duty of man is to take none of the principles of conduct upon trust; to do nothing without a clear and individual conviction that it is right to be done.

~William Godwin

The cause of justice is the cause of humanity. Its advocates should overflow with universal good will. We should love this cause, for it conduces to the general happiness of mankind.

~William Godwin

Make men wise, and by that very operation you make them free. Civil liberty follows as a consequence of this; no usurped power can stand against the artillery of opinion.

~William Godwin

Perseverance is an active principle, and cannot continue to operate but under the influence of desire.

~William Godwin

Invisible things are the only realities; invisible things alone are the things that shall remain.

~William Godwin

God himself has no right to be a tyrant.

~William Godwin

If ever there was a book calculated to make a man in love with its author, this appears to me to be the book.

~William Godwin

What can be more clear and sound in explanation, than the love of a parent to his child?

~William Godwin

Government will not fail to employ education, to strengthen its hands and perpetuate its institutions.

~William Godwin

The execution of any thing considerable implies in the first place previous persevering meditation.

~William Godwin

But the watchful care of the parent is endless. The youth is never free from the danger of grating interference.

~William Godwin

Everything that is usually understood by the term co-operation is, in some degree, an evil.

~William Godwin

Let us not, in the eagerness of our haste to educate, forget all the ends of education.

~William Godwin

We cannot perform our tasks to the best of our power, unless we think well of our own capacity.

~William Godwin

Study with desire is real activity; without desire it is but the semblance and mockery of activity.

~William Godwin

The diligent scholar is he that loves himself, and desires to have reason to applaud and love himself.

~William Godwin

Perfectibility is one of the most unequivocal characteristics of the human species.

~William Godwin

What indeed is life, unless so far as it is enjoyed? It does not merit the name.

~William Godwin

In cases where every thing is understood, and measured, and reduced to rule, love is out of the question.

~William Godwin

Whenever truth stands in the mind unaccompanied by the evidence upon which it depends, it cannot properly be said to be apprehended at all.

~William Godwin

We are so curiously made that one atom put in the wrong place in our original structure will often make us unhappy for life.

~William Godwin

One of the prerogatives by which man is eminently distinguished from all other living beings inhabiting this globe of earth, consists in the gift of reason.

~William Godwin

There must be room for the imagination to exercise its powers; we must conceive and apprehend a thousand things which we do not actually witness.

~William Godwin

Every man has a certain sphere of discretion which he has a right to expect shall not be infringed by his neighbours. This right flows from the very nature of man.

~William Godwin

It is probable that there is no one thing that it is of eminent importance for a child to learn.

~William Godwin

The lessons of their early youth regulated the conduct of their riper years.

~William Godwin

If admiration were not generally deemed the exclusive property of the rich, and contempt the constant lackey of poverty, the love of gain would cease to be an universal problem.

~William Godwin

Books gratify and excite our curiosity in innumerable ways.

~William Godwin

He that revels in a well-chosen library, has innumerable dishes, and all of admirable flavour.

~William Godwin

Power is not happiness.

~William Godwin

Our judgment will always suspect those weapons that can be used with equal prospect of success on both sides.

~William Godwin

Books are the depository of everything that is most honourable to man.

~William Godwin

My thoughts will be taken up with the future or the past, with what is to come or what has been. Of the present there is necessarily no image.

~William Godwin

There can be no passion, and by consequence no love, where there is not imagination.

~William Godwin

Power is not happiness. Security and peace are more to be desired than a name at which nations tremble.

~William Godwin

My mind was bursting with depression and anguish. I muttered imprecations and murmuring as I passed along. I was full of loathing and abhorrence of life, and all that life carries in its train.

~William Godwin

The subtleties of mathematics defecate the grossness of our apprehension, and supply the elements of a sounder and severer logic.

~William Godwin

The virtue of a human being is the application of his capacity to the general good.

~William Godwin

Government can have no more than two legitimate purposes - the suppression of injustice against individuals within the community, and the common defense against external invasion.

~William Godwin

A celebrated north country apostle, who, after Calvin had damned ninety-nine in a hundred of mankind, had contrived a scheme for damning ninety-nine in a hundred of the followers of Calvin.

~William Godwin

No maxim can be more pernicious than that which would teach us to consult the temper of the times, and to tell only so much as we imagine our contemporaries will be able to bear.

~William Godwin

Duty is that mode of action on the part of the individual which constitutes the best possible application of his capacity to the general benefit.

~William Godwin

Of Belief Human mathematics, so to speak, like the length of life, are subject to the doctrine of chances.

~William Godwin

Justice is the sum of all moral duty.

~William Godwin

Hereditary wealth is in reality a premium paid to idleness.

~William Godwin

Man is the only creature we know, that, when the term of his natural life is ended, leaves the memory of himself behind him.

~William Godwin

Self-respect to be nourished in the mind of the pupil, is one of the most valuable results of a well conducted education.

~William Godwin

Learning is the ally, not the adversary of genius... he who reads in a proper spirit, can scarcely read too much.

~William Godwin

Literature, taken in all its bearings, forms the grand line of demarcation between the human and the animal kingdoms.



~William Godwin

If there be such a thing as truth, it must infallibly be struck out by the collision of mind with mind.

~William Godwin

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