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Quotes by Hawthorne, Nathaniel

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Nathaniel Hawthorne (July 4, 1804 May 19, 1864) was a 19th century American novelist and short story writer. He is seen as a key figure in the development of American literature.

Caresses, expressions of one sort or another, are necessary to the life of the affections as leaves are to the life of a tree. If they are wholly restrained, love will die at the roots.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Is it a fact -- or have I dreamt it -- that, by means of electricity, the world of matter has become a great nerve, vibrating thousands of miles in a breathless point of time?

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Our Creator would never have made such lovely days, and have given us the deep hearts to enjoy them, above and beyond all thought, unless we were meant to be immortal.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Our most intimate friend is not he to whom we show the worst, but the best of our nature.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Generosity is the flower of justice.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

From principles is derived probability, but truth or certainty is obtained only from facts.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a commonplace prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Happiness in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally. Make it the object of pursuit, and it leads us a wild-goose chase, and is never attained.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Happiness is a butterfly, which, when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

A bodily disease which we look upon as whole and entire within itself, may, after all, be but a symptom of some ailment in the spiritual part.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

The greatest obstacle to being heroic is the doubt whether one may not be going to prove one's self a fool; the truest heroism is to resist the doubt; and the profoundest wisdom, to know when it ought to be resisted, and when it be obeyed.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be true.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Mankind are earthen jugs with spirits in them.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Labor is the curse of the world, and nobody can meddle with it without becoming proportionately brutified.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Life is made up of marble and mud.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Moonlight is sculpture.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

The only sensible ends of literature are, first, the pleasurable toil of writing; second, the

gratification of one's family and friends; and lastly, the solid cash.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

It is a good lesson --though it may often be a hard one --for a man who has dreamed of literary fame, and of making for himself a rank among the world's dignitaries by such means, to step aside out of the narrow circle in which his claims are recognized, and to find how utterly devoid of all significance, beyond that circle, is all that he achieves, and all he aims at.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

My fortune somewhat resembled that of a person who should entertain an idea of committing suicide, and, altogether beyond his hopes, meet with the good hap to be murdered.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Yesterday I went out at about twelve, and visited the British Museum; an exceedingly tiresome affair. It quite crushes a person to see so much at once; and I wandered from hall to hall with a weary and heavy heart, wishing (Heaven forgive me!) that the Elgin marbles and the frieze of the Parthenon were all burnt into lime, and that the granite Egyptian statues were hewn and squared into building stones, and that the mummies had all turned to dust, two thousand years ago; and, in fine, that all the material relics of so many successive ages had disappeared with the generations that produced them. The present is burthened too much with the past.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Sunlight is painting.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

I wonder that we Americans love our country at all, it having no limits and no oneness; and when you try to make it a matter of the heart, everything falls away except one's native State; --neither can you seize hold of that, unless you tear it out of the Union, bleeding and quivering.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Nobody, I think, ought to read poetry, or look at pictures or statues, who cannot find a great deal more in them than the poet or artist has actually expressed. Their highest merit is suggestiveness.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

This world owes all its forward impulses to people ill at ease.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Every young sculptor seems to think that he must give the world some specimen of indecorous womanhood, and call it Eve, Venus, a Nymph, or any name that may apologize for a lack of decent clothing.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Selfishness is one of the qualities apt to inspire love.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

See! those fiendish lineaments graven on the darkness, the writhed lip of scorn, the mockery of that living eye, the pointed finger, touching the sore place in your heart! Do you remember any act of enormous folly, at which you would blush, even in the remotest cavern of the earth? Then recognize your Shame.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Nobody has any conscience about adding to the improbabilities of a marvelous tale.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

A woman's chastity consists, like an onion, of a series of coats.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

Man's own youth is the world's youth; at least he feels as if it were, and imagines that the earth's granite substance is something not yet hardened, and which he can mould into whatever shape he likes.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

It contributes greatly towards a man's moral and intellectual health, to be brought into habits of companionship with individuals unlike himself, who care little for his pursuits, and whose sphere and abilities he must go out of himself to appreciate.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

In the depths of every heart, there is a tomb and a dungeon, though the lights, the music, and revelry above may cause us to forget their existence, and the buried ones, or prisoners whom they hide. But sometimes, and oftenest at midnight, those dark receptacles are flung wide open. In an hour like this, when the mind has a passive sensibility, but no active strength; when the imagination is a mirror, imparting vividness to all ideas, without the power of selecting or controlling them; then pray that your grieves may slumber, and the brotherhood of remorse not break their chain.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

All brave men love; for he only is brave who has affections to fight for, whether in the daily battle of life, or in physical contests.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel

We sometimes congratulate ourselves at the moment of waking from a troubled dream; it may be so the moment after death.

- Hawthorne, Nathaniel



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