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Quotes by Rousseau, Jean Jacques

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Jean-Jacques Rousseau (June 28, 1712 July 2, 1778) was a Franco-Swiss philosopher, writer, political theorist, and self-taught composer of The Age of Enlightenment. Rousseau's political ideas influenced the French Revolution, the development of socialist theory, and the growth of nationalism. His legacy as a radical and revolutionary is perhaps best demonstrated by his most famous line, from his most important work, The Social Contract: "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." [1] (For Rousseau's conception of revolution see Du Contrat Social, Book II, Chapter 8. Given that he considers revolution "dangerous and vain", one must question the legitimacy of calling Rousseau a revolutionary.)

To endure is the first thing that a child ought to learn, and that which he will have the most need to know.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Adversity is a great teacher, but this teacher makes us pay dearly for its instruction; and often the profit we derive, is not worth the price we paid.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The person who has lived the most is not the one with the most years but the one with the richest experiences.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Temperance and labor are the two real physicians of man.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

We are born weak, we need strength; helpless, we need aid; foolish, we need reason. All that we lack at birth, all that we need when we come to man's estate, is the gift of education.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The English people believes itself to be free; it is gravely mistaken; it is free only during election of members of parliament; as soon as the members are elected, the people is enslaved; it is nothing. In the brief moment of its freedom, the English people makes such a use of that freedom that it deserves to lose it.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Endurance and to be able to endure is the first lesson a child should learn because it's the one they will most need to know.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

I have always said and felt that true enjoyment can not be described.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Our greatest evils flow from ourselves.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Base souls have no faith in great individuals.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Fame is but the breath of people, and that often unwholesome.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

We do not know what is really good or bad fortune.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The English think they are free. They are free only during the election of members of parliament.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Man is born free, yet he is everywhere in chains.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Free people, remember this maxim: We may acquire liberty, but it is never recovered if it is once lost.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

A country cannot subsist well without liberty, nor liberty without virtue.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Our will is always for our own good, but we do not always see what that is.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The body politic, as well as the human body, begins to die as soon as it is born, and carries itself the causes of its destruction.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Gratitude is a duty which ought to be paid, but which none have a right to expect.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Great men never make bad use of their superiority. They see it and feel it and are not less modest. The more they have, the more they know their own deficiencies.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Whoever blushes confesses guilt, true innocence never feels shame.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The thirst after happiness is never extinguished in the heart of man.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

A feeble body weakens the mind.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Nothing is less in our power than the heart, and far from commanding we are forced to obey it.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Heroes are not known by the loftiness of their carriage; the greatest braggarts are generally the merest cowards.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

How many famous and high-spirited heroes have lived a day too long?

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Insults are the arguments employed by those who are in the wrong.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The person who is slowest in making a promise is most faithful in its performance.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Do not judge, and you will never be mistaken.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Good laws lead to the making of better ones; bad ones bring about worse.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Every man has the right to risk his own life in order to save it.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

To live is not breathing it is action.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Our affections as well as our bodies are in perpetual flux.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Plant and your spouse plants with you; weed and you weed alone.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Reading, solitude, idleness, a soft and sedentary life, intercourse with women and young people, these are perilous paths for a young man, and these lead him constantly into danger.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

All of my misfortunes come from having thought too well of my fellows.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Although modesty is natural to man, it is not natural to children. Modesty only begins with the knowledge of evil.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Money is the seed of money, and the first guinea is sometimes more difficult to acquire than the second million.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

We should not teach children the sciences; but give them a taste for them.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The English are predisposed to pride, the French to vanity.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Most nations, as well as people are impossible only in their youth; they become incorrigible as they grow older.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Take from the philosopher the pleasure of being heard and his desire for knowledge ceases.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

There are two things to be considered with regard to any scheme. In the first place, Is it good in itself? In the second, Can it be easily put into practice?

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Those that are most slow in making a promise are the most faithful in the performance of it.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Remorse sleeps during prosperity but awakes bitter consciousness during adversity.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Take the course opposite to custom and you will almost always do well.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The first step towards vice is to shroud innocent actions in mystery, and whoever likes to conceal something sooner or later has reason to conceal it.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Absolute silence leads to sadness. It is the image of death.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Slaves lose everything in their chains, even the desire of escaping from them.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

People who know little are usually great talkers, while men who know much say little.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

I have suffered too much in this world not to hope for another.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

We are born, so to speak, twice over; born into existence, and born into life; born a human being, and born a man.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

We pity in others only the those evils which we ourselves have experienced.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Falsehood has an infinity of combinations, but truth has only one mode of being.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Nature never deceives us; it is we who deceive ourselves.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

I may not be better than other people, but at least I'm different.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Virtue is a state of war, and to live in it we have always to combat with ourselves.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

As long as there are rich people in the world, they will be desirous of distinguishing themselves from the poor.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness?

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

A man says what he knows, a woman says what will please.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

It is too difficult to think nobly when one thinks only of earning a living.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Childhood is the sleep of reason.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The training of children is a profession, where we must know how to waste time in order to save it

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Let the trumpet of the day of judgment sound when it will, I shall appear with this book in my hand before the Sovereign Judge, and cry with a loud voice, This is my work, there were my thoughts, and thus was I. I have freely told both the good and the bad, have hid nothing wicked, added nothing good.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

It is not the criminal things that are hardest to confess, but the ridiculous and the shameful.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Conscience is the voice of the soul; the passions of the body.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

With children use force with men reason; such is the natural order of things. The wise man requires no law.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

The greatest braggarts are usually the biggest cowards.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Cities are the abyss of the human species.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques

Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a wise man, the life and death of Jesus are those of a god.

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques



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