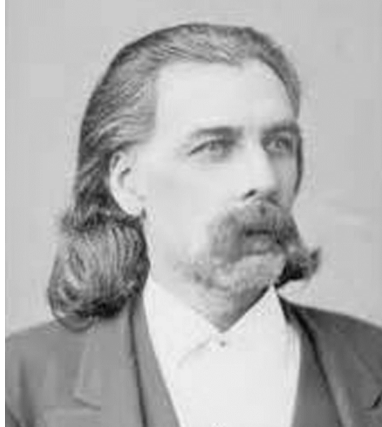


69 QUOTATIONS



Josh Billings

(1818-1885)

Josh Billings (Henry Wheeler Shaw) is a far distant second in stature to Mark Twain among the more provincial 19th-century humorists such as Artemus Ward and Petroleum V. Nasby. Three members of his family served in the U.S. House of Representatives. Billings joshed and wrote and performed on stage like Twain in a folksy voice, using dialect, slang, phonetic spelling, epigrams and wit. He was such a common man his embalmer tossed his guts into a gulch for dogs and fish bait.

ORDER OF TOPICS: man, life, truth, knowledge, wisdom, happiness, fools, women, love, manners, words, humor, imagination, genius, money, pride, sins, advice, health, old age, death:

MAN

Man was created a little lower than the angels and has been getting a little lower ever since.

A dog is the only animal that loves you more than you love yourself.

One of the rarest things that a man ever does, is to do the best he can.

LIFE

Life consists not in holding good cards but in playing those you hold well.

Life is a grindstone, and whether it grinds a man down or polishes him up depends on the stuff he's made of.

TRUTH

As scarce as truth is, the supply has always been in excess of the demand.

There are some people so addicted to exaggeration that they can't tell the truth without lying.

KNOWLEDGE

The less we know the more we suspect.

Knowledge is like money: the more he gets, the more he craves.

There is nothing so easy to learn as experience and nothing so hard to apply.

It's not only the most difficult thing to know oneself, but the most inconvenient.

WISDOM

Some folks are wise and some otherwise.

Wisdom has never made a bigot, but learning has.

Learning sleeps and snores in libraries, but wisdom is everywhere, wide awake on tiptoe.

There is no greater evidence of superior intelligence than to be surprised at nothing.

Half the troubles of this life can be traced to saying yes too quickly and not saying no soon enough.

I have lived in this world just long enough to look carefully the second time into things that I am most certain of the first time.

HAPPINESS

If you ever find happiness by hunting for it, you will find it, as the old woman did her lost spectacles, safe on her own nose all the time.

FOOLS

There are two kinds of fools: those who can't change their opinions and those who won't.

The best way to convince a fool that he is wrong is to let him have his own way.

WOMEN

Women's influence is powerful, especially when she wants something.

As a general thing, when a woman wears the pants in the family, she has a good right to them.

Be kind to your mother-in-law, but pay for her board at some good hotel.

There is no revenge so complete as forgiveness.

LOVE

Love looks through a telescope, envy through a microscope.

Love is like the measles. The later in life it occurs, the tougher it gets.

Love is said to be blind, but I know fellows in love who can see twice as much in their sweethearts as I do.

Marrying for love may be a bit risky, but it is so honest that God can't help but smile.

MANNERS

One of the greatest victories you can gain over someone is to beat him at politeness.

I don't care how much a man talks, if he only says it in a few words.

Flattery is like cologne water: to be smelt, not swallowed.

Silence is one of the hardest arguments to refute.

WORDS

There's a great power in words, if you don't hitch too many of them together.

HUMOR

There are very few good judges of humor, and they don't agree.

IMAGINATION

There are lots of people who mistake their imagination for their memory.

There are people who are always anticipating trouble, and in this way they manage to enjoy many sorrows that never really happen to them.

GENIUS

Common sense is instinct, and enough of it is genius.

Poverty is the step-mother of genius.

MONEY

Remember the poor, it costs nothing.

The poor suffer misery, while the rich have to enjoy it.

It ain't often that a man's reputation outlasts his money.

Live within your income, even if you have to borrow.

Money will buy a pretty good dog, but it won't buy the wag of his tail.

I haven't got as much money as some folks, but I've got as much impudence as any of them, and that's the next thing to money.

Honesty is the rarest wealth anyone can possess, and yet all the honesty in the world ain't lawful tender for a loaf of bread.

PRIDE

One of the best temporary cures for pride and affectation is seasickness. A man who wants to vomit never puts on airs.

SINS

No one can disgrace us but ourselves.

Most people repent their sins by thanking God they ain't so wicked as their neighbors.

Confess your sins to the Lord and you will be forgiven; confess them to man and you will be laughed at.

It is much easier to repent of sins that we have committed than to repent of those we intend to commit.

The road to ruin is always in good repair, and the travellers pay the expense of it.

The thinner the ice, the more anxious is everyone to see whether it will bear.

Reason often makes mistakes, but conscience never does.

ADVICE

Advice is like castor oil: easy enough to give but dreadful uneasy to take.

When a man comes to me for advice, I find out what kind of advice he wants, and I give it to him.

Don't take the bull by the horns, take him by the tail; then you can let go when you want to.

The time to pray is not when we are in a tight spot but just as soon as we get out of it.

Don't ever prophesy. If you prophesy wrong, nobody will forget it; if you prophesy right, nobody will remember it.

To bring up a child in the way he should go, travel that way yourself once in a while.

My advice to those who are about to begin, in earnest, the journey of life, is to take their hearts in one hand and a club in the other.

Be like a postage stamp. Stick to one thing until you get there.

Don't mistake pleasure for happiness.

HEALTH

Health is like money, we never have a true idea of its value until we lose it.

OLD AGE

After the fruit has got its growth it should juice up and mellow.

God forbid I should live long enough to ferment and rot and fall to the ground in a squash.

Men mourn for what they have lost, women for what they ain't got.

A puppy plays with every pup he meets, but an old dog has few associates.

I have never known a person to live to be one hundred and be remarkable for anything else.

DEATH

Three score years and ten is enough; if a man can't suffer all the misery he wants in that time, he must be numb.



Petroleum V. Nasby, Mark Twain, and Josh Billings