

## 87 QUOTATIONS



Will Rogers

(1879-1935)

Will Rogers was part Indian and had a wide lopsided smile and the apparent simplicity of a cowboy from Oklahoma—all heart and folksy wit. Everybody loved Will Rogers. He was a rancher, humorist, and movie actor and he was greatly mourned when he got killed in a plane crash in Alaska. Claiming he never met a man he didn't like, Rogers came across as at once lovably naïve like Huck Finn and a shrewd man of the people. He spoke in rustic dialect and was mostly original, though he borrowed a few wisecracks from Mark Twain, twirling a lasso instead of puffing on a cigar. He was a grassroots humorist in the tradition of the South and West as opposed to the urbane humor of the East represented by the tradition of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Robert Benchley, S.J. Perelman and Dorothy Parker.

ORDER OF TOPICS: ignorance, education, Prohibition, judgment, foresight, human nature, modern life, advertising, money, politics, Democracy, government, Congress, lawyers, taxes, golf, America, diplomacy, war, Communism, Hollywood, looking backward, advice:

### IGNORANCE

I never met a man I didn't like.

When ignorance gets started it knows no bounds.

Everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects. [borrowed from Twain]

An ignorant person is one who doesn't know what you have just found out. [Twain]

All I know is what I read in the papers, and that's an alibi for my ignorance.

I read about eight newspapers a day. When I'm in a town with only one newspaper, I read it eight times.

### EDUCATION

America is becoming so educated that ignorance will be a novelty. I will belong to the select few.

There is nothing so stupid as an educated man if you get him off the thing he was educated in. [Twain]

It isn't what we don't know that gives us trouble, it's what we know that ain't so. [Twain]

That's one thing about a little education. It spoils you for actual work. The more you know the more you think somebody owes you a living.

There are three kinds of men. The one that learns by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves.

#### PROHIBITION

Why don't we pass a constitutional amendment prohibiting anybody from learning anything? It if works as well as prohibition did, in five years Americans would be the smartest race of people on earth.

Prohibition is better than no liquor at all.

#### JUDGMENT

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

#### FORESIGHT

The fellow that can only see a week ahead is always the popular fellow, for he is looking with the crowd. But the one that can see years ahead, he has a telescope but he can't make anybody believe that he has it.

#### HUMAN NATURE

A difference of opinion is what makes horse racing and missionaries.

Lettin' the cat outa the bag is a whole lot easier'n puttin' it back in.

The best way out of a difficulty is through it.

Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.

Worrying is like paying on a debt that may never come due.

People who fly into a rage always make a bad landing.

A remark generally hurts in proportion to its truth.

Everything is funny, as long as it's happening to somebody else.

The only time people dislike gossip is when you gossip about them.

#### MODERN LIFE

I never expected to see the day when girls would get sunburned in the places they do now.

#### ADVERTISING

If advertisers spent the same amount of money on improving their products as they do on advertising then they wouldn't have to advertise them.

Advertising is the art of convincing people to spend money they don't have for something they don't need.

Get someone else to blow your horn and the sound will carry twice as far.

### MONEY

You've got to go out on a limb sometimes because that's where the fruit is. [Twain]

When should a college athlete turn pro? Not until he has earned all he can in college as an amateur.

Money and women are the two most sought after and the least known about of any two things we have.

Don't gamble; take all your savings and buy some good stock and hold it till it goes up, then sell it. If it don't go up, don't buy it.

The time to save is now. When a dog gets a bone, he doesn't go out and make a down payment on a bigger bone. He buries the one he's got.

### POLITICS

The fool and his money are soon elected.

I belong to no organized party. I am a Democrat.

If stupidity got us into this mess, then why can't it get us out?

There is no more independence in politics than there is in jail.

Politics has become so expensive that it takes a lot of money even to be defeated.

The more you observe politics, the more you've got to admit that each party is worse than the other.

Anything important is never left to the vote of the people. We only get to vote on some man, we never get to vote on what he is to do.

Liberty doesn't work as well in practice as it does in speeches.

### DEMOCRACY

On account of being a democracy and run by the people, we are the only nation in the world that has to keep a government four years, no matter what it does.

Our Constitution protects aliens, drunks and Senators.

### GOVERNMENT

Be thankful we're not getting all the government we're paying for.

People are taking their comedians seriously and politicians as a joke.

I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts.

Things in our country run in spite of the government not by aid of it.

It's easy being a humorist when you've got the whole government working for you.

The man with the best job in the country is the vice-president. All he has to do is get up every morning and say, "How is the President?"

Alexander Hamilton started the United States Treasury with nothing, and that was the closest our country has ever been to being even.

#### CONGRESS

If I studied all my life, I couldn't think up half the number of funny things passed in one session of Congress.

This country has come to feel the same when Congress is in session as when the baby gets hold of a hammer.

Ancient Rome declined because it had a Senate, now what's going to happen to us with both a House and a Senate?

About all I can say for the United States Senate is that it opens with a prayer and closes with an investigation.

#### LAWYERS

Make crime pay. Become a lawyer.

The only way to beat the lawyers is to die with nothing.

People are getting smarter nowadays; they are letting lawyers, instead of their conscience, be their guide.

#### TAXES

The only difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets.

If you make any money, the government shoves you in the creek once a year with it in your pockets, and all that don't get wet you can keep.

We don't seem to be able to check crime, so why not legalize it and then tax it out of business?

The income tax has made liars out of more people than golf.

#### GOLF

I have never been depressed enough to take up golf, but they say you get so sore at yourself you forget to hate your enemies.

#### AMERICA

The United States has never lost a war or won a conference.

When the Oakies left Oklahoma and moved to California, it raised the IQ of both states.

Ohio claims they are due a president as they haven't had one since Taft. Look at the United States, they have not had one since Lincoln.

One third of the people in the United States promote, while the other two-thirds provides.

What the country needs is dirtier fingernails and cleaner minds.

#### DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy is the art of saying "Nice doggie" until you can find a rock.

## WAR

You take diplomacy out of war, and the thing would fall flat in a week.

You can't say civilization don't advance.... In every war they kill you in a new way. [Twain]

No nation should be allowed to enter a war till they have paid for the last one.

## COMMUNISM

Communism to me is one-third practice and two-thirds explanation.

## HOLLYWOOD

The movies are the only business where you can go out front and applaud yourself.

I'm not a real movie star. I've still got the same wife I started out with twenty-eight years ago.

In Hollywood you can see things at night that are fast enough to be in the Olympics in the day time.

In Hollywood the woods are full of people that learned to write but evidently can't read. If they could read their stuff, they'd stop writing.

There's only one thing that can kill the movies, and that's education.

Being a hero is about the shortest-lived profession on earth.

The thing of being a hero, the main thing to it is to know when to die.

## LOOKING BACKWARD

When you put down the good things you ought to have done, and leave out the bad ones you did do—well, that's Memoirs.

Things ain't what they used to be and never was.

Last year we said, "Things can't go on like this," and they didn't, they got worse.

## ADVICE

Don't let yesterday use up too much of today.

Do the best you can, and don't take life too serious.

Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip.

The worst thing that happens to you may be the best thing for you if you don't let it get the best of you.

We are all here for a spell—get all the good laughs you can.

