

22 one-line insults and comebacks

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: “Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease.”

“That depends, Sir,” said Disraeli, “whether I embrace your policies or your mistress.”

“He had delusions of adequacy .”

-Walter Kerr

“He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire.”

– Winston Churchill.

“I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure.”

-Clarence Darrow

“He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary.”

-William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway)

“Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I’ll waste no time reading it.”

-Moses Hadas.

“I didn’t attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it.”

-Mark Twain.

“He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends.”

-Oscar Wilde.

“I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend, if you have one.”

-George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill.

“Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one.”

-Winston Churchill, in response.

“I feel so miserable without you; it’s almost like having you here.”

-Stephen Bishop

“He is a self-made man and worships his creator.”

-John Bright

“I’ve just learned about his illness. Let’s hope it’s nothing trivial.”

-Irvin S. Cobb.

“He is not only dull himself; he is the cause of dullness in others.”

-Samuel Johnson.

“He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to run up.”

– Paul Keating.

“He loves nature in spite of what it did to him.”

-Forrest Tucker.

“Why do you sit there looking like an envelope without any address on it?”

-Mark Twain.

“His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork.”

-Mae West.

“Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go.”

-Oscar Wilde.

“He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp-posts... for support rather than illumination.”

-Andrew Lang

“He has Van Gogh’s ear for music.”

-Billy Wilder.

“I’ve had a perfectly wonderful evening. But I’m afraid this wasn’t it.”

-Groucho Marx