

# Stephen Leacock

## Quotes

*Men, Economy, Fall, Two, Inspirational, Thinking, Work, Writing, Long, World,  
Life, Book, Science, Reading, Lying, Retirement, Clever, Facts, Forgiving,  
Needs*

Many a man in love with a dimple makes the mistake of marrying the whole girl.

~Stephen Leacock

The landlady of a boarding-house is a parallelogram - that is, an oblong angular figure, which cannot be described, but which is equal to anything

~Stephen Leacock

Now, the essence, the very spirit of Christmas is that we first make believe a thing is so, and lo, it presently turns out to be so.

~Stephen Leacock

It may be those who do most, dream most.

~Stephen Leacock

I am a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work the more I have of it.

~Stephen Leacock

A half truth, like half a brick, is always more forcible as an argument than a whole one. It carries better.

~Stephen Leacock

Advertising: the science of arresting the human intelligence long enough to get money from it.

~Stephen Leacock

There are two things in ordinary conversation which ordinary people dislike - information and wit

~Stephen Leacock

I detest life-insurance agents: they always argue that I shall some day die, which is not so.

~Stephen Leacock

It takes a good deal of physical courage to ride a horse. This, however, I have. I get it at about forty cents a flask, and take it as required.

~Stephen Leacock

The Compleat Angler is acknowledged to be one of the world's books. Only the trouble is that the world doesn't read its books, it borrows a detective story instead.

~Stephen Leacock

He flung himself from the room, flung himself upon his horse and rode madly off in all directions.

~Stephen Leacock

In ancient times they had no statistics so they had to fall back on lies.

~Stephen Leacock

Being a specialist is one thing, getting a job is another.

~Stephen Leacock

With the Great Detective, to think was to act, and to act was to think. Frequently he could do both together.

~Stephen Leacock

Electricity is of two kinds, positive and negative. The difference is, I presume, that one comes a little more expensive, but is more durable; the other is a cheaper thing, but the moths get into it.

~Stephen Leacock

Success is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration.

~Stephen Leacock

Astronomy teaches the correct use of the sun and the planets.

~Stephen Leacock

The Lord said 'let there be wheat' and Saskatchewan was born

~Stephen Leacock

The Victorians needed parody. Without it their literature would have been a rank and weedy growth, over-watered with tears.

~Stephen Leacock

The minute a man is convinced he is interesting, he isn't.

~Stephen Leacock

Men are able to trust one another, knowing the exact degree of dishonesty they are entitled to expect.

~Stephen Leacock

The classics are only primitive literature. They belong to the same class as primitive machinery and primitive music and primitive medicine.

~Stephen Leacock

What we call creative work, ought not to be called work at all, because it isn't. I imagine that Thomas Edison never did a day's work in his last fifty years.

~Stephen Leacock

It is to be observed that 'angling' is the name given to fishing by people who can't fish.

~Stephen Leacock

We think of the noble object for which the professor appears tonight, we may be assured that the Lord will forgive any one who will laugh at the professor.

~Stephen Leacock

About the only good thing you can say about old age is, it's better than being dead!

~Stephen Leacock

Writing is not hard. Just get paper and pencil, sit down, and write as it occurs to you. The writing is easy-it's the occurring that's hard.

~Stephen Leacock

I owe a lot to my teachers and mean to pay them back some day.

~Stephen Leacock

Life, we learn too late, is in the living, the tissue of every day and hour.

~Stephen Leacock

The great man... walks across his century and leaves the marks of his feet all over it, ripping out the dates on his goloshes as he passes.

~Stephen Leacock

Each section of the British Isles has its own way of laughing, except Wales, which doesn't.

~Stephen Leacock

Golf may be played on Sunday, not being a game within the view of the law, but being a form of moral effort.

~Stephen Leacock

Chess is one long regret.

~Stephen Leacock

If every day in the life of a school could be the last day but one, there would be little fault to find with it.

~Stephen Leacock

A sportsman is a man who, every now and then, simply has to get out

and kill something.

~Stephen Leacock

Humour is essentially a comforter, reconciling us to things as they are in contrast to things as they might be.

~Stephen Leacock

The road comes to an end just when it ought to be getting somewhere. The passengers alight, shaken and weary, to begin, all over again, something else.

~Stephen Leacock

Personally, I would sooner have written Alice in Wonderland than the whole Encyclopedia Britannica.

~Stephen Leacock

It's called political economy because it has nothing to do with either politics or economy.

~Stephen Leacock

Newspapermen learn to call a murderer "an alleged murderer" and the King of England "the alleged King of England" in order to avoid libel suits.

~Stephen Leacock

Writing is no trouble: you just jot down ideas as they occur to you. The jotting is simplicity itself - it is the occurring which is difficult.

~Stephen Leacock

The attempt to make the consumption of beer criminal is as silly and as futile as if you passed a law to send a man to jail for eating cucumber salad.

~Stephen Leacock

The parent who could see his boy as he really is, would shake his head and say: 'Willie is no good; I'll sell him.'

~Stephen Leacock

Most people can tire of a lecture in fifteen minutes, clever people can do it in five, and sensible people don't go to lectures at all.

~Stephen Leacock

Humor may be defined as the kindly contemplation of the incongruities of life, and the artistic expression thereof.

~Stephen Leacock

I admit that when the facts are not good enough, I always exaggerate them.

~Stephen Leacock

There is no doubt that many things in life come to us...at backgrounds so to speak. Happiness is one of them.

~Stephen Leacock

You cannot depict love inside a frame of fact. It needs a mist to dissolve in.

~Stephen Leacock

The English are terribly lazy about fighting. They like to get it over and done with and then set up a game of cricket.

~Stephen Leacock

The sorrows and disasters of Europe always brought fortune to America.

~Stephen Leacock

It's a lie, but Heaven will forgive you for it.

~Stephen Leacock

There is an old motto that runs, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." This is nonsense. It ought to read, "If at first you don't succeed, quit, quit at once."

~Stephen Leacock

To write well it is first necessary to have something to say.

~Stephen Leacock

You can never have international peace as long as you have national poverty.

~Stephen Leacock

In Canada we have enough to do keeping up with two spoken languages ... so we just go right ahead and use English for literature, Scotch for sermons, and American for conversation.

~Stephen Leacock

American politicians do anything for money... English politicians take the money and won't do anything.

~Stephen Leacock

I've seen lifelong friends drift apart over golf just because one could play better, but the other counted better.

~Stephen Leacock

It is difficult to be funny and great at the same time. Aristophanes and Moliere and Mark Twain must sit below Aristotle and Bossuet and Emerson.

~Stephen Leacock

Any man will admit if need be that his sight is not good, or that he cannot swim or shoots badly with a rifle, but to touch upon his sense of humour is to give him mortal affront.

~Stephen Leacock



Humour in its highest reach mingles with pathos: it voices sorrow for our human lot and reconciliation with it.

~Stephen Leacock

Anybody who has listened to certain kinds of music, or read certain kinds of poetry, or heard certain kinds of performances on the concertina, will admit that even suicide has its brighter aspects.

~Stephen Leacock

It was Einstein who made the real trouble. He announced in 1905 that there was no such thing as absolute rest. After that there never was.

~Stephen Leacock

Any two meals at a boarding-house are together less than two square meals.

~Stephen Leacock

All our yesterdays, it is true, have only lighted fools the way to dusty death. But we need at least the dates of the yesterdays and the list of the fools.

~Stephen Leacock

On the same bill and on the same side of it there should not be two charges for the same thing

~Stephen Leacock

Indeed I have always found that the only thing in regard to Toronto which faraway people know for certain is that McGill University is in it.

~Stephen Leacock

Too much has been said of the heroes of history-the strong men, the troublesome men; too little of the amiable, the kindly, the tolerant.

~Stephen Leacock

A silk dress in four sections, and shoes with high heels that would have broken the heart of John Calvin.

~Stephen Leacock

Professors of theory merely hold post-mortems.

~Stephen Leacock

When actors begin to think, it's time for a change. They are not fitted for it.

~Stephen Leacock

The tears of childhood fall fast and easily, and evil be to him who makes them flow.

~Stephen Leacock

I am what is called a professor emeritusâ€”from the Latin e, 'out,' and meritus, 'so he ought to be.

~Stephen Leacock

My parents migrated to Canada in 1876, and I decided to go with them.

~Stephen Leacock

In point of morals, the average woman is, even for business, too crooked.

~Stephen Leacock

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