

William Osler

Quotes

*Men, Life, Health, Science, Practice Of Medicine, Medicine, Art, Teaching,
Physicians, Disease, Book, Mind, Doctors, Teacher, Education, Heart, Way,
Exercise, Humility, Important*

The good physician treats the disease; the great physician treats the patient who has the disease.

~William Osler

Listen to your patient, he is telling you the diagnosis.

~William Osler

The person who takes medicine must recover twice, once from the disease and once from the medicine.

~William Osler

It is much more important to know what sort of a patient has a disease than what sort of a disease a patient has.

~William Osler

Gentlemen, I have a confession to make. Half of what we have taught you is in error, and furthermore we cannot tell you which half it is

~William Osler

The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade; a calling, not a business; a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head.

~William Osler

No man is really happy or safe without a hobby.

~William Osler

He who studies medicine without books sails an uncharted sea, but he who studies medicine without patients does not go to sea at all.

~William Osler

The very first step towards success in any occupation is to become interested in it.

~William Osler

Medicine is a science of uncertainty and an art of probability.

~William Osler

The trained nurse has become one of the great blessings of humanity, taking a place beside the physician and the priest.

~William Osler

We are here to add what we can to life, not to get what we can from life.

~William Osler

One of the first duties of the physician is to educate the masses not to take medicine.

~William Osler

There are three classes of human beings: men, women and women physicians.

~William Osler

Acquire the art of detachment, the virtue of method, and the quality of thoroughness, but above all the grace of humility.

~William Osler

Observe, record, tabulate, communicate. Use your five senses. Learn to see, learn to hear, learn to feel, learn to smell, and know that by practice alone you can become expert.

~William Osler

The value of experience is not in seeing much, but in seeing wisely.

~William Osler

No human being is constituted to know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth; and even the best of men must be content with fragments, with partial glimpses, never the full fruition.

~William Osler

The young doctor should look about early for an avocation, a pastime, that will take him away from patients, pills, and potions.

~William Osler

Every patient you see is a lesson in much more than the malady from which he suffers.

~William Osler

The philosophies of one age have become the absurdities of the next, and the foolishness of yesterday has become the wisdom of tomorrow.

~William Osler

Live neither in the past nor in the future, but let each day absorb all your interest, energy and enthusiasm. The best preparation for tomorrow is to live today superbly well.

~William Osler

There are only two sorts of doctors; those who practise with their brains, and those who practise with their tongues.

~William Osler

To have striven, to have made the effort, to have been true to certain ideals - this alone is worth the struggle.

~William Osler

The young physician starts life with 20 drugs for each disease, and the old physician ends life with one drug for 20 diseases.

~William Osler

The successful teacher is no longer on a height, pumping knowledge at high pressure into passive receptacles.

~William Osler

The greater the ignorance the greater the dogmatism.

~William Osler

Patients rarely die of the disease from which they suffer. Secondary or terminal infections are the real cause of death.

~William Osler

Nothing will sustain you more potently than the power to recognize in your humdrum routine, as perhaps it may be thought, the true poetry of life.

~William Osler

Without faith a man can do nothing; with it all things are possible.

~William Osler

It is not as if our homeopathic brothers are asleep: far from it, they are awake - many of them at any rate - to the importance of the scientific study of disease.

~William Osler

Advice is sought to confirm a position already taken.

~William Osler

No bubble is so iridescent or floats longer than that blown by the successful teacher.

~William Osler

What is the student but a lover courting a fickle mistress who ever eludes his grasp?

~William Osler

A physician who treats himself has a fool for a patient.

~William Osler

The only way to treat the common cold is with contempt.

~William Osler

Patients should have rest, food, fresh air, and exercise - the quadrangle of health.

~William Osler

Laughter is the music of life.

~William Osler

Too many men slip early out of the habit of studious reading, and yet that is essential.

~William Osler

Soap and water and common sense are the best disinfectants.

~William Osler

He who knows syphilis knows medicine

~William Osler

One special advantage of the skeptical attitude of mind is that a man is never vexed to find that after all he has been in the wrong.

~William Osler

The natural man has only two primal passions, to get and beget.

~William Osler

Live neither in the past nor in the future, but let each day's work absorb your entire energies, and satisfy your widest ambition.

~William Osler

If it were not for the great variability among individuals, medicine might as well be a science, not an art.

~William Osler

Humanity has but three great enemies: fever, famine, and war; of these by far the greatest, by far the most terrible, is fever.

~William Osler

It is much simpler to buy books than to read them and easier to read them than to absorb their contents.

~William Osler

We are all dietetic sinners; only a small percent of what we eat nourishes us; the balance goes to waste and loss of energy.

~William Osler

To confess ignorance is often wiser than to beat about the bush with a hypothetical diagnosis.

~William Osler

Work is the open sesame of every portal, the great equalizer in the world, the true philosopher's stone which transmutes all the base metal of humanity into gold.

~William Osler

A well-trained, sensible doctor is one of the most valuable assets of a community.

~William Osler

In seeking absolute truth we aim at the unattainable and must be content with broken portions.

~William Osler

The desire to take medicine is perhaps the greatest feature which distinguishes man from animals.

~William Osler

Jaundice is the disease that your friends diagnose.

~William Osler

Varicose veins are the result of an improper selection of grandparents.

~William Osler

There is no disease more conducive to clinical humility than aneurysm of the aorta.

~William Osler

We doctors have always been a simple trusting folk. Did we not believe Galen implicitly for 1500 years and Hippocrates for more than 2000?

~William Osler

There is no more difficult art to acquire than the art of observation, and for some men it is quite as difficult to record an observation in brief and plain language.

~William Osler

It cannot be too often or too forcibly brought home to us that the hope of the profession is with the men who do its daily work in general practice.

~William Osler

There are, in truth, no specialties in medicine, since to know fully many of the most important diseases a man must be familiar with their manifestations in many organs.

~William Osler

Courage and cheerfulness will not only carry you over the rough places in life, but will enable you to bring comfort and help to the weak-hearted and will console you in the sad hours.

~William Osler

Taking a lady's hand gives her confidence in her physician.

~William Osler

The most essential thing for happiness is the gift of friendship.

~William Osler

We are constantly misled by the ease with which our minds fall into the ruts of one or two experiences

~William Osler

No dreams, no visions, no delicious fantasies, no castles in the air, with which, as the old song so truly says, hearts are broken, heads are turned.

~William Osler

Now the way of life that I preach is a habit to be acquired gradually by long and steady repetition. It is the practice of living for the day only, and for the day's work.

~William Osler

Start at once a bedside library and spend the last half hour of the day in communion with the saints of humanity.

~William Osler

What is patience but an equanimity which enables you to rise superior to the trials of life.

~William Osler

Shed, as you do your garments, your daily sins, whether of omission or commission, and you will wake a free man, with a new life.

~William Osler

Avoid wine and women - choose a freckly-faced girl for a wife; they are invariably more amiable.

~William Osler

The teacher's life should have three periods, study until twenty-five, investigation until forty, profession until sixty, at which age I would have him retired on a double allowance.

~William Osler

Save the fleeting minute; learn gracefully to dodge the bore.

~William Osler

Nature, the great Moloch, which exacts a frightful tax of human blood, sparing neither young nor old; taking the child from the cradle, the mother from her babe, and the father from the family.

~William Osler

Without egotism and full of feeling, laughter is the music of life.

~William Osler

Shut out all of your past except that which will help you weather your tomorrows.

~William Osler

Perhaps no sin so easily besets us as a sense of self-satisfied superiority to others.

~William Osler

The uselessness of men above sixty years of age and the incalculable benefit it would be in commercial, in political, and in professional life, if as a matter of course, men stopped work at this age.

~William Osler

Happiness lies in the absorption in some vocation which satisfies the soul.

~William Osler

The Scots are the backbone of Canada. They are all right in their three

vital parts - head, heart and haggis.

~William Osler

When schemes are laid in advance, it is surprising how often the circumstances will fit in with them.

~William Osler

Fed on the dry husks of facts, the human heart has a hidden want which science cannot supply.

~William Osler

For the general practitioner a well-used library is one of the few correctives of the premature senility which is so apt to take him.

~William Osler

It is not the delicate neurotic person who is prone to angina, but the robust, the vigorous in mind and body, the keen and ambitious man, the indicator of whose engines is always at full speed ahead.

~William Osler

That man can interrogate as well as observe nature was a lesson slowly learned in his evolution.

~William Osler

Nothing is life is more wonderful than faith.

~William Osler

Let each hour of the day have its allotted duty, and cultivate that power of concentration which grows with its exercise.

~William Osler

The true poetry of life: the poetry of the commonplace, of the ordinary man, of the plain, toil-worn woman, with their loves and their joys, their sorrows and their griefs.

~William Osler

Look wise, say nothing, and grunt. Speech was given to conceal thought.

~William Osler

The higher the standard of education in a profession, the less marked will be the charlatanism.

~William Osler

Half of us are blind, few of us feel, and we are all deaf.

~William Osler

The great majority gave no signs one way or the other; like birth, their death was a sleep and a forgetting.

~William Osler

To know just what has do be done, then to do it, comprises the whole philosophy of practical life.

~William Osler

Think not of the amount to be accomplished, the difficulties to be overcome, or the end to be attained, but set earnestly at the little task at your elbow, letting that be sufficient for the day.

~William Osler

The clean tongue, the clear head, and the bright eye are birthrights of each day.

~William Osler

A man is sane morally at thirty, rich mentally at forty, wise spiritually at fifty-or never!

~William Osler

To do today's work well and not to bother about tomorrow is the secret of accomplishment

~William Osler

A library represents the mind of its collector, fancies and foibles, strengths and weaknesses, prejudices and preferences.

~William Osler

Conservatism and old fogeyism are totally different things; the motto of one is "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good" and of the other "Prove nothing but hold fast that which is old."

~William Osler

Faith is a most precious commodity, without which we should be very badly off.

~William Osler

It is strange how the memory of a man may float to posterity on what he would have himself regarded as the most trifling of his works.

~William Osler

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