

# OSLER'S NOTES

## **Do not promise cures.**

We work by wit and not by witchcraft, and while these patients have our tenderest care, and we must do what is best for the relief of their sufferings, we should not bring the art of medicine into disrepute by quack-like promises to heal.

*(Source: Cushing H. The Life of William Osler, Vol. 2, 179.)*

## **Doctors do not take criticism well.**

More perhaps than any other professional man, the doctor has a curious – shall I say morbid? – sensitiveness to (what he regards) personal error. In a way this is right; but it is too often accompanied by a cock-sureness of opinion

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which, if encouraged, leads him to so lively a conceit that the mere suggestion of mistake under any circumstances is regarded as a reflection on his honour, a reflection equally resented whether of lay or of professional origin.

*(Source: Teacher and Student, In Aequanimitas, 38.)*

## **Examine the throat and the rectum.**

Failure to examine the throat is a glaring sin of omission, especially in children. One finger in the throat and one in the rectum makes a good diagnostician.

*(Source: Bean WB. Sir William Osler: Aphorisms, 104.)*