



OSLER'S NOTES

The duties of the physician are several.

We know more and enjoy larger opportunities and with them come greater responsibilities, but could Hippocrates return he would find no change in those essential duties in which he is still our great exemplar. They are four: so as to study our cases as to acquire facility in the art of diagnosis, which must everywhere precede the rational treatment of disease; so as to grow in clinical judgement that we may learn to appreciate the relative value of the symptoms and physical signs, and give to the patient and his friends a forecast or prognosis; so as to conduct the treatment that the patient may be restored back to health at the earliest possible period, or, failing that, be given the greatest possible measure of relief, whether by drugs, the action of which he should carefully study, so as to have a strong and abiding faith in those which have been tried and not found wanting, by diet, by exercise, or by all the physical means available, and often by the exercise of his own strong personality; and lastly, so as to arrange sanitary and hygienic measures that, whenever possible, disease may be prevented.

(Source: The Evolution of Internal Medicine. In Modern Medicine: Its Theory and Practice. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers, 1907:34.)

Live to our threefold capacity.

In his character as a physician a man has a threefold relation: with the public, with the profession and with himself. Not one of us in all, only a few of us in some of these diverse relations, live up to our full capacity.

(Source: Dr Johnston as A Physician. Washington Med Ann 1902;1:158-61.)

The physician's heart is the most important aspect of practice.

Of the three factors in practice, heart, head, and pocket, to our credit, be it said, the first named is most potent.

(Source: Penfield W Neurology in Canada and the Osler Centennial. Can Med Assoc J 1949;61:69-73.)

