


PHRASES AND
PHILOSOPHIES

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With a head-piece and tail-piece
by Aubrey Beardsley.

Phrases and
Philosophies
for the use
of the Young
By Oscar Wilde
London mcmiii



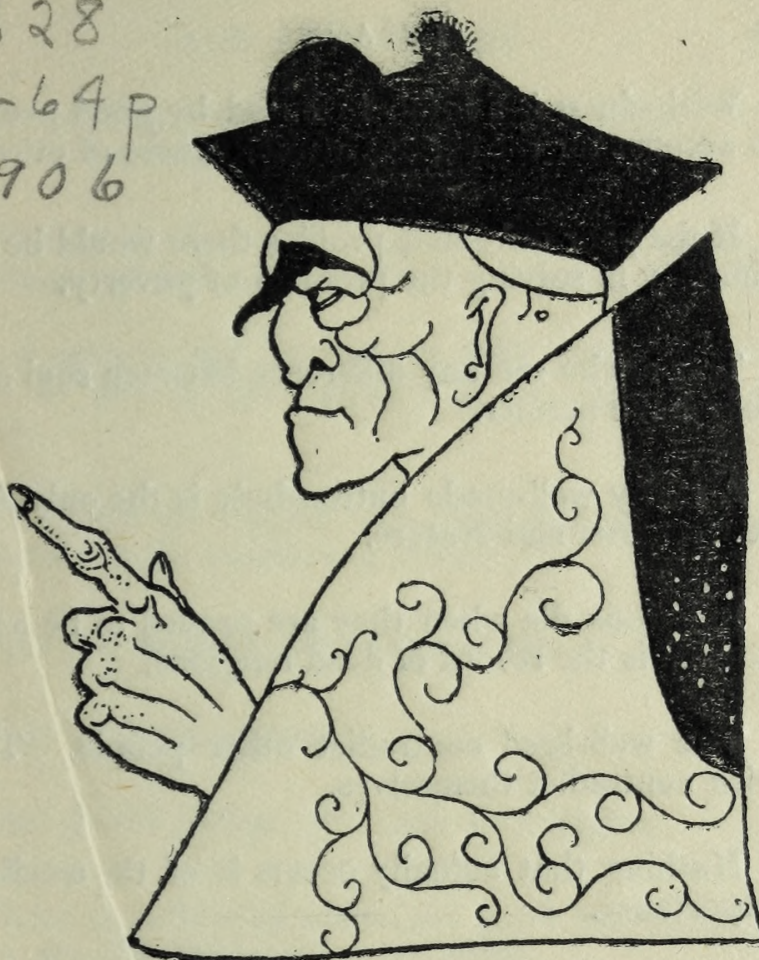
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Phrases and Philosophies

THE first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible. What the second duty is no one has as yet discovered.

20 Aug 53 by Donald L. Tom. The new 1903

Wickedness is a myth invented by good people to account for the curious attractiveness of others.

If the poor only had profiles there would be no difficulty in solving the problem of poverty.

✓ Those who see any difference between soul and body have neither.

✓ A really well-made button-hole is the only link between Art and Nature.

Religions die when they are proved to be true. Science is the record of dead religions.

The well-bred contradict other people. The wise contradict themselves.

✓ Nothing that actually occurs is of the smallest importance.

Dulness is the coming of age of seriousness.

✓ In all unimportant matters, style, not sincerity, is the essential.

If one tells the truth, one is sure sooner or later, to be found out.

✓ Pleasure is the only thing we should live for. Nothing ages like happiness.

It is only by not paying our bills that one can hope to live in the memory of the commercial classes.

No crime is vulgar, but vulgarity is crime. Vulgarity is the conduct of others.

Only the shallow know themselves.

Time is waste of money.

✓ One should always be a little improbable.

There is a fatality about all good resolutions. They are invariably made too soon.

The only way to atone for being occasionally a little over-dressed is by being always absolutely over-educated.

To be premature is to be perfect.

Any preoccupation with ideas of what is right or wrong in conduct shows an arrested intellectual development.

Ambition is the last refuge of the failure.

A truth ceases to be true when more than one person believes in it.

In examinations the foolish ask questions that the wise cannot answer.

Greek dress was in its essence inartistic. Nothing should reveal the body but the body.

One should either be a work of Art, or wear a work of Art.

It is only the superficial qualities that last. Man's deeper nature is soon found out.

Industry is the root of all ugliness.

The ages live in history through their anachronisms.

It is only the gods who taste of death. Apollo has passed away, but Hyacinth, whom men say he slew, lives on. Nero and Narcissus are always with us.

The old believe everything; the middle-aged suspect everything; the young know everything.

The condition of perfection is idleness; the aim of perfection is youth.

Only the great masters of style ever succeed in being obscure.

There is something tragic about the enormous number of young men there are in England at the present moment who start life with perfect profiles, and end by adopting some useful profession.

To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance.

It is important *not* to keep a business engagement, if one wants to retain any sense of the beauty of life.

By persistently remaining single, a man converts himself into a permanent public temptation.

Avoid arguments of any kind. They are always vulgar, and often convincing.

Relations are simply a tedious pack of people who haven't got the remotest knowledge of how or live nor the smallest instinct about when to die.

Once a man begins to neglect his domestic duties he becomes painfully effeminate.

It is absurd to have a hard-and-fast rule about what one should read and what one shouldn't. More than half of modern culture depends on what one shouldn't read.

Ignorance is like a delicate exotic fruit ; touch it and the bloom is gone.

In matters of grave importance, style, not sincerity, is the vital thing.

Three addresses always inspire confidence even in tradesmen.

The two weak points in our age are its want of principle and its want of profile.

Women have a wonderful instinct about things. They can discover everything except the obvious.

To expect the unexpected shows a thoroughly modern intellect.

In the case of a very fascinating woman, sex is a challenge, not a defence.

Questions are never indiscreet. Answers sometimes are.

The London Season is entirely matrimonial: people are either hunting for husbands, or hiding from them.

Morality is simply the attitude we adopt towards people whom we personally dislike.

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Self-sacrifice is a thing that should be put down by law. It is so demoralizing to the people for whom one sacrifices oneself.

OSCAR WILDE

