Robert Eddison's

Wisdom & Wordplay

300 original one-liners
to enrich your day



"I salute your genius.
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Gyles Brandreth

What people are saying…

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Donald Mead, chairman, The Oscar Wilde Society

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With a Foreword by Gyles Brandreth

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"To those who claim to read me like a book,
I'll ask what page you've reached."



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I feel like a balloon, thanking its life-giving oxygen for enabling it to rise.

Robert Eddison.

Foreword
by Gyles Brandreth

Condensing a philosophical or witty concept into a single line calls for great skill and mastery of language. As editor of *The Oxford Book of Humorous Quotations*, President of the Oscar Wilde Society and a lifelong lover of aphorisms, I know this to be true.

Apart from this author, I know of no aphorist, living or dead, who has originated so many high-quality aphorisms on such an awesome variety of subjects. As a taster of his larger collection, Robert Eddison's *Wisdom & Wordplay* is a dazzling combination of incisive wit, profundity and verbal dexterity of the highest order.

I'm a devotee of the works of Oscar Wilde, have appeared as Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and have written a series of Victorian murder mysteries featuring Wilde as my detective. For me, Oscar Wilde has always been the master aphorist, having reigned supreme for 130 years. Rare, indeed, is the man (or woman) of letters who could consistently match such classic one-liners as:

'What is a cynic? A man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing' or

'Philosophy teaches us to bear with equanimity the misfortunes of others'

But, although not all gods reign for eternity, it never once occurred to me that this particular one could ever be dethroned – until now. Could it just be that, in the author of this remarkable book, Wilde has finally met his match?

I am proud to introduce you to Robert Eddison. How should I describe him? While reading Modern Languages and Law at Cambridge, he won a European scholarship, which was followed by a university lectureship and a Foreign Office consultancy. But it's his lifelong fascination with the written and spoken word that has dictated Robert's two main hobbies – coining mint-fresh aphorisms and public speaking, which led to some freelance broadcasting for the BBC and a lecture tour of America.

And it was Robert's Puckish love of words and wordplay that finally drew him to a career in mainstream journalism, writing periodic colour features for the broadsheets and tabloids. As a lifelong member of Mensa, he also chairs some of its popular discussion dinners and was recently appointed to a directorship of the newly formed international charity for high ability (IAFHA), which seeks to identify and nurture gifted children.

Robert's love of words is, of course, widely shared by other journalists and public figures, who, like me, are constantly on the lookout for new material to add a dash of sparkle to their speeches and lectures. This treasure-house of highly individual quotes provides a rich source of ideas, be it for us, the best man at a wedding or the conference delegate.

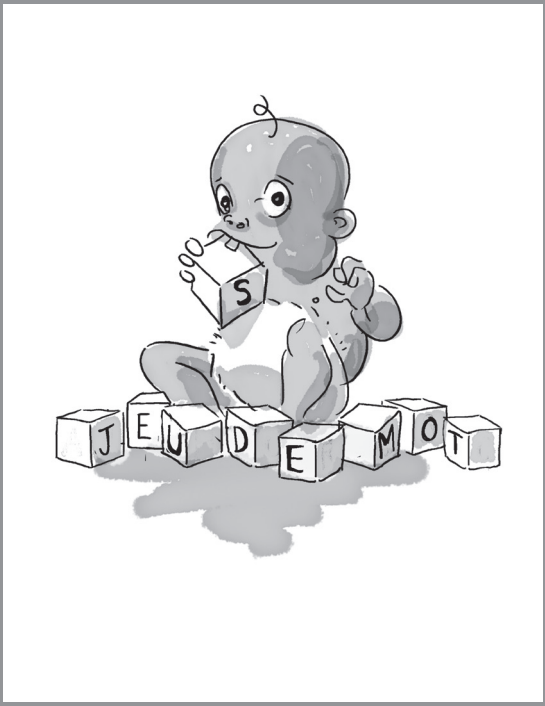
This book also offers the ideal year-round gift for every lover of words. It's a book to live with and savour, like a good liqueur, line by glorious line. You'll need *three* copies, though – one as a gift, one for your travelling bag and one for the loo.

For me, Robert is *the* Aphorist – a wise, witty and deeply thoughtful observer of our times. He isn't Wilde. He's Eddison. And quite wonderful.

You have his book in your hands and you'll soon have his aphorisms in your head.

Enjoy them. They are the best.

Wordplay



Squares are never ahead
of the curve



The nicotine addict with money to burn
can only watch it go up in smoke



Wooden people lack polish

Some broken English is broken
beyond repair



Leading the simple life can be
very complicated



Throwaway remarks are
not always caught

Few bang the drum for those
who blow their own trumpet



To gluttons, the dessert is always
worth the weight

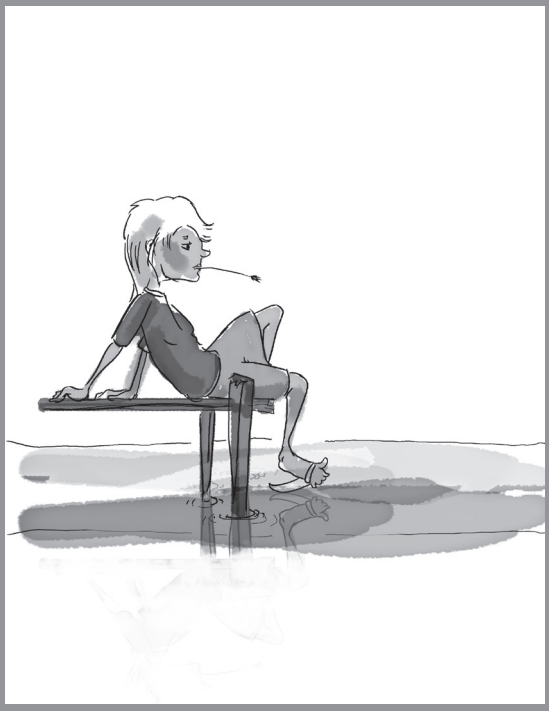


In hard times, banks serve their
customers with little interest



Circular discussions end up at square one

Reflective



Most careers bubble happily along
without the kettle ever whistling



The curious are their own best teachers



You may watch a tree grow for ten years,
but you will never see it growing



Only when happy in your own skin can
you put yourself in another's

A clear conscience makes the
best sleeping pill



We all want to be understood -
but not too well



Verbosity acts like a weed
to throttle meaning



Deep thoughts take time to surface

Not being yourself is part of
being yourself



The older our skin,
the more comfortable we feel in it



Modesty comes from seeing
ourselves in perspective

Dark



Even in death, people can loom
larger than life



A life well-lived is to die for



One would prefer to rest in peace
before death



Take your time too often and you'll be
left with no time to take

Death is a once-in-a-lifetime experience



Truth drugs are a form of forced entry



Cremation stops you taking your secrets to the grave



Being high as a kite comes with strings attached

The amateur liar avoids your eye;
the professional liar seeks it



Not every hangman gets the
hang of gallows humour



Pity the pensioner who started with
nothing and has most of it left

Humour



In old age, we lose height,
but gain authority



Many can't stand taking things
sitting down



To the shyster, fare avoidance
is just the ticket