

From an Ample Nation*

Selections of

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- 1. The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson**
 - 2. The Life of William Osler by Harvey Cushing**
 - 3. Medical Nemesis by Ivan Illich**
 - 4. Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl**
 - 5. Closing the Chart by Steven Hsi**
 - 6. The Care of the Patient by F. W. Peabody**
 - 7. A Taste of My Own Medicine by Edward Rosenbaum**
 - 8. Middlemarch by George Eliot**
 - 9. One Hundred Days by David Biro**
 - 10. P.S. Julia by J. Fox Garrison**

Lagniappe:

Why Read? by Mark Edmundson

Blurbs

- 1. Emily Dickinson has guided me for decades. In December, I always appreciate "the certain slant of light." One can read them as refreshing snacks, or reread them years later and see new levels of meaning.**
- 2. Cushing's The Life of Osler won the Pulitzer Prize in 1926. It's a thick tome - over 1300 pages long. Osler comes across in these pages as a scientist, a clinician, a bibliophile, a jokester, a humanist and much more. Well worth the effort**

3. Medical Nemesis is one of the first modern books to inform the public about the juggernaut that is the Health Care System. Illich is a true iconoclast, but this book is tough going. The thesis is stated early in the book: "The greatest threat to the health of the commonweal is the medical profession.

4. *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor E. Frankl is among the most influential works of the 20th C. This is a fascinating, sophisticated, and very human book. At times, Frankl's personal and professional discourses merge into a style of tremendous power. "Our generation is realistic, for we have come to know man as he really is," Frankl writes. "After all, man is that being who invented the gas chambers of Auschwitz; however, he is also that being who entered those gas chambers upright, with the Lord's Prayer or the Shema Yisrael on his lips." A must read.

5. Hsi's book, written while he was dying of Takayasu's aortitis, is profoundly moving and important. It gives caregivers and patients an insight into the country of the ill and teaches, even seasoned health care providers, many lessons we were never taught.

6. F.W. Peabody's essay is the most important article on patient care ever written. It is short. All care providers should read it every few years. It used to be on the web - but not any longer - I will try to place it my website.

7. This gem was made into the movie - "The Doctor" - and predictably, the book is much, much better. In it, an elderly rheumatologist chronicles the lessons he learned when he developed laryngeal carcinoma. He is a gentle man with profound insights and the book will enrich students and physicians alike.

8. Middlemarch is arguably the finest novel in the English language. It takes a bit of discipline but is brilliant, captivating, memorable. Tertius Lydgate is one of fictions most memorable physicians and one of the first to be portrayed in literature.

9. A memorable and important read. In clear, compelling prose, the author describes what it felt like to undergo a bone marrow transplant, to be hospitalized in isolation for eight weeks, to deliberately destroy his immune system with radiation and chemotherapy, to have bone marrow transplanted from a healthy donor, and finally to endure the agonizingly slow, painful and depressing period of recovery.

10. I “discovered” P.S. Julia quite by accident. It moved me greatly and I think it is a must read for patients and all care givers. Every day, I see patients who would benefit from Sitting at Julia Fox Garrison’s feet.

Lagniappe: Mark Edmundson tells us that: "The purpose of a liberal arts education is to give people an enhanced opportunity to decide how they should live their lives" and that literature is "*the* major cultural source of vital options." This book opens one’s eyes and makes one feel as Keats did, “like a watcher of the sky/When a new planet swims into is ken.”

* From Emily Dickinson

The soul selects her own society,
Then shuts the door;
On her divine majority
Obtrude no more.

Unmoved, she notes the chariot's pausing
At her low gate;
Unmoved, an emperor is kneeling
Upon her mat.

I've known her from an ample nation
Choose one;
Then close the valves of her attention
Like stone.