Book Review

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For each date in the calendar, the author offers a nugget from history or some happening, often poignant, sometimes quaint; gathers us to a beautiful place in a poem about the world we share; then returns us to earth with a short reflection for the day.

The founder of Canongate Press, Stephanie Wolfe Murray, in her Foreword: thought this book ‘a wonderful journey, reading about people and incidents both famous and infamous...you might well think it to be superficial, but the author almost always leads us to explore further’.

Addicts have not completely lost structure in their daily lives, in that their days are constructed around obtaining the next supply. Aiming for abstinence, they often flounder, especially if they have no employment to resume or living companion to give the day a form. This daily reader could be a little extra frame for their day.

Burn’s reflection on the day’s poem leads to his tenet for the day. His 366 maxims (366 because he includes 29 February) weave into an immediately useful relapse-prevention framework.

We can learn from history. Others have gone before us; but poets turn a lesson into music, bring out the universality, and help it stay in our memory.

I did not find the word ‘god’ on any page; yet if you ever wondered what comprised spiritual recovery from alcoholism, you might get the gist by reading this compendium of fact and modest contemplation. Truly, a source for healing and restitution.

The author also offers a daily website: http://www.poetrychangeslives.com

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