

My companion was reading his paper still, and I opened my book.

I read two paragraphs and sat there thinking of Santayana's writing. I thought of its hard glory, its clear outline, its texture of rich and fine mentality. How well he knows too that beautiful and magnificent theory carries with it the obligation to say it completely, to give it the style, the imagery, the movement, the form—in a word—that the soul of it essentially is. Santayana knows where philosophy ends and poetry or religion or mysticism begins; he knows their relationship to life as he knows the relationship of philosophy to life. His thought may not be something to found a new gospel on perhaps—I am glad that it is not, there is so much gospel fruit in the land. But when more succulent and evangelical creeds fail one, Santayana may be good to rest upon. With him the mind gets its due noblesse oblige. With him feeling is distinguished and existence aristocratic.

And then I began to try to express for myself just what is that strange effect one gets from Santayana at his best of a kind of tragic peace, of a rich definiteness of all desire and knowledge and beauty, a kind of brilliance that is made up of our limitations, a deep sense of some fatal splendor of light that is more beautiful but less happy than dreams.

From these meditations my neighbor distracted me by turning over his paper and getting the last page of it

smoothed out to suit himself. He appeared to have mastered the entire contents so far. My thoughts left Santayana and began to wander over that last newspaper page. A column about China, battles and massacres; a woman had jumped out of a window; a rum ship had been seized by federal agents—I knew the brand of it, narrative, events, with no comment, no point, no application, no hint of the surrounding complexities of life. Incidents and adolescence. Pure action. Juvenility of fact.

My eye fell then on a heading half toward the bottom; there naturally enough, I reasoned, the news conveyed being less murderous than the Chinese affair:

SHIMMIE DANCER ASKS DAMAGES FOR PERMANENT WIGGLE

Almost anyone, you might think, would smile or be amazed at that except the young man—and perhaps the millions like him. But all he did was to give a little jerk of his elbow when he saw this piece of news and bring the lines closer to his eyes. Then he began to read with profound absorption. It was evidently nothing strange for him, it had punch, it went, it belonged, it was life.

I looked back at the Santayana and put it carefully in my pocket. Some day perhaps, I thought, when I could no longer stand the company I was with, he would be my mad money and take me home again.

STARK YOUNG.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Cooperation in America

SIR: Harold Laski states, toward the end of his review of the Webb's great book, *The Consumers' Cooperative Movement*, that Lord Bryce remarked to him: "The time had come for America to organize a cooperative movement on a grand scale . . . now that the first ease of acquisitiveness has been exhausted."

Neither Mr. Laski nor Lord Bryce, however, seemed to know that America already *has* a cooperative movement, not on the large and prosperous scale that exists in Europe, but nevertheless, too significant to be overlooked. In the United States today cooperation has all of the advantages as well as the weaknesses of youth. Its healthy vigor, undaunted enthusiasm and self-confidence are often thwarted by its needless mistakes and its aversion to learning from the experience of others. Still it is growing lustily.

Moreover, it possesses an advantage which the older European cooperators sadly lacked. It has a body of thoughtful men and women closely working with it who are formulating and emphasizing the philosophy and ideals of the cooperative movement. The theory and the practices of cooperation are developing side by side in this country. In Europe the driving force toward cooperation has invariably been the urgent needs of the masses for food, clothing and shelter. The immediate economic advantages gained have been the bonds that have held the majority of its membership fast. The philosophy of the movement has come along later, if at all.

Visiting cooperatives in nine European countries last summer, I found that there were thousands and thousands of cooperative consumers and producers to one cooperative thinker. In Vienna, Karl Renner, Austria's former Prime Minister, now President of the Austrian Cooperative Union, told me: "When the administration of the daily needs of the 250,000 families of the Vienna Cooperative Society press upon us, few of these people have time to dwell upon theories of economic reorganization." The demands on American cooperators, however, are not as yet so great that they have not "time to think." The workers in the United States generally support The Cooperative League (the cooperative educational federation), in believing that the whole profit system is fundamentally wrong. They go into the cooperative movement, not only to gain its material benefits, but

also to demonstrate that they can thereby work out a sound method of supplanting the present dominant economic system.

If Mr. Laski were disposed to seek the information, he might easily discover cooperative activity in the United States that would hearten him. At the present time we can count about 3,000 consumers' cooperative societies in this country, with a total membership approaching well over half a million heads of families, and with an annual turnover of \$200,000,000. Such an accomplishment has required real effort as well as loyalty to the cooperative idea. It has not been easy to compete successfully with the high developed chain-store system so well entrenched here. Yet many of the better societies annually do a business of more than \$100,000. The majority of the consumers' societies conduct stores. They begin with groceries, and then expand to supply other needs. Restaurants, laundries, coal, ice and milk distributive associations, and housing societies are flourishing but are still in the early stages of development.

The 1920 returns of the Bureau of Census show 329,449 farms securing their farm supplies, such as fertilizer, feed, twine, coal and household necessities through their cooperative distributive societies. Cooperative purchases by farmers amounted to \$84,615,669.

The farmers' cooperative marketing associations far surpass the distributive societies in membership and in annual business. In the State of Kansas alone, the yearly turnover of cooperative farmers' associations amounts to \$200,000,000. Roughly speaking, there are over 12,000 farmers' societies in the United States carrying on cooperative enterprises amounting to an annual business of a billion and a half dollars.

Cooperative banks are equally encouraging. The Bank of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers developed assets totalling \$14,000,000 in less than two years. The resources of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and of the Association of Machinists, as well as of many other groups, are being mobilized in cooperative banking.

All across the country the industrial and agricultural forces are awakening to the fact that the democratic organization and control of credit and of their consuming and producing power must go hand in hand. They are using the means and the methods of cooperation toward this end. Lord Bryce was right: "The time has come."

AGNES D. WARBASSE.

Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

The Crow's Nest

HE always was stopping, in a quiet considering attitude, with his broad head on one side, to take a fresh look at the world. He wasn't a poet and he didn't go around talking about it, but he had an affection for the place—he regarded it all as his home. At sea he would stand fascinated for hours at a time at the rail, getting the feel of the great mass beneath him—the strong, living ocean. Or he would sit on a beach, half the day, watching the waves, one by one, while his horse pawed the sand restlessly and stared at the waters. It was the same when he went inland: he understood plains. I joined him once in Nebraska, way off on a great bare flat prairie, where you couldn't see anything but more of the same in every direction. He had left his Eastern home and gone to work there, to live under those skies.

He liked hills too, and rivers, and winds. Each had something to tell him. He even liked deserts; he disappeared into one once for three years. In short, he seemed glad he was born on this particular earth. He traveled about and looked it all over; not the cities so much, which he seemed to regard as warts on its surface, but the old earth itself. He had an idea something could be made of it, if men ever learned.

His attitude toward men was not that of a fellow-being exactly. He didn't look down on them, like a teacher, or ruler, or general; he pondered their history the way anthropologists do. He thought of men as a species, trying to tenant the planet the best way they could:—a gifted, bewildered, pathetic, mysterious race. He talked of mankind as them, not as us. He hoped for great things of them; or rather it wasn't exactly hope; it wasn't an emotion at all; it was more a serene expectation that they would some day succeed. In mastering their fears, for example, and understanding their natures; and in being more generous in their quarrels, less cheap in their follies. Meantime he smiled at most of their barbarities—including his own.

This wasn't aloofness precisely. It was the consciousness, rather, of one's dual rôle. Part of the time he was one of this race himself, part of the time he looked on. He seemed to think everyone did this. Well of course, many do. But the way that he did it was a little different from the usual observer's. Politicians are, observers, for instance, but they are concerned with the present; they deal with men as they are; but he didn't. His eye was on our future.

Imagine a lot of babies who know perfectly well they will some day grow up, but who meantime are helpless to do anything much about it but wait—that was how he regarded himself and other intelligent persons.

The simile is imperfect. Babies do grow up, but we don't; we must leave our hopes of better things to future generations and centuries. But he never felt cheated about this: a little wistful, that's all.

Meanwhile any signs that we babies were maturing encouraged him. He liked to see a man behave sensibly, even if it were only about some insignificant decision or habit. And when a whole nation did some sensible act, it gave him a deep satisfaction. He wasn't the kind of man to be thrilled, but he felt a thrill at such moments.

He liked to discuss the quirks and stupidities he found in his own nature, and plan how to civilize a few of his obstinate instincts. He laughed when he couldn't—at the

ways his sloth tricked him for instance, or at his ego's unphilosophic indignation over undue demands on it.

He was skilful with tools of every kind, from a farmer's to a jeweler's. A tool in his hands became part of him, an extension of his quick brain. It was fun to watch him when he was working over one of his inventions—the materials seemed to come alive and jump around under his eye.

He rarely censured anyone but himself; never any body of people. His whole attention went into trying to understand their misdoings. Modern lynchings depressed him more than anything else; but, instead of denouncing them, he tried (vainly) to get at the why of them, like a scientist studying some cruel and loathsome disease. The only kind of men he ever really lost his temper about, were cynical leaders who didn't believe in men's future, and who cajoled and then bled their followers; or, in business, exploited them.

In his personal relations with people he was always doing kind things, but was always surprised if anyone inferred from this that he was their friend. He simply had an instinct of helping to straighten things out. The big tangles were not his affair—he had learned to take that for granted—but any small difficulty, any hardship or friction or quarrel that he could smooth he always would try to, no matter how much it cost.

He never found anyone stuck in a bog, without trying to give them a lift. Sometimes this meant money, sometimes merely undoing kinks. He would try to explain parent and child to each other, or an employer and worker, or persons of different temperaments, religions, or political faiths. He would go on difficult errands, write letters, plan, argue, make gifts, all from this impersonal desire to see things working better.

There was one thing about this—he was generous only in his own way. He hated to be asked any favor. But he liked to do it spontaneously. Hardly anyone understood he was impersonal—they thought he did it for them. They would then become emotionally grateful. This made him uneasy: he tried to be considerate, he didn't repulse them; but he didn't respond; he simply withdrew as fast as he decently could, and let their feelings die out.

Even people who were cool and impersonal by nature themselves, would become moved by what they supposed must be his feelings for them, and would speak of his warm-hearted loyalty and his wonderful friendship. Then he would look rather guilty, for he didn't have those feelings at all. He usually liked them, and remembered them, or most of them anyhow; yet in one way he didn't care if he never saw them again.

He had friends whom he loved, but they were few, and he never told them he loved them. It was as unnatural to him to speak of such feelings, while friends were alive, as it would have been to dig up the interlacing roots of twin plants. He seemed to think his friends ought to understand without any talk about it—understand by his actions, I suppose. But how could they? They saw him ready to do things for everybody as well as his friends.

According to some of his enemies, he had no heart at all, only an inexplicable interest in human affairs, like a visitor from some other planet, curious and kind, but remote. Well, perhaps he was remote in a sense. He belonged in the future. His soul naturally seemed like a stranger's to us of the present.

CLARENCE DAY, JR.