

which men may be misled.

And whom might he mislead with *The Double-Cross System*? No one, he assures us. After all, anything that might mislead or be damaging was omitted from his report as he wrote it—in the most interesting case because “the argument is too long to be developed here,” interesting because nowhere does he provide an analysis of why a double-agent system should be run by Intelligence rather than by Operations. He does suggest that his report may be useful in what it will show for the Next Time, but later he makes it clear that the Next Time will be different because electronic means of surveillance have rendered the wireless telegraphy of Germany’s agents—many of whom were planted on English soil for no more sinister purpose than to send back to Germany dependable weather reports—into the dark ages. The techniques described by Sir John could now only be used in an underdeveloped country, and only in that sense can this report be called, as Sir John suggests he hopes it may be, a “useful manual.”

A useful manual, probably not; a fascinating glimpse into the spookish world of the 1940’s, definitely; a report and historical document, certainly; above all, a new exploration of how men may be deceived, a Brendel-gone-to-the-wars, a Report on more than its title suggests. Perhaps Sir John Masterman was right in his choice of title for his most nearly autobiographical work, *Fate Cannot Harm Me*.

STUDENT RATES

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My Land Is Dying by Harry M. Caudill

(E. P. Dutton; 144 pp.; \$6.50)

Jonathan Eisen

It’s not just Harry Caudill’s country that is dying. It’s not as though no one knows that America is being chewed up by the strip mining companies. Certainly the studies have been made, the facts are in and the cry has been raised. In some cases action has been taken, but in most cases the remedies have not cured. And because they have fallen short, more and more people have become alienated from the political process—which leaves the corporations still greater leeway to wreak their havoc upon the land.

There seems to be a process at work whereby issues are raised over and over again until people become bored or alienated primarily because there are absurdly simple solutions to problems that stem from a system that permits venality to operate on a large institutional scale. What kind of a civilization is it that permits . . . ? and you can fill in the blank with the horror of your choice. People often find themselves getting together in various forms of outrage which may be exhilarating but are nonetheless debasing to the human spirit and which leave the reformer with a sense of weariness, isolated moments of transitory victory and a considerable number of blind spots. And he forces himself to turn away from contemplating the basic corruption of a civilization that decreasingly attends to anything but the barest minimum requirements of human happiness and spends the greater portion of its collective energy in various forms of rape and pillage.

The coal companies of which Harry Caudill writes are but the most flagrant manifestation of a greed that sees terricide being carried on in part through the auspices of the Tennessee Valley Authority, whose mania for the cheapest coal possible has returned millions of dollars to

the Federal treasury while actively helping to transform hundreds of square miles of beautiful land into desert. Which, to my mind, indicates how absurd it was to think that agencies like the TVA would protect the “public interest” when that is defined in a capitalist framework. Legislatures are all purchasable; every man has his price and the coal and other mining companies have plenty of money to meet any man’s price—more money than “the people” have influence, even in mass aggregate.

Interesting also are the ways in which American capitalism continues to treat its own land as existing simply for immediate exploitation. Only when it is profitable to enjoy conservation practices does it do so, and sometimes not even then if the ideology of corporate hegemony is threatened. Vast sums are spent convincing Washington that strip-mining is a problem for the states, and vice versa. To say nothing of the huge public relations campaigns designed to deceive the people into believing that strip mined land can be reclaimed. Which it can be in some instances—when it is mostly flat and care is taken to save the three layers separately, as is done in England and some European countries; no such care is taken in this country, even in Iowa which has some of the finest and deepest topsoil in the world and, unfortunately, a huge reserve of coal which is now beginning to be exploited.

Caudill’s book is factual, and angry. It details the history of mining in Kentucky and the bordering coal states, a history that at present has seen the increase of the mining death rate. The mineowners are almost unparalleled in their willingness to proceed completely unmindful of any value other than immediate prof-

its and collusion with a union that, once headed by John L. Lewis, has been taken over by thieves and assassins.

The book is a mine of relevant information about the industry, but its real value is to those interested in forcing a halt to these practices. For decades people have either organized against the encroachment of the corporations and fought them through the courts and the political process or with guns and dynamite without making very much headway. The prevailing ideology is still predominantly in the hands of the corporate élites, despite a massive effort of revolutionaries and reformers to promote the cause of justice, reason and democracy. But division has a way of overcoming community, while the war between the Luddites and purveyors of "industrial revolution" is still with us. Only now not only people are fighting for their lives: the land is fighting for its life as well. The handwriting is on the wall and the mountain people are responding with sabotage even though the companies own the police, the courts, the legislature and the President. They have learned the lesson of good laws with no one willing to enforce them, showpieces for an administration that wants to cover all its bases while it steals your home. But it is the companies that have declared the war.

Caudill still believes that the mining companies should be regulated properly. But for that to happen, as he himself demonstrates elsewhere in his book, would require a change of consciousness profound and lasting and a determination on the part of those in power to effect systemic change, neither of which is at this time in the offing.

My Land Is Dying is not a hopeful book. It does not detail ways in which the interest of the public and the earth can come to prevail, though it certainly points to last-resort approaches to the solution before the entire country is despoiled. The U.S. has created another Carthage out of Vietnam. Now the corporations are doing the same thing to America.

Poems of George Santayana selected by Robert Hutchinson

(Dover Publications; 182 pp.; \$2.00 [paper])

Andrew Bongiorno

"My friends advised me to stop writing such old-fashioned stuff," George Santayana confessed to Bruno Lind the year before his death; and he immediately added, "Oh, yes, the verse was a mistake." Earlier in the conversation he had regretted ever having written *A Hermit of Carmel* and having included too many of his old pieces in the "collected poems," referring, no doubt, to the 1923 volume of *Poems*, a selection (except for "Minuet") from *Sonnets and Other Verses* (1896) and *A Hermit of Carmel and Other Poems* (1901). Yet in the same conversation he informed Lind that Daniel Cory had in his possession a collection of "last poems" with instructions to see them published under the title of *Posthumous Poems*. (They appeared in 1953 as *The Poet's Testament: Poems and Two Plays*. The earliest piece in this collection may be "Good Friday Hymn" dated 1888, and the latest the undated title poem, surely one of Santayana's finest. The two plays are *The Marriage of Venus*, written in 1896 and rewritten in 1946, and *Philosophers at Court*, written in the years 1897-1901.)

Despite misgivings, then, Santayana would not let his published poetry remain out of print nor the unpublished remain unknown, and in fact he continued to versify and to translate well into his later years. The last of his poetic efforts, left unfinished and never published, was a translation of Lorenzo de' Medici's *Ambra*, "a sort of pastoral elegy" which he undertook to transform into "a real tragedy." The chances are, then, that he would have been pleased rather than displeased by this Dover paperback, a reprint of the complete sonnet sequence which first made his name as poet and containing, in addition to a selection from all the poetry hitherto published in

book form, "a group of early poems and dramatic interludes first published in the *Harvard Monthly* between 1895-1903 but never included in later volumes of Santayana's verses."

The volume may find some readers among the students of *Realms of Being* and many among those who know Santayana best from *The Last Puritan* and the autobiographies. But its most enthusiastic readers will come from among those who have long known and prized the *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion*, the *Soliloquies in England*, and other writings that are philosophical without being technical philosophy. For these are philosophical poems (even the "Athletic Ode" is penetrated by philosophy), and they make their strongest appeal to such as would share the poet's feeling for and understanding of the world. But for their philosophical substance they might have lost their readers long before this.

Santayana's friends have proved to be sound critics; technically his poems are indeed old-fashioned—perhaps *dated* would be the better word. Some were written during the poet's undergraduate years, many before the year of Tennyson's death, and almost all of them before the start of the modern movement (to which, in any case, he would have paid no heed. "For heaven's sake, dear Cory," he cried in 1937, "do stop Ezra Pound from sending me his book. Tell him that I have no sense for true poetry, admire (and wretchedly imitate) only the putrid Petrarch and the miserable Milton..."). The sonnet, the quatrain, the couplet, and other traditional forms serve most of his metrical needs; the diction and the idiom are indeed Petrarchan and are never, as Yeats would have them, "as natural as