



Little Essays: Drawn From the Writings of George Santayana (Classic Reprint)

Logan Pearsall Smith

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Excerpt from Little Essays: Drawn From the Writings of George Santayana

The origin and purpose of this book can be briefly stated. Ever since I became acquainted with Mr. Santayana's writings, I have been in the habit of taking up now and then one or another of his volumes, finding in them, among many things that, being no philosopher, I did not understand, much writing like that of the older essayists on large human subjects, which seemed to me more interesting and in many ways more important than anything I found in the works of other contemporary writers. I soon fell into the way of copying out the passages that I liked, and thus I gradually formed a collection of little essays on subjects of general interest - art and literature and religion, and the history of the human mind as it has manifested itself at various times and in the works of different men of genius. As most of Mr. Santayana's books have not been reprinted in England, and are hardly known to those on this side of the Atlantic who might be interested in them, it occurred to me that it might be worth while to print these little essays. I asked Mr. Santayana if he would permit me to do this, sending him my collection for his consideration and possible approval. I sent it to him with some misgiving, for I felt that it was rather an impertinent thing to cut up the life-work of a distinguished philosopher into a disconnected compilation of "elegant extracts."

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