

The Story Of American Literature



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THE STORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE BY LUDWIG LEWISOHN THE MODERN LIBRARY
NEW YORK LUDWIG LEWISOHN 1883- A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR OF The Story of
American Literature No history of American criticism can ignore the contributions of
Ludwig Lewisohn. Over a period embracing the World War and its long after math, his
writings have given a new impetus and scope to the evaluation of American literature.
Always enlightened and just, realistic and sensi tive, Mr. Lewisohns books are all
devoted to a search of essences in personality and ideas. He is equally the creator and
critic. His work is both adventurous and solidly rooted in tradition, wide in its range
and sure in its discrimination. Born in Berlin in 1883, Ludwig Lewisohn was brought to
America when he was seven years old. He received a wholly American education, at
first at the College of Charleston, South Carolina, and later at Colum bia, University. As
a teacher, at the University of Wisconsin and Ohio State University, 1910-1918, he
exercised a strong literary influence over his students. From the academic world he
moved into the more exciting field of journalism and then became drama critic on the
staff of The Nation, 1918-1924. For a number of years he lived in Europe and repeatedly
visited Palestine and North Africa. He is the author of twenty-five volumes, embracing
criticism, biography and fiction. His critical works include The Modern Drama, The

Creative Life, The Drama and the Stage, Cities and Men, The Story of American Literature, of which the last named, here amplified and reprinted, is undoubtedly the culmination. Among his novels, those that have become integral parts of modern literature, not only at home but in translation in countries as diverse as Sweden and France, are The Case of Mr. Crump, The Island Within, Stephen Escott, The Last Days of Shylock, The Golden Vase, Trumpet of Jubilee. The same may be said of his two autobiographical volumes, Up Stream and Mid-Channel. For many years now he has given a great part of his time and strength to the service of the Zionist cause. He resides in New Rochelle, New York, with his wife, Thelma Spear Lewisohn, the concert singer, and their son. Every history and every history of literature becomes a jrag went immediately upon completion Action and creation continue on their march the book n static. Hence for this Modern Library Giant edition of The Story of American Literature have written a postscript, bringing, as best I could, the matter up to date. Tht book is now, at least, less fragmentary than it was before. It may indeed, whatever its shortcomings, be said to complete the record of an epoch fast drawing to its close. LL CONTENTS Preface Page vii INTRODUCTION page ix BOOK ONE Beginnings page 1 BOOK TWO The Polite Writers Page 53 BOOK THREE The Transcendentalist Revolt page 105 BOOK FOUR The Troubled Romancers page 153 BOOK FIVE Demos Speaks page 194 BOOK SIX The Rise of the Novel page 233 BOOK SEVEN The Soil and the Transition page 273 BOOK EIGHT Sowers and Pathfinders page 310 BOOK NINE The Development of Forms page 367 BOOK TEN The Great Critical Debate page 415 BOOK ELEVEN The Naturalists page 462 BOOK TWELVE Beyond Naturalism page 523 Postscript 1939 page 591 The authors grateful acknowledgment is due to all writers and publishers whose copyrighted works are referred to in the course of these pages. In particular for the quoted pas sages from the works published by the following firms HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY Carl Sandburg HARPER BROTHERS Edna St. Vincent Millay William Dean Howells Mark Twain HENRY HOLT COMPANY, INC. Carl Sandburg Robert Frost HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY Amy Lowell William Vaughn Moody ALFRED A. KNOFF Stephen Crane Elinor Wylie LITTLE, BROWN COMPANY Emily Dickinson HORACE LIVERIGHT, INC. Hilda Doolittle Ezra Pound T. S...

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