

CONTEMPORARY
American Authors

A Critical Survey and 219 Bio-Bibliographies

FRED B. MILLETT

AMS PRESS
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FOREWORD

This book has a dual purpose: to give a fairly full and systematic account of American literature since 1900, and to furnish biographical and bibliographical information concerning 219 contemporary American authors. Both parts of the book should prove useful to a variety of persons: to the reader and student desirous of orienting himself in contemporary literature; to librarians, collectors, and booksellers who desire convenient checklists of a large number of contemporary authors; to reviewers and reference workers in this difficult field, and to teachers whose pleasant opportunity it is to discuss contemporary literature.

The Critical Survey which precedes the Bio-bibliographies treats the major literary types and the major and some of the minor authors who have expressed themselves in these types. It differs from other attempts to survey this rich and bewildering field in the fullness with which it considers, not merely such conspicuous forms as the novel, drama, and poetry, but such neglected forms as biography, criticism, and literary journalism generally. The Critical Survey incorporates about half the material contained in my Introduction to the 1929 edition of Manly and Rickert's *Contemporary American Literature*.

The Survey offers one man's view of the complex literary phenomena of two generations. In the nature of the case, the critical evaluations must be taken as tentative, since the historian of contemporary literature works without the guidance of authority and the winnowing power of taste and time. But the personal judgments set down here, however faulty they may prove to be, are supported in many instances by contemporary critical opinion.

The basic problems in writing the history of contemporary literature involve both facts and values. The basic facts concerning contemporary literature are not only innumerable but relatively inaccessible. It is one of the major functions of this book to assemble in convenient form a very large number of facts about the authors treated. Once the facts have been assembled, the problem of systematizing and organizing them is overpowering. The quantitative difficulty is, however, far inferior to the qualitative one, since it is possible for historians to ignore facts concerning authors or movements of which they are uninformed or in which they are uninterested. But the qualitative problem is raised by every author on whom judgment is passed. In the case of authors belonging to earlier literary periods, the phenomena have been classified and organized, numberless earlier historians have furnished conventional critical judgments, and fundamental revaluations take place so slowly that it is not difficult

to assimilate them. But the historian of contemporary literature must depend on his own taste and that of other contemporary readers and critics to assist him in selecting and classifying authors, and in estimating the significance of the men and movements with which he deals. He writes, moreover, with the certainty that in a few years, some of his critical judgments may seem unintelligent, irrational, or absurd. But a contemporary historical-critical account of our literature ought to be of some use, not only to current, but to future readers. What would we not give for a contemporary survey of Elizabethan literature from the pen of even a minor critic? Since the writing of contemporary literary history is one of the most important services a critic can render not only his own age, but posterity, it is not incumbent on anyone to judge too harshly the forays into contemporary literary history which a few bold spirits have made at the expense sometimes of their academic and critical reputations.

In the Bio-bibliographies, authors' names are given in the fullest form possible. The portion of the name appearing outside the parentheses is that which appears on the author's title-page or, in some instances, the name the author has used on his more recent publications.

The biographical sketches which precede the Bibliographies vary in length with the significance of the writer and the amount of available material. In every case, I have appealed to the living authors treated for material to supplement that contained in the obvious biographical reference works, and, in almost two-thirds of the cases, I have received generous amounts of information and have incorporated it in the sketches. In such instances, the printing, as a whole or in part, of the letters received constitutes the first edition of these letters.

The Bibliographies in this book have been constructed with the aid of the most reliable tools: the *United States Catalog* and its supplements, the *English Catalogue*, *Whitaker's Cumulative Book List*, the *Vertical File Service Catalog*, the catalogue of the Library of Congress, the Union catalogue at the Library of Congress, the catalogue of the New York Public Library, the catalogue of the Harvard College Library, the catalogue of the Yale University Library, special collections of first editions in other academic and public libraries, and innumerable booksellers' catalogues. As a result, a large majority of writers are represented by fuller bibliographies than are in existence elsewhere. When bibliographies were already in existence, I have made critical use of them, but such bibliographies have never been accepted as authoritative.

In the Bibliographies, I have attempted to give the full title and date of appearance of the first edition of all books, pamphlets, broadsides, and leaflets published in the form of separates up to January 1, 1939. Works edited, compiled, translated, or illustrated by the author, as well as poems set to music, are included. An author's contribution to a symposium or to a collection is not included, unless it received separate publication later.

Certain features of the Bibliographical style require comment. I have attempted to give the full title of the first edition of all works. An author's name appears in the Bibliographies in title-page form, only when such a form is required for clarification. Otherwise, the name is omitted, as are academic titles following his name, books by him, the expressions "illustrated" and "with illustrations," and other purely descriptive statements if they do not form part of the title proper. Material not part of a title but added to assist clarity is enclosed in brackets []; brackets in the original are shown as < >. The capitalization is the system common to current American library practice. The punctuation between title and subtitle has been normalized by the use of commas. The date of publication given is the date of the first appearance of the book, whether the book was published in America or elsewhere. If the book appeared under a different title abroad after its appearance in the United States, the American title is given first, and the foreign title and date are added in parentheses. When the foreign title differs from the American title but agrees with it in date, the foreign title is cited in the parentheses following the American title. When a bracketed date follows a date without brackets, the date without brackets is incorrect although it may appear in first editions of the book, and the bracketed date is correct. When the title or classification suggests the format or size of the publication, no further description is given. Full length plays and books in wrappers are not distinguished from those in boards. When, however, the format is not boards, it is generally described, as an aid in locating fugitive publications.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the Bibliographies:

Am. ed.—American edition; comp.—compiled; c.—copyright; ed.—editor, edited, edition; enl.—enlarged; illus.—illustrated, illustrations; intro.—introduction; n.d.—no date of publication; no(s).—number(s); pref.—preface; pseud.—pseudonym; pt.—part; pub.—published; repr.—reprinted; rev.—revised; supp.—supplement; trans.—translator, translation; vol(s).—volume(s).

For the assistance of readers and students, I have attempted to give a classification of titles. Frequently, classification has been extremely difficult and that finally decided upon must be regarded as merely tentative. As rarely as possible, however, have I taken refuge in anomalous classifications. As a further aid to selection, I have placed an asterisk (*) before titles that seem most worthy of the reader's immediate attention.

The Studies listed furnish a valuable index to the amount of critical attention an author has received, not only in the United States and the British Isles, but also on the Continent. In many instances, the Studies constitute a larger bibliography of critical material than is available elsewhere. A dagger (†) has been placed before each of the critical Studies which contain useful bibliographical information. Very few Studies have been listed that run to less than two full pages.

The lists of Articles which appear after many of the bibliographies are frankly selective. It has seemed better to give detailed information about a small number of important articles rather than to give a great many blind references to articles and reviews. To take the place of such lists, I have in every instance directed the reader to the specific volumes in the *Book Review Digest* where such references may be found in large numbers. The reader or student who wishes to trace in detail the critical reception accorded a contemporary author is referred to the following standard indexes of articles and reviews: the *Book Review Digest*, *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, *International Index to Periodicals*, *Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature*, published by the Modern Humanities Research Association, the annual bibliographies in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, and the frequent excellent bibliographies published in the scholarly journal, *American Literature*.

Three types of references will assist a reader in finding relevant material in both parts of the book. (1) The symbol (*q.v.*) following an author's name in the Critical Survey indicates that the author is to be found in the proper alphabetical position among the Bio-bibliographies. (2) At the end of most of the biographical sketches, reference is made to the pages in the Critical Survey where the author is discussed. (3) In the Index of Authors, which appears on pages 711-15, page-references to both the Survey and the Bio-bibliographies follow the names of all the authors treated in this volume.

The plan for the book out of which this book has grown sprang from the fertile mind of Professor Edith Rickert. In teaching contemporary literature at the University of Chicago, Professor Rickert became aware of the very serious need of a book containing essential biographical and bibliographical information concerning the authors whom she was discussing. Such information was first gathered in the form of work-sheets prepared by undergraduate and graduate students. Out of these work-sheets evolved the first slim edition of *Contemporary American Literature*, which she published in 1922 in collaboration with Professor John Matthews Manly. This edition contained no critical survey, but it gave very brief biographies and selected bibliographies of 246 contemporary authors. The second edition of *Contemporary American Literature* which I published in 1929 was on a somewhat more comprehensive scale. It ran to 378 pages, contained a critical Introduction of thirty thousand words, and gave somewhat fuller biographical and bibliographical information. One hundred sixty-six authors were retained from the first edition, eighty authors were dropped, and fifty-three new authors were added.

In the preparation of *Contemporary American Authors*, the biographical and bibliographical work has been done completely afresh. The Critical Survey runs to over a hundred thousand words. The biographies have

quadrupled in length, and the bibliographies have become checklists of all the first editions of the authors' books and pamphlets. One hundred seven authors have been dropped from the second edition; six authors who were dropped in the second edition have been restored; thirty authors who appeared for the first time in the second edition have been retained, and 101 new authors have been added.

In a work of this type, the problem of the selection of authors is very acute. The procedure of selection used here was the most satisfactory I could devise. The list of authors treated in my edition of Manly and Rickert's *Contemporary American Literature* (1929) was checked against a large number of guides: lists of prize-winners; lists of best-sellers; lists of authors reviewed in *Time*, the *New Yorker*, and *Poetry*; and lists of authors treated in other manuals of contemporary literature. The resulting list was then submitted to about thirty teachers and critics of contemporary literature, and in those cases where four of these critics agreed in recommending an addition to the list, such an addition was made. The resulting list will satisfy no one, since no two authorities would agree on exactly which two hundred American authors deserve treatment in a book of this type. But it is the best list that I could devise, and I offer it for what it is worth. There are not more than three or four names here whose presence causes me any great critical embarrassment.

The preparation of this book would have been impossible without the unflinching kindness with which officials of the following libraries have put their resources at my disposal: the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, the Harvard College Library, the Boston Public Library, the Newberry Library, the University of Chicago Libraries, and the Olin Library, Wesleyan University. I should also like to express my appreciation to the reference librarians of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, the Jones Library at Amherst, and the Chapin Library at Williams, who have assisted me in the locating of first editions in their special collections.

The Harvard College Library is rich in manuscript material as well as in first editions. It has a sizable collection of letters in manuscript or typescript of the following authors: Akins, Allen, Austin, William Rose Benét, Bynner, Canby, Cullen, Heyward, Hillyer, James Weldon Johnson, Kreymborg, Lindsay, MacKaye, Masters, Morley, Robinson, Sandburg, Sarett, Sinclair, Taggard, Teasdale, Carl Van Doren, and Wheelock. It has a large number of letters along with some manuscript poetry, or else a very large collection of manuscript poetry, by "H. D.," Fletcher, Merrill Moore, Santayana, and Untermeyer. Further, it has first editions of the works of Norman Foerster, Frost, Hillyer, Lindsay, Lowell, Marquis, Merrill Moore, Robinson, Sandburg, Santayana, and Stevens, and most of those of John Dewey and Paul Engle.

Equally rich in manuscript material is the Harriet Monroe Poetry

Room of the University of Chicago Libraries. It houses a large collection of letters in manuscript or typescript, and, occasionally, some manuscript poetry, by these authors: Alien, William Rose Benét, "H. D.," Fletcher, Frost, Gregory, Heyward, Kreymborg, Masters, Mencken, Neihardt, Ridge, Riding, Sarett, Schneider, Scott, Stevens, Taggard, Teasdale, Untermeyer, Wheelock, Williams, and Winters. The Poetry Room has a very large collection of first editions of these authors: Bynner, Lindsay, Lowell, and Pound.

The Collection of American Literature at the Yale University Library contains first editions by Allen, Stephen Vincent Benét, Cabell, Churchill, Coffin, "H. D.," Garland, Glasgow, Millay, Morley, Repplier, Robinson, Teasdale, and Wister. It is also fortunate in owning manuscripts by Day, Lewis (nine novels and plays), MacLeish (poetry), Stein (several books), Tarkington (one novel), Wharton (all the manuscripts and papers), and Wilder (the novels).

The Lockwood Memorial Library of the University of Buffalo has manuscript poems contributed by these authors: Bishop, Bogan, Boyle, Burt, Bynner, Cowley, Cullen, Engle, Fletcher, Frost, Hillyer, Hughes, Josephine W. Johnson, Masters, Millay, Marianne Moore, Morley, Nathan, Prokosch, Santayana, Stevens, Taggard, Mark Van Doren, Winifred Welles, Wheelock, and William Carlos Williams.

Partial lists of first editions may be consulted at the Abernethy Library of American Literature, Middlebury, New York University, Princeton, Wellesley, Wesleyan, and the Chapin Library, Williams College. Special collections may be found at the Jones Library, Amherst (Frost and Taggard); Boston University (Leonard); Princeton (Frost and MacLeish); and Wellesley (Frost, Lindsay, Lowell, Masters, Millay, Robinson, Teasdale, and Wylie).

To list the authors who have replied generously to my request for autobiographical information would be to list two-thirds of the authors treated in this book. In most instances, a quotation in the biographies represents a passage from a personal letter of the author's. American publishers, likewise, have been extremely courteous in furnishing me material concerning the authors on their lists.

Such a project as this is bound to be co-operative, and I should have been utterly unable to carry it through if I had not had the constant assistance of professional bibliographers and of undergraduate and graduate students in various academic institutions. Of the latter, I mention the following gratefully: R. R. Hawkins of the Reference Department of the New York Public Library, Sophie Udin (Columbia University School of Library Service), Ernest H. Halstedt (Wesleyan), Arthur R. Youtz (Harvard), Leon Cooper (Illinois), J. Robert Collins (Catholic University), and William J. Shorrock, Thomas Howells, and Robert W. Wadsworth (Chicago). For three years, Mr. Wadsworth has devoted a great deal of time

to the collection and organization of the biographical material. I am also deeply indebted to Katharine Krusé for her intensive reading of the Critical Survey. Her highly developed sense of logic and coherence and her acute ear for verbal infelicities have saved me from many a blunder.

I should like to express my appreciation to Wesleyan University for its grant to help defray the very heavy expense of completing this work.

But the book would never have been finished if I had not had the constant advice and encouragement of John Fall of the Reference Department of the New York Public Library. Not only is he primarily responsible for the Bibliographies, but he has given me constant professional counsel and unending encouragement. At every stage of the preparation and publication of the book, his bibliographical skill and expert knowledge have been indispensable; the generosity of his contributions—in thought, energy, and administrative direction—can never be repaid.

Although I cannot undertake to discuss at length my reasons for excluding any reader's favorite authors, I shall appreciate it very much if readers will send me notes of omissions or corrections in title, dates, or classification.

FRED B. MILLETT.

Honors College,
Wesleyan University.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	vii
A CRITICAL SURVEY	
THE BACKGROUND	3
THE NOVEL	23
THE SHORT STORY	85
DRAMA AND THEATER	98
POETRY	127
LITERARY JOURNALISM	153
BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY	164
CRITICISM	181
CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN AUTHORS	
219 BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHIES	207
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHIES	
CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND LITERARY HISTORY	669
RECOMMENDED BOOKS BY CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN AUTHORS	675
CLASSIFIED INDEXES	
INDEXES OF AUTHORS BY TYPES	
<i>Autobiographers</i>	683
<i>Biographers</i>	683
<i>Critics</i>	684
<i>Dramatists</i>	684
<i>Essayists</i>	685
<i>Historians</i>	685
<i>Humorists</i>	685
<i>Novelists</i>	686
<i>Philosophers</i>	687
<i>Poets</i>	687
<i>Short-Story Writers</i>	688
<i>Travelers</i>	689
<i>Writers of Children's Books</i>	689

CONTENTS

INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS OF BOOKS CONTAINING STUDIES	691
INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS OF PERIODICALS CONTAINING ARTICLES	705
INDEX OF AUTHORS	711

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN AUTHORS
A CRITICAL SURVEY

THE BACKGROUND

The relationship between American life and American literature is by no means easy to define, but some comprehension of the first of these entities is necessary if one is to evaluate American literature in any except the purest of aesthetic terms. During a period in our literary history when social forces have been extremely influential, it is especially desirable to make some description and analysis of the environment in which American authors have lived and worked with varying degrees of comfort or discomfort, adaptation or maladjustment. Certain elements in American life have been constant: the physical immensity of our country, the tendency of our culture to develop along regional lines, the comparative brevity of our history, and the consciousness—with or without a feeling of inferiority or superiority—of our dependence on older Continental cultures. Other elements have been influential almost from the beginning: the hybrid nature of our racial stock and the consequent assimilation or failure of assimilation of more or less alien strains, and the antithesis between the rural and the urban ways of life, an antithesis steadily being made less conspicuous by such powerful standardizing agencies as transcontinental highways, the automobile, radio, and moving picture, nationally syndicated newspaper features, and national advertising on streets and billboards, in railroad trains and magazines. Intellectually and politically, American life illustrates the interplay on and under its surface of a number of antithetical forces—ruralism vs. urbanism, conservatism vs. liberalism vs. radicalism, regionalism vs. nationalism vs. internationalism. Although America is still fundamentally democratic and nationalistic, the operations of these antithetical forces must be taken into account in any consideration of American political, intellectual, and aesthetic life, and of American literature since 1900.

BEFORE THE WAR

The history of America between the end of the Spanish-American War (1898) and the beginning of the World War (1914) can be described in terms of three important movements. The first of these movements was the tendency on the part of big business to form larger and larger combines, to extend its control, not merely horizontally but vertically, and to maintain its favored economic position by a more or less corrupt and invisible control of political power. The second but opposed tendency was the attempt to control and regulate the mercantile and political activities of big business. The third movement was the process of re-

storing to the common man a measure of the control over the political machinery of democracy denied him by the alliance between big business and politics.

The movement toward the formation of great trusts was illustrated dramatically at the turn of the century by a rapid multiplication of huge industrial combines.¹ The growth of these organizations was viewed with apprehension by socially-minded thinkers and politicians, and the "trust-busting" campaign launched by President Theodore Roosevelt was indicative of the alarm aroused in the public mind.

But equally significant for the period was the attack on various grounds on that system of *laissez faire* which had made possible the amassing of tremendous fortunes, the control of politics by big business, and the formation of large numbers of great trusts. The ideas that furnished the ammunition for this reform movement had diverse origins. Certain of them were first broached by the Populists, who reached the peak of their power in the early nineties. Those ideas that pertained particularly to the restoration of political power to the common man, originated in reform movements in Oregon and Wisconsin. Still other sources of liberal ideas were socialism and the social service movement associated for many years with the names of Jane Addams in Chicago and Lillian Wald in New York. But whatever the sources of the ideas, the carrying out of them depended on their adoption by the leaders of liberal political groups, first in the Republican party under Theodore Roosevelt and later in the Democratic party under Woodrow Wilson. As one or the other major party assimilated liberal ideas, the earlier leaders and movements were superseded and their functions ceased. The Populist party died because the Democratic party had taken over its program under the influence of William Jennings Bryan. The insurgent movement led by Senator Robert M. LaFollette received a body-blow when Theodore Roosevelt appropriated its ideas, founded the Progressive or Bull Moose party, and was, in turn, defeated by the leader of the reform wing of the Democratic party, Woodrow Wilson.

One of the most striking evidences of the growing hostility to big business and to its control over politics was the rise of the muckraker, the journalist bent on exposing the shortcomings and the vices of the trust and the corruption of politics by business interests. Toward the end of 1902, two series of articles which began to appear in *McClure's Magazine* announced a new variety of political journalism. The first series was Lincoln Steffens' exposures of corruption in municipal politics,

¹ Among these were the Amalgamated Copper Company (1899), The American Smelting and Refining Company (1899), The Standard Oil Company (1899), The Consolidated Tobacco Company (1901), The United States Steel Corporation (1901), and The International Mercantile Company (1902). The total capitalization of these companies was said to reach over two and a half billion dollars. Harold U. Faulkner, *The Quest for Social Justice, 1898-1914*, Macmillan, 1931, pp. 28-29.

a series afterwards collected in *The Shame of the Cities* (1904). The second series was Ida M. Tarbell's carefully documented and relentless history of the Standard Oil Company. *McClure's* circulation increased at so spectacular a rate that soon such magazines as *Everybody's*, *Munsey's*, and the *Cosmopolitan* joined the campaign, and in 1904, Steffens, Miss Tarbell, and Ray Stannard Baker took over the *American Magazine*, and made it a medium of the new political and economic criticism.

Another field ready for the muckraker was the insanitary and unscrupulous methods of manufacturing and distributing foods and useless or dangerous drugs. Patent medicine was attacked in a series of articles in the *Ladies Home Journal* in 1904-05, and in the latter year *Collier's* featured a similar series. In 1906, Upton Sinclair's (*q.v.*) novel, *The Jungle*, horrified the nation by its exposé of insanitary conditions in the packing industry. These revelations led to a modest amount of legislation for pure foods and drugs under the animated leadership of Dr. Harvey Wiley. But the interests involved continued to make it impossible to pass laws adequately protecting the public from impure foods and valueless patent medicines.

The church responded promptly to this stirring of the national social conscience, reconsidered the whole problem of its social responsibilities, and gradually developed liberal inter-church organizations which were to play a very considerable part in reform programs during the war and the post-war period.

Throughout the pre-war period there is abundant evidence of a new social spirit, motivating, in Professor Faulkner's phrase, the quest for social justice. On the economic side, the movement for the state provision of adequate workingmen's compensation laws, which had been frustrated in Massachusetts in 1909, and again in New York by conservative courts in 1910, gained ground. Eleven states passed employers' liability acts in 1911, and by 1921 all but six of the states and the District of Columbia had adopted similar laws. The movement to abolish child labor developed at an accelerated pace. Between 1905 and 1907, two-thirds of the states passed such legislation or strengthened the laws they had already passed. In 1912, the Children's Bureau was established as a part of the Department of Commerce. Attempts to wipe out by federal legislation the hideous blot child labor has made on our economic history have, however, continued to be blocked by a reactionary judiciary or by the pressures of conservative economic or religious groups.

The movement to restore some measure of true democracy to the operation of America's political machinery took the form of the widespread adoption by the states of such measures as the initiative, referendum and recall, the system of direct primaries, woman suffrage, and the popular election of United States Senators. Attempts to introduce a juster system of taxation also made headway. A federal income tax law, passed

in 1894, had been rejected as unconstitutional, but by 1909 a constitutional amendment made legal the federal taxation of income, and by 1913 this amendment had received the consent of the requisite number of states. Within five years, this tax was beginning to yield the major portion of the federal government's revenue.

While these important legal changes were taking place, striking social processes were also in progress. The immigration of the foreign-born proceeded with great rapidity. In each of six of the years between 1905 and 1914, over a million immigrants came to America. By 1910, there were more than thirteen million foreign-born in the United States and an equal number of white children born of foreign parents. The high-school population doubled between 1898 and 1914. The number of telephones rose from over a half million in 1900 to three millions and a half in 1910 and nearly six millions in 1915. But more striking in the effects on national habits and psychology was the advent of the automobile and the moving picture. The four automobiles registered in 1895 had grown to eight thousand in 1900, and two and a half millions in 1915. The spread of the moving picture was almost equally sensational. Although programs confined to motion pictures were not shown until the middle of the first decade of the century, there were five thousand theaters devoted to the exhibition of pictures by 1907, and by 1915 the number had grown to eighteen or nineteen thousand.¹

The most conspicuous figure in American life in the first decade of the twentieth century was Theodore Roosevelt. His services as Police Commissioner of New York in 1895 attracted considerable attention, but his brief and well-publicized experience as a Rough Rider in the Spanish-American War increased his personal popularity tremendously, led to the governorship of New York in 1898, and made it impossible for the Republican party to refuse to nominate him for the vice-presidency, despite President William McKinley's personal antipathy to him, when the latter sought the presidency for the second time in 1900. The innocuous desuetude of the vice-presidency promised the vital Roosevelt a kind of living death, but chance in the form of an assassin's bullet brought him to the presidency for a period of six and a half years beginning on September 14, 1901.

Theodore Roosevelt was the apotheosis of the American ideal of the period. His vitality and aggressiveness, his capacity for racy phrasing and pungent commentary on his opponents, his flair for publicizing his pet notions and nostrums, the ease with which he lent himself to lively and diverting caricature, his high spirits and good humor, his democratic

¹ Since 1915, the number of motion-picture theaters has remained relatively stable. In 1929, the figure was said to be 20,250. (*Motion Pictures*. Reprinted from *A Century of Industrial Progress*, Doubleday, Doran, 1929.) In 1938, the figure was said to be 17,500. (*New York Times*, Oct. 9, 1938, p. X5.)