

ica. This is due not to any conscious hostility to the spirit or letter, but to the indifference and apathy with which the masses regard the increasing assaults upon its basic principles. Unless the American people awake to the necessity of defending their most priceless heritage there is manifest danger that within the lives of those now living the form will survive the substance of the faith. The thoughtful few who from time to time sound their warning are 'as one crying in the wilderness'. Their voices are lost in the roar of a mechanical civilization." In the closing chapters of the book Mr. Beck leaves the Constitution entirely and launches into a veritable jeremiad on the revolt of a shallow, soulless, pleasure mad, machine ridden, and money rotten society against constructive leadership and wholesome authority. Undoubtedly, the sermon is needed; but, unless the indictment is overdrawn, even the return to a reverence for the Constitution can hardly save us.

The Constitution of the United States, Yesterday, Today — and Tomorrow? By James M. Beck. George H. Doran Company.

## PEPYS FROM THE PLYMOUTH ROCK

By Raymond M. Weaver

CAMALIEL BRADFORD has for years rated himself a collector of souls. And, as though he has suspected something either peculiar or original in this preoccupation, he has invented for it an ugly technical name; he would be known as a "psychographer". It is an ill favored name, and Mr. Bradford's own. To be the first "psychographer" — that, in the belief of some, is to be a new thing in literature. The

New York "Times", jealous for Mr. Bradford's originality, once denied Lytton Strachey the laurels for being "the first author to show what can be done by applying psychological methods and insight to the writing of biography", allowing Mr. Bradford a proud ten years' priority. H. L. Mencken is more summary: "This Bradford is the man who invented the formula of Lytton Strachey's 'Queen Victoria'." All of which, in the light of Mr. Strachey's cool and declared assurance that he has invented nothing, but rather (unlike some of his most confident critics) has read Dr. Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" with respectful attention, makes this battle of the ancients and moderns gaily diverting. To the moderns belong both the ignorance and the ardor.

Neither Mr. Bradford, nor his master Mr. Strachey, has, of course, invented anything in the art of biography: Plutarch, Agnes Repplier, Marcel Schwob, each is an elder "psychographer". But in any art the palm must go, not to who does it first, but to who does it best. And now that Mr. Bradford, after living intimately with Pepys' Diary for thirty years, has been latterly moved to use it "for psychographic purposes", he has earned for himself nothing unique in glory.

"The Soul of Samuel Pepys" is an easy, entertaining book, and shallow by the very nature of its purposes. "The very amplitude of the Great Diary makes it difficult for hurried readers to approach. It has the abundance, the crowded, formless richness, the embarrassing complication of an actual lived life. And it seemed as if it might be possible to introduce a certain amount of order and clarity into the shapeless mass, so as to make it more available for those who have not the patience to deal with its tangled entirety." Mr.

Bradford's book is designed not only for "the hurried reader", however; it is also consciously tempered to the taste and intelligence of "the divine average". Mr. Bradford says of Pepys: "As he was average in station, so he may be said on the whole to have been average in character; below the average in some points, perhaps decidedly above it in others, but on the whole, distinctly representative." It follows, of course, that Mr. Bradford makes no keen or radical exploration in what are, and aplenty, the paradoxes and mysteries of this extraordinary "average man". Rather, by making what is in effect an anthology from the Diary, he exposes the reader to Pepys' self betrayal, that the reader may solace his dumb isolation and secret intimacies by the pleasures of recognition — recognition untroubled by understanding. For Mr. Bradford has contributed little or nothing by way of insight. He comments upon Pepys' "indisposition to indulge in deliberate theoretical self-analysis" — a squeamishness before his own dissected soul in which Pepys was surely "average". Mr. Bradford respects Pepys' terror of indecent exposure of the hidden springs of his behavior — a delicacy on the part of this "psychographer" that would have shocked Jane Austen. At best, Mr. Bradford has done a good job of journalism upon Pepys, "a man amazingly like you and me". The book is amiably pitched in the tame and safe realm of commonplace and unctious. It is a book for "the hasty reader" — a book for "you and me".

After Mr. Bradford in the first chapter has, in their externals, placed "The Man and the Diary", he offers an anthology in six chapters from Pepys' account of himself: Pepys and (1) His Office; (2) His Money; (3) Humanity; (4) His Intellect; (5) His Wife; (6)

God. The conclusion is characteristic: "It is because the vast brooding consciousness of God alone gives such a life all its significance — and all its emptiness, and because I believe the busy, active, external, material life of America today, so much the life personified by the great Diarist, needs God more than anything else to save it."

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The Soul of Samuel Pepys. By Gamaliel Bradford. Houghton Mifflin Co.

## WHEN EDITORS WRITE VERSE

By David Morton

TWO editors of other people's poetry here lay aside the paste and shears and speak out in their own voices, as poets — Harriet Monroe, the redoubtable editor of "Poetry", in Chicago, and John Farrar, editor of THE BOOKMAN and of "The Bookman Anthology of Verse". Yet another, Franklyn Pierre Davis, clings to the less precarious rôle of editor and presents the fifth in his series of anthologies of newspaper verse.

Miss Monroe, in a prefatory note, offers her book more or less in the nature of a contemporary historical exhibit, and thus encourages the reviewer in opening the subject of poetic possibilities in the immediate and contemporary. Such discussion is the more strongly suggested because of Miss Monroe's famous attachment to the idea that life here and now is the proper business of poetry. While the inclusion in the book of the ecstatic "Columbian Ode" of thirty years ago serves to measure the temperamental distance from our own skeptical and disillusioned days, the element of contrast is more pointedly revealed in the effective title poem in two parts — "1823" and