

this book, to see that not so long ago there were men in public life who had ideals and were willing to fight for them even when they knew it meant defeat. They should be proud of Beveridge and his friends; they should demand more Beveridges to meet the present emergency.

JOHN E. LOCKWOOD

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS *by Bennett Champ Clark* (LITTLE, BROWN. \$3.75)

BOTH the strength and the weakness of this book lie in the author's refusal to adhere to either of the two biographical schools now most in vogue—the psychological and the sociological. If any career ever spoke for itself, that of John Quincy Adams did. In the *Education of Henry Adams* and the *Degradation of the Democratic Dogma*, Henry and Brooks Adams have provided some personal observations that supplement their grandfather's exhaustive diary; they have also thrown light on the political and economic struggle between their family and State Street. Possibly, therefore, the sole function of J. Q. A.'s biographer should be to arrange, condense, and refurbish the facts that the family itself has recorded and interpreted. And since no form of literature is more painfully familiar than the psychological or the sociological biography that fails to come off, the malicious critic might give thanks that Mr. Clark had the good sense to refrain from both the one and the other.

But the really petulant critic will not let it go at that: he will add two positive objections. First, the best excuse for a new biography of John Quincy Adams is that it should offer new material or new interpretation of old material. Any good encyclopaedia provides all the facts that the superficial student requires and the old gentle-

man's diary offers a standing challenge to the energy of the more curious. Mr. Clark has added nothing new. In the second place, no biographer ever writes without *some* point of view, and Mr. Clark's is that of a Missouri Democrat and this side idolater of Jefferson and Jackson. It is therefore hardly an exhilarating experience to receive from the hands of the western pony express so pedestrian an account of the greatest Adams of them all, and to discover that the democratic dogma of one hundred years ago has been transformed by this pilgrimage of one thousand miles into the single not very meaningful word—and that coined by Teddy Roosevelt—"Americanism".

All of which does not mean that Mr. Clark's book is either valueless or unreadable. Any effort to revive interest in a President unequalled in all our history for sheer ability cannot be a total loss, and when that effort reveals such industry and common sense as Mr. Clark displays, there is no question of anything approaching dullness. But the character and career of John Quincy Adams arouse such admiration that one automatically demands from his biographer standards of literary excellence, scholarship, and understanding commensurate to the task.

QUINCY HOWE

BLOODY YEARS *by F. Yeats-Brown* (Viking. \$2.75)

ALL of us once possessed the wisdom of children, many of us have since acquired the wisdom of the world, a very few have completed the circle and rediscovered the simple childhood values. In Mr. Yeats-Brown these three forms of wisdom exist side by side, but in curious forms. Part of him still lurks in darkest Harrow, part of him turned soldier

of fortune, and part of him has dabbled with the rudiments of Yoga. One speaks of wisdom in conjunction with *Bloody Years* only because the adventures that it records of the author's three-year imprisonment in Turkey during the War gave him a philosophy of life that consistently overshadows the physical activities to which he devotes almost all his space. The cloudy moralizing of his few reflective passages pervades the whole book.

He begins with a brief history of Turkey between 1908 and 1915, written in a style that suggests the collaboration of E. Phillips Oppenheim and Emil Ludwig. The author makes his first personal appearance in Mesopotamia, where he is captured by the Turks when his airplane lands disastrously on enemy territory. He is taken to Mosul and then to central Anatolia where he undergoes great hardships, both mental and physical, having witnessed *en route* other sufferings far worse than his own. Being an officer with an apparently limitless bank account, he cashes checks right and left and finally makes his way to Constantinople where his money and ingenuity enable him to escape but not to evade capture some weeks later. He is placed in a crowded dungeon out of which he bribes his way into solitary confinement and again escapes, this time on the eve of the Armistice.

Mr. Yeats-Brown's most engaging quality is his perfect sincerity; one admires it even more than his courage and resourcefulness. But his style is melodramatic and his mental processes would do credit to a Spanish anarchist. Like his previous *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, this book contains a self portrait of precisely the type of British officer that excited such admiration and bewilderment among the French during the War, the type that has become familiar in the writings of Paul Morand, Jean Giraudoux, and André

Maurois. But if *Bloody Years* is slightly inferior to its predecessor as autobiography, it is more valuable in another respect. West European rivalries are commonly regarded as the chief cause of the last war and a likely cause of the next one. Mr. Yeats-Brown, trained in India and jailed in Turkey, redresses the balance. He first shows that Levantine policies led directly to the assassination at Serajevo, and then, by glorifying the military virtues not only in the West but in the East, he helps to keep alive the grand old spirit of 1914.

QUINCY HOWE

A HALF-DAY'S RIDE by Padraic Colum
(MACMILLAN. \$2.00)

ANYONE who reads these essays of Padraic Colum's can claim with good reason that he has heard Padraic Colum talk. His spoken sentences have the same long, rhythmic swing, his spoken thought the same clarity and originality; and in his conversation there is the same erudition so easy to take for granted when it occurs casually and so surprising in its range and depth when one considers it in retrospect.

The essays cover a wide sweep of the earth's surface and several strata of its inhabitants. You walk with Padraic Colum on the volcanic hills of Hawaii and stroll with him in the well-tamed parks of France. You meet poets, pedlars, "Miss Europe", a couple of midgets, the lady caretaker of an aquarium, and an anonymous young person with whom he climbs to the top of the Eiffel Tower. In another writer the jump might seem great from a thirty-sou circus to the plays of Plautus, but Padraic Colum wants to tell you how to get the full flavour of Plautus's "whipped-up speeches". The comedies, he says, were "produced in the market-