

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.

PEPYS FROM THE PLYMOUTH ROCK

By Raymond M. Weaver

GAMALIEL 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

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 unction. 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."

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