

Belles lettres and bell ringers

Democracy and the Supreme Court, by Robert K. Carr, University of Oklahoma Press, 1936. \$1.50.

IN the system of "checks and balances" which the American people devised for their government, the United States Supreme Court appears to be doing more checking than balancing, this thought-provoking book implies.

Dr. Robert K. Carr, assistant professor of government in the University of Oklahoma, has done a splendid job of explaining the Supreme Court problem in terms that the layman can understand. Avoiding complications and technicalities of constitutional law, he tells clearly the issue that America faces: how much power should the Supreme Court wield over acts of Congress?

The book discusses recent important decisions of the court that had far-reaching effects on the nation's economic conditions.

"It would seem but common sense to admit that a modern government must have strong powers; that unfortunately, such powers may be abused; but that when such powers are vested in an agency directly responsible to the people, the tendency toward the abuse of power will be kept at a minimum," the book states.

"Certainly it would seem wiser to run the risk that Congress might sabotage the Constitution, than to permit the final word concerning that Constitution to be spoken by a council of elder statesmen responsible to the people only in the remotest manner."

Dr. Carr frankly recognizes certain practical difficulties that stand in the way of any change in the relationship between Congress and the Supreme Court, but his book leaves the reader feeling that there is hope for development of a somewhat more flexible setup, more responsive to the rapidly changing needs of the nation.—R. C.

Bayard Taylor, Laureate of the Gilded Age, by Richmond Croom Beatty. University of Oklahoma Press, 1936. \$3.00.

Because Bayard Taylor, renowned author and globe-trotter, lived so near the ultimate stuff of life, this account of him and the forces which made him unique and versatile is eminently readable.

Before his death in 1878 at the age of 52 he was famed as a lyceum lecturer, and was a close friend of many noted folk of his day including Lanier, Lincoln, Mark

Twain, Browning, Carlyle, Longfellow and Dickens. He was also known for his prolific output as a poet, reporter, novelist and author of travel volumes.

Mr. Beatty reveals the place of Taylor's thought in relation to the fascinating background of Nineteenth Century America, and achieves a critical estimate of Taylor as a literary artist. This is a vivid and trenchant biography of a colorful American, revealing, through the latest information on his life and works, a new and inspiring portrait.

Mr. Beatty is a native of Shawnee, but has lived the greater part of his life in Alabama, where he is now a member of the English faculty of the university of that state. His previous biographical work includes the well known book, "William Byrd of Westover."—S.H.

Dr. A. B. Thomas, associate professor of history, is sorting material which he has been gathering for seven years for a book on Spanish exploration in northern Mexico and Texas An article on "A Table of Tentative Lower Paleozoic Correlations in the Basis of Graptolites" by Dr. Charles E. Decker, professor of paleontology, was published in the September issue of the *Bulletin of American Association of Petroleum Geology*

Stanley Vestal contributed a short story to *Boys Life* and another to *Ten Story Western* for October, writing about the early days in the west "Plato and the Gods," an article by Dr. Gustav E. Mueller, associate professor of philosophy, was included in the September issue of the *Philosophical Review* *American Philosophy*, a historical criticism by Dr. Mueller, was released recently by its publishers in Stuttgart, Germany

Collection is moved

The Frank Phillips collection of historical material about Oklahoma, the Southwest and the Indian tribes, has been moved from the basement of the Law building to more convenient and spacious quarters on the main floor of the University library.

Shelf space is available for books, there is more light, and graduate students and others wishing to do research work on the collection will find arrangements much more convenient.

A second gift of \$10,000 made recently by Mr. Phillips will make it possible to double the collection within the next five years, in the opinion of Dr. E. E. Dale and Dr. M. L. Wardell, who are in charge of the collection.

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