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Book Review. The History and Development of the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States by Nelson B. Lasson

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the difficulties involved in their tasks. His work is not, however, an apologia for news-gatherers or for nervous publishers in the United States whose viewpoints are affected by incipient threats "to the freedom of the press" or to profits. All in all, the volume represents a serious attempt, documented and clearly written, to submit evidence preliminary to drawing decisions or arriving at solutions.

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BRIEFER NOTICES

AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

In a year commemorating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the framing of the Constitution of the United States, a recent number of the Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science (Series LV, No. 2, 1937) is of special interest. This issue of the Studies is a treatise on *The History and Development of the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States* (pp. 150) by Nelson B. Lasson, of the University of Maryland. The text is divided into four chapters, the first of which shows that "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, homes, papers and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures . . ." was not an invention of English jurisprudence, in spite of the well-known maxim that "an Englishman's house is his castle." The fundamental idea embodied in the amendment is, on the contrary, found in Biblical literature and in the Roman law. In the second chapter, the use of and the opposition to writs of assistance in the colonies is described. The third chapter is devoted to the demand for and the adoption of a bill of rights to the Constitution, with special emphasis upon the formulation and approval of the Fourth Amendment. An interesting point in this chapter is the evidence that the House of Representatives once rejected the Amendment as it now reads. It was subsequently restored in its present form, however, by the committee on arrangement and finally adopted by both houses. The last chapter of the book is concerned with the interpretation of the Fourth Amendment by the Supreme Court of the United States. In the earlier years of our national history, few cases involving the amendment reached the Court. But with the extension of the criminal jurisdiction of the United States, especially in cases of sale of narcotics and intoxicating liquors, such cases multiplied. The treatise is well annotated and fully documented and includes a table of cases cited.—F. E. HORACK.

Even casual observers have long been aware of the need for reforming the system of financial control in our federal government. In *The Ad-*