'ESSENCE OF BIOGRAPHY'

Nevins Cites Character Revelation

By MICHAEL DAVIS
Thresher Reporter

Dr. Allen Nevins, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, outlined the pleasures and pains of the art of biography Thursday night at Fondren Lecture Lounge.

The essence of biography, said Dr. Nevins, is the revelation and understanding of a man's character. There is no other problem of historical interpretation more fraught with difficulties.

Dr. Nevins pointed out some of the uses and misuses of letters, diaries, opinions of contemporaries, and other biographical material. He illustrated his ideas with anecdotes drawn from biographers from Plutarch to Schlesinger and from his own volumes on Grover Cleveland, Hamilton Fish, Henry Ford, and John D. Rockefeller.

Sometimes journalist, critic, editor, and teacher, Dr. Nevins has turned from biography to writing American history on a monumental scale. His 'Ordeal of the Union,' now in the sixth of a proposed ten volumes, attempts a historical synthesis of the cataclysmic years from the Compromise of 1850 to the end of Reconstruction.

Thursday afternoon Dr. Nevins was honored by Dr. Frank Vandiver, Harris Masterson, Jr. Professor of History, at Brown House at the end of a speaking schedule that took him to four Texas colleges in as many days.