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# —OTHER SELECTED BOOKS—

## The Seeing Eye

**A River Full of Stars.** By Elizabeth Hamilton (André Deutsch 12s. 6d.)

**MISS HAMILTON** is Irish. By profession she is a teacher of classics; by nature she is a poet, uncommonly gifted with the uncanniest powers of vision and observation, together with a touch of fire that recalls Emily Brontë. It was the combination of these qualities, a microscopic brilliance of observation, a classical seeking after accuracy, a sudden impatient flare of Celtic fire, that gave her first book, "The Year Returns," such rare distinction. It brings the same quality to her second. She gives us fresh and lovely pictures of her Irish family home, her elegant Irish mother and her gentle, military father: she describes the disastrous attempt of her parents to emigrate to Florida; she shows us a star-dazed adolescence in Bayswater and at school and college, her entry into the Catholic Church, and once again the flowers and birds at Longleat.

H. E. BATES.

## Laughter

**Patrick Campbell's Omnibus.** (Hulton Press. 12s. 6d.)

**HERE**, gathered from various periodicals, are fifty-nine of Mr. Campbell's stories, essays and exuberances. The subjects have no formal beginning and no end: they seem to be sudden bursts of laughter, ribald, gentle or ironic, at life as it revolves round Mr. Campbell and his family. He is an Irishman with an irresponsible sense of fun, which spills all over the contemporary scene, investing it with a slightly raffish

lunacy. He presents a jostling crowd of characters—landladies, tennis girls, opera fans, tax collectors, children and dogs. All of them are formidable, and made more so by drawings in Ronald Searle's strong, spidery line.

E. ANTHONY THOMPSON.

## Time and Piety

**The English Mediaeval Parish Church.** By G. H. Cook. (Phoenix House. 36s.)

**BEGUN** any time between the eighth and twelfth centuries, enlarged and refined in the thirteenth or fourteenth, almost entirely rebuilt by mercantile munificence in the fifteenth, half-stripped for pawn in the sixteenth, defaced for purity in the seventeenth; suffering from a soothing neglect in the eighteenth and from a searing love in the nineteenth, a fair specimen of an English parish church is an enchanting monument to the interchange of time. Built with the "laugh-full money of Ingland," as was Walberswick's tower by old women's pennies and tradesmen's pounds; centre of robust parochial life, scene of trading, drinking and dancing, the church, whose present primeness puts one upon tip-toe, may well be aware of more than its most worldly visitor.

Mr. G. H. Cook's book is a first-rate dictionary with which to unravel the puzzle of a parish church. Those who understand the pleasures of parciose and piscina it will inform and absorb. But for the benighted this is not perhaps the book to make them walk a hundred yards for the key of the church.

EDWIN SMITH.

## Maker of the Proms

**The Last Years of Henry J. Wood.** By Jessie Wood. (Gollancz. 12s. 6d.)

**I**N the packed pages of "My Life in Music," Sir Henry Wood told his own story up to 1938, his seventieth year. This sequel, a welcome book in the Jubilee year of the Proms, is less concentrated, for in his six remaining years of life the pace was slower. Jessie Wood's sympathetic account reminds us that even a musical career as successful as Wood's may have disappointments and frustrations. Sir Henry served music honestly, and his name will live, but on August 10, 1944, the fiftieth anniversary of his first Prom, he was a dying man. Ten days later he died, without even seeing the streets of his beloved London lit up again.

FELIX APRAHAMIAN.

## Road to the Isles

**The Highland Jaunt.** By Moray McLaren. (Jarrolds. 16s.)

**THIS** sentimental journey in the footsteps of Dr. Johnson and Boswell on their Highland and Hebridean tour of 1773 indulges two strong affections—for the Western Highlands and for the ingenuous, unpredictable Bozzy. Mr. McLaren fills in vividly the background of that "romantick pilgrimage" from the stink and squalor of old Edinburgh to the sea-girt peaks of Skye. Boswell's enthusiasms and absurdities are Mr. McLaren's chief interest, but he is splendidly successful also in presenting the eighteenth-century Highland scene.

HAROLD STEWART.