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**OUR BOOKSHELF**

SOME I KNEW WELL. By Clifford Bax. (*Phoenix House*; 15s.)

Mr. Clifford Bax always writes well about the people he has known, so it is fortunate for us that he has known so many, and in such diversity. *Some I Knew Well* is a series of short studies, sometimes taken up with literary criticism rather than personal revelation, but leaving, in almost every case, new and clear-cut impressions of their subjects: James Agate who "combined something of Samuel Johnson's big-stickery with something of Samuel Pepys's pettiness"; Stephen Phillips that almost-forgotten poet-dramatist who was due in any case for a come-back; Havelock Ellis in two rooms in Brixton, his mind and personality "like some magnificent cathedral"; Gordon Bottomley, "a notable figure, a big and handsome fellow bearded like Jove"; Aleister Crowley, of whom Mr. Bax says that we are mistaken if we think of him as a mountebank; Arnold Bennett, W. H. Davies, George Russell with clear memories of previous incarnations; C. B. Fry, "the heroic and almost legendary man"; E. V. Lucas, whose interests included "club-life, wine and friendship"; and a dozen other men. He remembers the author's cricket eleven of which Stacey Aumonier made a good short story and regrets that Galsworthy was prevented by an accident from playing for it. But the book is very much more than gossip and reminiscences, for Mr. Bax writes as shrewdly of the work of the men he describes as he does kindly of the men themselves.