

Mr Campbell is a professional humourist, and his collection of pieces from the *Irish Times* is a pleasant reflection of Dublin life (with occasional expeditions to Leopardstown or the Curragh) seen as it were from the bar of the Gresham Hotel. But his humour is never forced, and he mingles irony with wit, pity with satire, finding human nature infinitely funny and lovable at the same time. In Ronald Searle he has a fitting companion, whose angular illustrations match all his moods.

I.E.

SIR TOBIE MATHEW. By David Mathew.

EDWARD GARNETT. By H. E. Bates. ('Personal Portraits', Max Parrish; 6s. each.)

It was an excellent idea to invite distinguished writers to contribute to a series whose common denominator is simply 'the biography I would most like to write'. The latest two volumes, so different in subject and treatment, are brilliant examples of a literary form rare enough in English to be remarkable. For Mgr Mathew, his ancestor is a perfect subject for his special gift of evoking a society and the men that made it. Sir Tobie, son of the Archbishop of York, friend of Bacon, a figure at the Court of Charles I, convert and priest: he has grace and intelligence, and a suggestion of mystery that allows his biographer to speculate about the hidden springs of a character at once complex and compelling. In eighty pages we are given a portrait of astonishing detail and depth, and once more we are aware of Mgr Mathew's resource in illuminating a figure of history with affection and serenity of judgment.

Mr Bates writes of a friend to whom he owes much, and his portrait of a disinterested critic who used his skill to assist young writers is the work of gratitude and love. As one might expect of a novelist of Mr Bates's achievement, Garnett is described with accuracy and with a full regard for the oddities of manner and dress that marked him. 'He was that rare person whose whole life was in the work of others', and that life is generously recorded by one of his inheritors.

The publishers deserve a word of thanks for a delightfully produced series, abundantly illustrated and moderately priced.

I.E.