

A THRESHING DAY. By H. E. Bates. 9½ x 6.
32 pp. W. and G. Poyle. 7s. 6d. n.

This quite short story—scarcely five thousand words—is a delightful trifle; readers will stress the noun or adjective according to their mood and inclination. From first to last the author is in it entirely on his own ground. It is, as the title tells us, threshing day at the farm, and Esther, a girl of fifteen, the farmer's daughter, is helping at the threshing drum. Among the numerous other assistant neighbours comes one Pike, a handsome, swaggering young fellow, for whom all the world goes well, and who has the good will of men and women alike. They listen when he talks, admire when he acts; he takes what he wants, and is given everyone's approval for doing so. Esther cannot but feel the strange power of his personality, and, when the day wears at last to its end, she waits for him beside his horse in the wagon-shed. He kisses her and goes away, leaving her at once sublimely happy and broken-hearted. That is all, but it is done so adequately, in places so charmingly, that most will be ready to agree that it is enough.