

# "FLOWERS AND FACES"

(Golden Cockerel Press,

limited to 325 copies, two guineas) reveals its author, Mr.

H. E. Bates, novelist and short story writer, as a happy man. And so he ought to be, for he is a countryman living in the country, in a big old stone granary that he has himself converted into a cottage home; he is an amateur flower gardener, too (and they

are always keen) with an acre of Kentish loam, four foot deep, for his world; he is also, seemingly, poor—so that he has to raise from seed and do all the work himself; he has a wife and two daughters. In his overtime he writes books, not about gardens as a rule, though flowers and the weather will keep coming in. What is more, he has the gift of writing; or perhaps the seeing eye, the heart to enjoy, and the patience to keep on till he gets what he wants, for these are the gifts—writing is an extra. In this essay he sends memory for a short holiday, among flowers, going back to his Northamptonshire childhood, praising the town gardens, his grandmother's garden, and now and then breaking out into general admiration: "The English are often too much criticized for their indifference to art or wine or food or good cooking or for the lack of some virtue to which they are constitutionally foreign, but it seems to me that they are never praised enough for the greatest of all their virtues, their great love of flowers, for the indomitable passion and desire for colour and blossom which asserts itself wherever they are." Mr. Bates can put up with all manner of flowers—"I cannot recall a flower I dislike," he says—but he cannot abide "lavender-shirted dilettanti" who write flowery books about their gardens and houses. He should not get so cross. These may not—do not, as a matter of fact—write nearly as well as he does, but a kindly eye might have seen their love of gardens as at least palliating lavender-shirtedness. When a book is to be printed as finely and fondly as this, to last and give pleasure for more than a lifetime, it is a pity to date it by being mortal angry with a silly generation. What will Mr. Bates's daughters' daughters make of the lavender-shirted dilettanti, or of their grandad's fuss about them? But I must stop grumbling! Mr. Bates is as good a writer as the Golden Cockerel men are printers. A man born for prose, as other poets are born for verse; and he makes his paragraphs with comeliness, delicate and sturdily individual, like a Sweet William, or a nice border of pinks.



Mr. H. E. Bates.

FRANK KENDON.

were sl  
tion to  
of all  
was ap  
But  
wild fl  
and th  
too far  
The  
the T  
touch  
trans  
and m  
called  
7s. 6d  
He w  
durin  
a darl  
plined  
to a  
the p  
He  
from  
But l  
strug  
red t  
slow  
the d  
faith  
holdi  
teres  
a si  
whic  
man  
"  
by  
McC  
Bark  
Mrs  
bage  
Am  
with  
pict  
wicl  
of r  
But  
also  
ticu  
a to  
in  
exp  
W  
By  
"  
eve  
and  
dis  
on