

I hope I should have recognised the sterling merit of *The Two Sisters* (CAPE) without the more or less detailed examination of its beauties in a preface by Mr. EDWARD GARNETT, who tells us that the author, Mr. H. E. BATES, is but twenty years old. It is a strange story, set in a drab Midland environment, of a queer lower-middle-class family with a mad father, two devoted but contending sisters, a crude ne'er-do-well of a brother and a stalwart shy wharfinger who, loving *Jenny*, the less comely of the sisters with the more lovable character, is thought by *Tessie* to be in love with herself. The bitterness of this misunderstanding does

not break down the deep affection between the two girls, and the subsequent more dramatic tragedy—the drowning of *Michael*—brings them together again in a beautiful patient acceptance of their loss. If the situation is indeed imagined and not merely the imaginative rendering of a known story it is a notable creative achievement. It is an astonishingly complete and finely felt piece of work, whatever its origin, with an occasional touch of the macabre. Mr. BATES has a sense of style, a rare gift of selection of the salient points of character and of the details that build up a scene in the reader's mind. The character of *Jenny*, the sensitive



“THE TIDE BE GOING OUT FAST  
 “WELL, I DON'T CARE; I SHA  
 UNTIL NEXT YEAR. I'M GOING HO

girl full of the imaginative child's beautiful dreams and ardent affections, the development of her self-sacrificing tenderness for her younger impetuous sister, the lovely awakening to love and her joy in her man's quiet strength and fine moral and physical courage, are exquisitely set down. The slight story is admirably handled, and I commend it to the fastidious literary epicure, while assuring those who look for interest and excitement that they will not be disappointed. But it is not a book for the over-eager skipper.

for  
PH  
wri  
of l  
pec  
the  
rig  
RO  
pro  
sub  
po

in  
br  
of  
in  
G  
de  
bi  
w  
co  
w