International Textiles in 1944 shows) many excellent designs are produced by English artists; but only a few of these new designs ever reach the looms. Thus, though our craftsmanship is so excellent, our traditional designs are so good, and the patterns we make for the West and East African trades are so exciting, our general export range of furnishing fabrics, for example, has not the freshness of colour and pattern of much American and some pioneer Australian work. But though she has thus not been able to record a full use of all the talent which exists here, Mrs. Lovat Fraser's book should have a wide circulation abroad. The illustrations and explanations of our exotic African trade alone make the book worth reading, while the history cannot fail to interest the most general of readers in this most ancient craft, and in the people whose habits and inventions modified it. One of the most surprising of these individuals is the clergyman Cartwright who, in the summer of 1784, first mastered and then revolutionised out of his head the technical process of weaving, *a priori* ("before I had ever seen a loom at work"), but who (unfortunately for himself) imagined nothing of the human and political consequences of his extraordinary power of innovation.

AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS.

Fiction

Journeyman. By Erskine Caldwell. (The Falcon Press. 8s. 6d.)
Tender is the Night. By F. Scott Fitzgerald. (The Grey Walls Press. 8s. 6d.)
This Side of Paradise. By F. Scott Fitzgerald. (The Grey Walls Press. 8s. 6d.)
The Jacaranda Tree. By H. E. Bates. (Michael Joseph. 9s. 6d.)
Brave and Cruel. By Denton Welch. (Hamish Hamilton. 8s. 6d.)

MR. CALDWELL'S new novel about the degenerate poor whites of Georgia proves again that there is a limit to the number of times an author can repeat a success. *Tobacco Road* had the fascination of a new thing; by the time *God's Little Acre* appeared the carbon copies were smudging a little. *Journeyman*—so far are we from the original impetus—displays the sad effort at vitality and quick come-back of an old-time comic looking for a job. The story of Semon Dye, gun-toting evangelist, pimp, card-sharper and heavy drinker, is rather like a snappy comedy run at slow motion. The book is short, but action and humour are thinly spread. Dye takes the first three pages to get out of his automobile, and from then on the reader is likely to find himself skipping. We wait for the long-promised revivalist meeting, but when it comes it falls, in spite of all the author's efforts, as flat as the rest. People scream, undress, leap in the air, squirm on the floor, and we watch coldly, never for a moment transported by their religious hysteria as we were by that of the negroes in Joyce Carey's *Aissa Saved*. We are obviously expected to see Dye as a lovable crook. The other characters, whom he has robbed, cuckolded and bullied, are sad to see the end of him. Not so the reader. The only time Dye's gaunt frame moves without a creak is when, after the revivalist meeting, he realises he has forgotten to take the collection—but that's the least convincing touch of all.

We owe the republication of the novels of Mr. Scott Fitzgerald to the fact that another post-war generation in the States considers itself "lost." Apparently unaware of the correct procedure of a generation in that condition, American readers are reverting for information to the literature of the 'twenties. Mr. Scott Fitzgerald was not only the chronicler but the critic of his age, and, for this reason, his works have some substance although as literature they do not rate very high. *Tender is the Night*, judged by Thomas Wolfe to be the writer's best work, is haphazard in construction and over-crowded with characters and incidents not relative to the main theme. A young psychiatrist gives up a promising career to marry a beautiful and wealthy patient and follow her on her wanderings about the south of France. As the wife recovers, the husband deteriorates; when his wife tires of him and sends him back to his career, he is as "lost" as the rest of them. This thread of story, never clearly defined in the book, is swamped by the antics of characters that were, one feels sure, personalities of the period. Their separate eccentricities of behaviour probably made it easy for contemporaries to recognise "old so-and-so," but give them no individuality now that the originals are forgotten. The flavour of the 'twenties has grown insipid; the wit is not witty enough, the jokes not really funny, the escapades adolescent.

This Side of Paradise tells of the childhood and youth of a spoilt boy who cannot decide whether he is an egoist or a genius. Samples of his poetry liberally given throughout will settle any doubts the reader might have. "We are," says the blurb, "allowed to see his later exploits, his great successes and sensational failures, his morals, excesses . . . ." but to anyone who has lived through the last two decades the excesses of the 'twenties are likely to seem very simple-minded indeed. To be "lost," as to be so many things, one needs a substantial private income, so no one in England can afford to be "lost" this time. We are forced, whether we like it or not, to be a sort of Saved Generation. To judge from the lives lived in these novels, we are not missing very much.

Mr. Bates' new book *The Jacaranda Tree*, like his previous one *The Purple Plain*, comes, not out of the writer's daily life, but out of that war-time oasis of action, fear and heightened emotion that some writers struck like a new vein. In both a clearly defined bone of action gives the maximum scope for the writer's impressions of a new country. His vivid impressions of heat and colour never had time to grow dull; so eager is he to convey to us their brilliance that at times his use of colour adjectives almost caricatures itself. In *The Jacaranda Tree* a group of English people evacuate themselves from a small Burmese town in the face of the advancing Japanese troops. Paterson, their leader, manager of the local rice mill, is an unconventional man, resented by the English community because he has kept himself apart from it. Along the road the white refugees, all except Paterson, find their several fates until he, in the end, sick and conscious of having failed in his leadership, is left alone with the Burmese boy and girl who love him. The justice of Paterson's self-accusation grows upon us slowly. He has been efficient, uncompromising and courageous, but he has conceded nothing to his fellowmen. Those who died seem to have died from their own weakness; the truth is, they died from his hardness. His love is for the native people who do not attempt to meet him on his own ground. Paterson's flash of self-comprehension is not developed; the last pages are for the Burmese boy who, like the cabin-boy in *The Cruise of the Breadwinner*, has an instant of vision before he carries his master across the bridge into a new world. The novel, as a whole, does not impress as vividly as did *The Purple Plain*. The three men in the first novel who trekked back from the wrecked 'plane are likely to remain longer in the mind than the rather conventional group of English people who set out with Paterson, but the book is full of memorable incidents (that of the vultures clambering into the wrecked car is altogether too memorable); its pattern is firmly drawn, its purpose clear and compelling. Mr. Bates is among the most readable of present-day writers.

Mr. Denton Welch's short stories *Brave and Cruel* were published only a few days before the announcement of his death at the early age of thirty-one. One is saddened, therefore, to note in the development of his work from its early self-absorption to an understanding of and sympathy with odd and difficult characters like the hero of the title story—new powers and a promise that cannot now be fulfilled.

OLIVIA MANNING.

Shorter Notices

British Authors. A Twentieth-Century Gallery. By Richard Church. (Longmans. 8s. 6d.)

OF the fifty-two British authors whom Mr. Church explains in this book, the earliest is Thomas Hardy and the most recent Miss Daphne du Maurier. There are some strange omissions. Mr. Auden is overlooked, and so is James Joyce. The reason for the latter may be that Joyce was Irish; but Mr. Shaw is Irish too, and he and Katherine