

H. E. BATES: *Oh! To be in England.*  
166pp. Michael Joseph. 15s.

Here, for the fourth time round in the dreary Larkin saga, the same formula is once again repeated: orgies of food and drink, lip-smacking, the Rolls, chamber pots with roses winking at the brim, "Ma", swimming pools, and not only cleavage but—hush—plump, daring girls in the *altogether*. But even Mr. Bates seems to have realized the whole machinery has begun almost audibly to creak.

After all, to poke fun at rationing in times of scarcity had, one sadly supposes, a certain tiny *raison d'être*. While as for income tax, well, that has one rolling in the aisles automatically. But in an affluent society, what justification can the Larkins possibly have?