

LOVE FOR LYDIA. H. E. Bates. *Michael Joseph*, 12s.6d. 19 cm. 319 pages.

Mr. Bates has returned to the Northamptonshire scene of his early novels and stories, but with a certain disenchantment—the landscape is described realistically and not distilled into lyricism. The story is the reminiscence of a writer looking back to the early 'thirties when he was a young reporter and fell in love with the daughter of a once rich and still proud aristocratic family. Through his eyes we watch Lydia progress from lover to lover until her career ends in tuberculosis and marriage with the writer. Although Lydia is too novelettish a character to be entirely convincing, there are others in the book to compensate for her and the passages describing Midland towns and countryside are magnificently alive.