

PICK OF THE PAPERBACKS



Making Globalisation Work
by Joseph Stiglitz
Penguin, £8.99

Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel Prize-winning

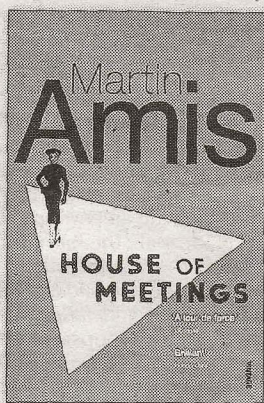
economist and former Clinton adviser, rails here against what he sees as the power of developed nations (chiefly the USA) and their excessive influence on the World Bank and the IMF. He argues that globalisation can be both profitable and ethical with worldwide regulation, a new global reserve system and greater emphasis on local projects in developing countries. One can query the costing of all this, and its reliance on good governance in the developing world, but his arguments are passionate, sincere and readable.

Jeffrey Robson

House of Meetings
by Martin Amis
Vintage, £7.99

Martin Amis's last novel, *Yellow Dog*, met a whirlwind of derision when it was published in 2003. The novelist Tibor Fischer damned it as "not-knowing-where-to-look bad". Does

House of Meetings deserve similar opprobrium? I don't think so. It dramatises a love triangle between a sexy Jewish woman called Zoya and two Russian brothers – one of whom, a rapist, narrates the novella. Much of the action takes place in a Soviet gulag in the decades after the Second World War



and hinges on a conjugal visit to the camp by Zoya to spend a night with the narrator's younger brother, Lev, in a shack known as the House of Meetings.

The camp's grotesque brutality – scarred with constant "vicings, awlings,

lathings, manic jackhammerings, atrocious chisellings" – is described with typical Amisian gusto. Such flippancy might seem tasteless, at odds with the grave subject. Yet Amis writes with enough force to entertain even while describing depravity.

Alastair Sooke



Rousseau's Dog
by David Edmonds and John Eidinow
Faber & Faber, £9.99

We hear a lot about

Enlightenment values these days, but this account of the dispute between Jean-Jacques Rousseau and David Hume shows that the 18th century was not a golden age for rationality. When Rousseau's subversive writings threatened to land him in jail, Hume arranged a refuge in England, but he was then involved in a whispering campaign against Rousseau. Though a large supporting cast makes the story hard to follow, *Rousseau's Dog* is a gleefully unflattering portrait of two men who ought to have known better.

Anthony Cummins



Shakespeare and Co
by Stanley Wells
Penguin, £8.99

There are hints of the bawdy realities of Elizabethan

life in the history plays but, in general, Shakespeare avoided contemporary anecdote and instead drew on fairytales and historical sources. Stanley Wells tries to rectify this. This book is a brilliant examination of the Bard's theatrical times: the lives and plays of his greatest contemporaries and how they, in turn, related to Shakespeare's. Ben Jonson and Christopher Marlowe get particularly inspired descriptions; but, from cross-dressing prostitutes to the plague, the true delight is in the detail of this vivid read.

Serena Davies



Cloth Girl
by Marilyn Heward Mills
Sphere, £7.99

British West Africa in the 1930s. Robert Bannerman, a wealthy,

English-educated black lawyer takes Matilda, the 14-year-old niece of his clerk, as a second wife so he can satisfy his lust for her. As well as telling an engrossing and at times heartbreaking story, Matilda's experiences of living in two separate worlds – her traditional African family and her ambitious husband's colonial household – are an excellent vehicle for a discussion of some complex post-colonial issues. This is a wonderful first novel, as thought-provoking as it is enjoyable, from an author with a lot to offer.

Jo Caird

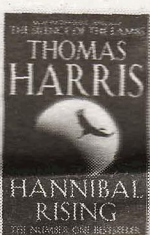


Monarchy
by David Starkey
Harper Perennial, £8.99

David Starkey's stated project is not a history of the kings

and queens of England, but an analysis of the institution of the English (and Scottish) monarchy, carrying on from his 2004 book *The Monarchy of England: the Beginnings*. But because the nature of monarchy was incrementally shaped over 600-odd years, in practice this is exactly what he says it is not: a history of the kings and queens of England, given a thematic and narrative backbone that raises it above a canter through royal houses into something gripping. This work has real drive, and it is often hard to remember how dull history could be at school.

Toby Clements



Hannibal Rising
by Thomas Harris
Arrow Books, £6.99

Anthony Hopkins's portrayal of Hannibal Lecter in the

film version of *The Silence of the Lambs* raised him from being just another deranged psychopath with improbable powers into something altogether more classy. But it piled an unfair weight of expectation on Thomas Harris, who is after all only a writer of vivid and fluent thrillers. Here, he explains why Hannibal became a cannibal: born into the Lithuanian aristocracy (naturally), Hannibal's family flees the Germans, but he and his sister are caught by some villainous – and hungry – looters. Only Hannibal escapes, and his revenge is truly terrible. TC