

BOOK REVIEWS

CLASSIC RETURNS

BY MICHAEL ROGERS

FICTION

Hrabal, Bohumil.
Too Loud a Solitude.

Harvest: HBJ. (Translation). Mar. 1992. 108p.
tr. by Michael Henry Heim. ISBN 0-15-690458-6. pap. \$7.95. F

With this title Harvest launches its new "Translation" series featuring paperback reprints of foreign authors in English as well as original translations. The publisher plans to release two to four volumes annually. This slim novel by the Czech author of the truly marvelous *I Served the King of England* was dubbed a "remarkable story about the indestructibility of books and knowledge" by the *New York Times*. If hardcover prices have limited your purchases of such stellar foreign literature, this series will provide an economical means of expanding your collection. Other inaugural volumes are Amos Oz's *To Know a Woman* (ISBN 0-15-690680-5; *LJ* 2/1/91), Stanislaw Benski's *Missing Pieces* (ISBN 0-15-660798-0), and José Saramago's *The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis* (ISBN 0-15-699693-6).

Kraft, Eric.

Little Follies: The Personal History, Adventures, Experiences & Observations of Peter Leroy.

Crown. 1992. c.448p. LC 89-29845. ISBN 0-517-58543-X. \$22. F

When Leroy's eight paperback novellas were first published in the 1980s, they brought him a cult following. This volume combines texts from those novellas, plus a new installment, "The Young Tars." Most of the originals are out of print, so those who missed sections of protagonist Peter Leroy's humorous "personal history" of growing up on Bolotomy Bay, Long Island will be happy to see this, as will those needing a fix of new material.

Larsen, Nella.

An Intimation of Things Distant: The Collected Fiction of Nella Larsen.

Anchor: Doubleday. 1992. 278p. LC 91-3374. ISBN 0-385-42149-4. pap. \$9.50. F

All but forgotten now, Larsen rode the crest of the Harlem Renaissance wave, producing two popular novels and several short stories between 1926 and 1930, when she became the first black woman to win a Guggenheim fellowship. Oddly, she quit writing in the early 1930s and worked as a nurse until her death in 1964. This volume collects for the first time her five short stories along with an introduction by scholar Charles Larson and a chronology of her life. When all your titles by Zora Neale Hurston are out, recommend Larsen.



No longer distant, readers can again get intimate with five of Larsen's short stories

Merritt, A. **Dwellers in the Mirage.**

Collier: Macmillan. (Nucleus Fantasy & Science Fiction). 1992. 283p. LC 91-29099. ISBN 0-02-022872-4. pap. \$5.95. FANTASY

Though first published in 1932, this and many of Merritt's other novels did not find a wide audience until they were reprinted in the 1960s, at which time several of them became million sellers. Unfortunately, by then the author was long dead. Now being reissued as part of Collier's "Nucleus" series (Classic Returns, *LJ* 9/1/91), this sword-and-sorcery piece takes place on the Alaskan tundra. Other recent titles in the series are Fritz Leiber's *The Green Millennium* (ISBN 0-02-022346-3), John Brunner's *The Squires of the City* (ISBN 0-02-017511-6), and Clifford D. Simak's *City* (0-02-025391-5).

NONFICTION

Butler, Pamela E.

Self-Assertion for Women. 2d rev. ed.

HarperCollins. Mar. 1992. c.448p. index. LC 90-84723. ISBN 0-06-250125-9. pap. \$13. PSYCH

First published in 1976, this self-help title was revised and issued in paperback in 1981 and has sold 90,000 copies to date. At the time of its debut, *LJ*'s reviewer found it had broader appeal than the title indi-

cates: "While [Butler's] emphasis is on the needs of women, men too can benefit from her thinking" (*LJ* 6/1/77). The latest revised edition contains a new preface.

Fromm, Erich.

The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness.

Holt. 1992. permanent paper. 576p. index. LC 91-28595. ISBN 0-8050-1604-X. pap. \$16.95. PSYCH

Fromm here continues the method of applying sociological theory to psychoanalysis that he presented in earlier works such as *Man for Himself* and *The Sane Society* (Classic Returns, *LJ* 3/1/91). "A work of broad scope and prodigious scholarship" (*LJ* 12/1/73) was the reaction of *LJ*'s reviewer to the volume in which Fromm tackles human aggression.

The New York Times Garden Book.

Lyons & Burford. 1992. ed. by Joan Lee Faust. 359p. illus. index. LC 91-25231. ISBN 1-55821-125-X. pap. \$15.95. GARDENING

First published in 1954, this volume was the companion of weekend gardeners for nearly 20 years before going out of print. Though fairly simple in approach compared to many newer gardening books, the basics of green thumbery really haven't changed, making this a viable source of information that one doesn't need a degree in botany to understand.

Swanberg, W.A. **Sickles the Incredible.**

432p. ISBN 1-879664-02-X. \$25; pap. ISBN 1-879664-03-8. \$14.95.

Wallace, Willard M.

Soul of the Lion: A Biography of General Joshua L. Chamberlain.

357p. ISBN 1-879664-00-3. \$25; pap. ISBN 1-879664-01-1. \$12.95.

ca. vol. Stan Clark Military Bks., 915 Fairview Ave., Gettysburg, PA 17325. 1991. photos. maps. bibliog. index. BIOG

"In this scholarly and well-written book, the author has provided a fascinating biography of one of the Civil War era's most colorful but little known figures," said *LJ*'s reviewer about *Sickles* (*LJ* 3/15/56). If the Civil War is popular with your patrons, this volume will continue to "inform as well as entertain" them, thus remaining "highly recommended."

Debuting four years later, Wallace's volume was found to "paint a readable and realistic picture of a remarkable military figure" (*LJ* 11/1/60). It was also the first biography of Chamberlain, and as he, like Sickles, was one of the war's lesser-known players, it's still the only one available. This remains "valuable in all collections on the Civil War."

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