

SZKICE O LITERATURZE EMIGRACYJNEJ. By *Maria Danilewiczowa*. Biblioteka "Kultury," vol. 289. Paris: Instytut Literacki, 1978. 414 pp. 85 F., paper.

In 1964, two stout volumes, entitled *Literatura polska na obczyźnie, 1940-1960*, appeared in London under the editorship of Tymon Terlecki. Dr. Danilewiczowa's *Szkice o literaturze emigracyjnej* is thus the second attempt at coping with contemporary Polish émigré literature. Written in 1976, it includes more up-to-date information and is also more readable, since the previous venture, although valuable as a reference book, is primarily an inventory, a *bibliographie raisonnée*.

Szkice is at once something less and something more than a history of Polish émigré literature from 1940 to 1976. To its detriment, it completely disregards one genre, drama. On the other hand, the work includes discussions of publishing houses, periodicals, studies in history, and some political disputes. Like its predecessor, the book is at times encumbered by lists of names and titles, but in general the text reads well thanks to bits of reminiscences, amusing anecdotes, and occasionally pungent criticism. As a matter of fact, several studies jostle for space between the covers of this lively and meaty book, which is why, perhaps, the author preferred to call it *Sketches* rather than, say, *History of Émigré Literature*.

For about three decades, from 1942 onward, the author was the director of the Polish Library in London which, thanks to her endeavors, compiled a large collection of Polish books and periodicals from four continents. Danilewiczowa's strategic position enabled her to draw on an impressively large body of publications. Some of her evaluations and analyses, especially those dealing with poetry, are controversial, but the book gives the reader a good idea of the scope, variety, and thematic range of that literature, an orientation in its major trends, and a feel for various literary milieus. By far the best chapters are the initial ones, in which Dr. Danilewiczowa, writing as an eyewitness, manages to evoke vividly the atmosphere of Polish literary life, first in France during the war years and then in London. The chapters themselves are a literary contribution.

The book contains its share of minor factual mistakes. As the editor of the Jerusalem periodical *W Drodze* during two war years, I would like to take advantage of this occasion to correct two faulty bits of information about that newspaper. Contrary to what the author says (p. 104), it was not a weekly but a fortnightly publication, and the poet Broniewski, although he worked at the paper, was never its editor (as stated on page 106).

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KÁLMÁN MIKSZÁTH. By *Steven C. Scheer*. Twayne's World Authors Series, no. 462. Boston: Twayne Publishers, G. K. Hall, 1977. 161 pp. \$10.50.

To write intelligently about an author who worked in a language and literary tradition likely to be unfamiliar to one's readers is a difficult enough task in itself. If one must also pay heed to the demands of comparative studies and literary criticism in the process and compress the end product into some one hundred and fifty pages, the task becomes impossible. Steven C. Scheer has nonetheless done the impossible in this very fine analysis of the art and life of Kálmán Mikszáth, Hungary's Mark Twain. Forced by the nature of his assignment "to strike a reasonable balance between necessary plot summaries and the equally necessary critical commentary," Scheer offers the English-reading public a brief but well-rounded picture of Hungary's leading author at the turn of the century and indirectly provides an insight into the social and political milieu in which Mikszáth worked. The plot summaries themselves are a delight to read, intricate though they are, for Scheer has managed in his sketches to render some of the flavor along with the content. He lets Mikszáth himself speak now and then and retells, in capsule form, a number of the charming anecdotes with

which Mikszáth's novels are filled. The reader cannot but be convinced by Scheer that Mikszáth's ability to weave his material into incredibly complex yet integral plots in gently humorous fashion makes him a first-rate writer by any standard.

If Scheer is less convincing in his critical treatment of Mikszáth he may well be forgiven. Taking a stand against both older and younger schools of Hungarian criticism, which classified Mikszáth as a Romantic and a Realist, respectively, he reaches no real conclusion, although he does not lack original observations. Yet this will hardly matter to anyone except the specialist. Mikszáth is, after all, Mikszáth, and Scheer has very ably shown that he is worth knowing about under any label, or under none. Scheer's little volume is a must for all who do not know Mikszáth's language but have an interest in Hungary or in East European literature.

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ČESKÝ SLOVNÍK VĚCNÝ A SYNONYMICKÝ. Compiled by Jiří Haller. Prague: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1969–77. Vol. 1: lvi, 292 pp. Kčs. 75. Vol. 2: liii, 595 pp. Kčs. 88. Vol. 3: xlvii, 711 pp. Kčs. 99.

During the past fifty years, Czech lexicographers have produced or begun work on several major monolingual dictionaries. The cornerstone of them all has been *Příruční slovník jazyka českého*, published by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences between 1935 and 1957. The quarter of a million entries on 10,827 pages of nine large-sized volumes have served as a springboard for several significant lexicographic enterprises. One of them is the four-volume *Slovník spisovného jazyka českého* with 192,908 entries on 4,644 pages, produced by the Academy's Institute for the Czech Language between 1960 and 1971. Another is the recent (1978) *Slovník spisovné češtiny pro školu a veřejnost*, a single volume prepared by the same institute, with over 50,000 entries on 800 pages. The work under review, *Český slovník věcný a synonymický* (hereafter referred to as *ČSVS*), is yet another dictionary meriting special attention. Although still incomplete, the three volumes that have appeared thus far already stand out among the world's monolingual dictionaries as an undertaking of unique comprehensiveness. The compiler of *ČSVS*, Jiří Haller, was originally entrusted with the preparation of the dictionary by the translators' section of the Union of Czechoslovak Writers. By the time of his death in 1971, Haller was able to complete volumes 1 and 3 in their entirety and a substantial part of volume 2, and to begin organizing material for the remainder of the work.

Organized according to subjects or concepts rather than alphabetically, the purpose of *ČSVS*, as stated in volume 1 (p. v), is a practical one: to aid translators, writers, and journalists by offering, within a subject-oriented framework, the widest possible selection of synonyms. It is meant to serve not only as the source of available expressions in the Czech language but also as a point of departure for discovering its as yet unrealized potentialities. The conceptual skeleton for the work has been the revised and enlarged second edition of Rudolf Hallig and Walther von Wartburg's *Begriffssystem als Grundlage für die Lexikographie: Versuch eines Ordnungsschemas* (1963).

A brief synopsis of the published volumes is as follows: Volume 1 contains entries relating to the universe and its make-up, the earth's atmosphere and surface structure, weather, minerals, flora, and fauna. Volume 2 is made up of entries pertaining to humans as physical beings—sexual and racial differentiation, the human body and its various parts and organs as well as their functions, the five senses, bodily positions and movements, sleep, health and disease, stages of human life, food and drink, sexuality, and clothing. Volume 3 comprises entries dealing with the mental aspects of humanity—intelligence, capabilities, perception, consciousness, memory, imagination, thought processes, emotions, will, morality, and other nonmaterial traits. An alpha-