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BRITISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE IN JAN NERUDA'S MAGAZINE "PICTURES OF LIFE" [OBRAZY ŽIVOTA]

Lidmila Pantůčková

In the early and middle period of the literary career of the great Czech classic writer Jan Neruda an occasional part of his mansided activities for fifteen years (1859—1874) was the editorship or co-editorship of magazines. As editor he worked in *Pictures of Life* and *The Family Chronicle* [*Rodinná kronika*],¹ in a few numbers of *The Humourist Papers* [*Humoristické listy*],² and in a fashion magazine for tailors, *The Goldmine* [*Zlaté dno*].³ As co-editor he functioned in *Flowers* [*Květy*], *Czech Thalia* [*Česká Thalia*], and *Lumír* [*Lumír*].⁴ In the soon following period of the climax of his creative powers (1876—1883) he had to give up this sort of editorship because of lack of time, but went on co-editing one series of books and in the very last year of that period started to edit another.⁵ Worth mentioning, too, is his editorship of a single publication⁶ and his long-time functioning as editor of the "Feuilleton" column in the daily *National Paper* [*Národní listy*].⁷

¹ In *Pictures of Life* [further PL] 1859—60, in *The Family Chronicle* 1863—64.

² In 1862 he took over the editorship, for a short time, from Josef R. Vilímek, who was imprisoned for infringing censorship regulations.

³ He took over the editorship in secret after the death of the editor Jan Kaška in 1869 and continued in it until 1874.

⁴ He co-edited *Flowers* with Vítězslav Hálek from 30 Nov. 1865 to 1 July 1867, *Czech Thalia* with Josef Mikuláš Boleslavský in 1868, and *Lumír* with Vítězslav Hálek from January to June 1873.

⁵ He co-edited, along with Ferdinand Schulz, Vítězslav Hálek, and Eduard Grégr, a series of translations from foreign literatures entitled *World Poetry* [*Poesie světová*] in the years 1871—85, and edited a series of Czech poetical works *Poetical Gatherings* [*Poetické besedy*], which he founded in 1883 and went on editing until the end of his life.

⁶ In 1880 he was the editor of the memorial volume *The Nation for Itself* [*Národ sobě*] published to benefit the Czech National Theatre.

⁷ He edited this column from 1865 to the end of his life.

This editorial work of Jan Neruda, even though in the case of literary magazines limited to a relatively short period of time, was — like his whole literary and journalistic activity — in full harmony with his progressive world outlook and with the aesthetic programme of the new literary generation of his time (called “the May group” after the miscellany *May [Máj]*, published in 1858) — a generation which he belonged to as one of its founders and whose programme was largely due to his own initiative and was, to a great extent, formulated by himself. In all the magazines he edited — either himself or in collaboration — he consistently applied, as he did in all his meritorious work for the welfare of the Czech nation and its language and literature, the main principles of this programme, emphasizing the need for an all-round and truthful depiction of reality and for a democratic spirit and world reputation for new Czech literature. This need for world recognition of Czech literature was reflected in his endeavour as editor to make the Czech literary and cultural public acquainted with world literature both of the past and of the present through the medium of translations and critical studies. He formulated the aim of this endeavour of his perhaps most aptly in a letter to Servác Bonifác Heller written before 30 April 1876, where he stressed the necessity to “know and *digest* the whole of *world* literature, if we are to accomplish anything at all by ourselves that the world would take notice of”.⁸ And in concordance with Neruda’s life-long struggle to liberate Czech literature from the one-sided influence of German literature, a significant place was reserved in his magazines for other literatures than German, including British and American.

The literary magazine in which Neruda initiated his editorial activities was *Pictures of Life*, bearing the subtitle “An Illustrated Family Library of Entertaining and Instructive Reading” [“Domáci illustrovaná biblioteka zábavného i poučného čtení”] and published in the years 1859—1862. In its first two volumes Neruda worked first as collaborator of the Prague editor Josef R. Vilímek (from the fourth number dated March 1859 to the end of the year), and then as editor for the printer and publisher Antonín Augusta, who resided in Litomyšl (in the 1860 volume). It should be emphasized, however, that *Pictures of Life* was not only the magazine in which Neruda spent his editorial apprentice years, but at the same time a magazine which was of great importance for his own creative growth, as he contributed to it abundantly as poet, prose-writer, journalist and literary critic. And it was, too, a magazine which became a very effective weapon for Neruda in his uncompromising struggle with Czech literary conservatives, who condemned the production of the May group as a “destructive” literary trend: it was here that he published several key studies explaining the basic principles of his literary generation and

⁸ *The Works of Jan Neruda [Spisy Jana Nerudy], The Library of Classics [Knihovna klasiků]*, vol. 39, *Letters [Dopisy]* III, Prague: SNKLU, 1965, 83, No. 111.

successfully defending it against all attacks.⁹ And it should also be pointed out that though this magazine was of such crucial importance for Neruda himself and for the whole May group, the conditions for its publication were not very favourable, for both technical and political reasons. Neruda's work as collaborator of the editor in the first volume published in Prague did not meet with any insuperable technical obstacles, but when the publication shifted to Augusta in Litomyšl and Neruda became editor, his activities demanded frequent visits to that town, which added much to the load he had to carry at that time. Even more unfavourable for the publication of a representative Czech illustrated magazine — then the only one of its kind — were the then existing political conditions. The first volume of the magazine and three-quarters of the second were published in a period still marked by virtually unlimited national oppression, that is, before the issuing of the Emperor's October Diploma of 1860, the aim of which was to stick to constitutional principles and to the rights of the Slavonic nations, which resulted in a considerable relaxation of the political atmosphere. The pressure of these unfavourable conditions was felt even by Neruda himself as editor and contributor. His collaboration with the representatives of the young literary generation and his sharp attacks on conservative elements who were smothering the development of Czech literature called forth slanderous invectives directed against his magazine and himself, of which he complained in a proclamation published on the cover of the fifth number of the magazine in 1859, and even — as Karel Štorkán has pointed out — his denunciation to the police for "disseminating poison and pernicious seed".¹⁰

It is therefore highly commendable that Neruda did not allow himself to be deterred by these adverse circumstances and set out a very high general aim for his magazine, formulated in his programme proclamation published before the beginning of his editorship (on 28 November 1859) — in the "entertaining" (that is, literary) part to achieve a "genuine enrichment of Czech literature",¹¹ in the instructive to inform the readers about the results of scientific research and their application in practical life, and in the critical to point to the significant position assumed by Czech literature as almost the only sign of the existence of the Czech nation at that time. To fulfil this programme Neruda gained as contributors for his magazine most of the outstanding writers of his own literary generation as well as several of their still living predecessors.¹² With the help of these and especially by his own excellent literary and critical work he did succeed not only in fulfilling his aim, but also in

⁹ The most important of these was his study "Harmful Trends" ["Škodlivé směry"], published in three parts in the 5th and 6th numbers of the 1859 volume.

¹⁰ Karel Štorkán: *The Journalist Jan Neruda [Novinář Jan Neruda]*, Prague: Orbis, 1956, 21.

¹¹ "To the Readers of *Pictures of Life*" ["Čtenářům *Obrazů života*"], PL 28 Nov. 1859, signed "Jan Neruda".

creating one of the most valuable Czech magazines of all times, according to the assessment of Albert Pražák in 1907.¹³

A very significant role in the fulfilment of Neruda's programme in the magazine and in the achievement of its high quality was played, too, by the translations from world literature published in it (in these Neruda himself participated as translator from Hungarian, German, and French literatures).¹⁴ These translations were not intended, as we learn from the second editorial programme proclamation published on the cover of the number of 3 June 1860,¹⁵ to provide "an easier filling in of space or mere entertainment",¹⁶ but to secure for foreign literatures equal rights with Czech literature in Bohemia and to extend a knowledge of these literatures among the Czech reading public. Of no less importance were, too, critical studies on the representatives of world literature published in *Pictures of Life* under Neruda's editorial leadership. The range covered by these translations and studies will be obvious when it is pointed out that they concerned Russian, Polish, South-Slavonic, German (to a lesser degree), French, Italian, Danish, Hungarian, but also English, Irish, and American literatures.

I.

In investigating the representation of British and American literature during Neruda's editorial work in *Pictures of Life*, any scholar's attention must be drawn to the marked disproportion in it — in the first two volumes of the magazine literature produced in the United States is represented much more extensively than that created on the British Isles, and it may therefore be given priority in this initial section of the present study. The main subject of investigation will be four critical studies,

¹² Poetry was represented especially by Vítězslav Hálek, Adolf Heyduk, Gustav Pflieger Moravský, and Neruda himself, prose fiction — besides Neruda — for instance by Alois Vojtěch Šmilovský, Gustav Pflieger Moravský, Karolina Světlá, Vítězslav Hálek, Karel Sabina, Božena Němcová, and J. V. Frič, non-fictional prose for instance by Neruda himself, Edmund Břetislav Kaizl, Josef Durdík, Václav Zelený, F. J. Studnička, Vítězslav Hálek, and Jan Krejčí.

¹³ *Czech Literature of the 19th Century [Literatura česká devatenáctého století]*, vol. III, part II (Prague: Jan Laichter, 1907), ch. V, Albert Pražák: "The First Period of Jan Neruda's Activity" ["První období činnosti Jana Nerudy"], 361.

¹⁴ In the 1859 volume he published translations of eight poems by Sándor Petöfi (No. 7, 253—4) and of aphorisms by Friedrich Spielhagen (No. 7, 279—80), and in the 1860 volume of three specimens from Victor Hugo's *La Légende des siècles* (No. 5, 199—201).

¹⁵ The proclamation was unsigned, but according to Jan Thon its author was obviously Neruda (see *The Works of Jan Neruda*, The Library of Classics, vol. 11, *Literature [Literatura]* I, Prague: SNKLHU, 1957, Explanatory notes, 580).

¹⁶ "Pictures of Life" ["Obrazy života"], PL 3 June 1860.

though they do not exhaust the whole representation of American literature — two translations of Red Indian legends¹⁷ should be at least briefly mentioned in this place to complete the picture. All four studies were written by the Prague solicitor, writer and translator Edmund Břetislav Kaizl (1836—1900) and three of them contain, too, translations of individual verses or even of whole poems. The first of these contributions was published in the ninth number of the 1859 volume under the title “Longfellow and his New Work” [“Longfellow i jeho nové dílo”] with the subtitle “The Courtship of Miles Standish and other Poems”.¹⁸ It is not a mere review, as its title would seem to suggest, for its introductory part contains an analysis of the social conditions determining the development of American literature in general and poetry in particular in Longfellow’s and Kaizl’s time, as well as an evaluation of the creative growth of the American poet until the publication of the volume mentioned in the subtitle. The analysis is well-informed, while the evaluation is in harmony with the then enthusiastic reception of this poet’s work both in his homeland and abroad. Approaching this attitude, common in the criticism of his time, Kaizl designates Longfellow as “the first and most perfect North American poet”,¹⁹ and lavishes praise on the elegance of his poetry, his uncommon ingenuity and sense of beauty, as well as the splendid style and composition of his individual poems. In contradistinction to Longfellow’s totally uncritical admirers, however, Kaizl also voices his disapproval in several places. Thus in his evaluation of the poet’s translation of Esaias Tegnér’s poem “The Children of the Lord’s Supper” he expresses his disagreement with Longfellow’s statement about the superiority of this poem over its German models (Johann Friedrich Voss’s *Luise* and Goethe’s *Hermann und Dorothea*), and by his own positive assessment of Goethe’s idyllic epic proves the American poet guilty of an error in judgment. His critical voice may be heard, too, in his analysis of *Evangeline* and of the poem “The Building of the Ship”. While he appreciates the charm of the pictures of the New World in the former poem and praises the latter for the deep sense of its main idea and its excellent style and composition, he concludes by emphasizing that these two poems do not, in spite of all their merits, reach the high level of objectivity and universality to be found in their German models (Goethe’s *Hermann und Dorothea* and Schiller’s “Das Lied von der Glocke”). A critical tone may be distinguished, too, in the conclusion of Kaizl’s essentially positive evaluation of the minor poems adjoined to *Miles Standish* in the volume under review. He underlines as their main merit

¹⁷ “A Small Dinghy of White Stone” [“Člunek z bílého kamene”] and “Ampata Sapa, the First Woman” [“Ampata Sapa, první žena”], trans. Jiljí Vratislav Jahn, PL 1859, No. 7, 251—3. The English titles are my translations — I have been unable to find the English originals.

¹⁸ PL 1859, No. 9, 353—7.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 353.

the disappearance of an empty mistiness and vagueness in reflection which sometimes protruded all too much in their predecessors, and correctly gives prominence to "My Lost Youth", praising it as equally beautiful in thought and execution, and quoting from it (in his own good translation) its refrain (taken over, as he correctly points out, from an old Northern song).²⁰ In conclusion, however, he points out that these poems are aptly called "Birds of Passage", as in view of their themes — prevailingly drawn from the past or from foreign countries and literatures — they are foreigners after all, while the reader, even though he loves these "beauteous singers",²¹ would wish to hear, too, birds without shiny foreign feathers, but with domestic voices. On the other hand, Kaizl's review of *Miles Standish*, to which the main part of his contribution is devoted, consists of nothing but positive judgments. After having assessed this work as in many respects surpassing its predecessors, and after having presented a well-informed analysis of its historical background, he lavishes praise on its masterly depictions, original characters and the poet's ingenious creative approach. In his somewhat uncritical opinion, American poetry has gained in this poem a work which "both in its subject-matter and spirit belongs to it as its own" and is the foundation stone of "a new and courageous building".²² In general it may be said that Kaizl's evaluation of Longfellow is based on his solid knowledge of all the works on which he pronounces his judgments in this contribution, as well as on his familiarity with at least some of the critical works concerned with the American poet and published in his time (unfortunately, however, he does not refer to any of the latter).²³ As pointed out above, to a certain extent he succeeded in avoiding the pitfall of unqualified praise by having preserved his critical detachment. In this, at least in my opinion, his standpoint is not very far from that of some American critics of the recent past who have acknowledged Longfellow as a poet of an extraordinary natural talent who — even though "not remembered primarily as a nationalistic writer", nevertheless "did much

²⁰ See *ibid.*, 356. It was an old Lapland song, as Longfellow himself pointed out in the Introduction to the poem (see *The Complete Poetical Works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*, Cambridge: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, The Riverside Press, 1893, 194).

²¹ *PL* 1859, No. 9, 357.

²² *Ibid.*, 356.

²³ It seems to be very probable that the sources from which Kaizl might have drawn information on Longfellow (and in his following three studies on other American poets) included the then well-known works by Rufus Wilmot Griswold *The Poets and Poetry of America* (Philadelphia: 1842) and *The Female Poets of America* (Philadelphia: 1848). As these books are unobtainable in Czechoslovakia, however, and I have not succeeded in borrowing them from abroad, I could not compare the judgments of the Czech critic with those of his possible American model (except for one case in which I have become acquainted with the latter's opinions from a secondary source — see p. 173 and note 30).

to memorialize American history and folklore in his narrative verse",²⁴ and has thus become an inseparable part of the American national heritage.

A downright overevaluation was committed by Kaizl, however, in his second contribution dealing with American literature and published in the tenth number of the 1859 volume under the title "Charles Fenno Hoffman".²⁵ To this poet and prose-writer, who is almost entirely forgotten nowadays, Kaizl addresses only words of praise. After a brief but correct biography, he very positively evaluates Hoffman's journalistic activity (in this he is not mistaken, as this writer has survived in the consciousness of the American cultural public as the founder and editor of *The Knickerbocker Magazine*) and warmly praises, too, the author's travel books for their telling scenic descriptions and their "rich and pure style".²⁶ But there is considerable overestimation in his assessment of Hoffman's first novel *Greyslaer*, which was, admittedly, immensely popular at the time of its publication,²⁷ gained its author fame and had retained its popularity until the time when Kaizl wrote his study, but which did not ensure Hoffman, as Kaizl believes, "an honourable place among North American novelists",²⁸ as it has fallen into almost entire oblivion. Kaizl warmly praises, too, Hoffman's lyric poetry, which was remembered somewhat longer than the author's novel, but which does not deserve the enthusiastic eulogies lavished on it by Kaizl in his evaluation of individual poems. Nor can his general final assessment of Hoffman as poet hold its ground in our times — maintaining as it does that as creator of songs this writer outdid all the other American poets, and evaluating him as a genuine master of his art whose poems, in their delicacy and strength of feeling, surpass the poetry of Thomas Moore, and whose ballads equal "the richest melodies from the times of Herrick and Edmund Waller".²⁹ Kaizl's overestimation of Hoffman is, however, to a great extent justified by the time in which it was written. The great popularity of this author at the time he was writing and for a certain period after was substantially strengthened by Rufus Wilmot Griswold's high praise in his *Poets and Poetry of America* (see note 23), as well as by Poe's having regarded him as significant enough to be included in his

²⁴ Eldon C. Hill in the item "Longfellow" in *The Reader's Encyclopedia of American Literature*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1962.

²⁵ PL 1859, No. 10, 394—5.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 395. His praise concerns *A Winter in the West* (1835) and *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie* (1839).

²⁷ Soon after its first edition in 1840 it went through four other editions in a single year, and was also successfully dramatized.

²⁸ PL 1859, No. 10, 395.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

series of critical articles "The Literati of New York City", published in *Godey's Lady's Book* in 1846.³⁰

Kaizl's third study on American literature appeared in the second number of the 1860 volume and was entitled "William Cullen Bryant".³¹ After having determined, in his introduction, Bryant's place in the poetry of his time as the favourite of New York (in contradistinction, as Kaizl has it, to Longfellow, who was the boast of Boston, and Poe, whose fantasy was the delight of the Southern states), Kaizl presents an outline of the poet's life and literary career which is, except for a few insubstantial errors in dates, spelling mistakes or misprints, fully adequate. Within this outline he presents a perceptive analysis of the poem "Hymn to Death", supported by a quotation of three lines in his own translation (this is, except for an error in translating the expression "the bud of life", correct), and an adequate interpretation of the poem "The Ages", bearing witness to his close acquaintance with its theme and form. After having positively assessed Bryant's editorial work and his translations from European literatures, he concludes his outline with a general critical evaluation of the poet's creative approach in which — from the point of view of present-day research — he does not commit any serious errors. He correctly appraises Bryant's mastery of style and comprehends very well the poet's propensity for abstracting from a close observation of natural objects a "consistent . . . philosophical moral, which he presents to the reader in a classical form".³² In the poetical expression of this philosophy Kaizl places Bryant even above Longfellow, whom he himself to a certain extent overestimated in his preceding contribution, though on the other hand he correctly maintains that the creation of the latter poet is wider in its thematic scope than that of the former. A very important fact, however, escaped Kaizl's attention in his comparison of the two poets — that it was Bryant and not Longfellow who encouraged American poets to achieve cultural independence from Europe by writing of their own American experience, who was the author of the very first poetry

³⁰ Poe, however, categorically rejects "the indiscriminate and lavish approbation" bestowed by Griswold on the merits of Hoffman as poet, which has done the latter "irreparable injury", and even though he does not deny that Hoffman's prose and poetry shows some positive aspects (like Kaizl, for instance, he praises the scenic descriptions and the style of Hoffman's travel books), he also finds some weak points in individual works and criticizes "the whole tone, air, and spirit" of Hoffman's poetry for being "echoes", even though perhaps not conscious, of Thomas Moore (see Edgar Allan Poe: *Essays and Reviews*, The Library of America, 1984, "The Literati of New York City", "Charles Fenno Hoffman", 1208—11).

³¹ PL 1860, No. 2, 67—8. It is worth noting that one letter from the probably more extensive correspondence between Neruda and Kaizl has been preserved — on 15 Dec. 1859 the editor asks the contributor to finish his article on Bryant as soon as possible (see *Letters* III, 8, No. 4).

³² PL 1860, No. 2, 68.

of a purely American character, and who — by giving “an American formulation to the Romantic movement”³³ — immensely contributed to the development of American literature from Neoclassicism to Romanticism. The rest of the study is devoted to an overall positive evaluation of Bryant's individual poems. From those depicting “a natural life in the woods”³⁴ Kaizl correctly marks out the poems which have preserved their high poetical value until the present time (“To a Waterfowl” and “The Yellow Violet”, to which he adds “Autumn Woods” and “To a Cloud”), even though he commits the error of placing them on the same level as the songs of Hoffman (admitting, however, that Bryant's poems “have more philosophy”).³⁵ Of the other poems he pays most detailed attention to “A Song of Pitcairn's Island”, giving a well-informed summary of its historical background and correctly pointing out that the story depicted in it also inspired Byron to write his poem “The Island”. In conclusion it may be said that Kaizl's evaluation of Bryant bears witness to his very good knowledge of the poet's creative work based on his own reading (he again does not refer to any critical works) and, with the single exception pointed out above, does not contain any judgments which would be totally unacceptable at the present time.

Kaizl's fourth and last study on American literature published in *Pictures of Life* appeared in the fourth number of the 1860 volume and bears the title “A Survey of North American Poetry” [“Přehled básnictví severo-amerického”].³⁶ In its introductory passage he reminds his readers of his preceding studies on the life and work of three American poets published in the same magazine and defines the aim of his new contribution as an attempt at painting “a small picture of North American poetry in general”³⁷ through the medium of classifying the main representatives of this poetry into individual groups. And it should be pointed out at once that he did succeed in fulfilling this aim of his by presenting, in the body of his study, which consisted of ten parts, a small but very instructive picture of the whole development of American poetry from its very beginnings until his own time. In addition he made his readers acquainted, in the eleventh part, with two American patriotic songs and, in the last, twelfth part, with the main representatives of fictional and non-fictional prose. In his survey of the development of American poetry Kaizl mostly briefly, but in some cases in more detail, evaluates the creation of thirty-three poets and poetesses, and mentions by name a further twelve. Of these forty-five authors more than half (twenty-seven) are entirely or almost entirely forgotten in our own time. This contradic-

³³ *The American Tradition in Literature*, Volume One, Sixth ed., New York: Random House, 1985, 538.

³⁴ *PL* 1860, No. 2, 68.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *PL* 1860, No. 4, 178—84.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 178.

tion inherent in the critical attention Kaizl paid to so many poets considered to be quite insignificant nowadays does not reveal itself, however, to the same degree in all ten parts of his study dealing with American poetry. Even though of the fifteen poets assessed or mentioned in the first two parts, which are concerned with the Colonial and the Post-Revolutionary periods (in the latter Kaizl includes, too, the poets of the Revolution), only ten have survived in the present-day histories of literature,³⁸ Kaizl's evaluation of them all is well-informed and from the point of view of our times substantially correct. In his account of the poetry of the Colonial period he only slightly overestimates Mather Byles, and gives a wrong surname to Benjamin Tompson ("Thomson"). Also in the second part he commits greater errors only exceptionally — in his assessment of Philip Freneau he does not mention the latter's lyric poetry, so significant in the history of American literature as an important bridge between Neoclassicism and Romanticism, and he ascribes to Joël Barlow a nonexistent poem "The Discovery of America".³⁹

The disparity between Kaizl's judgments and those of the critics of our times does not make itself felt too markedly, either, in the sixth, seventh and tenth parts of the study discussed, in which this critic evaluates those poets whose work has remained alive until the present day (Whittier, Longfellow, Bryant, Poe) or who have kept a significant place in the history of American literature (Holmes, Halleck) or have at least earned a brief mention in most surveys of this literature (Dana Sr.). In spite of this, however, not all of his critical judgments are acceptable nowadays and it is necessary to criticize him, too, for some minor mistakes. In the sixth part, devoted to Whittier and Dana Sr., Kaizl correctly underlines as the typical features of their work its "national character" and "invigorating liberalism", but wrongly places both authors on the same level as "standing nearest to the foremost poets",⁴⁰ thus underestimating Whittier, of whose work not a few poems have gained a timeless value, and overestimating Dana Sr., a poet with great literary ambition but small talent. And, what is even more serious, in spite of his accentuation of Whittier's liberalism Kaizl entirely ignores the active participation of this great poet and journalist in the Abolitionist movement, and does not mention any of the poems or collections inspired by it. Of the minor mistakes we should

³⁸ From the Colonial period Cotton Mather and Michael Wigglesworth, and to a certain extent Benjamin Tompson, Benjamin Colman, and Mather Byles; from the Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary periods Francis Hopkinson, Philip Freneau, John Trumbull, Timothy Dwight, and Joël Barlow.

³⁹ He has obviously been misled by Barlow's original intention to write an epic with such a theme; this was never realized and soon definitively Barlow decided for a deeper philosophical depiction of the events following the discovery of America in his patriotic epic *The Vision of Columbus* (which is also mentioned by Kaizl and more positively assessed than its later re-made version *The Columbiad*).

⁴⁰ PL 1860, No. 4, 180.

mention the wrong year of Whittier's birth (1808 instead of 1807). The seventh section, adequately assessing the contribution of Oliver Wendell Holmes as the best American writer of humorous verse and presenting a perceptive evaluation of the lyric poetry of Fitz-Greene Halleck, does not contain, in contradistinction to the preceding part, any erroneous judgments and only a few minor mistakes (the wrong year of Halleck's birth — 1795 instead of 1790 — and the incorrect title given to one of his poems — "Woman" instead of "Wyoming"). The last of the above-mentioned sections of Kaizl's study in which this critic's evaluation does not substantially differ from that of present-day scholars is the tenth, reminding the Czech reader of three poets who are, in Kaizl's opinion, rightly regarded as the most prominent representatives of the American literature of their time — Bryant, Longfellow, and Poe. As for the first two, Kaizl does not present any assessment, referring the reader to his previous studies in *Pictures of Life*, as well as to his article on Longfellow published in *Lumír* in 1856.⁴¹ Poe is characterized by him as a "splendidly gifted Romantic" "eulogized by his friends" and "abused by his enemies beyond measure",⁴² and because he dealt with the work of this poet once before, as he informs us (in *Lumír* 1856),⁴³ he concentrates only on his biography, but deals with it more extensively. As his main source for the *Lumír* article as well as for his study in *Pictures of Life* was Poe's first biographer R. W. Griswold (as stated in the footnote to his earlier *Lumír* contribution,⁴⁴ though in the study we are just discussing this is not mentioned), we are not surprised that he presents the readers of *Pictures of Life* with the same incorrect information as he did those of *Lumír*. Of these errors, based on the legends spread by the poet himself as well as by his biographer, we should mention the wrong year and place of Poe's birth (1811 instead of 1809 and Baltimore instead of Boston), and especially the untrue account of the course of the poet's life between his departure from the university and his appointment to West Point — that he set off to join the Greeks in their struggle for liberty, but got instead into difficulties at St. Petersburg (caused by drinking bouts) from which he escaped by the skin of his teeth. On the other hand, Kaizl deserves praise for his writing about the personal character and

⁴¹ "H. W. Longfellow and The Song of Hiawatha" ["H. W. Longfellow a zpěv o Hiawathě"]. By Edm. Bř. K., *Lumír* 6 (1856), part I, 572—4 and 597—8.

⁴² *PL* 1860, No. 4, 183.

⁴³ "Edgar Allan Poe. A North American Poet" ["Edgar Allan Poe. Básník severo-americký"]. By Edm. Bř. K., *Lumír* 6 (1856), part II, 1027—9, and 1048—52.

⁴⁴ Kaizl stated there that this article of his was taken over from a longer manuscript "A Short Survey and Specimens of North American Poetry" ["Krátký přehled a ukázký básnictví severoamerického"] — obviously the study he was preparing for *Pictures of Life*. As his source for both contributions he mentions R. W. Griswold's *Memoir* published in *Standard American Authors*, Leipzig: Alphons Dürr, 1856. Adjoined to his *Lumír* article are his translations of six of Poe's poems.

the way of life of the American poet — at a time when these were to a great extent unjustly attacked by Poe's adverse critics, particularly by Griswold — with understanding and sympathy.

To the parts of Kaizl's study analysed so far, which deal with poets surviving in the consciousness of the American reading public or at least in more detailed accounts in histories of American literature, and in which the disparity several times mentioned before is not markedly noticeable, we should add the eleventh section concerned with two American patriotic songs — "Hail Columbia" and "Yankee Doodle".⁴⁵ In his brief introduction Kaizl ascribes a higher poetical value to the former song than to the latter (I could not verify this judgment, as I have been unable to obtain the original text of the version of "Yankee Doodle" translated by Kaizl) and presents a few explanatory words about the genealogy of the word "Yankee" and about the expression "Yankee Doodle" (in the former case giving one of the existing hypotheses,⁴⁶ in the latter the correct explanation). After these introductory words he makes his readers acquainted — for the first time in his and their country — with the texts of these songs in his own translation. For the reason mentioned above I cannot assess his translation of "Yankee Doodle", but that of the other song seems to me to be adequate, even though it is in places quite free — it nowhere impairs the meaning of the original. Kaizl even adheres to the original rhyme arrangement (couplets), but uses more rhymes (twenty-two to the eighteen of the original).

In the remaining parts of Kaizl's survey of American poetry, however, the discrepancy between his critical opinions and the standpoint of the criticism of our time reveals itself very conspicuously. They are the third, fourth and fifth parts, in which he deals with the poetry of the immediate precursors of his time, and the eighth and ninth, concerned with the contemporary period. Kaizl here briefly evaluates the work of nine poets and five poetesses⁴⁷ and mentions by name a further seven,⁴⁸ none of whom have stood the test of time. In spite of the fact that all these poets are justly forgotten nowadays, Kaizl for the most part assesses them positively, though not entirely uncritically. Unqualified praise is address-

⁴⁵ In the subtitle to the first song he correctly mentions as the author "Hopkinson" (Joseph H., 1770—1842), in that to the second we find the name "Sheckburg", a wrong spelling of the surname of Dr. Schuckburg, a British army surgeon, to whom the text, whose real author has not yet been identified, has often been contributed.

⁴⁶ Stating that the expression is a corruption of the word "English" in the mouths of the Red Indians (see *PL* 1860, No. 4, 183).

⁴⁷ John Pierpont, William Clifton, Robert Paine, Charles Sprague, J. G. C. Brainard, Alfred B. Street, V. J. G. Percival, Theodore Sedgwick Fay, N. P. Willis, Maria Gowen Brooks, Elizabeth Oakes Prince Smith, Lydia Howard Sigourney, Hannah Flagg Gould, and Frances Sargent Osgood.

⁴⁸ Carlos Wilcox, Richard Alsop, St. John Honeywood, Henry Theodore Tuckerman, William Wetmore Story, Charles Fenno Hoffman, and George Pope Morris.

ed by him to John Pierpont, William Clifton, N. P. Willis, and to the "splendid row of American women writers",⁴⁹ that is, Maria Gowen Brooks, Elizabeth Oakes Prince Smith, Lydia Howard Huntley Sigourney, Hannah Flagg Gould, and Frances Sargent Osgood. In his evaluation of the rest of the poets praise markedly outweighs blame, but is qualified by at least a few critical comments. Robert Paine is criticized by him for the general darkness of his poetry and a tendency to an over-epigrammatic style, Charles Sprague for the weakness of his satire and the wearisome monotony of some of his odes, J. G. C. Brainard for too superficial descriptions, Alfred B. Street for the occasional overuse of images in his poems, and V. J. G. Percival for a lack of refinement. Kaizl's overestimation of all these poets (even of those just mentioned in whom he sees some weak points) is, of course, unacceptable nowadays, but fully comprehensible from the point of view of his time. Pierpont and Percival were included in the first ranks of the American poets of their period and their works were universally praised. Percival was even generally acknowledged as the leading poet of the American nation and had preserved this high place until the appearance of Bryant. Of the five female poets, four (Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Osgood, Mrs. Sigourney, and Mrs. Smith) enjoyed very great popularity in their time and their poetry was praised far beyond its worth by contemporary critics. Two of them were even given flattering appellations — Mrs. Brooks was called "Maria of the West" by Robert Southey, while Mrs. Sigourney was generally known as the "Sweet singer of Hartford" and the "Mrs. Hemans of America". Likewise Paine, Sprague, Brainard, Street, Willis, and Morris earned considerable praise for their best works from the critics of their time. Against the background of such an overestimation Kaizl's exaggerated praise does not seem to be so surprising. What does surprise us in the light of the present canon, however, is the entire omission of the greatest poet of the period dealt with by the Czech critic in the eighth and ninth sections — Walt Whitman. Besides the errors in judgment pointed out above, in the parts of Kaizl's study just discussed there occur, too, some minor mistakes in dates and places of birth, as well as some wrong spellings and misprints.⁵⁰ On the other hand, however, it is admirable that to the eighth and ninth parts of his study Kaizl adjoined his translations of five poems by five of the poets assessed by him, thus making his readers acquainted with these works in their mother tongue for the very first

⁴⁹ PL 1860, No. 4, 182.

⁵⁰ Wrong dates of the births of George P. Morris, N. P. Willis and H. T. Tuckerman, of the publication of Willis's *Poetical Scripture Sketches*, and of the death of Mrs. Brooks, wrong places of birth of Percival and Mrs. Brooks, and incorrect spellings of the names Clifton and Oakes, and of the titles *Zamor*, *The Burning of Schenectady*, *Dashes at Life with a Free Pencil*, and *Idomen*.

time (though their gain was of course not very great, as these were all productions of a definitely lower artistic level).⁵¹

The last, twelfth part of Kaizl's study is dedicated to the most outstanding representatives of American fictional and non-fictional prose whom he regards it as necessary to at least name after his evaluation of American poetry. And indeed, he does only name them without assessing them in any way, only in some cases pointing out that they are also known in his country from translations (Franklin, Irving) or that they are "known" in general or "famous" (Cooper, Mrs. Beecher Stowe). His enumeration covers almost the whole field of all the genres of American prose, but omits Thoreau and Melville.

II.

The representation of British literature in *Pictures of Life* under Neruda's editorial collaboration and editorship is, as was pointed out above, substantially scantier than that of the literature produced in the United States. In the first volume there are no translations, nor any critical studies. In the second volume, edited by Neruda himself, British literature has found a better representation, even though still not equalling that of American literary products. It consists of Kaizl's study on Shakespeare's sonnets in the first number⁵² and, in the fourth number, translations of two Irish legends and the obituary of Thomas Babington Macaulay.⁵³ As we learn from Neruda's correspondence, however, British literature should have been represented in that volume in a different manner and perhaps more extensively. In December 1859 and January 1860 negotiations were in progress between Neruda and J. V. Frič (at that time living in exile, mainly in London and Paris), the outcome of which should have been an article by Frič on contemporary British literature, in par-

⁵¹ Two of these translations (of the poem on the Rhine introducing the eighth canto of T. S. Fay's *Ulric: Or the Voices* and of Hoffman's poem "To an Autumn Rose") are acceptable even nowadays, but the three others (of "When Other Friends are Round Thee" by George P. Morris, "Farewell to Cuba" by Mrs. Brooks, and "The Lonely Church" by Mrs. Sigourney), even though on the whole quite adequate, impair the meaning of the original texts at a few places by being too free. In most of them, except for Morris's poem, Kaizl also succeeded in adhering to their original rhyme arrangement (in Mrs. Sigourney's poem to its unrhymed verse).

⁵² "Shakespeare's Sonnets" ["Shakespearovy Znělky"], *PL* 1860, No. 1, 21—3.

⁵³ The translations of the Irish legends are signed by the initials "V. F." and are made, as the translator informs us, from the German translations of Julius Rodenberg (see *PL* 1860, No. 4, 156—9); the obituary is unsigned and correctly assesses Macaulay's poetical work, his literary criticism, as well as his work as a historian (see *PL* 1860, No. 4, 191).

ticular Thackeray.⁵⁴ Frič, however, did not write any such article and Neruda, who obviously did not want to give up British literature for his magazine altogether, had no choice but to turn again to his competent contributor Edmund Břetislav Kaizl (no correspondence concerning this change in Neruda's plans, however, has been preserved). And Kaizl did write an article on British literature for the very first number of the 1860 volume, even though it did not concern the period suggested by Neruda to Frič but a much older one — the above-mentioned study on Shakespeare's sonnets. It may be characterized as a brief general critical evaluation of the famous collection, adjoined to which are fifteen sonnets in Kaizl's translation.⁵⁵ In his introductory words Kaizl emphasizes that the new era in appreciating the Stratford genius opened by world scholarship has also started in Bohemia where, in spite of unfavourable conditions, much has been done to make the public acquainted with the great dramatist through the medium of translations of his works,⁵⁶ performances of his plays, and newspaper and scholarly criticism. Kaizl, too, intends to contribute to this trend in his country by turning his readers' attention to the works of Shakespeare's youth, so far little known or even unfamiliar to them — his sonnets — with the aim of helping them in finding a new and original source for an assessment of the whole personality of the great man and writer, as well as of the changes in his philosophy of life on its pilgrimage to a splendid goal. This definition of Kaizl's purpose, as well as his following statement that the sonnets more than any other writings of Shakespeare's provide us with "a light streaming from Shakespeare's life",⁵⁷ bear witness to his indebtedness to the German scholar Georg Gottfried Gervinus, the aim of whose monograph on Shakespeare⁵⁸ (from which Kaizl twice quotes) was to grasp and interpret the spiritual unity of the great writer's whole creation by tracing, through the medium of critical analyses of individual works, the development of his soul and heart,⁵⁹ and who also expressed his conviction that of all Shakespeare's works the sonnets are the only ones that allow us a direct

⁵⁴ See Neruda's letters addressed to Anna Holinová (31 Dec. 1859, *The Works of Jan Neruda*, The Library of Classics, vol. 37, *Letters I*, Prague: SNKLU, 1963, 24, No. 18) and to J. V. Frič (the beginning of January 1860, *The Works of Jan Neruda*, The Library of Classics, vol. 38, *Letters II*, Prague: SNKLHU, 1954, 72, No. 103, and the explanatory note *ibid.*, 590).

⁵⁵ Sonnets II, VI, VII, IX, X, XII, XVIII, XXII, XXIII, XXX, XXXIII, LIV, LV, LXXI, and CXXX.

⁵⁶ Kaizl has in mind the edition of the translations of Shakespeare's dramas launched by the Museum of the Kingdom of Bohemia in 1855 and running up to 1872.

⁵⁷ *PL* 1860, No. 1, 21.

⁵⁸ G. G. Gervinus: *Shakespeare*. Zweite Auflage. Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1850 (in 4 volumes). The chapter "Shakespeare's Sonnette" is in vol. II, 357—420.

⁵⁹ For the definition of this aim see *ibid.*, especially the "Einleitung", I, 30—1, but also *passim*, e.g. II, 376, 379, 380, 381, 398.

look into their author's own spiritual life.⁶⁰ Certain echoes of Gervinus's views may be heard, too, in Kaizl's general assessment of the collection, particularly in his dividing the sonnets into three parts,⁶¹ evaluating those addressed to the "dark lady" as a manly confession of the wrong-doings of the poet's youth,⁶² and characterizing the collection as "a sort of poetical diary, a mirror of spiritual life".⁶³ On the other hand, however, Kaizl's evaluation also bears witness to his having used other sources as well, some of them at least written in English, even though he does not refer to any of them (thus, for instance, he quotes Meres's praise of the sonnets in English, while Gervinus translates this into German).⁶⁴ The greatest difference between the two scholars may be found, however, in their approach to the aesthetic value of Shakespeare's collection. It is true, of course, that an aesthetic evaluation was not the aim of the German scholar, as follows, too, from what has been said about his purpose above. He concentrates on what he calls the "psychological contents"⁶⁵ of the sonnets, and as these have enabled him to fulfil his aim of revealing Shakespeare's spiritual development, he regards these poems as invaluable, especially in view of the non-existence of any other sources on the problem in question. He does touch upon the aesthetic aspects of the sonnets from time to time, however, and whenever he does so, he is sharply critical, maintaining that their artistic value has been overestimated and blaming their "artificial" style and "bad" conventional form for leading the reader astray from the inner truth depicted in them. In contradistinction to this, Kaizl's final evaluation, though very brief, does not ignore the aesthetic value of these poems, extolling Shakespeare's creative approach as characterized by his clothing his thoughts "in the charming garb of vivid comparisons with fresh and sweet-smelling nature" and, in doing so, taking full advantage of everything animate and inanimate in nature, of all "the splendid phenomena in the realm of

⁶⁰ See *ibid.*, especially II, 358, 376, 379, 380, 381, 398, 400—1.

⁶¹ Like Gervinus (see *op. cit.*, II, 360, 362, and *passim*), and like present-day scholars Kaizl divides the sonnets into a first part addressed to the poet's friend, "a beautiful young man" (*PL* 1860, No. 1, 21) and a second singing about a woman devoid of all physical beauty to whom Shakespeare devoted himself after his arrival in London (see *ibid.*, 22), but surprisingly, and again like Gervinus, also a third part consisting of sonnets dispersed throughout the first and second parts and containing "Maxims of a refined philosophy for life" (*PL* 1860, No. 1, 22; I have been unable to find this statement of Gervinus's, which Kaizl quotes in his Czech translation and in its original German version, in the former's book).

⁶² See *PL* 1860, No. 1, 22; for Gervinus's similar assessments see *op. cit.*, I, 53—5, II, 361, 362, 405—6.

⁶³ *PL* 1860, No. 1, 22; for Gervinus's similar words see especially *op. cit.*, II, 376, 380, 381.

⁶⁴ Kaizl: "sugar'd sonnets", *PL* 1860, No. 1, 21; Gervinus: "Shakespeare's Zuckersonnette", *op. cit.*, II, 358.

⁶⁵ G. G. Gervinus, *op. cit.*, II, 379.

grand celestial bodies", as well as of "a violet gently breathing in its concealment" and of "tones softly blowing through the air".⁶⁶

After this assessment there follow Kaizl's translations of fifteen sonnets, which he regards as a poor substitute for a translation of the whole collection, for which, as he emphasizes, the Czech readers of his time are still waiting in vain, and which he denotes as his youthful attempts, in their form and selection too insufficient for testifying to the truth of his preceding judgments. A detailed evaluation cannot be presented here for lack of space, but even a mere comparison of these translations with the original texts proves Kaizl guilty of being inordinately modest in this assessment of his own work. Except for one place⁶⁷ he does not commit any grave trespasses upon the letter and spirit of the original, even though his translation is at places quite free. Worth positive evaluation, too, is that with the exception of three sonnets (XVIII, XXXIII, and LIV) Kaizl adheres to the rhyme arrangement of the original and observes this arrangement even in the sixth sonnet, in which Shakespeare uses only six rhymes. Praiseworthy, too, is Kaizl's successful attempt to keep to the original iambic pentameter, even though it is a metre unnatural to the Czech language. Finally, two misprints should be mentioned — the first changing the number of sonnet XVIII to XIII and the second impairing, unfortunately, the meaning of the original.⁶⁸ Any other weak points in Kaizl's translations which might be discovered by a more thorough analysis would be more than outweighed, however — at least in my opinion — by the fact that they were, as far as I know, the very first in Bohemia.

* * *

As follows from the analysis in this study, in the first two volumes of *Pictures of Life* Neruda as editorial collaborator and then editor did succeed, with the substantial help of Edmund Břetislav Kaizl, in realizing an important aspect of his aesthetic programme by widening the knowledge of the Czech readers in two branches of world literature — British and American. British literature came off rather badly, but the readers of Neruda's magazine could at least become more closely acquainted with its very greatest representative and, moreover, read fifteen of his sonnets in their mother tongue for the first time. On the other hand, the instruction they received in American literature was truly thorough. In spite of some erroneous critical judgments due to the condition of literary

⁶⁶ PL 1860, No. 1, 22.

⁶⁷ In the last line of sonnet LXXI in which "And mock you with me" is translated as "Would mock you as it [the wise world — LP] mocked me" (see PL 1860, No. 1, 23).

⁶⁸ The word "hair" — in Czech "vlas" — is in the fourth line of sonnet CXXX misprinted as "voice" — in Czech "hlas" (see PL 1860, No. 1, 23).

scholarship in Kaizl's time, especially the overevaluation of a number of authors entirely forgotten nowadays, and in spite of insufficient attention paid to prose and a total neglect of the drama, Kaizl in his studies made the Czech readers familiar with the whole history of American literature from its beginnings to his time, and in addition dealt in detail with the work of two of its outstanding representatives, Bryant and Longfellow. The weak points of Kaizl's work for the magazine go, of course, to the discredit of Neruda as editor as well, though in his case, too, they may be excused as being typical of their time and due to the current situation in literary studies. And it should be emphasized that these deficiencies are more than outweighed by the positive contribution of Kaizl's studies, which would not have been possible without the editorial work of Jan Neruda, who opened the pages of his magazine to such a competent contributor. That this representation of British and American literature in *Pictures of Life* under Neruda's editorial leadership was indeed to the credit of the great Czech classic writer is convincingly proved by the remaining two volumes of the magazine (1861—1862), which he did not edit any longer and to which he did not even contribute.⁶⁹ After his departure we may observe a marked decline in the general quality of the magazine. Contributions by outstanding Czech authors conspicuously diminish in number⁷⁰ and the representation of world literature, both in translations and in critical studies, is substantially limited. Critical studies on British and American literature do not appear at all, and there are translations of only five poems by British poets (contributed by Kaizl).⁷¹ Much decreased, too, is the representation of other branches of world literature, whether translations or critical studies (four translations compared with forty-four in the preceding two volumes, three critical studies compared with seven). It is no wonder, therefore, that the magazine gradually lost its original diversity and attractiveness and that because of the growing lack of interest on the part of its readers publication had to be stopped with the eighteenth number of the 1862 volume.

⁶⁹ The editor of the 1861 volume was Jiljí Vratislav Jahn, who in the following volume of 1862 figures only as the main collaborator of the new editor Antonín Augusta.

⁷⁰ Of the prominent poets only Vítězslav Hálek and Adolf Heyduk are represented, of writers of good prose fiction Josef Svátek.

⁷¹ See *PL* 1862, No. 2, 19, and No. 3, 26. They are the poems "The Inchcape Rock" by Robert Southey, "Hee Balou" and "Peggy's Charms" by Robert Burns, "The Palmer" by Sir Walter Scott, and "Written after swimming from Sestos to Abydos" by Lord Byron.

BRITSKÁ A AMERICKÁ LITERATURA V NERUDOVĚ ČASOPISE „OBRAZY ŽIVOTA“

V raném a středním období tvůrčího vývoje Jana Nerudy bylo po dobu patnácti let občasnou součástí jeho mnohostranné činnosti redigování beletristických časopisů. I tato jeho redakční práce je jako jeho celoživotní tvorba v plném souladu s jeho estetickým programem zdůrazňujícím potřebu umělecké pravdivosti, demokratické ideovosti a světovosti české literatury, a s požadavkem světovosti těsně souvisejícím úsilím osvobodit českou literaturu od jednostranného vlivu literatury německé a prohloubit znalosti českých čtenářů v neněmeckých oblastech literatury světové. Prvním z těchto časopisů byly *Obrazy života* (1859—1862), v jejichž prvních dvou ročnících Neruda působil i jako přispěvatel. K vysoké kvalitě tohoto listu, která mu získala renomé jednoho z našich vůbec nejlepších, přispělo i rozsáhlé zastoupení světové literatury. Důkladného poučení se čtenářům dostalo zejména o literatuře americké, a to ve čtyřech kritických statích E. B. Kaizla, které přes některé autorovy dobově poplatné mylné soudy podaly zasvěcené hodnocení celého vývoje této literatury od jejích počátků až po Kaizlovu dobu. Britská literatura je zastoupena pouze překlady dvou irských pověstí podepsanými šifrou “V. F.” a statí E. B. Kaizla “Shakespearovy Znělky”. Čtenáři se však alespoň mohli blíže seznámit s jedním dílem vůbec největšího představitel této literatury a poprvé si přečíst patnáct sonetů ve své mateřštině. Nerudovi se tedy za pomoci Kaizla skutečně zdařilo podstatně rozšířit obeznámenost českých čtenářů s angloamerickou literární oblastí. Jeho zásluha tím více vynikne, když prolistujeme ročníky 1861 a 1862, které už neredigoval a do nichž ani nepřispíval. Dochází v nich k výraznému snížení kvantity a kvality v zastoupení literatury české i světové. Kritické statí o britské či americké literatuře zde nejsou žádné, z překladů pouze pět básní od britských romantiků v Kaizlově převodu. Časopis ztratil svou zajímavost a pro nezáměr čtenářstva byl zastaven.