

Della Summers (ed.-in-chief), **Longman New Pocket English Dictionary**. Longman Group Limited, London 1984, 320 pp.

Another new member — a pocket English dictionary meant as a first monolingual learning dictionary — has recently increased the family of the Longman dictionaries. It offers definitions for about 10,000 words and phrases and presents them in clear and simple English, employing a limited vocabulary of 1600 common words. Numerous examples and even illustrations assist the learner in grasping the meanings defined.

The dictionary is an attractive booklet and very handy because of its truly pocket size. It may become a *vade-mecum* even for more advanced students, who could make use of it for simple definition practice, i. e. in learning how to define in a simple way the meanings of the most frequent English words, and for the exemplification of their employment. Students will appreciate that the examples adduced by the dictionary are different from those offered by the other Longman dictionaries.

The learner will use the dictionary preparatory to availing himself or herself of the *Longman Active Study Dictionary* and eventually of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* and other English dictionaries. In this way the new pocket dictionary fills a gap within the range of available monolingual English dictionaries. It will be welcomed even by those for whom it is not primarily intended.

Jan Firbas

Tibor Frank (ed.), **The Origins and Originality of American Culture**, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1984, 801 pp.

In April 1980 one of the more important international conferences on American studies held in Europe in recent years took place in Budapest. Over seventy literary scholars, linguists and social historians from Eastern and Western Europe, the Soviet Union and the United States presented papers on a wide variety of topics gathered loosely around the theme of the meeting, "The Origins and Originality of American Culture". Now these papers have been published and so made available to the general scholarly public.

The collection includes all the papers presented at the conference, arranged in fourteen sections. In fact the use of the term "American Culture" is somewhat misleading. The bias is heavily towards literature: twelve sections deal with literary topics (or view social and cultural phenomena through literature).

The linguistic papers in the volume fall under two headings — "Impacts and Influences" and "Theories and Theorists". The most interesting paper in the first group is Sándor Rot's discussion of lexical semantic fields (based on Trier's theory rid of its agnostic implications) in American neologisms from 1945 to 1975. Two other papers in the same group can also be considered as linguistically relevant and interesting — Veronika Kniezsa's treatment of expressions for 'playing truant' and László Pordány's analysis of borrowings from American in British English, including the influence of German on American English (one example, 'iron out', however, is recorded in the *OED*). The remaining three contributions in "Impacts and Influences" are not linguistic papers as such. Péter Medgyes argues which of the two variants should be taught at schools and, with various qualifications, favours Standard British English. John Odmark's discussion of relations between language and culture operates with imprecise and subjective notions, such as the vitality and originality of the American language, and Julio-César Santoyo's survey of Spanish loan-words is an emotional defence of Spanish-speaking settlers in the present USA based on arguments long since familiar from other authors.

In the second linguistic group, "Theories and Theorists", the most revealing, in the reviewer's opinion, are Messmer's and Kenesei's papers. András Messmer shows how advanced Whitney's approach to language was and István Kenesei's discussion of relative clauses is well founded and well balanced. In another paper, József Andor traces Chomsky's views back to early, especially European thinking. The remaining two papers by László Varga and Katalin E. Kiss deal with questions related to the theory of functional sentence perspective. The relation between stress, syntax, and semantics, discussed by Varga, is