

tion, reflecting the official views of the English government, which were, predictably, inimical to the ally of England's foe, Louis XIV. Yet Defoe could not always hide his contempt for the Habsburg suppression of Hungary's liberties and of the freedom of worship of his coreligionists, the Protestants of Hungary.

These latter documents cover a wide range of views: Protestant writers and those friendly toward France supported Rákóczi; those favoring the Habsburgs were hostile toward him. Köpeczi says, "We selected such documents as were in our view characteristic and at the same time easy to understand because they were least burdened by long successions of legal and historical arguments" (p. 30). With that editorial criterion, it is likely that the documents were chosen for a general readership rather than to illuminate the issue on a more sophisticated level. Within that framework, however, the book affords an objective, well-balanced, informative, and precise view of the Rákóczi years.

BÉLA K. KIRÁLY

Brooklyn College of the City University of New York

STEPHEN SZÉCHENYI AND THE AWAKENING OF HUNGARIAN NATIONALISM, 1791–1841. By *George Barany*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968. xviii, 487 pp. \$15.00.

Széchenyi's life was replete with paradoxes. A rich aristocrat and cosmopolitan who remained unwaveringly loyal to the Habsburg dynasty, a man who till the age of thirty hardly knew Hungarian and was scarcely familiar with his "fatherland," he was to become the national awakener of modern Hungary. An idealist whose entire life was ruled by faith in divine justice and a Christian perfectionism, he became a founder of a capitalist economy. An economic, social, and constitutional reformer and apostle of modern nationalism, he was taken aback when the social and political forces of modern nationalism broke through the dams of slow, systematic "reform from above." He was torn between the agonizing alternatives of a rigid, absolutistic administration and a sweeping liberal opposition movement, between a reaction jeopardizing all his reform work and revolutionary anarchy. The final question, "whether reform sincerely accepted and intelligently applied in time could be a substitute for either strong-fisted absolutism or revolution," is a relevant one for the modern twentieth-century reader.

The interest of the reader is aroused in the introductory pages, and it is sustained to the end of the book. Barany uses fully all the ingredients of modern analytic biography. The son's faithfully obedient and still critical relations with his father, his religious and humanist upbringing, the fascinating light-minded Viennese high society of the 1810s, the alarming experiences of a long military service, the broadening horizons during foreign travels, uncontrollable Eros and self-torturing guilts—these are the threads out of which the author weaves, with deep psychological feeling and fine human sympathy, the early portrait. In the picture of the mature Széchenyi, the author emphasizes the struggles of an active, constructive life, and the collisions of a hostile, suspicious, or applauding outer world and a politically tough but spiritually hypersensitive inner constitution. Perhaps the deepest, most impressive section of the book deals with the transition between these two phases of Széchenyi's life.

The book is based on thorough research. The 1,500 footnotes embrace the entire

literature on Széchenyi, including the twenty-four massive volumes of his collected works, letters, and papers. Also used are documents from all the accessible archives—that is, from Austria, Great Britain, France, Sweden, the Vatican, and the United States. The book is more than the biography of an outstanding person, for Széchenyi is skillfully placed within his age. Barany finds that his subject's character and ability coincided with the needs of an age ripe for reform, and he expertly interweaves the other figures and problems of the first part of the Hungarian "Reform Age" (1825–41) with Széchenyi's activities and concerns.

Moreover, the Hungarian developments studied are fitted into the proper European context, and the implications of the potentialities of Hungarian nationalism are explored. Especially interesting are the new data and conclusions regarding the governing system of the Habsburg Empire, Metternich's political conception, and the European powers' understanding of the Hungarian situation. Through Széchenyi's example, the author proves that Enlightenment and Romanticism, religion and liberalism, were reconcilable in the Central European nationalisms as long as it was merely a question of national awakening, social programs, the abolition of serfdom, and economic modernization. But, without idealizing Széchenyi's weakness and gradual ineffectiveness, he also points out that liberalism and nationalism came into conflict the moment there appeared on the agenda the political program of nation building. In one place (p. 101) the author justifiably calls it an oversimplification that "whenever the principles of nationality and liberalism clashed, Széchenyi *always* sacrificed . . . the interests of liberty . . . to those of his affection for his race." At the end he nevertheless concludes, "Nationality, above or at the expense of liberty—this characteristic feature of Central European nationalism was clearly formulated by the father of modern Hungarian nationalism at this point." It was not possible then, nor has it been possible since, to reconcile the principles of liberal democracy and the pretensions of nationalism in this mixed and multinational area. And yet in the nationality question Széchenyi belonged among the more moderate and more tolerant representatives of Magyar nationalism.

The work also asks whether it is possible to solve the conflict between simultaneous loyalties to the nation and the unity of a supernational empire. Széchenyi dedicated his entire life to proving the possibility of such reconciliations, and within himself perhaps he did succeed. His solution, however, was not accepted by the modern nationalism he inspired. In this volume no answer is yet given to the question whether there actually did exist the possibility of reconciliation, whether Széchenyi's "golden mean" was really viable, or to use the generally valid formulation of the introduction, whether reform sincerely accepted and intelligently applied in time could be a substitute for absolutism or revolution. But, from Széchenyi's dramatic break with the liberal nationalist reform trend and his sharp polemics with the rising new leader Kossuth—with which this volume ends—one can already suspect the answer.

Perhaps one area in which the work is weaker than in other respects is in dealing with economic problems, or more precisely with the crises of the feudal order and their political manifestations. Here the author did not fully utilize the available literature. Nevertheless, in general this book is the best Széchenyi biography as well as the most competent work on Hungary's "Reform Age" ever to appear in the West.

PÉTER HANÁK
Hungarian Academy of Sciences