

THE ORIGINS OF THE CRIMEAN ALLIANCE. By *Ann Pottinger Saab*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977. xii, 223 pp. \$17.50.

The origin of the Crimean War has long been a fascinating topic in diplomatic history. Scholars have attempted to explain how the Great Powers—Russia, France, Great Britain, and the Ottoman Empire—were drawn into a major conflict in which the immediate issues in dispute were not clear, and when no government, with the exception of the Ottoman regime, wished to fight. The problem of how this could have happened is analyzed in Ann Pottinger Saab's excellent monograph. The narrative covers the two years from the arrival of the Menshikov mission in February 1852 to France's and Britain's entry into war with Russia in March 1854; particular attention is given, as the author explains, to "the process by which the British government, initially reluctant to become involved in the Eastern crisis, became the Ottoman Empire's military ally." Consequently, the focus is on those events at Constantinople which "enmeshed the British in a war they wanted to win but did not wish to fight" (p. ix).

A great strength of this account is the sympathetic attention given to the Ottoman position. The author has used Ottoman archives and Turkish historical literature, and the Ottoman capital is the center of the narrative. The book commences with a discussion of the Menshikov mission and an analysis of its goals, particularly the demand for the recognition of what, in practice, would have been a Russian protectorate over the Orthodox subjects of the sultan. Acceptance of this condition was correctly regarded as a "death sentence" by the Ottoman government. British influence in Constantinople, especially in relation to the Tanzimat reforms and the reaction of the various elements of Ottoman society to them, is also fully discussed.

In the chapters tracing the steps toward war, this reviewer found particularly interesting the explanation of the activities of Stratford Canning, the British ambassador, and Constantine Musurus, the Ottoman representative in London, whose overly optimistic "descriptions of British readiness to help" (p. 72) contributed to the Ottoman willingness to go to war. The analysis of the background of the battle of Sinope and the effect that disastrous defeat had in drawing the Western powers into war is also extremely effective.

The book is based on a thorough study of the literature on the Crimean War published in the major European languages and in Modern and Ottoman Turkish. French, British, Austrian, and Ottoman archives are similarly used. Although the emphasis is on British and Ottoman policy, the positions of the other powers are also discussed. The account is a good companion to the recent work by Paul Schroeder, *Austria, Britain, and the Crimean War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), which emphasizes Habsburg policy.

BARBARA JELAVICH
Indiana University

GESCHICHTE DER RUSSISCHEN LITERATUR. 3rd ed., 2 vols. By *Adolf Stender-Petersen*. Munich: C. H. Beck, 1978 [Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1957]. Vol. 1: xvi, 440 pp. Vol. 2: 623 pp. DM 48.

The appearance of an unchanged third edition of a work which was translated (under the late author's supervision) over twenty years ago (in 1957) would seem to indicate its intrinsic value. Certainly no one scholar could write a history of Russian literature from its beginnings to the Symbolist period, and keep his treatment equally strong, alert, and profound throughout. Stender-Petersen, an expert in the medieval period, is remarkably knowledgeable in the eighteenth century as well. His treatment of nineteenth-century literature is sound and informative, but generally eclectic in a con-