

THE CRIMEAN WAR: A RUSSIAN CHRONICLE. By *Albert Seaton*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977. 232 pp. + 8 pp. plates. Maps. \$12.95.

Despite its generally admitted importance for many aspects of the history of Russia, the Crimean War has yet to gain serious attention from Russian historians who write in English. Colonel Seaton has set out to rectify this situation and he succeeds to some degree in a very narrowly defined area. His book is a short and highly readable account of the actual combat that took place on the Crimean peninsula, and is based almost exclusively on major Russian secondary sources and memoirs and correspondence of Russians who fought there. The introductory and concluding sections, dealing with diplomacy and imperial policy, are shallow and should have been omitted.

Despite the title, this is not a chronicle of the war as a whole; there are only cursory references to other theaters of conflict. He includes virtually nothing about the logistical problems that the Russians faced, and how they managed to surmount them for a surprisingly long period of time, or about Totleben's remarkably successful efforts to fortify Sevastopol. The author's decision to view things exclusively from the Russian side and to rely essentially on Russian sources makes it impossible to introduce comparative elements into the description. Russian generalship was frequently inept, but was it, on the whole, more inept than that of the Allies?

As Colonel Seaton notes, in some respects Russian weapons were inferior to those of their opponents, yet he does not tell the reader how significant this inferiority was. The student of military history will find little about differences in tactics used by the Russians and by the British and French. The Crimean War was fought during the period of transition from preindustrial to industrial warfare. Were the British or the French really more "modern," or was the Russian defeat caused simply by inept leadership and the need to keep much of the army inactive on the Austrian frontier?

There is a long list of interesting questions that are not touched in Seaton's book. The serious student will find John S. Curtiss's treatment in *The Russian Army under Nicholas I* more helpful. Nevertheless, within its narrow limits, *The Crimean War: A Russian Chronicle* is reasonably successful and will be enjoyed by battle buffs.

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THE LIFE OF FRIEDRICH ENGELS, 2 vols. By *W. O. Henderson*. London: Frank Cass, 1976. Vol. 1: xii, 389 pp. + 8 pp. photographs. Index. Vol. 2: ix, 464 pp. (pp. 390-853) + 8 pp. photographs. \$60.00 for 2 vols. Distributed by ISBS, Inc., P.O. Box 555, Forest Grove, Oregon 97116.

The great irony of the history of socialism is that its most ambitious theoretical essay, *Das Kapital*—an indictment of an economic system in which labor, the well-spring of social wealth, is progressively rendered unproductive—should have been written by a man who was, for most of his life, voluntarily unemployed. In this he was supported and financed by a practicing capitalist, who himself spent the last twenty-five years of his life as a coupon-clipping rentier.

So it is that we are accustomed to think of Friedrich Engels primarily as the man who made it possible for Karl Marx to work in the British Museum, who relieved his poverty and enabled him to educate his children privately and to live relatively comfortably during his late middle years. We remember him, too, as a man whose personal attachment was such that, to save Marx embarrassment, he gave himself out to be the parent of his housekeeper Helene Demuth's child, whom Marx himself had fathered.

Engels's activities as Marx's friend and supporter are indeed carefully documented by W. O. Henderson in his two-volume biography. But he does much more than that. He rehearses the material which makes it possible to reassess Engels as a nineteenth-century socialist writer and activist. The book is organized in a very straightforward fashion. The first volume takes Engels's life to 1870, dealing with his early years, his revolutionary activities in the late 1840s and the 1848 revolutions, his business activities, and his contacts with German revolutionaries abroad, about which he gives a detailed account. An entire chapter is devoted to the origins, influence, and significance of Engels's *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*. The second volume examines Engels's role in the composition of *Das Kapital*, gives a lengthy account of his work as a journalist, especially as a military correspondent, and devotes much space to Engels's work as a socialist publicist and organizer in the two decades before and after Marx's death in 1883.

This biography is a work of very extensive and careful scholarship by someone who is familiar with both the primary and secondary sources and who deploys them with great care. The results of all the most recent work on Engels, including that of Förder and Cornu, which are specifically acknowledged, are all drawn together carefully. W. O. Henderson's book is now the fullest and most authoritative account of Engels's life available.

Having said this, it may still be that many readers will be disappointed by the book. Although we are constantly reminded that Engels was, in his own right, a figure of stature and authority in the socialist movement, it remains true that the most interesting aspect of Engels's life was his relationship with Marx. And although the contacts between the two and the subventions which Engels provided are meticulously recorded, there is a sense in which the relationship remains a mystery. Engels and Marx were very different characters. Engels was tall, athletic, and fit and his physical dissimilarity from his great friend was accentuated by temperamental differences. Marx's life, however disorganized, was dominated by a spendthrift wife of essentially bourgeois tastes, whose domestic affairs, at least outwardly, were marked by a strong desire for social respectability. Engels lived with illiterate women whom Jenny Marx would not have in her house. At the same time Engels was *more* respectable than Marx, more at ease in the upper middle-class world, wrote more fluently, and coped more equably with the typical tragedies of life. He was fundamentally a more optimistic and genial character than Marx, and his view of social development was, perhaps, less cataclysmic.

None of this is at odds with what is set forth in the book under review, but the author arrays his material so carefully, and with such concern for fairness, that we are left with the feeling that some imaginative insight—which would tell us not just why Engels was friendly to Marx but why he was *so* generous and long-suffering in a relationship in which he was exclusively the giver—is missing. It has been argued, particularly in recent years, that Engels vulgarized the teaching of his friend, especially in, say, *Anti-Dühring*, but, although Henderson thoroughly exposes the mechanics of their intercourse throughout the period after the publication of volume 1 of *Das Kapital*, he does not allow himself to speculate on the dynamics of the relationship.

But to say so much, and only so much, is to be ungrateful, because this is a book which is indispensable. The fact that it still leaves room for the essayist does not detract from its great value.

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