

Insofar as evidence permits, Professor Sablinsky clarifies Gapon's relations with the authorities. He apparently tried to remain as independent of them as possible, sharing the Slavophiles' belief in unfettered action with the government's blessing and cooperation—like the Slavophiles, he would square the circle. Yet he demonstrated a traditional equivocation reminiscent of the sixteenth-century church in the matter of an acceptable degree of government protection and control. He never perceived any moral or political inconsistency in accepting occasional material support from the state. This, of course, makes his hopeless effort to revive the Assembly after January 9 appear hypocritical. Moreover, throughout the movement Gapon gave the impression of greater sycophancy than the author suggests.

A detailed account of Gapon's relations with the oppositional and revolutionary parties is particularly enlightening. From the Kadets to the Bolsheviks, they opposed and underestimated his activity, considering it diversionary and amateurish. The workers also held their would-be intellectual mentors at arms' length, as dangerous to their cause. Thus, the blunders of January 9 ended Lenin's anxiety about workers acting without Marxist leadership. Assembly leaders were to sit in the St. Petersburg Soviet.

The author's introduction is in large measure a comprehensive statistical overview of the condition and position of labor at the turn of the century. The partially descriptive bibliography of some fifty pages covers all aspects of the assembly movement.

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THE LAST DAYS OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA, 1910–1917. By *Miriam Kochan*.
New York: Macmillan, 1976. 224 pp. Illus. \$15.95.

Miriam Kochan's book on the last days of imperial Russia is a handsomely illustrated volume intended for the general reader. The author's primary aim is to convey some notion of the way people in various classes of society lived, combined with a description of the growing atmosphere of political apocalypse. She has relied chiefly on memoirs, either those of foreigners who were present or of Russians whose memoirs have been translated into English. Chapters on the social life and mores of the wealthiest nobles and merchants concentrate on the extravagant opulence in which they maintained themselves. Their wealth is contrasted to the meager existence of the peasantry and the rapidly growing working class. Theater and ballet are the central concerns of a chapter on the world of art, while a chapter on religion, aside from a brief reference to the deeply religious nature of the Russian people, is devoted almost exclusively to Rasputin. Finally, a chapter on the imperial family recounts their personal drama in familiar terms.

Although a certain amount of oversimplification is inevitable in this kind of book, several choices of emphasis seem arguable. There is no mention of the multinational character of the Russian Empire and the attendant problems. The general reader is left with a false impression of the nobility because of the author's decision to portray only the fantastically wealthy. Given the small space devoted to the revolutionary movement and those elements of society which stood between the wealthy few and the masses, the author's overweening concern with who wore what to the ball becomes annoying. The author has found a number of excellent old photographs with which to illustrate her story, many of them unfamiliar. The book contains numerous factual errors and misspelled words, none worth quibbling about here.

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