

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.