

FRITZ: THE STORY OF A POLITICAL ASSASSIN. By *Ronald Florence*. New York: Dial Press, 1971. viii, 337 pp. \$8.95.

"Fritz" is Fritz Adler, the man who in October 1916 assassinated Count Stürgkh as a demonstration against the war and the oppressive internal regime in Austria, for which he held Stürgkh responsible. It was the one effective act of his life, which otherwise was a story of frustrations. The son of the famous Viktor Adler, re-founder and thereafter leader of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, he imbibed in infancy a dedicated devotion to the causes of international socialism and pacifism, but his difficult and uncompromising character kept him at loggerheads with the leaders of the party—the disputes reaching a climax when the party, like the German party and others, refused to take a stand against war in 1914. Condemned to death—as he expected and perhaps hoped—for his act, amnestied, and released in 1918, he again proved to be a lone wolf in Austrian politics, and his efforts to revive the old International came to little. He died, almost forgotten, in 1960.

Dr. Florence's work is based on a painstaking study of Adler's personal papers, and on the accounts of his trial, which he himself made the occasion for a lengthy profession of faith and denunciation of the regime. This part of the book, which includes a description of Adler's unexpected scientific interests, is sympathetically done and contains much new material, since strangely enough no one else had hitherto found Adler's life deserving of a full-length study. Even these pages hardly constitute a full biography, for the whole forty-two years from 1918 to 1960 are dismissed in eight pages, only five of them about Adler. When the author ventures into wider fields, he is not very happy. His book gives only the most summary account of Adler's party, of the living conditions of the Austrian workers, or even of the regime which provoked Adler to his act; on the other hand, there are irrelevancies, such as a description of Emperor Francis Joseph's funeral and his successor's act of abdication. There are a good many factual mistakes: to mention only one, the Emperor Charles was not the younger brother of Francis Ferdinand (p. 206), but his nephew. The style is fluent but somewhat theatrical; the effect is most satisfactory when the events described, such as the assassination and subsequent trial, were themselves dramatic.

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HISTORIA POLSKI, 1795–1918. By *Stefan Kieniewicz*. Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1968. 611 pp. 72 zł.

This large textbook is the second volume of the yet unfinished three-volume history of Poland published in Warsaw. Covering the period from partitions to the re-emergence of the Polish state in 1918, it reflects the predominant trend in present-day Polish historiography. Its author, an outstanding and most prolific writer, has contributed a large number of books on the nineteenth century. To the English reader he should be known for his *Emancipation of the Polish Peasantry* (Chicago, 1969) and for a section in the *History of Poland* (Warsaw, 1968), of which he was also chief editor.

The present volume is meant for university students and represents a synthetic treatment of the period. Only one other book exists in Polish which immediately invites comparison—the study by Marian Kukiel, *Dzieje Polski porozbiorowe, 1795–1921*, published in London in 1961. These books are comparable in size and in