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Starred Review. Those who think of terrorism as an inexplicable evil produced by an alien culture will have their eyes opened by this fascinating study of 19th-century anarchist terrorists. Yale historian Merriman (History of Modern Europe) tells the story of Émile Henry, a well-educated young man from a politically radical family who tossed a bomb into a crowded Paris cafe in 1894. In Merrimans portrait, Henry emerges as an understandable, if not sympathetic, figure_a sensitive dreamer whose outrage at the misery of the poor curdled into a fanatical hatred of bourgeois society. He found a home in Europes percolating anarchist movement, whose adherents celebrated a cult of revolutionary violence and sang hymns to Lady Dynamite; their bombings and assassinations set off a wave of panic and police repression. Merrimans account frames an illuminating study of working-class radicalism in belle époque France and its bitter conflict with the establishment in an age when class warfare was no metaphor. Its also an absorbing true crime story, with Dostoyevskian overtones, about high ideals that motivate desperate acts.