

Westphalia. He rapidly rose after this, and soon his name became a tower of strength, not only in his own land but throughout the broad continent of Europe. He early displayed great administrative ability, and as the chief member of the Prussian ministry, he effected many important changes in the conduct of affairs. Among other things he abolished restrictions on internal trade, and for a time success seemed to crown his every effort; but the French invasion and conquest snapped his policy asunder, and embittered many years of his life. He was conservative and religious in tone, full of vital energy and daring, bitter in his hostility to bureaucracy and military despotism, and warm in his admiration of the vigorous years of the past. He took a firm stand on the question which raised the expediency of allowing communities to govern themselves, which he considered the only practical guarantee of national liberty. In 1807, he was dismissed from office by the impotent king, when he withdrew to his estates in Nassau, only to be recalled with open arms again some months afterwards, when the wisdom of his policy was revealed by the Peace of Tilsit. Napoleon, who at that time, did not dream of Stein's real character, nor know of his intense patriotism, favoured the recall of the eminent minister. Another year elapsed, and the Corsican ruler suspecting Stein, by means of information found in an intercepted letter, which criticised his policy, set the wheels in motion to free his path from so redoubtable an antagonist in the field of statecraft and diplomacy. Stein, in November, 1808, was forced to resign, while in the very midst of the prosecution of his series of political reforms, which are known in history as Stein's System, and which provided for the abolition of serfage, the establishment of a municipal organization, similar to that of England, and others equally advanced and pertinent. Stein im-

mediately retired to Austria, and joined the Tugendbund—a secret national society, and the French emperor confiscated his property. In 1812, the Baron's influence was cast with Russia, and in response to a summons from Alexander, he went to the court of the autocrat. He encouraged the coalition against his arch-enemy, and when the allies marched into Saxony, he became President of the Council of all the German States. Shortly after this he attended the Congresses of Vienna and Aix-la-Chapelle, but through the intrigues of lesser men, he made no very distinguished appearance there, and ceased to take afterwards any marked political standpoint. His statesmanship may almost be said to end with the Fall of 1812, for though he enjoyed honours until the day of his death, his name was no longer used as a conjuring word. He was undoubtedly a hero and a brave man. He had to fight the battles of his country against open enemies without and covert traitors within. His manner was sharp and decisive, and even his best friends suffered from his autocratic bearing and generally defiant attitude. In his time he formulated many plans for German unification and strength, and these have been taken up by his successors in office, and several of them have been literally carried out. Stein died in 1831, at Fraücht, where he had lived during the last years of his life in the full enjoyment of his estates, which had been returned to him by the Government. Too much can hardly be said in praise of the admirable style in which this notable biography is written. It represents a monument of labour, exhaustive study, and copious research. It must make a marked impression in the world, and pass into history as one of the great biographies.

Another biography, calculated to provoke much comment among literary people everywhere, is Mr. Hamerton's faithful, and in every way