

THE MENTAL STATUS OF THE HOHENZOLLERNS.

The present upheaval in Europe has set medical men athinking, and one of the results is some attention has been given to the mental stability of the Hohenzollerns, to which house the present Emperor of Germany belongs. One of the most critical studies of this subject has been made public from the pen of Dr. Cabanès, of Paris, who is noted for his medico-historical researches.

The dynasty really began with Frederick William, who reigned from 1640 to 1688, and called himself Duke of Prussia, Margrave of Brandenburg, and Arch-Chancellor of the Holy Roman Empire, and many other titles. He was very ambitious and ever on the grasp for power.

He was succeeded by his son, Frederick, who was the first to assume the title of King of Prussia—putting the crown on his head with his own hands. He had a passion for ceremonies of all kinds. One of his great regrets when he died, in 1713, was that he could not witness the pageant of his own funeral.

He was followed by Frederick William I., who lives in the pages of Carlyle. He ruled his family and all who came under him with relentless brutality, and on one occasion could hardly be restrained from putting his son to death with his own hands. He was noted as the meanest and stingiest man in Europe; yet he spent large sums in kidnapping tall men wherever he could find them and putting them in his guards, and then made great efforts to secure large women as wives for these in order that he might raise up a race of giants. As he grew older he became more and more irritable and had epileptic fits and attacks of mania.

Following him we have Frederick the Great, a man of marked ability, but without moral principle. He had absolutely no regard for oaths, agreements, or friendships. Everything had to go that stood between him and his object. He was a thorough freebooter. He did much for Prussia, but on methods of shameless trickery and downright robbery. He was mean and brutal like his father, but with more ability. He directed in his will that he was to be buried among his favorite dogs to show his contempt for mankind. He kept himself incessantly busy to escape the melancholy that ever haunted him; and he was constantly scribbling verses of poetry.

He was succeeded by his nephew, a conceited visionary, and full of crude superstitions. He encouraged all sort of mystics in his country. During his reign the weird performances of secret societies reach high-water mark. The King sometimes attended these mystic ceremonies in disguise, and it is said that the excitement of them hastened his end, which occurred in 1797.