

ideal aims, a generous spirit of self-sacrifice, and a feeling of one common duty pervaded the German nation, and foremost in it the teachers and students of the German universities.¹ This spirit, as it produced co-operation and unity of action, also favoured unity of thought, and contributed much to the popularity of several philosophical systems which promised more than they could give. Encyclopædic surveys were then supposed to be more than the empty shell, the mere skeleton of learning which they have since proved to be; they were looked upon as being able to grasp and convey the living spirit of knowledge. This phase of thought, which in the sequel will largely command our attention, has dis-

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second volume of Ersch and Gruber's 'Encyclopædie,' gives a definition and history of encyclopædic study, which, according to him, was introduced into the modern (German) universities together with the philosophical faculty. In the beginning this was subservient to the three higher faculties (theology, law, and medicine), but gradually took the lead. He argues that only since university studies have become encyclopædic can they be considered as furthering true humanity. He refers to the great crisis through which in the beginning of the century literature, science, and arts were passing (p. li), and mentions the conflicting principles in the treatment of mathematics, physics, history, philosophy, and philology. See also the 'Vorbericht,' vol. i. p. vii.

¹ Among the mass of literature dealing with this subject, the 'Memoirs of Frederick Perthes,' by his son (English translation, vol. i. chap. xi. *sqq.*), and Steffens's 'Autobiography' ('Was ich erlebte,'

Breslau, 1840-44, 10 vols.), give the most vivid and exhaustive accounts. Neither Stein, the great statesman, nor Goethe, the great poet and thinker of the age, took part in this alliance of the patriotic and intellectual interests of the German nation. Stein's attitude to the idealism of the age is defined by Seeley, 'Life of Stein' (vol. i. p. 30, "It is desirable to mark that between him and the literature and philosophy of his time and country there was no connection at all"), and is expressed in a remarkable conversation which he had with Steffens, March 1813, at Breslau (quoted by Seeley, vol. iii. p. 119; Steffens, vol. vii. p. 120 *sqq.*) Goethe's position is defined by his reply to the invitation to contribute to the 'Deutsches Museum,' a periodical planned by the bookseller Perthes. It was to be a scientific alliance of all the intellect of Germany, and was in time "to be transformed into a political one possessing the strength and union necessary for vigorous action" (Perthes' Memoirs, vol. i. p. 167).