
NEW TITLES

History

**GOLD AND IRON:
Bismarck, Bleichröder, and
the Building of the German
Empire**

by Fritz Stern
Knopf, 1977, 620 pp. \$17.95
L of C 76-26128
ISBN 0-394-49545-4

Columbia historian Fritz Stern, using new archival material, including the recently uncovered papers of the wealthy Jewish banker Gerson Bleichröder, argues that political, more than economic, forces controlled and shaped imperial 19th-century Germany. By focusing on the exceptionally close collaboration between Bismarck and Bleichröder for over 30 years, Stern reveals what other historians have ignored or minimized—that Bismarck understood the political uses of money and consciously employed economics as an instrument of policy. He shows how the banker acted as the chancellor's political and financial adviser, helped him to amass a large personal fortune, and served him as diplomatic agent and financier of his wars against Denmark (1864) and Austria (1866). Portraying Bleichröder as a striver for social acceptance, Stern, in passing, demonstrates how Prussian anti-Semitism barred this conservative nouveau riche financier from assimilation into the aristocracy.

**THE EMPIRE OF
REASON: How Europe
Imagined and America
Realized the Enlightenment**

by Henry Steele Commager
Doubleday/Anchor, 1977
342 pp. \$10
L of C 76-2837
ISBN 0-385-11672-1

The modern tendency, writes Commager, is to view the American Revolution "against the foreground of our own time." Conscious of its limitations, we neglect its greatest accomplishment: If the Old World imagined the Enlightenment, only the New World achieved it. The Revolution's debt to such men as Montesquieu and Locke has long been acknowledged. But in this sweeping rummage through the 18th century, Commager shifts perspective to examine Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, and others as *philosophes*—but also as men of affairs, who could create a rational system of government unthinkable in the old societies across the sea. A romantic in the grand historical tradition,