

for which there has not yet been sufficient time since his decease. Many of the writings respecting him which have been published, are so disguised by the partial and prejudiced views of the writers; and others of them bear so evident marks of being written to serve a particular purpose at that time, that very little reliance can be placed in their fidelity; nor can any just conclusions be drawn from the data they furnish. Some of these productions have been sent into the world by men who had no opportunity of acquiring a correct knowledge of the events they pretend to describe, but who catching their information from flimsy and garbled newspaper reports; and being possessed with the book-making mania, set themselves up as authors without any one qualification to fit them for such an undertaking. There are none of these objections apply to the work before us. Count de Segur is obviously no book-making writer—he does not seek to attract attention to his publication and secure a sale for it by a flaming title, which often promises more than the perusal of the work realizes. On the contrary, he modestly ushers it forward under the simple title of “*A History of the Expedition to Russia*,” although the work, besides giving a clear and minute detail of the operations of that campaign; furnishes a mass of other information such as we have not met with in any other writings on the subject. The operation of the various events of the campaign, upon the mind of Bonaparte, is detailed with a minuteness which displays the character of that ambitious but persevering Emperor in a light in which it has seldom been viewed before. Nor is it of him alone we have characteristic traits; almost all the officers of rank who accompanied him on the occasion have come in for their share, and have their dispositions portrayed with a minuteness which shows the writer to have been an attentive observer of passing events and that he has given a faithful narration of them. To aid his talents as a writer, General de Segur had opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of his subject which happen to but few. Holding a high rank in the army he was admitted to the most private councils of his brother officers—was always present and consulted when Bonaparte developed his vast plans, or condescended to ask the advice of his Generals on any proceeding. And besides he seems to have been a frequent spectator of the effects produced in the Emperor’s mind, by success or adversity in his measures. The whole result of his observations he narrates in a manner which deeply impresses the reader with the conviction of their authenticity. The style in which the Book is written, even in its translation from the original, is simple, but elegant and animated, while the chain of incidents which pervades it, is preserved with a spirit which leads the reader along with the author, and completely exempts him from that tedium which not unfrequently attends the perusal of purely historical details.

Viewing General de Segur’s labours in this light, we consider ourselves as fully justified in the assertion with which we set out; and we will even go a step farther, and may say that this work is not only capable of affording entertainment and instruction to the reader of the present day, but its contents will be found valuable to the future historian. It is now universally admitted that the character of a truly great man can never be justly appreciated by his cotemporaries; nor