

“Napoleon preferred figures and *distinct* styles:—*tragedy, history, epic*. Being the personification of *algebra*, he despised the gradation, *woman* and nobility.

“Life, which is fruitful, is movable; so immovable algebra always breaks when it comes in contact with life.

“Napoleon’s $a+b$ encountered two chances, two unknown quantities, two x , which conquered it:—Madrid and Moscow.

“The snows of Russia and the sun of Spain vanquished Napoleon; unexpected realities overthrew the certainties of algebra.

“Before Montenotte you see Bonaparte—the man, the sword, the little gray hat. At Austerlitz, the chief, the master, and the war-horse. After Austerlitz, the draped robe, the sceptre, the actor’s part.

“The hero Bonaparte disappears at Montenotte. Napoleon the Great arises. The public and imperial part begins at Austerlitz.

“Thus Napoleon passes from heroism to the enjoyment of power, and from power to theatrical display.

“From reality to splendour;—from splendour to costume.

“As men are children they have especially admired this last phase—that of costume.”

Sharp, bitter words these, yet how true. And how visibly Chasles brings before us the whole of the wondrous career of the great soldier! As you read you see the pale, thin face of the young general “with eyes in which burned a feverish light;” the form clad in the plain manly uniform of the republic, you hear the voice commanding the charge, and watch the rush of men, ragged and half-starved, drive back the proud Austrian army. Then the man appears to you on that memorable December morning, when the sun of Austerlitz rose on the battle of the Three Emperors; and again in his capital, decked out with trappings unseemly on a warrior; in the long wild flight from Moscow; in the twilight of that June evening with the Prussian host after him, and last of all, on the rock in mid-ocean. It is no slight talent that of sketching in so few words such a man and such a career.

The result of Chasles’ study of authors and their style, is well seen in his mode of treating Literary Questions. Beginning with definitions which clearly make out the peculiarities of nations, he analyses the style of the greatest authors of all times and places, and draws forth lessons which, condensed into a few lines, are worth