Précis du siècle de Louis XV (III)

Histoire de la guerre de 1741

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The Précis du siècle de Louis XV is an account of Voltaire’s own world. His sources are the memoirs of leading military or political figures, many known to him personally, the wide range of archives and state papers to which he had access as historiographe de France, what he reads in the press, and what he picks up in conversation. We have moved from Voltaire historian to Voltaire the shrewd eye-witness, writing with vivacity of what he has seen and heard.

This volume contains the full text of the Histoire de la guerre de 1741, a detailed account of the war of Austrian succession from the French perspective and written by Voltaire in his capacity of royal historiographer. Editorial notes help to place this work in the context of the later Précis and explain how Voltaire refined his text and altered his perspective. It provides and invaluable insight into the evolution of the text into its final form, and sheds light on Voltaire’s working methods and creative process.

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