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COLLECTION
OF
BRITISH AUTHORS.
VOL. 560.

OLIVER CROMWELL'S LETTERS AND SPEECHES
BY
THOMAS CARLYLE.
IN FOUR VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

By the same Author,

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LETTERS AND SPEECHES:

WITH ELUCIDATIONS.

BY

THOMAS CARLYLE.

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VOL. I.

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BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1861.



PREFACE

TO THE SECOND (LONDON) EDITION.

THE First Edition of this Work* having, contrary to expectation, spread itself abroad with some degree of impetus, has, as in that case was partly natural, brought me into correspondence with various possessors and collectors of Cromwell Letters; has brought obliging contributions, and indications true and fallacious, from far sources and from near; and, on the whole, has disinterred from their widespread slumber a variety of Letters not before known to me, or not before remembered by me. With which new Letters it became a rather complex question what was now to be done.

They were not, in general, of much, or almost of any, intrinsic importance; might here and there have saved some ugly labour and research, had they been known in time; but did not now, as it turned out, tend to modify, in any essential particular, what had already been set down, and sent forth to the world as a kind of continuous connected Book. It is true, all clearly authentic Letters of Cromwell, never so unimportant, do claim to be preserved; and in this Book, by the title of it, are naturally to be looked for. But, on the

* December 1845.

other hand, how introduce them now? To unhoop your cask again, and try to insert new staves, when the old staves, better or worse, do already hang together, is what no cooper will recommend! Not to say, that your Set of Cromwell Letters can never, in this Second or in any other Edition, be considered as *complete*: an uncounted handful of needles to be picked from an unmeasured continent of hay, — how can you ever assure yourself that you have them all?

After deliberation, the law of the case seemed to be somewhat as follows: *First*, that whatever Letters would easily fit themselves into the Book as it stood, — easily, or even with labour if that were all, — should be duly admitted. *Secondly*, that for such Letters as tended to bring into better relief any feature of the Man or his Work, — much more, had they tended to correct or alter in any respect any feature I had assigned to him or to it: that for these an effort should be made, if needful; even a considerable effort; effort, in fact, to be limited only by this consideration, Not to damage by it to a still greater degree the already extant, and so by one's effort accomplish only loss. *Thirdly*, that for such Cromwell Letters as did not fall under either of these descriptions, but were nevertheless clearly of his composition, there should be an *Appendix* provided. In which, without pretension to commentary, and not needing to be read along with the Text, but only apart from it if at all, they might at least stand correctly printed: — they, and certain other Pieces of more doubtful claim; for most part Letters too, but of half, or in some cases of wholly, official character; — if by chance they were elucidative, brief, and not easily attainable elsewhere. Into which Appendix also, as into a loose back-room or lumber-room, not