

Preface

1828 and further editions in 1848–9 and 1854, adding to each new edition a few more notes and a few more words of the text. After his death in 1858 a second transcription was made by the Rev. Mynors Bright, a classical scholar and Fellow of Magdalene, and was published in 1875–9 in six volumes, by a different publisher, Bickers. Bright provided a more generous selection of the original (some four-fifths) than Braybrooke in any of his versions, but, discouraged by its reception from the reviewers, who were scathing about its lack of annotation, he insisted on having no more than one thousand copies printed. The way was thus open for another editor. Bright died in 1883, bequeathing to Magdalene the manuscript of his transcription (which, like Smith's, was complete except for certain passages considered unprintable), and expressing the wish that if it were ever to be published, it should be brought out by George Bell & Son, who had acquired the rights in the Braybrooke editions. Bell and Magdalene then arranged for the production of a new edition. It was an expanded and slightly revised version of Bright's six volumes and was edited by H. B. Wheatley, a London bibliographer and antiquarian, who had already declared an interest in Pepys by constructing the index to Bright's edition and by publishing *Samuel Pepys and the World he lived in* (1880). Wheatley's edition came out between 1893 and 1899 in ten volumes. About nine-tenths of the diary were now made public: the only omissions (apart from five days' entries overlooked by accident) were about a hundred brief passages which could hardly have been published in Victorian England without offence. More regrettable from a broader point of view was the fact that the text Wheatley used (almost entirely the work³ of Bright) was peppered with inaccuracies, and that he saw fit to smooth out the occasional rough edges of Pepys's prose. His commentary, while an improvement on those of his predecessors, was patchy and thin, and fell short of the best standards of his day.

The text from which the present selection has been made is that of the edition of 1970–83, edited by myself and the late Professor Matthews, and is principally the work of Professor Matthews, who was an expert on seventeenth-century English shorthand and on the history of the language. For my part, I, as a historian, played a minor role in its construction, checking the readings and making suggestions wherever textual difficulties could be solved