DAVID FRIEDRICH STRAUSS IN HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS

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David Friedrich Strauss in His Life and Writings by Eduard Zeller

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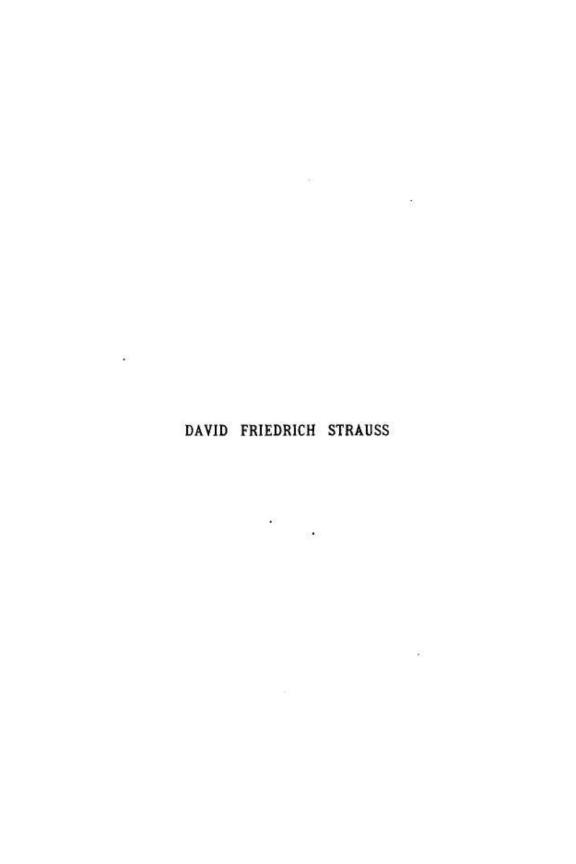
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EDUARD ZELLER

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AUTHORISED TRANSLATION

WITH A PORTRAIT

LONDON
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1874

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PREFACE.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER the death of the man to whose memory the following pages are dedicated, I was requested by the Editor of the 'Swabian Mercury' to write a necrology on him for that journal. This I promised to do, only stipulating to be allowed a somewhat longer time, as other duties prevented me from undertaking it immediately. however, I proceeded to the execution of the task, during the last Easter vacation, I became speedily convinced that I could not keep my narrative, without incurring my own utter dissatisfaction with it, either in substance or extent, within the limits involved by its appearance in a daily journal. I therefore resolved to design it at once on a larger scale, and to comprise in it more than was

compatible with its original object. The present memoir is the result.

It is not intended to present a biography, but a biographical delineation; not a finished picture, but a preliminary sketch. In order to write the biography of such a man as Strauss, I should have required far more complete material and far more leisure than stood at my disposal at the present time. Moreover, the history of a life cannot be fully delineated until that life is so far removed from the present that the persons and the circumstances which influenced its course can be openly discussed on all sides without wounding the legitimate feelings and considerations of others. Even where no such scruples existed, distinct limits were imposed on my work by its whole plan and by the little time which I could bestow upon it. Much that I could have added · I was obliged to withhold, because it would have too much disturbed the harmony of the whole. I have been obliged to pass over in silence, or with slight allusions, persons who stood in close connection with Strauss, and personal relations which he valued; for a narrative on a larger scale would alone have afforded sufficient scope to make the general reader acquainted with these persons and to render their relations intelligible to him. The principal figure moreover could not stand out with perfect distinctness if it were surrounded in its narrow framework by too many subordinate figures; who would likewise require to be treated with a certain amount of care in order to render them recognisable.

The basis of the following biography has been formed chiefly from my personal recollections, in addition to Strauss's works and a few published notices respecting him. These recollections extended over the greater part of Strauss's life; for I had known him even before he had left the University. Soon afterwards I had him as a teacher, and for several years I lived under the same roof with him; and from that period I kept up an intimacy with him which, from time to time, as our places of abode allowed of it, was revived by shorter or longer meetings. In addition to this, I have had the perusal of more than two hundred letters, extending from the end of

the year 1835 to the last weeks of my friend's life. Where these sources have proved insufficient (which, however, was on the whole but rarely the case) I have gathered information from those who were in intercourse with him at different periods. A valuable completion to my own knowledge of him has, lastly, been afforded me by Strauss's own records of his life and by the poems which in the course of my work have been most kindly sent to me by his children.

From these aids I venture to hope that I have been sufficiently informed upon the subject I have undertaken, and that, much as this sketch is lacking in completeness, it is at any rate guarded from errors of any importance.

THE AUTHOR.

BERLIN: May 1, 1874.