

Correspondence and related documents

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Besterman's groundbreaking 'definitive' edition of Voltaire's correspondence is the first and only edition to be based accurately on manuscripts, and contains over 21,000 letters from and to Voltaire, or between third parties. All known letters written by and to Voltaire are printed in full, and each letter is extensively annotated. Also reproduced are more than 500 documents that shed light on various aspects of Voltaire's long career.

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'Voltaire's correspondence superbly represents a critical period of history in a picture composed day by day during more than sixty years; it gives us a close-up of the society of an entire epoch, in all its grandeur and baseness, and makes us the familiars of its thinkers and artists, kings and statesmen, tax gatherers and tripe sellers; it variously reflects the mind, the feelings, the doings of a very great man; every page illustrates the insight, the poetry of a genius, expressed in an incomparable style; and these things make Voltaire's correspondence the great classic of letter-writing, and indeed a masterpiece of literature' (Th. Besterman, Introduction to vol.85).

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