

Heroes took shape in Carlyle's mind within four days, between the 27th of February and the 2d of March, 1840. On the first date he writes to his brother John: "I am beginning seriously to meditate my *Course of Lectures*, and have even, or seem to have got, the *primordium* of a subject in me,—tho' not nameable as yet." On the second date he is able to give the course in outline: "My subject for Lecturing on ought hardly yet to be *named*; lest evil befall it. I am to talk about gods, prophets, priestis, kings. poets, teachers (*six* sorts of men); and may probably call it 'On the Heroic.' Odin, Mahomet, Cromwell, are three of my figures; I mean to show that 'Heroworship *never ceases*,' that it is at bottom the main or only kind of worship." On All Fools' Day he calls on Emerson to sympathize with him on his "frightful outlook" in having to give a course of lectures "'On Heroes and Hero-Worship,'—from Odin to Robert Burns"; and on April 8, he announces the title in its present form, except for one word, and calls it "a great, deep, and wide subject, if I were in heart to do it justice."

Just how he prepared for this course has never been made quite clear. Neither Mr. Traill¹ nor Mr. Gosse,² his latest editors, explain the matter, or establish the relation between the spoken lectures and the written book. That it is now possible to do both is due to the courtesy of Mr. Alexander Carlyle, who has made for the present edition extracts from his great kinsman's unpublished letters, which place the matter beyond a doubt.

Froude gives a hint, quoting from Carlyle's own journal for April 23, 1840: "I have been throwing my lectures upon

¹ *Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (Centenary ed.), *Introduction*. Lond., 1897.

² *On Heroes and Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*. By Thomas Carlyle. With an Introduction by Edmund Gosse. *Nineteenth Century Classics. Introduction*, p. x. Lond., 1896.