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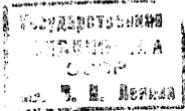
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C O M M I S S I O N E R S F O R F O R E I G N M I S S I O N S .

BY E. C. TRACY.

B O S T O N :

P U B L I S H E D B Y C R O C K E R A N D B R E W S T E R ,  
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## P R E F A C E .

HERDER, speaking of a National Biography, remarks that the names of those only should have a place in it, who have actually contributed something to the well-being of mankind; and that, in regard to such, it should be the biographer's chief aim to show how they thus contributed; how they became what they were; what obstacles they had to encounter; how far they went, and what they left to be done by others; and finally how they themselves regarded what they had done—the work of their lives. A true narrative embracing these points, he adds, and derived, as far as practicable, from the lips or the writings of the subject of it, or of those who most intimately knew him, would be like a voice from the grave—like a Last Will and Testament of the deceased, in regard to what was most peculiarly his own and his noblest legacy.

The first, at least, of these demands, is fully met in the following pages. Mr. Evarts is to be numbered, beyond all question, among those who have contributed to the well-being of their race. For the rest, the writer can only say that he has studiously endeavored to make such use of the materials within his reach, as not altogether to fail in the particulars mentioned by Herder. It will be found accordingly, that the life of Mr. Evarts, and especially the great employments of his life and his views relating to them, are laid before the reader chiefly in his own language. The selections from his writings, published and unpublished, have been carefully made with constant reference to this object. His published writings have been used the more freely, not only as the best biographical materials, but because they are not of such a nature as to demand separate republication, and it is only in this volume that any adequate record of his views on the important subjects that most occupied him, will be generally accessible.

The papers left by Mr. Evarts are voluminous, as he was fond of writing, and much in the habit of preserving every written thing. But in one respect, they might by some be deemed deficient; and this volume may in consequence disappoint expectations. The

manuscripts contain little that relates directly to his own experience and progress in the Christian life. From a very early period, passages of this kind become brief and incidental; and even papers relating to his Christian experience while in college, to which the writer has been particularly referred, are not now to be found. How far the following facts may account for this, it is impossible to determine. When leaving home on one of his earliest journeys to the south, he directed that, in case of his decease, certain packages of papers should be destroyed. After his return he was told by the person employed in his office, to whom the charge was given, that it would not have been complied with. When next called away on a distant journey, he looked over his papers and committed many to the flames himself. It is not supposed, however, that after becoming engaged in the great business of his life he ever wrote much on the subject referred to; and to give that topic any more prominence than it here holds, would not be in keeping with his character and habits. His inner life as a Christian was habitually and naturally expressed in his daily business; and transacting that heartily as unto the Lord, and with constant prayer, it became to him a chief means of spiritual discipline. Hence even his official writings are often in the highest sense autobiographical, and yet without the least obtrusion of the private individual into the place of the functionary.

In the preparation of this volume the writer has been under great obligations to gentlemen connected with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and to other friends and correspondents of Mr. Evarts who have furnished valuable suggestions and materials, and has been very much aided by the Memoir in the *Missionary Herald*, written by one of his associates soon after his death. To this last mentioned source, it will be seen, he has been indebted almost exclusively, as was proper, for the concluding pages of the Memoir, instead of trusting to his own less intimate personal knowledge.

Such as it is, and with unfeigned diffidence respecting his own agency in it, the writer submits the volume to the friends of missions and to the public, in the hope that so much of the mind and spirit of Mr. Evarts will be found in its pages as to render them of sterling value, and of use to the cause in which he delighted above all things to labor while he lived, and to take leave of which was one of the severest trials connected with approaching death.

E. C. T.

*Windsor, Vt., May, 1845.*