

**THE LIFE, WRITINGS AND
CHARACTER OF EDWARD
ROBINSON: READ BEFORE THE
N. Y. HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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The Life, Writings and Character of Edward Robinson: Read Before the N. Y. Historical Society
by Henry B. Smith & Roswell D. Hitchcock

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HENRY B. SMITH & ROSWELL D. HITCHCOCK

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THE
LIFE, WRITINGS AND CHARACTER
OF
EDWARD ROBINSON, D.D., LL.D.,

READ BEFORE THE N. Y. HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BY
HENRY B. SMITH, D.D.,
AND
ROSWELL D. HITCHCOCK, D.D.

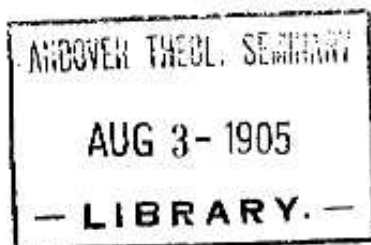
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R E M A R K S

OF

PROF. HENRY B. SMITH, D. D.,

ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEATH OF DR. ROBINSON,
AT A MEETING OF THE NEW YORK HISTORI-
CAL SOCIETY, FEBRUARY 8, 1868.



DR. EDWARD ROBINSON, though not able to trace his lineage to the spiritual father of the Plymouth Colony, was of Puritan descent and New England parentage. He was endowed in a high degree with the mental and moral qualities of that penetrating, frugal, laborious, liberty-loving and God-fearing race from which he sprung. His early advantages were slender, but they were all well improved. In Hamilton College he easily stood at the head of a large class in every department of study, though mathematics was at first his chosen pursuit. Devoting himself to the ministry of the Gospel, he soon found that his congenial sphere was in the walks of sacred scholarship rather than in the routine of pastoral life. At Andover and in Germany, during nine years of study, he prepared himself, with pa-

tient toil, for his life's work; and with such sagacity and success, that the name of the humble New England boy is now named—in Sacred Geography, with those of Bochart, Reland and Ritter, in Sacred Philology, with Gesenius and Winer. In both these branches, as also in the editing of theological periodicals, and in the thorough training of a large number of students for the sacred ministry, his eminence is so undisputed, that no English scholar of the present century can be said to surpass him.

With a clear perception of the wants of the times, he first devoted himself to the thorough study of the original languages of the Bible. Forty-three years have elapsed since he first went to Andover and received a strong impulse from the ardent labors of Professor Stuart. Theological controversy in New England had already ceased to be chiefly metaphysical and dogmatic, and had begun to centre more definitely in the inquiry as to the exact sense of

the Scriptural record. Sacred Philology was revived. Stuart was impulsive, and Robinson methodical; the one was bold, the other exact; the former inspired, the latter instructed with patient skill; what the one began with enthusiasm, the other perfected with elaborate care. Luther's motto, *Nulla dies sine linea*—the maxim of assiduous toil, and that other maxim of constant progress, *Dies diem docet*, which Gesenius put in the front of his Hebrew Lexicon, give us the clue to Dr. Robinson's scholarship. Such labor may be called plodding, but it is sure; thus alone can a thesaurus be made, a mine for all scholars. The process is slow, but the result is a monument, defying the tooth of time, and above the envy of the aspirants for fugitive applause. It is worthy of a noble ambition, and a high reward for years of toil, to be assured that a work has been completed to which scholars of every communion, in many lands, and through long years must resort, there to learn wisdom and knowledge.