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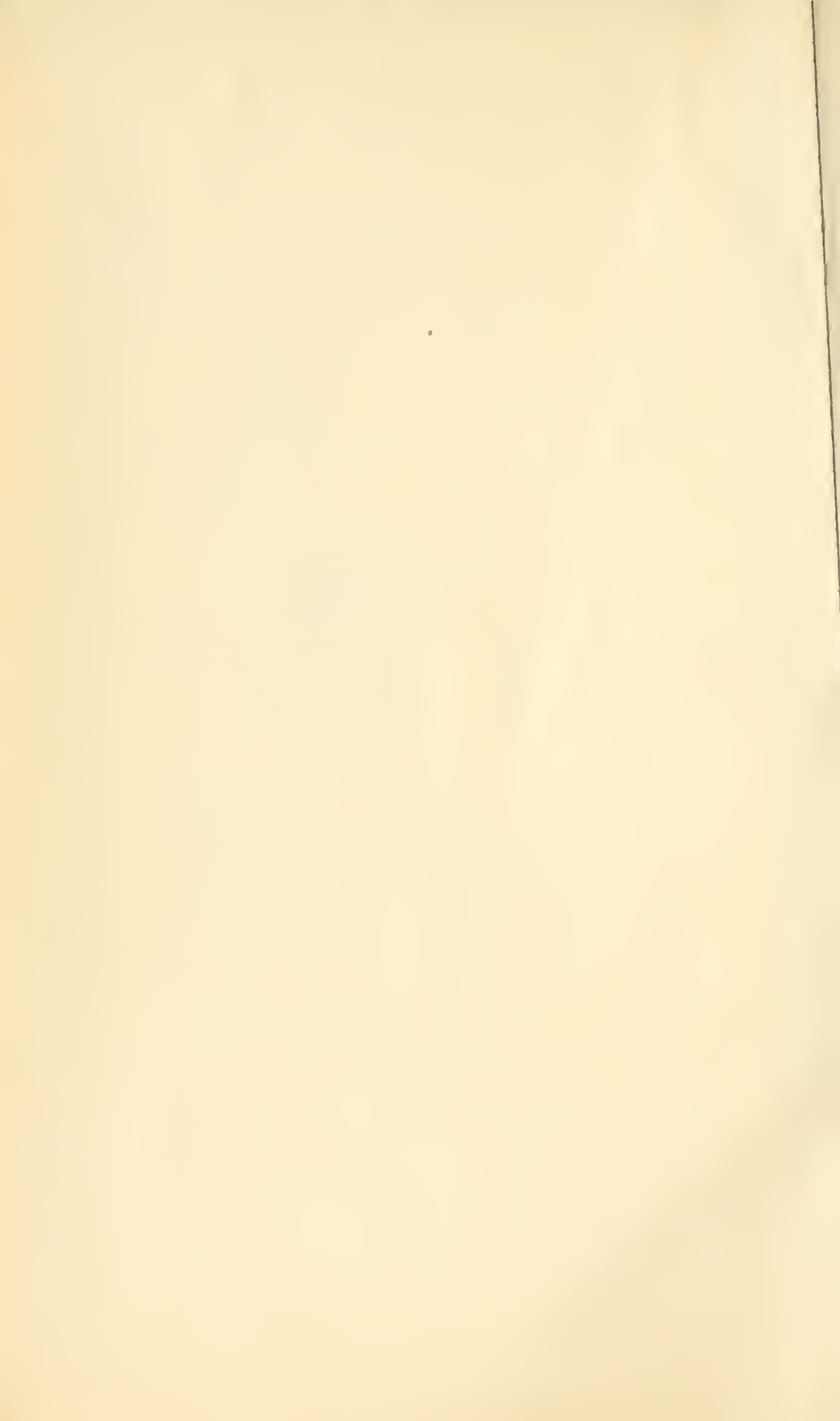

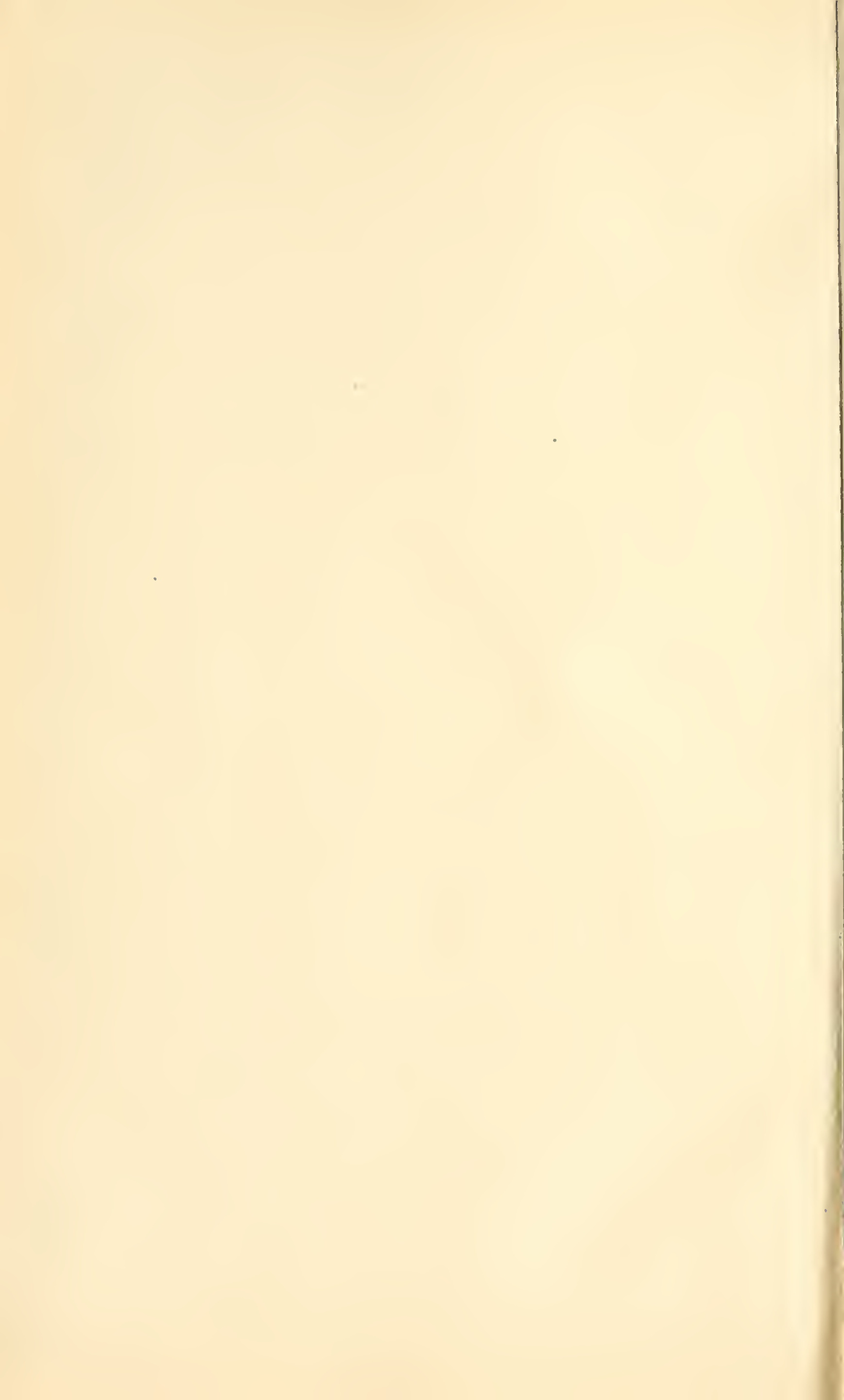

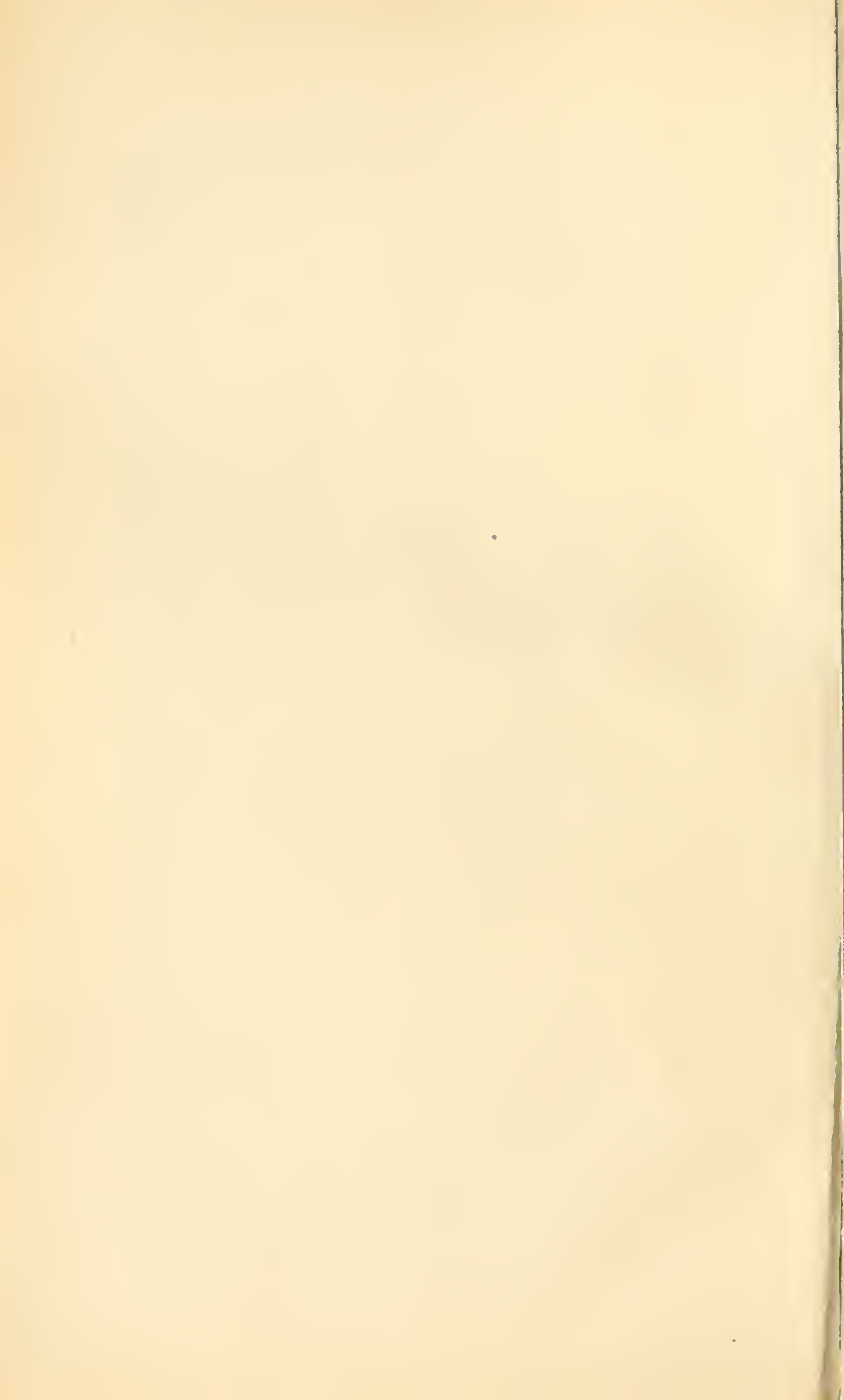

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REMINISCENCES

AND

ANECDOTES

OF

DANIEL WEBSTER

By PETER HARVEY

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PREFACE.

It is now a quarter of a century — almost the life of an entire generation — since Daniel Webster died. During this period new issues have come to the front, the fires of by-gone contests have become harmless ashes, and the reunited Nation can look at such a life as this great man presents, with a calmer and wiser gaze than was possible in the nearer view of days that were fraught with warring convictions, now at last hushed to rest. Through a friendship which is one of my happiest and most grateful recollections, it was my privilege to be intimate with this man in life, and to receive his last messages upon the bed of death.[1] And now, as I feel myself drawing near to the end of this earthly existence, I desire to give to the world, and especially to the rising generation, a true insight into the structure of his character, which

[1] In a recent letter, addressed to the editor, Mr. C. A. Stetson gives the following interesting incident, showing Mr. Webster's implicit confidence in and strong affection for Mr. Harvey: "During the negotiations in 1842, Mr. Curtis and myself were sitting in Mr. Webster's study, in Washington, when the mail-bag was brought in. With other letters, one from Mr. Peter Harvey was opened. Mr. Curtis read it. Mr. Webster had asked a favor: it was granted. Mr. Curtis said: 'By Jove, he is St. Peter!' 'No,' quickly replied Mr. Webster, 'Peter Harvey never denied his friend!' It seemed to me that a more loving compliment never had been paid to one who reverenced Mr. Webster."

cannot be fully appreciated in simply reading the written records of his public career.

His sweetness of temper, his kindness of heart, the depth of his friendships, his firm hold upon the facts of the Christian religion (as illustrated by the Colby and Benton stories related in the following pages), the pathos and humor of his home life, — these ought to be known and understood by the world.

The greater part of the matter contained in these pages is derived from my own personal recollections of Mr. Webster, as the result of my long and familiar association with him. These recollections were dictated by me, from time to time, to a stenographer, from whose written-out notes they have been prepared for this book. Some of the papers and books from which these *memorabilia* are taken were deposited with me, several years after Mr. Webster's death, by his son, Fletcher Webster; and from that time to this they have been a precious legacy, which I now feel the country at large ought to share with me.

I do not, in these pages, propose to write a Life of Daniel Webster. I am content to act only as the frail but necessary thread which binds these gathered leaves together. Mr. Webster has written his own biography in the strong and unmistakable impress he has made upon the country's history. I believe that the writings of no man, in the short but eventful history of the American Republic, are so destined for immortal fame as those of him whom it is my last wish to "delight to honor."

Let me here state a fact about his memory, which, to my mind, is in every way worthy of the attention of the reader. It is this. I cannot but feel that the man who did the most to set forth Mr. Webster's life and genius

was Edward Everett. I see this fact in Mr. Everett's whole career; in the depth of his sincerity and regard; in his lifelong devotion, and in the uniformly affectionate manner in which Mr. Webster always spoke of him.

I well remember, in the year 1847, when riding with Mr. Webster to the Dedham Agricultural Fair-ground, on a pleasant September day, he said: "I have been thinking over what I propose to say, if called upon to make a speech. Mr. Everett was born in the county of Norfolk; and, although it is not always wise to say complimentary things to a man's face, still I may never have a better opportunity, and I shall tell the Norfolk County people to-day what I think of their distinguished son. When I was appointed Secretary of State the first time, by General Harrison, one of the very first things I did, in the way of foreign appointments, was to select Mr. Everett to represent the Government at the Court of St. James. In such appointments, it has always seemed to me that we should choose men of character, who would represent the country at large, rather than be influenced by the bias of party; for foreign nations judge of our people by the representative men whom we send out to them. Since that time I have had many letters from eminent statesmen abroad, thanking me for sending Mr. Everett; for, in choosing him to represent us in the presence of the English people, I sent them a man as well versed in their own history as any man living, with the exception of Macaulay. I am going to tell these people to-day just what I think of Mr. Everett, for I honor him and love him."

In the address which he delivered upon this occasion, he carried out his intention formed in the carriage; and, greatly to the surprise of every one, and to the astonishment of Mr. Everett himself, pronounced a noble

eulogy upon his friend. Though he was to come in town in the afternoon, and the carriage was at hand, he waited, saying: "Let us stop a moment, and see what Mr. Everett says."

Mr. Everett, unconsciously flushed, rose and said: "It would not be becoming in me to bandy compliments with my illustrious friend. He has seen fit to compliment me upon my attainments in international law. I should not dare to say here how much personal friendship may have had to do with the picture he has drawn; but this I will say, take from that knowledge of international law what I have learned at his feet, and there would be nothing left worth mentioning."

The strong friendship between these two men was never marred by a breath of suspicion or jealousy; and, if I could have selected one man from the list of his many and distinguished friends to have written his Life, I should have had no hesitation in choosing Mr. Everett. I have often heard Mr. Webster say: "In the turmoil and confusion of party lines, when political friends might be forgetful of every thing save their own prospects, I never had a doubt or misgiving about two distinguished friends who were by my side, however public opinion might vary. One was Edward Everett; the other was Rufus Choate."

There were others, then, who could have written his Life more worthily than I. It is not my purpose, at this eleventh hour, to write it. I only wish to disclose to the public some of the inner traits of his character, to do his great memory full justice, and to paint him as he really was, to a new generation who know him not. And I feel that, unless I string together a few of these sacred and long-cherished reminiscences, they will be lost for ever in the hurry of the new generation. How many

are the relationships this man sustained to the public whom he served, and to the private few to whom he was a delight! How true was his fidelity to the network of responsibilities that rested upon him!

There comes to my mind, as I write, the remembrance of his address at Saratoga during the Harrison campaign, when, as it may be remembered, the Whigs were much given to glorifying the humble birth of their candidate for the Presidency. In this address he made the following allusion to the circumstances of his own birth: "It did not happen to me, gentlemen, to be born in a log-cabin; but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log-cabin, raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early that, when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist. I make to it an annual visit; I carry my children to it, to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are now among the living; and if ever I am ashamed of it, or if ever I fail in affectionate veneration for him who reared it and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and, through the fire and blood of a seven years' Revolutionary war, shrunk from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice, to serve his country and to raise his children to a condition better than his own, — may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted for ever from the memory of mankind!"

It is a great satisfaction to me to present to the readers of this volume an Appendix, descriptive of the statue of Webster given by Mr. GORDON W. BURNHAM, of New York, to that city, containing among other notable addresses delivered on that occasion the eloquent and most fitting address of our distinguished townsman, the Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

My thanks are due to Professor SANBORN, of Dartmouth College, who has furnished me from time to time with papers and anecdotes which he himself had gathered through his intimate relationship with the family of Ezekiel Webster.

I wish also to express my satisfaction at the able and efficient manner in which Mr. GEORGE M. TOWLE has assisted me in preparing, during the hours of my physical weakness, these gathered fragments of my friend's eventful history for publication.

My prayer is that posterity may value this life, which to me has been so inexpressibly dear; and that, "since he had the genius to be loved," he may, indeed, "have the justice to be honored in his grave."

PETER HARVEY.

PARKER HOUSE,
BOSTON, May 24, 1877.

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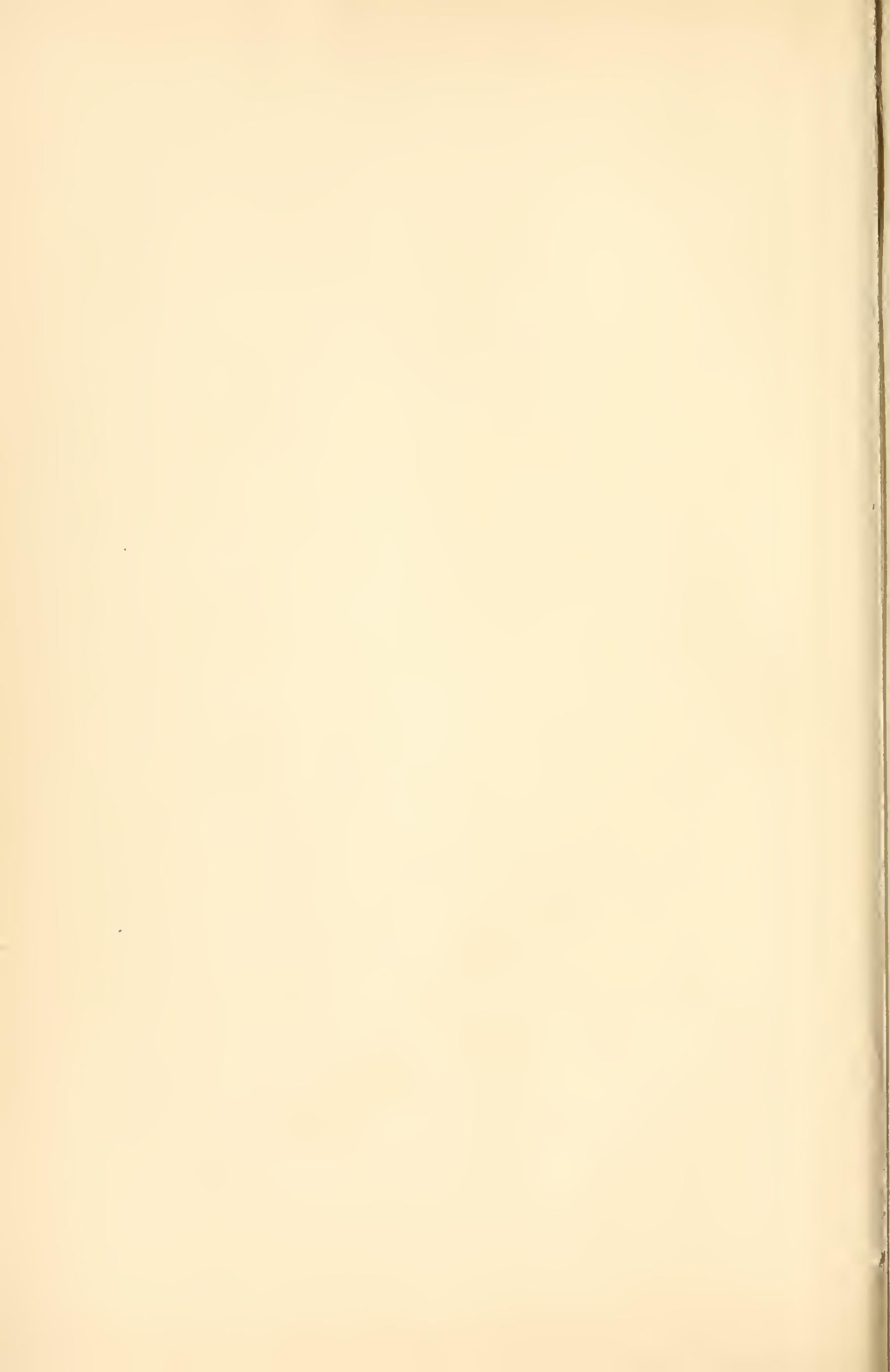
[1] The original miniature of Mr. Webster from which this engraving was copied, was taken when a law-student in the office of Thomas W. Thompson of Salisbury, N. H., and while paying his attentions to Grace Fletcher, who was residing with her sister Rebecca, wife of Israel Webster Kelly of that town.

It was given by Mr. Webster to Grace at that time, and, upon her decease, was presented by him to her sister, Mrs. Kelly.



REMINISCENCES OF DANIEL WEBSTER.

REMINISCENCES OF DANIEL WEBSTER.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS.

DANIEL WEBSTER was born in the town of Salisbury, New Hampshire, on the eighteenth day of January, 1782. He was the ninth in a family of ten children, and was the son of Ebenezer Webster, by his second wife, Abigail Eastman.

Of the house where he was born scarcely a vestige now remains. It was a plain, brown, substantial New England farm-house, standing a little above the high-road, and upon a hill which overlooked the picturesque and winding valley of the Merrimac. The old cellar, choked with weeds and rubbish, is all that is left to designate where the house stood. Not far from its site, however, may still be seen the ruins of an old well, dug by his father long before Daniel was born, and from which the family derived their supply of water. Just by the well, in which still hangs, or hung a few years since, an "iron-bound bucket," is an ancient and umbrageous elm, affording a grateful shade to those who choose to enjoy it in summer; and round about are some old fruit trees which Colonel Eben-

ezer Webster planted. It was Daniel Webster's custom to visit the scene of his childhood almost every year for over half a century; and he loved to sit under the old wide-spreading elm, beneath which he had played and romped in the days of his infancy, and to drink of the still cool and delicious water of the moss-grown well. Near by where the house stood, ran a rapid and bubbling stream, called "Punch Brook." It has now dwindled to a little rivulet, which feebly trickles on its way through field and meadow to the river. On the other side of the highway, a little beyond the site of the old homestead, is the place where stood the mill built by Colonel Webster, though but little remains of the building now. The neighborhood is rugged; granite rocks and ledges appear on every hand: nor does the soil yield very abundantly to the farmer's toil. Two years after Daniel's birth, his father moved to Elms Farm, not far from the old place, of which we shall speak further on.

Colonel Ebenezer Webster, the father of Daniel, was one of those stalwart, vigorous, strong-minded, and hardy-bodied yeomen, for whom the Granite State is celebrated. He was a wise man and a patriot, a hard worker, and an energetic and public-spirited citizen. Born in 1739, he was old enough, when the French War broke out, to serve in it as a soldier. At the age of eighteen he enlisted in the famous Rodgers' Rangers, comprising some of the boldest and most rugged of the New England yeomanry. They had to go doubly armed, and to carry with them both snow-shoes and skates, to

be used when occasion required. Their packs were of double weight. Webster served with Stark, Putnam, and others, who were afterwards Revolutionary heroes. These Rangers fought desperate battles, and won brilliant victories on the borders of Lake George. Webster afterwards served under General Amherst, at the taking of Ticonderoga and Crown Point. In 1761, he removed to Salisbury, where he purchased a farm, erected the first mill in the town, married, and settled down to earn such a living as he could by tilling the not very hospitable soil. Soon a sturdy family of children began to grow up around him, and he found it difficult to supply their needs; but he speedily became prominent in town affairs, and took a leading part in its business. He was chosen successively surveyor of highways, moderator, selectman, town clerk, representative, senator, a delegate to the convention "for forming a permanent plan of government," in 1778, and a delegate to the constitutional convention in 1788; and, in the later years of his life, he sat on the bench as a judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Hillsborough County.

Meanwhile, the outbreak of the Revolutionary War opened for Ebenezer Webster a sphere of usefulness to the country, which took him away from farm and town-meeting, and which he entered upon with a patriotic zeal and ardor all his own. When the war broke out, he was captain of the Salisbury militia, composed of sturdy and intelligent yeomen like himself. The news of Lex-

ington and Concord aroused his energetic spirit, and he promptly led his company, consisting of about seventy-five men, to join the rapidly swelling Continental forces at Cambridge. At this time he was in the full vigor of sturdy manhood. "As an officer," says one who wrote of him some years ago, "he was beloved by his soldiers, and always had their entire confidence. He was born to command. He was in stature about six feet; of a massy frame, a voice of great compass, eyes black and piercing, a countenance open and ingenuous, and a complexion that could not be soiled by powder. He was the very man to head the proud columns of the Sons of Liberty."

Arriving at the seat of war soon after the battle of Bunker Hill, his company was added to the little army of minute men who were fast gathering from every part of New England. These minute men were not incorporated in the militia, but served as volunteers without pay. They were not soldiers by trade, but real patriots; and when they had gathered in their harvests, and had a month or two to spare, they would go and give their services to the country. Then they would return home, dig their potatoes, look after their families, and hurry away again to the camp and the battle-field. Daniel Webster often talked with me of his father's military career.

It was while Captain Webster was stationed with his company in the vicinity of Boston, that he had the signal honor of being awarded the duty of guarding the commander-in-chief. Washington

had but recently arrived and placed himself at the head of the little and not too well organized Continental army. His camp was on Dorchester Heights, and Captain Webster had just come from New Hampshire with a quota of minute men. This event in his father's life was always a source of great pride to Daniel Webster. One day, in 1840, he was travelling in Virginia with his son Fletcher, who observed that he was in a thoughtful, silent mood.

"What is the matter, father?" asked Fletcher. "Are you not well?"

"Yes, oh yes; but I was thinking, Fletcher, of an old man, upwards of eighty years of age, whom I met in New Hampshire the other day. He told me some interesting incidents about your grandfather. He said that he was one of the company of minute men that Captain Webster commanded. He spoke of their being on Dorchester Heights at the time General Washington had his camp there. A detachment of my father's company was delegated to guard-duty around Washington's tent. The weather was frosty; and this old man was one day walking to and fro before the tent, when the side opened, and the tall figure of Washington appeared before him. He looked up at the sky, and then turning, said to the sentry: 'Soldier, who is the commander of your company?' 'Captain Webster, of the New Hampshire minute men.' 'When you are relieved from guard,' returned Washington, 'say to Captain Webster that I should like to see him at my tent early in the morning.'

The sentry delivered the message, and my father afterwards told him what Washington had said. He wished to consult him as to the feeling in New Hampshire; asked him about the patriotic sentiment among his neighbors, — whether they had counted the cost of resistance to the British, and were ready to throw away the scabbard, and spend and be spent in the cause. Washington talked an hour with the captain, offered him refreshments, and when he retired, shook him warmly by the hand. Fletcher," added Mr. Webster, "I should rather have it said upon my father's tombstone that he had guarded the person of George Washington, and was worthy of such a trust, than to have emblazoned upon it the proudest insignia of heraldry that the world could give!"

Washington need scarcely have asked Ebenezer Webster if his New Hampshire neighbors were in earnest, had he seen the pledge which Webster himself drew up and persuaded eighty-four of his townsmen to sign at the beginning of the war. This pledge ran as follows: —

"We do solemnly engage and promise that we will, to the utmost of our power, at the risk of our lives and fortunes, with arms, oppose the hostile proceedings of the British fleets and armies against the United American Colonies."

In the last year of his life, Daniel Webster thus spoke of the signers of this pledge: "In looking up this record, thus connected with the men of my birthplace, I confess I was gratified to find who were the signers and who were the dissentients

Among the former was he from whom I am immediately descended, with all his brothers, and his whole kith and kin. This is sufficient emblazonry for my arms; enough of heraldry for me."

Ebenezer Webster participated in the war, always with gallantry and courage, from beginning to end. He took part in the battles of White Plains and Bennington, and in 1780 was posted at West Point. This was shortly before Benedict Arnold's treason; and on the evening of the day when the traitor's designs were revealed to Washington, whose headquarters were then at West Point, he summoned Captain Webster to his tent, and ordered him to guard it that night. "I believe I can trust you," he said, with a smile. Thus Ebenezer Webster had the good fortune to protect Washington's life a second time. It was stated by Webster that Washington did not sleep that night, but restlessly paced up and down in his tent, or wrote busily at his camp-table, till daylight.

During the war, Captain Webster was appointed one of a committee to ascertain what each townsman of Salisbury ought to contribute to the expenses of the war, and to levy a tax accordingly. The richest man in the town, who had not done any military duty, declared that his share was too large, and refused to pay it. The committee went to him, and Webster, as their spokesman, addressed him thus: "Sir, our authorities require us to fight *and* pay. Now, you must pay *or* fight." The man refused the tax no longer.

As a magistrate, Ebenezer Webster was noted

for his honesty and judgment, his careful consideration of the cases that came before him, and the comprehensive and concise method of his decisions. In serving the town, his own estimate of his services was modest enough, and is an example to the officials of the present day. He charged three or four shillings a day for his time as a town officer. He was not less prominent in church affairs, than in military ability and in the public business of the town; was often a member of important committees, and was one of the elders of the Salisbury Church for many years. He died in 1806.

Ebenezer Webster had ten children by his two wives; five sons and five daughters. His eldest son, Ebenezer Webster, succeeded to the farm in Salisbury, where he lived quietly until his death. The next child was a daughter, Olivia, who died early. The second daughter, Susannah, married John Colby, of Boscawen, and also died at an early age. The second son, David, was a farmer; he moved with his family, when quite a young man, to Canada, where he lived and died, leaving many children. Joseph, the third son, was also a farmer, and noted for his ready wit; he died in 1810. The third daughter, Mehitabel, never married, and died at the age of thirty-seven; and the fourth, Abigail, married a Mr. Haddock, of Franklin, and died early. The three youngest children were Ezekiel, Daniel, and Sarah. The latter married and lived in Franklin, dying in her twenty-first year.

In one of Daniel Webster's diaries, in my possession, he thus touchingly and eloquently alludes to the members of his father's family, and the fact of his surviving them all: —

"1839, Jan. 18, Friday. I am this day fifty-seven years old. My brothers and sisters have all died young. I was by much the most slender and feeble of the family in early life; but have yet outlived them all, and no one of them, I think, attained my present age: although I am not quite certain how this may have been with my half-brother, David Webster, who was older than myself by ten or twelve years, and who died in Canada some years ago, — exactly at what time, I do not know. My father died at sixty-seven. His constitution, naturally strong, was evidently affected by the hardships and exposures of his early life. My uncle, Benjamin Webster, lived to a great age, — I believe above eighty years. He died in Cabot, or the adjoining town, in Vermont. My uncle William Webster went to Salisbury with my father. He died several years ago, being then much the longest resident in the township, and being, I think, something more than seventy years of age. My paternal aunts lived, so far as I remember, to be seventy or more. My mother also reached seventy. Her mother, Mrs. Gerusha Fitz, whom I well remember, died in my father's house, about June, 1796, aged about ninety years. My own health, from the age of twenty-five, has been remarkably good; and for little occasional illnesses I have too often been able to see obvious causes

in want of proper care and discretion. If I were now to strike out of the number of my sick days those which have been occasioned by want of proper exercise, by unnecessary exposure, and by some degree of intemperance in eating and drinking, I should make a very great deduction from the whole list. For this uncommon health, and for all the happiness of a life which has been, so far, exceedingly happy, I desire to render the most devout thanks to Almighty God. I thank him for existence; for the pleasure and the glory of rational being; for an immortal nature; and for all the gratifications, the joys, and the means of improvement, with which he has blessed my earthly life; for the time and the country in which I have lived; and for those objects of love and affection, whose being has been entwined with my own."

For his own brother, Ezekiel Webster, Daniel had not only the most devoted affection, but the most exalted respect. In his early years, he looked as anxiously for Ezekiel's approval of all his acts, as Coriolanus did for that of his mother. His confidence in his elder brother's judgment was unbounded; his reliance upon his wisdom and counsel was without limit. When he had brought the whole nation to pay homage at his feet for the splendor of his triumph in the Hayne debate, Daniel Webster had one keen regret.

"How I wish," he sorrowfully exclaimed, "that my poor brother had lived till after this speech, for I know that he would have been gratified by it!" It is not strange that these brothers had so

strong a mutual attachment to each other. They were not only own brothers, but were nearly of the same age, and grew up together on the paternal farm. They shared each other's toils and hardships, and these were by no means trifling. It has already been said that Ebenezer Webster found it difficult to force a subsistence for his large family from the unyielding soil; and as soon as his sons were old enough to work, they began to assist him. Ezekiel and Daniel, both endowed with uncommon minds, aspired to something higher than the existence of farmers. They were ambitious to go to college; and they knew that, if they did so, they must work their own way. They both labored in the old saw-mill on the banks of the Merrimac; and after Daniel, who was the more frail and delicate of the two, left home at the age of fourteen for college, Ezekiel remained at home, aiding in the support of the family, until he was twenty. He thus developed the sturdy and noble frame which was so often remarked afterwards, when he became prominent at the New Hampshire bar. But Daniel, though away, and pursuing his studies at Hanover, did not forget that it was his brother's ambition, as well as his own, to acquire a liberal education. He wrote home urgently entreating his father to release Ezekiel from his farm duties, and to allow him to attend the Academy. Although Ebenezer Webster was embarrassed in his finances, with all his property heavily mortgaged, he consented. But the brothers, in thus leaving home, did not cease to aid in the support of the

family. They resolved to do all that in them lay to pay their father's debts, and to impart comfort to the old homestead. Bravely they advanced to the battle of life, and cheerfully they met the many difficulties and obstacles that lay in their path. Their success was due to their own industry, perseverance, and pluck, and the steadfast courage with which they faced the trials of their early years.

It appears from a statement made by Mr. Webster in after years, that they shared the meagre contents of a common purse until they had fully established themselves in their profession. When Daniel was teaching in Fryeburg, he on one occasion returned home by way of Hanover, where Ezekiel was at college. The first thing he did was to find out whether his brother was in want of money; and, although his own salary as a teacher was scarcely more than the wages of a daily laborer, he was quite ready to help Ezekiel if he needed it. The result of his visit may be told in his own words: "We walked and talked during a long evening; and finally, seated upon an old log, not far from the college, I gave to Ezekiel one hundred dollars, — the result of my labors in teaching and recording deeds, after paying my own debts, — leaving to myself but three dollars to get home with." But neither the assistance of his father nor of his younger brother enabled Ezekiel to pursue his college course without interruption. He was obliged to eke out his expenses by taking charge of a private school in Boston, keep-

ing pace with his college class as best he could in the odd hours when he was not teaching. The condition on which he took the school was that the tuition paid during the first term should go to the retiring master, — a bargain which deprived Ezekiel of ready money for three months. It is interesting to know that among his pupils at this school were Edward Everett and George Ticknor. He even added more burdens to himself, by undertaking, in addition to his day school, an evening school for sailors. The letters of the two brothers at this trying period of their lives give us a clear insight into their position as well as characters, and are full of interest. Daniel, in a letter to a classmate in 1801, discloses the poverty and struggles of the family, and his own exertions at once to relieve them and to enable Ezekiel to finish his college course. He says: "Returning home after Commencement, I found, on consideration, that it would be impossible for my father, under existing circumstances, to keep Ezekiel at college. Drained of all his little income by the expenses of my education thus far, and broken down in his exertions by some family occurrences, I saw he could not afford Ezekiel means to live abroad with ease and independence, and I knew too well the evils of penury to wish him to stay half beggared at college. I thought it, therefore, my duty to suffer some delay in my profession, for the sake of serving my elder brother, and was making a little interest in some places to the eastward for employment." The result of "making

a little interest eastward" was, that he got the school at Fryeburg, and postponed the law to a more favorable epoch.

Ezekiel's letters at this time show at once the extremities to which he was now and then reduced, and the unconquerable buoyancy of spirit which he carried through all his difficulties. They are also full of wit and wisdom.

The close and loving friendship between Daniel and Ezekiel Webster remained intact as long as the latter lived. As late as 1828, — the year before Ezekiel's death, — Daniel was seeking his counsel and approval as eagerly, now that he had become famous in the Senate and at the bar, as when they were struggling youths with a common purse.

Ezekiel was thought, by many persons who had the opportunity of judging his qualities, the equal of his more celebrated brother in intellectual endowments. Their father was wont to say that "Ezekiel could not tell half he knew; but Daniel could tell more than he knew." Ezekiel's great failing was his timidity, while Daniel was as bold and fearless as a lion. Still, the elder brother's talents won him high rank both as a lawyer and as a politician. He rose to be the head of the bar of his native State, served often in both branches of the Legislature; and, at the time of his death, in the very prime of his years, is pronounced to have been "by far the most worthy and influential man in New Hampshire." It was on the 10th of April, 1829, that Ezekiel Webster, at the age of

forty-nine, fell suddenly dead in the midst of a brilliant argument, in the court-house at Concord, at the very feet of the judges. His death was caused by heart disease.

The intelligence that his revered and beloved brother was no more was carried to Daniel Webster by a gentleman named Homans, who related to me what passed. This gentleman was then but a young man, a clerk in a store. At that period railroads were unknown, and it was slow travelling by stage-coach, in the early spring, from New Hampshire to Boston.

"I acquainted Mr. Webster," said he, "with the news of the death of his brother. The driver of the coach from Concord brought this news to the Elm Street house. He had fallen dead the day before in the court-house. The driver wished to know where Mr. Webster lived, so as to go and tell him. I said that I knew, and would perform the melancholy errand. So I went to Summer Street, and rang the bell, it being nearly two o'clock in the morning. Pretty soon Mr. Webster made his appearance at the window over the balcony, and called out, —

"'Who is there? What is wanted?'

"I replied: 'I have important news for you, sir, from New Hampshire.'

"'I will be down in a moment,' he said.

"He descended, partially dressed, and opened the door. He looked at me earnestly.

"'I have news from your brother,' said I.

"'Is my brother dead?'

"'He is; and here is a letter containing the particulars of the event.'

"He took the letter with a trembling hand, and bade me walk in. For an instant he seemed perfectly stunned; but soon recovered himself, and read the letter.

"I asked if he had any wishes as to a relay of horses for the return stage.

"'Yes,' he replied; 'I am much obliged to you for mentioning it. But before making any arrangements, I have a most painful duty to perform; and how I can discharge it I scarcely know. Mrs. Webster, my brother's wife, is now under my roof, with her daughter. I must break this to her at once.'

"He took the candle, and ascended the stairs; and I heard a tap on a door, which presently opened. I heard no conversation; but soon a terrific shriek rang through the house. In a few moments Mr. Webster came downstairs, in tears. He was, however, very deliberate about the arrangements for departure, and said he would be ready in two hours. He told me to get a comfortable carriage, to hold three persons; which I hastened to do. They left town at four o'clock. I shall never forget the expression of anguish that appeared upon Mr. Webster's face when the sad news was broken to him. He tried to hold his feelings in subjection, but seemed to be utterly overcome by the depth of his grief."

Let us now revert to the earlier period of Mr. Webster's life. As has been said, he worked on

his father's farm and at the old mill in his boyhood; and he always looked back to those years with fondness and affection. For his father and mother he had a deep-rooted love. He has described his father to me as a man of great kindness of heart, as well as energy and determination. He was strongly attached to his childhood's home and the memories of the years there spent.

One day, after he had been on a visit to Elms Farm, he met me at the Revere House, and took out of his pocket a little parcel. It proved to contain a Japan teaspoon. It was all corroded with rust, and half eaten up.

"A week ago," said he, "my gardener found that spoon in the garden, near the house where I was born. I may have taken pap with that very spoon; it is just the kind we used to have. What associations the sight of it brings up!—what associations of early life! That and the Bohea tea: that was what stirred the Bohea tea. I would not take a thousand dollars for that spoon!"

He attended school at intervals at the district schools in the neighborhood, and was at different times under Masters Tappan, Chase, and Hoyt; and at the age of thirteen entered Phillips Academy at Exeter, then recently founded. There he prepared for college, remaining at the academy nine months; and completed his preparation with the Rev. Samuel Wood, in Boscawen, — the town which adjoined Salisbury. In 1797, at the age of fifteen, he entered Dartmouth College, where he graduated in the summer of 1801.

Master Tappan, one of his early schoolmasters, who lived to a great age, and saw with intense pride the fame and position attained by his whilom pupil, has left an interesting account of him as he appeared in school. He was the brightest of all the boys, says Master Tappan, and quicker at his studies than Ezekiel. "On a Saturday, I remember," the ancient pedagogue goes on, "I held up a handsome new jack-knife to the scholars, and said that the boy who would commit to memory the greatest number of verses in the Bible by Monday morning should have it. Many of the boys did well; but when it came Daniel's turn to recite, I found that he had committed so much, that, after hearing him repeat some sixty or seventy verses, I was obliged to give up, — he telling me that there were several chapters yet that he had learned. Daniel got that jack-knife. Ah, sir! he was remarkable even as a boy; and I told his father he would do God's work injustice if he did not send both Daniel and Ezekiel to college."

The following incident occurred during the boyhood of Daniel, which is well worth relating, as illustrative of his energy and resolution. While he and his brother were living at home, they on one occasion made a journey to the upper part of Vermont, to visit their uncle Benjamin. On the way, they overtook a teamster with a heavy load, whose horses had stopped and refused to go further, when the team was half way up a steep hill. The horses and wagon were so situated across the road, that it was impossible for the brothers to

pass in their chaise. After some time spent by the teamster in trying to start his horses, he left them and went in search of help. Daniel said to Ezekiel, "Come, we can start this team. You put your shoulder to the hind wheel, and I will mount the near horse."

This was no sooner said than done. Ezekiel put his sturdy shoulder to the wheel; Daniel mounted the horse, whipped, and shouted at him. The horses pulled together, and away they went; and the load was soon drawn to the top of the hill. When the man returned, he found his horses quietly resting by the roadside, at the summit, and the Websters out of sight.

Mr. Webster was once telling me about a plain-spoken neighbor of his father, whose sons were schoolmates of his own. This neighbor had moved into the neighborhood of Hanover, where he had opened a little clearing, and had settled upon a piece of comparatively barren land. After Daniel had been in college several months, his father said to him, —

"John Hanson is away up there somewhere. I should like to know how he is getting along. I think you had better find him out, and go and see him."

So Daniel inquired about, and soon found out pretty nearly where Hanson lived.

"One Saturday afternoon," related Mr. Webster, "I thought I would trudge up there through the woods, and spend Sunday with my old friends. After a long, tedious walk, I began to think I

should never find the place; but I finally did: and when I got there, I was pretty well tired out with climbing, jumping over logs, and so on. The family were not less delighted than surprised to see me; but they were as poor as Job's cat. They were reduced to the last extreme of poverty, and their house contained but one apartment, with a rude partition to make two rooms. I saw how matters were; but it was too late to go back, and they seemed really glad to see me. They confessed to me that they had not even a cow or any potatoes. The only thing they had to eat was a bundle of green grass and a little hog's lard; and they actually subsisted on this grass fried in the hog's fat. But," said Mr. Webster, emphatically, "it was not so bad, after all. They fried up a great platter of it, and I made my supper and breakfast off it. About a year and a half afterwards, just before graduating, I thought that, before leaving Hanover, I would go and pay another visit to the Hansons. I found that they had improved somewhat, for they now had a cow and plenty of plain, homely fare. I spent the night, and was about to leave the next morning, when Hanson said to me, —

"'Well, Daniel, you are about to graduate. You've got through college, and have got college larnin', — and now, what are you going to do with it?'

"I told him I had not decided on a profession.

"'Well,' said he, 'you are a good boy; your father was a kind man to me, and was always kind

to the poor. I should like to do a kind turn for him and his. You 've got through college; and people that go through college either become ministers, or doctors, or lawyers. As for bein' a minister, I would never think of doin' that: they never get paid any thing. Doctorin' is a miserable profession; they live upon other people's ailin's, are up nights, and have no peace. And as for bein' a lawyer, I would never propose that to anybody. Now,' said he, 'Daniel, I 'll tell you what! You are a boy of parts; you understand this book-larnin', and you are bright. I knew a man who had college larnin' down in Rye, where I lived when I was a boy. That man was a conjurer; he could tell, by consultin' his books, and study, if a man had lost his cow, where she was. That was a great thing; and if people lost any thing, they would think nothin' of payin' three or four dollars to a man like that, so as to find their property. There is not a conjurer within a hundred miles of this place; and you are a bright boy, and have got this college larnin'. The best thing you can do, Daniel, is to study that, and *be a conjurer!*'"

Mr. Webster used to tell, with great gusto, many stories about his early life. One was as follows: He was once at home from college on a vacation, in the winter time. It happened that a neighbor was going up to Lebanon, which was about four miles from Hanover, the seat of the college. His father had asked this neighbor to carry Daniel back with him when he went. This he

agreed to do, at least as far as Lebanon; and Daniel was to walk the remaining four miles. Daniel's mother had packed his little trunk, and he was to start very early in the morning. They set out accordingly, in an old-fashioned, square-boxed pung-sleigh, which contained several barrels of cider, to be sold by the owner at Lebanon. It was a cold, frosty, snappy morning, and by sunrise they had got a mile on their way. Daniel wore his new clothes and mittens, made by his mother's own fond hands: she had spun, woven, and dyed them. In the course of the morning they reached a stream, where the bridge had been carried away by a recent flood, and was lodged just below the road. They saw that the stream could be crossed only by fording, and the neighbor, after looking at Daniel, said, —

"You've got tight boots on; suppose you take the reins and drive."

Daniel did as he was bid, while his companion jumped out to walk across over the broken bridge.

"I drove down cautiously," said Mr. Webster, describing the scene, "and all seemed favorable to a safe passage; when suddenly the pung sank, and I found myself up to my armpits in the water. The horse plunged forward, and reached the opposite bank, when, almost as quickly as I am telling you, my clothes became a solid cake of ice. It was some distance to any dwelling, and in my condition I was sure of freezing to death very soon unless I was relieved. So I jumped out of the sleigh, and told the man to drive as fast as he

could. I took hold of the little iron rod at the back of the pung, and he plied the whip lustily. I sometimes came near falling, but managed to hold on, and was kept from freezing, by the rapid motion of the sleigh, till we reached a house. I went in and asked the lady, who was at home alone, if she would give me a chance to dry my clothes. She said she would. Then I asked her, 'Can't you put me into a room where there is a bed, and take my clothes and dry them?' She said that she could, and it was accordingly so arranged. It was a full hour and a half before I fully recovered and felt comfortable again; but the fact was then apparent that the *contents of my mother's dye-pot* were left on my body instead of on my clothes!"

While in college, Mr. Webster often indulged his literary muse, and not seldom tried his hand at poetry. One of his poems, serious and full of grave thought, appeared in the "Dartmouth Gazette," in December, 1799, and was as follows: —

"Happy are they who, far removed from war,
And all its train of woes, in tranquil peace
And joyful plenty, pass the winter's eve.
Such bliss is thine, Columbia! Bless thy God!
The toil and labor of the year now o'er,
While Sol scarce darts a glimmering, trembling beam,
While Boreas' blast blows bleak along the plain;
Around the social fire, content and free,
Thy sons shall taste the sweets Pomona gives,
Or reap the blessings of domestic ease.
Or else, in transport, tread the mountain snow,
And leap the craggy cliff, robust and strong —
Till from the lucid chambers of the South
The joyous Spring looks out and hails the world!"

He expressed a similar idea in a noble and beautiful passage of a speech delivered in Congress in 1814: —

"I am not anxious," he said, "to accelerate the approach of the period when the great mass of American labor shall not find its employment in the field; when the young men of the country shall be obliged to shut their eyes upon external nature, upon the heavens and the earth, and immure themselves in close, unwholesome workshops; when they shall be obliged to shut their ears to the bleatings of their own flocks upon their own hills, and to the voice of the lark that cheers them at the plow, — that they may open them in dust and smoke and steam, to the perpetual whirl of spools and spindles, and the grating of rasps and saws!"

It has already been seen with what generous spirit of self-sacrifice Daniel Webster interrupted his law studies in order to lend aid to the education of Ezekiel. This, as I have said, he resolved to do by teaching school, a frequent resource then as now with poor young men just out of college, who sought a temporary way of making a living. This was in the winter and spring of 1802. The scene of his brief but successful career as a teacher was the town of Fryeburg, Maine, then a part of Massachusetts, — a town lying close to the New Hampshire border, on the Saco river.

The following is the record of his appointment as schoolmaster: —

FRYEBURG, April 20, 1802.

At a meeting of the Trustees of Fryeburg Academy, the following report was made by the committee: Your committee, chosen to supply the Academy with a preceptor, to teach in the Academy, beg leave to report that we engaged Mr. Daniel Webster, from the first of January last passed, at the price of $350 per year, and in that proportion for a part of the year.

DAVID PAGE, }
JUDAH DANA, } *Committee.*

In the following September this vote was recorded: —

Sept. 1, 1802.

Voted, That the Secretary return the thanks of this Board to Mr. Daniel Webster, for his faithful services while preceptor of Fryeburg Academy.

WILLIAM FESSENDEN, *Secretary.*

Many were the stories which Mr. Webster used to tell of his career as a teacher. He added to his duties in this calling that of recording deeds, — an employment he secured from the circumstance of his boarding in the family of the register of deeds of Oxford County. By this means he added not a little to his scant income as preceptor.

In a letter to a classmate, written in 1802, Mr. Webster relates the following droll incident: —

"On my way to Fryeburg I fell in with an acquaintance, journeying to the same place. He was mounted on the ugliest horse I ever saw or heard of, except Sancho Panza's pacer.[1] As I had two horses with me, I proposed to him to ride one

[1] This is, no doubt, a slip of the pen. Mr. Webster probably meant Don Quixote's pacer.

of them, and tie his bag fast to his Bucephalus. He did so, and turned his horse forward, where her appearance, indescribable gait, and frequent stumblings afforded us constant amusement. At length, we approached the Saco river, — a very wide, deep, and rapid stream, — when this satire on the animal creation, as if to revenge herself on us for our sarcasms, plunged into the river, which was then very high, and was wafted down the current like a bag of oats. I could scarcely sit on my horse for laughter (I am apt to laugh at the vexations of my friends). The fellow, who was of my own age and my mate, half choked the current with oaths as big as lobsters; and old Rosinante was all the while much at her ease. She floated up among the willows, far below on the opposite bank."

Not long before his death, Mr. Webster betrayed the minuteness of his recollection of his first visit to Fryeburg, in a conversation with Mr. Robert Bradley. "At that time," he said, "I was a youth, not quite twenty years of age, with a slender frame, weighing less than one hundred and twenty pounds. On deciding to go, my father gave me rather an ordinary horse; and, after making the journey from Salisbury on his back, I was to dispose of him to the best of my judgment, for my own benefit. Immediately on my arrival, I called upon you, stating that I would sell the horse for forty dollars, and requesting your aid in the sale. You replied that he was worth more, and gave me an obligation for a larger sum; and

in a few days succeeded in making a sale for me at an advanced price. I well remember that the purchaser lived about three miles from the village, and that his name was James Walker."

On being told that Mr. Walker was still living, Mr. Webster added with great heartiness, —

"Please to give him my best regards."

What with his school-teaching, his law-reading at chance intervals, and his deed-copying, which he did in the evenings, his hands were quite full at Fryeburg. A portion of two volumes, filled with deeds of his copying, are still extant there. The academy in which he taught was a small, one-story building. A few years after his connection with it, this building was taken down, and a new one erected on another site. The ground on which the old academy stood was purchased by Mr. Webster's early friend, Samuel A. Bradley, and consecrated to the statesman's memory. No ploughshare has been allowed to enter the enclosure. While at Fryeburg, Mr. Webster delivered a Fourth of July oration, which received warm praise from his political friends, and was acknowledged by the following vote of the academy trustees: —

Voted, That the thanks of the Board be presented to Preceptor Webster, for his services this day; and that he would accept five dollars as a small acknowledgment of their sense of his services this day performed.

William Fessenden, *Secretary*.

The five dollars were no doubt welcome, and far from being disdained; for at that time every dollar

counted with the two ambitious and struggling brothers.

Shortly afterwards he wrote to his brother the following parody of an old song : —

"Fol de rol, dol di dol, dol di dol;
I'll never make money my idol,
For away our dollars will fly all.
With my friend and my pitcher,
I'm twenty times richer
Than if I made money my idol.
Fol de rol, dol di dol, dol di dol."

The trustees of the academy, as well as the people of Fryeburg, became deeply impressed by Daniel Webster's genius and abilities during his residence there. The Rev. N. Porter, D.D., one of the trustees, predicted that he would become the first man in the country. Others declared their opinion that, if the people could appreciate the man, he would be governor of New Hampshire within five years; and one shrewd villager affirmed that to be governor would be small business for him. As a teacher he was greatly beloved. The friendships which he formed at that period of his life were cherished with warm affection till his death. In conversation he often reverted to pleasing recollections, and indulged in refreshing remembrance, of the past.

To one of these early friends he wrote, not long before he died, closing his letter in these terms:

"I am happy to hear of your establishment and the growth of your fame. You have a little world around you; fill it with good deeds, and you will fill it with your own glory."

To another of these early companions he sent an engraving of himself as "a token of early and long-continued friendship." After Fryeburg Academy was burned, the trustees proceeded to raise funds to erect a new building. Mr. Webster engaged in the enterprise with energy and cordial good will, and promised to forward the work with all his power. As late as September, 1851, he expressed a purpose of being present at the dedication of the building and delivering the opening address; but was prevented from fulfilling his friendly intent.

CHAPTER II.

AS A LAW STUDENT.

Mr. Webster began to study law in August, 1801, immediately after his graduation, in the office of Thomas W. Thompson, a friend of his father, at Salisbury. His studies were interrupted, though not discontinued, by his teaching at Fryeburg; and, after the close of his service as a teacher, he returned to Mr. Thompson's office, where he remained about two years. In July, 1804, he went to Boston to pursue his studies in the office of the celebrated Christopher Gore, who had already occupied high posts of honor at home and abroad, and who was afterwards Governor of Massachusetts. He remained in Boston until the spring of 1805; and, during this period, he at one time took charge of his brother Ezekiel's school, and thus became the preceptor of the boy Edward Everett.

Mr. Webster was admitted to the bar in Boston, in March, 1805, and soon after established himself and put out his sign at Boscawen, the town next to Salisbury, that he might be near at hand to assist his father. In the autumn of 1807, — his father having now died, — he removed to Portsmouth, where

he resided until 1816, when he took up his permanent residence in Boston.

He evidently exercised sound judgment in choosing the law as a profession, as his after career abundantly proved. Sometimes, however, his fine literary taste was shocked by the rude baldness and dry technicalities of legal studies, and his well-trained moral sense was still more shocked by what Jeremiah Smith used to call "the practices" of the attorneys of the day.

He once complained of the course of study laid down in his time for young students at law. The books first put into their hands, he said, were dry, technical, repulsive, and to a great extent unintelligible to the beginner. This, together with the style of practice then in vogue in country offices, tended to create in his mind a disrelish for his chosen profession. More liberal study and better society, however, gave him more enlarged views of jurisprudence.

The following letter from the Hon. Judah Dana, of Fryeburg, shows how a portion of his leisure hours were employed, when a teacher; and how, like other young men oppressed by the *res angustæ domi*, he strove "to gain time" in his professional studies: —

ROCHESTER, Jan. 18, 1805.

DEAR SIR, — Your favor of December 29 arrived in my absence, and the necessity of my attending court in this town immediately after the receipt of it, prevented me from answering it till this time; and now I am in the bustle of the business of the court. I cannot ascertain the precise time of

your residence at Fryeburg as preceptor of the academy, but think you came in November or December of 1801, and returned the September following, making a term of eight months. On your arrival, you informed me that, as you had commenced, you intended to pursue, the study of the law, and wished the use of my library during said term. You had access to the same; and I presume that you devoted the principal part of your leisure hours, while you were at Fryeburg, to the study of the law. If a certificate of the above import will be of any benefit to you, I can truly and cheerfully make it. I am, dear sir, in much confusion, and with much esteem,

Your sincere friend,

JUDAH DANA.

Mr. Webster, from the time he began to study law, had a strong desire to pursue his studies in the office of Christopher Gore, at Boston. This had been a sort of youthful dream with him. Gore was a great lawyer and a great man. In 1804, Mr. Webster went to Boston to visit a classmate named Bradley, who was better off than himself in this world's goods, and was then studying with Judge Heard. They had been chums in college; and when Mr. Webster went to Fryeburg, Bradley began his studies in Boston. Mr. Webster found his friend, saw the Boston sights, and spoke of his desire to spend his last year of study in Mr. Gore's office.

"I have seen Mr. Gore," said Bradley, "and will take you into his office and introduce you to him."

This was rather a bold venture, as Bradley knew the famous lawyer scarcely more than did Webster himself.

Mr. Webster, in relating the incident to me, said: —

"I agreed to go with Bradley, and we started off; but, as we were going up the stairs, it occurred to me that such an introduction would be rather a drawback. I consoled myself, however, by thinking that Mr. Gore might not be in, and that that would end it all. We knocked and entered. He was in, and was sitting at his desk, with his black-bowed spectacles on his nose, looking rather formidable.

"'Good-morning, Mr. Gore,' said Bradley. 'My classmate, Mr. Webster, who has been studying with Senator Thompson, is very anxious to enter his name in your office, to finish his studies.'

"I stood there, anxious enough; and, from Mr. Gore's forbidding look, feared that he was making up his mind to give me a point-blank refusal. I did not show any forwardness, but was rather diffident, and finally said: 'My friend and classmate has been kind enough to introduce me to you; but I did not think of obtruding myself here without letters from sources of credit. And, although I have a strong wish to enter your office, I had no thought of intruding at this time.'

"I saw his features relax a little, as he said: 'My office is hardly the best place for you; my practice is very limited, consisting only of chamber practice: you would get more knowledge by studying with gentlemen having a larger commercial business. I have a library, and that is all.'

"'I know that very well,' I replied; 'but I

should feel proud to have studied my profession in your office.'

"Bradley added: 'I think, sir, you will never have cause to regret taking my friend. I feel sure that his future will amply justify the venture; and if you will allow me, I will give you a copy of a eulogy delivered by him on a classmate, when he was fifteen years old, which was published by his class.'

"I felt mortified at this, but said nothing. Mr. Gore looked at the closing part of the eulogy, and then at me. He asked me some questions about my father and mother and Senator Thompson, all of which I modestly answered; and the result was that Mr. Gore spoke kind words, and asked me to sit down. My friend had already disappeared! Mr. Gore said what I had suggested was very reasonable, and required little apology; he did not mean to fill his office with clerks, but was willing to receive one or two, and would consider what I had said. He talked to me pleasantly for a quarter of an hour; and, when I arose to depart, he said: 'My young friend, you look as though you might be trusted. You say you came to study, and not to waste time. I will take you at your word. You may as well hang up your hat at once. Go into the other room; take your book, and sit down to reading it, and write at your convenience to New Hampshire for your letters.'

"From that time till the close of Governor Gore's life I never had a warmer friend than he. He introduced me to the bar, and followed me with good

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wishes and kindness down to the period of his death."

At the time of his beginning practice, Mr. Webster's father was a county judge. The New Hampshire courts were then composed of a bench of regular judges and of the sitting magistrates, or side judges, one for each county. Ebenezer Webster was one of these side judges. He was no lawyer, but sat somewhat in the capacity of a juror, personally knowing the circumstances of many of the cases, and acting as an adviser. The celebrated Jeremiah Smith was one of the judges, and Judge Farrar the other. Both were friends of the elder Webster. They knew that he had fought for his country, was everywhere respected, and that he had made great sacrifices to give his sons a liberal education.

It happened that, just as Daniel was completing his studies in Mr. Gore's office, the clerkship of the county court of Merrimac became vacant by the death of the incumbent.

The clerk was paid by fees; and, as there was a great deal of litigation in New Hampshire, it did not require a large tariff of fees to give the clerk a generous income. It is a fact, that the most lucrative offices in New Hampshire at that time were the clerks of courts. They received more pay than the judges or the governor or any salaried officer. A clerkship was worth from $1,500 to $2,000 a year, which would be equivalent to nearly $10,000 now.

When this office became vacant, lawyers of es-

tablished reputation asked for it. No member of the bar could earn so much, or really received so much, as the clerks in the larger counties, where there was a good deal of litigation. There was a lively competition for the Merrimac office, and Ebenezer Webster promptly applied to Judge Smith and Judge Farrar for this place for Daniel.

They thought the matter over; and, although strong political influences were brought to bear for other men, they finally announced to the father that they had decided to give the appointment to Daniel. It was not possible for them to have done him a greater favor. It was a great act of friendship on the part of the judges. They did it as a sincere mark of friendship for the elder Webster.

"I felt," said Daniel, "that in the fortunes of our family the turning-point had arrived. Before, it had been hard for them to get money; here was an office that would bring $2000 a year, of which $1500 could be laid by, — a fortune, every thing that one could wish for."

Mr. Webster had just written home to say that he had completed his studies and was about to be admitted to the bar, when he received a letter from his father, announcing that he had procured for him the clerkship of Merrimac County, and urging him to make no delay in accepting the office with proper acknowledgments, either in person or by letter. He received the letter at night, and saw at once that it was a singular piece of good fortune to get this office. He began to feel rich;

now he should not want for money, and all his family could share in his prosperity.

With a feeling of thankfulness and gratitude, he at the same time was greatly excited, and could scarcely sleep. He was eager to tell his good fortune to Mr. Gore. He went early to the office, and it seemed as if the hours never would pass for the time when Mr. Gore should arrive. As soon as he came in, and had taken off his hat, Daniel followed him into his private office, and his face was lighted up with joy as he approached his patron.

"You are in good plight this morning," said Mr. Gore; "you have had good news?"

"Yes, I have; and I have come to receive your congratulations, for I know they will be hearty, — you have been so kind to me."

"I then," Mr. Webster went on to tell me, "handed to him my father's letter; and I soon noticed that, instead of expressing delight, he seemed a little moody. He did not say he was glad of it; he did not say he was pleased; he did not congratulate me. I stood a while, and then sat down. Finally, he said: —

"'You are a little excited about this office now; go into the other room, and by-and-by I will have a little talk with you about it.'

"I could not understand what he meant, but went to my desk. After the lapse of an hour he called me into his office again, and said: —

"'I know perfectly well how you feel about this office. In your situation, having had a pretty hard struggle to get an education, and appreciating

keenly the sacrifices a fond parent has made to aid you, it is not strange that you are eager to repay his kindness. But I want to say to you that you have *got up the hill;* your education is secure, and you are now just ready to start in your profession. Although this office of clerk of the court is in the line of the law, still it is not a place where there is much chance for the display of talent. A man merely rusts out in it, as he would in driving a stage. There is nothing in it. To come to the point, I do not want you to take that office.'

"If he had put a pistol to my head," said Mr. Webster, "and had demanded my life, I should not have been more astonished.

"'Do you know the income of the office?' I asked.

"'Yes, I know all about it. So far as mere money considerations are concerned, it would be worth while to take it; but I have a notion that your mission is to make opinions for other men to record, and not to be the clerk to record the opinions of courts. You are destined for higher distinctions than to be clerk of a court, if I am not mistaken.'

"'But money is my chief ambition, and this will bring it to me.'

"'I know it; but I feel so strongly on this point, that I am going to persuade you to decline that place, and to trust to Providence for something better. I know your history and your father's wishes and feelings; and I give this advice, knowing all these things. I don't want you to take the

office. You will have a struggle with your father over it, and it will be hard for him to comprehend your refusal. But before you leave me I am going to extort a promise from you to decline it.'

"It is needless to repeat the arguments that he used. Suffice it to say that, against my own judgment, I promised that I would not take the clerkship. He said kind, complimentary, and even flattering things of me, and still I felt that I was throwing away a great present good. I had strong confidence in Mr. Gore's judgment, and I do not suppose anybody else could have persuaded me to make such a promise. He said that if I refused the office, and in five or six years I did not admit that his advice was good, he would make up to me the difference. I promised. It was a leap in the dark. It was faith.

"The next day I started — it being a cold winter's day — to visit my father and break to him my decision. That was the hardest of all; but my mind was made up, and Mr. Gore had inspired me with a good deal of confidence in myself. He made me feel that there was something in me, and I started for New Hampshire with that feeling. I reached Concord in the afternoon of the third day, and there hired a man to carry me fourteen miles in a pung to my father's, where I arrived in the early evening.

"As I approached the door, jumped out of the sleigh, and mounted the stoop or portico, I looked through the window. I saw a blazing wood fire, and a nice, clean, painted hearth; and there was my

father, — a venerable man, — seated in his chair, with his white locks streaming down, looking into the fire. I stood and watched him, with filial reverence. I thought to myself, how happy he is now, contemplating all the good that is to come; and I am going in to mar and dash it all away! I went in: he never greeted me more warmly. 'How glad I am to see you!' he exclaimed, as he kissed me.

"My mother came in, and it was a jubilee for five minutes. At last supper was brought in, and I was making up my mind how to break this thing to my father. I almost regretted the rash promise I had made to Mr. Gore. I wished a hundred times that I could retract it. Then again, there was something that prompted me to think that I could do better than to record other men's opinions.

"My father broached the subject, by saying, 'I think you had better ride over to Judge Smith's in the morning, and be qualified at once.'

"'I shall write to Judge Smith and Judge Farrar to-morrow,' I replied; 'thank them for their favor as warmly as I know how, and for their kindness and friendship for you which has procured me this appointment. And, while I render these thanks, I am going to decline the office.'

"My father stood and looked at me in amazement.

"'Decline! Are you crazy? You are joking, — you are trifling!'

"'No, sir; I am serious. Mr. Gore' —

"'None of your Mr. Gores to me! Don't you talk about Mr. Gore!'

"And," said Mr. Webster, "I can see now that look of mingled anger, incredulity, and pity that he wore, as he said: —

"'Mr. Gore! — telling a young fool to refuse a good office! — a silly boy that knows nothing about life! — filling his head with some foolish fancies about what he is going to do, when this opportunity offers to give him all a reasonable man requires! None of your Mr. Gores to me! — a man who is driving his coach with four horses, with his liveried servants, who knows nothing about the struggles of life! — filling a young fool's head with nonsense! You are crazy! You vex me! You never annoyed me so much in your life before!'

"He began to scold, for the first time in his life, and I thought it was time for me to speak.

"'My father, I wish to say to you that no man living, no son, appreciates more than I do the trials you have gone through for me; and no one could be more grateful than I. I appreciate all you have done for my welfare, and the sacrifices you and my mother have made. But still, I am now of age, and am a man for myself. My education has cost you many sacrifices, and ought to bring you something in return. You may need money; but that is not every thing that we live for. You yourself would be glad to see your son rise to eminence, and be a man among his fellows, — which no man ever was as a clerk of a court. I am more than half inclined to think Mr. Gore's advice is good.

It may seem otherwise just now; but I feel a prompting within me that tells me there is something better for me than to be a clerk of courts. My mind is made up.'

"'Are you fully resolved?' said my father.

"'Yes, sir; I am.'

"He did not say another word for a long time, — perhaps half an hour. Then he went on: —

"'Daniel, in the long struggle with poverty and adverse fortune that your mother and I have made to give you and Ezekiel an education, we have often talked over these sacrifices, and the prospects of our children. Your mother has often said to me that she had no fear about Ezekiel; that he had fixed and steady habits, and an indomitable energy. She had no doubt of his success in life. But as for Daniel, — well, she didn't know about him: he would be either something or nothing. I think your mother was a prophetess, and that the problem is solved to-night. You have fulfilled her prophecy, — you have come to nothing.'

"That was the last time he ever mentioned the clerkship to me.

"I wrote a letter to the judges, declining the office, and returned to Mr. Gore and told him what I had done. I then went up to Boscawen, and opened a law-office in a red store, with stairs upon the outside, for which I paid a rent of about $15 a year. I lived at home, and walked to and from the office at morning and night. I then resolved never to leave home during the life of my father, who was growing old, no matter what

might betide. I stayed by him two years. I did not, in those two years, make money enough to pay the rent of the office; but I stayed there until my father died. I closed his eyes in death, and received his parting blessing; and then I started for Portsmouth, and began my career of life and practice there."

Mr. Webster added, that he argued one case before his father as judge; and that the old man considered it "a creditable performance; one about which there was nothing to regret." He thought that his father was decidedly gratified by it.

CHAPTER III.

AT THE BAR.

Many anecdotes of Mr. Webster's early career at the bar survive, and a few of them may properly find a place in these pages. Some that are given have been told before, having had the transient circulation of a newspaper paragraph, and some I had from Mr. Webster himself.

Joel Parker, formerly chief justice of the New Hampshire Court of Common Pleas, and later professor of law in Harvard College, who had many opportunities of judging of Mr. Webster's capabilities as an advocate, has left his impression of him on record, as follows: —

"There is evidence of his early professional ability, as manifested at the September term of 1806, when his argument made such an impression upon a friend of mine, — then a lad of some ten or twelve years, — that, after a lapse of nearly half a century, he distinctly remembers the high encomiums passed upon it. He recollects, he writes, with perfect distinctness the sensation which the speech produced upon the multitude. The court-house was thronged, and all were loud in his praise. As soon as the adjournment took

place, the lawyers dropped into my informant's father's office, and there the whole of Webster's bearing was eagerly discussed. It was agreed on all hands that he had made an extraordinary effort. One of the lawyers accounted for it by saying, 'Ah! Webster has been studying in Boston, and has got a knack of talking; but let him take it rough and tumble awhile here in the bush, and we shall see whether he will do much better than other folks.' Such testimony as this is valuable. It shows that Webster's future greatness was reflected upon his first professional efforts. His earliest arguments at the bar were creditable, even honorable, to his fame in the maturity of his powers. Such men as Judge Jeremiah Smith predicted his future eminence. He never spoke before a jury without exciting admiration and eliciting praise."

In his "Life of Judge Smith," Mr. Morison speaks as follows of Mr. Webster's first appearance at the Superior Court in New Hampshire: —

"At the court holden in Hillsborough County in 1807, a young man, who had been admitted as an attorney but not as a counsellor, appeared with a cause of no great pecuniary importance, but of some interest and some intricacy. Though not then of such advanced standing at the bar as to be entitled to address the jury, he was yet allowed to examine the witnesses, and briefly state his case both upon the law and facts. Having done this, he handed his brief to Mr. Wilson, the senior counsel, for the full argument of the matter. But the chief justice had noticed him; and, on leaving the court-

house, said to a member of the bar that he had never before met such a young man as that. It was Daniel Webster, and this was his first action before the court."

Israel W. Kelley, Esq., of Concord, the brother-in-law of Mr. Webster, has left a more minute account of the same trial. He was present in the court, and acting as sheriff. He said that Mr. Webster's reputation as an able advocate was established at the bar of New Hampshire, by his first argument in the Superior Court at Hopkinton, Hillsborough County. The case was tried before Judge Smith, in May, 1807. Mr. Webster not having practised in the Court of Common Pleas two years, as the law then required, could not legally argue a case in the Superior Court. By special permission, however, he took charge of this suit. The action was brought by his client for trespass, against the owner of a pasture adjoining his own. The wall between the enclosures had been thrown down, and the plaintiff's horse had evidently been dragged through the breach from the defendant's pasture after his leg had been broken, which prevented his being driven. Messrs. Atherton and Dana, men of eminent legal ability, were counsel for the defendant. Sheriff Kelley, who was then crier of the court, thus describes the scene: —

"When Mr. Webster began to speak, his voice was low, his head was sunk upon his breast, his eyes were fixed upon the floor, and he moved his feet incessantly, backward and forward, as if trying to

secure a firmer position. His voice soon increased in power and volume, till it filled the whole house. His attitude became erect, his eye dilated, and his whole countenance was radiant with emotion. The attention of all present was at once arrested. Every eye in the crowded court-room was fixed on the speaker, but my own; for I was obliged to watch the door, that I might prevent confusion by the throng of spectators that were constantly crowding into the hall."

After Mr. Webster opened an office in Boscawen, his first writs were served by Sheriff Kelley upon Messrs. Purdy and Currier, traders in Boscawen. While the young attorney and the sheriff were at dinner, the former proprietors, with a reckless accomplice, expelled the keeper left in possession by the officer of the law, and by force recovered possession of the shop. Returning to the scene of action, the sheriff began a parley with the intruders, and tried to convince them of the magnitude of their offence. But Mr. Webster resolved to vindicate practically the majesty of the law; and accordingly ran for an axe, to batter down the door. Before his return the door was unbarred; and the sheriff having recovered possession of the property, levied, without judge or jury, a fine of thirty dollars upon the owners for forcibly excluding him.

An able and forcible writer, N. P. Rogers, of Plymouth, N. H., who often assumed a rough, quaint style, was well acquainted with the Websters, and was in early life their warm and devoted

friend. The following letter, which he contributed to the "New York Tribune," relates to Daniel Webster's early appearance at the bar; and is worth inserting, both as giving a vivid picture of that period of the great statesman's life, and as an amusing literary curiosity.

"There's a town a little south of me, about thirty-five miles off, in plain sight, where they've held courts for the county. It's the county of Grafton. They've held courts there these seventy years. Webster used to come to court there when he was a young lawyer. They say he went to his first court there. I don't know how that is, but he went there when he was almost a boy. I could see him plainly from here. He was singular in his look. Him and his brother 'Zeke' used to come to court together after a year or two. Daniel came first, though 'Zeke' was the eldest. I can see them now, driving into that little village in their bellows-top chaise, — top thrown back, — driving like Jehu, the chaise bending under them like a close-top in a high wind. I had heard tell of Diomede and Ulysses, — a couple of old Greeks that used to ride in some such looking cars as they did, though I believe the Greeks don't ride together. But Daniel and 'Zekiel Webster made me think of them two Greeks. Daniel used to drive very fast. They'd come in as if they had started long before day; and it was a sight, in a small place, to see them two ride in together. I could have told either of them thirty miles among a thousand men.

"The court-house was a little one-story building that stood on a hill. Daniel made his first speech, they tell me, in that house, and tried his first case there. It was a small case, and the only one he had. He wanted to get it put by. The lawyer on the other side was opposed to it, and Daniel got up and made a speech to the court that made the little old house ring again. They all said — lawyers and judges and people — that they never heard such a speech, or any thing like it. They said he talked like a different creature from any of the rest of them, great or small, — and there were men there

that were not small. There was a man tried for his life in that court, or one soon after, and the judges chose Webster to plead for him; and, from what I can learn, he never has spoken better since than he did there when he first began. He was a black, raven-haired fellow, with an eye as black as death, and as heavy as a lion's, — and no lion in Africa ever had a voice like him; and his look was like a lion's, — that same heavy look, not sleepy, but as if he didn't care about any thing that was going on about him or any thing anywhere else. He didn't look as if he was thinking about any thing; but as if he *would* think like a hurricane if he once got waked up to it. They say the lion looks so when he is quiet. It wasn't an empty look, this of Webster's; but one that didn't seem to see any thing going on worth his while.

"'Zekiel didn't use to speak in the courts for a great many years. The talk was that he couldn't say any thing. They said he 'was a better judge of law than Daniel, but couldn't speak.' He did not need to speak much, for he generally put his cases into such a shape that he got them without coming to trial. Nobody ever knew how or why, but Zeke Webster's cases hardly ever came to trial. After some years he got to helping try other lawyer's cases; and then he spoke, and as well as a man could speak, — more sensible, they said, than Daniel himself. It was not till after Daniel left the State; and some thought he didn't speak before, because Daniel was present.

"There was a lawyer by the name of Parker Noyes, that used to go to court the same time with the Websters, — a better lawyer, it was said, than either of them; but he hadn't Daniel's power of talk, — a nicely read lawyer and fatal pleader. Webster used to dread to meet him, he said. He knew the books and the cases, and was an authority about the court-house. Webster would sometimes be engaged to argue a case just as it was coming to trial. That would set him to thinking. It wouldn't wrinkle his forehead, but made him restless. He would shift his feet about, and run his hand up over his forehead, through his Indian-black hair, and lift his upper lip and show his teeth, which were as

white as a hound's. He would get up, and go across the bar and sit down by Parker Noyes, and ask him where such a law was decided, and the names of the cases, — not what the law was, but where it was in the books. What it was he decided for himself. Noyes would tell him where it was, and then he would go back to his seat; and when the case would come up for trial, he would up and pour out the law and cite his authorities, as if he had spent months in poring upon it, — his own mind arriving at the decisions of the sages of the law without having seen the books, and on the spur of the moment; but, for the sake of the judge, he would ask Parker Noyes to tell him where the authorities had written it down.

"Parker Noyes was a great advocate himself. You probably never heard of him in your State of New York. He was a man that didn't wish ever to be heard of, or talked about, anywhere. A man of no vanity whatever. He wasn't an orator; but his talk was very powerful both to the jury and the judges. He got such credit for candor and honesty among the people, that the jury put as much confidence in what he said as if he had been a witness or a judge. He spoke to them more like a judge than an advocate; and he never was excited or disturbed. 'Zekiel Webster, who was a different man, seeing Noyes get up once in his calm way to address the jury in an important case, whispered to a lawyer sitting by him, 'See how undisturbed Noyes is; cantharides would not excite him!' He was one of the great New Hampshire lawyers. Richard Fletcher lived in the same town with him, before he left the State, and owed much of his legal sharpness, no doubt, to the training he got by the side of such an antagonist. Parker Noyes, I believe, did not go to Massachusetts, — 'the way of all' the New Hampshire great (besides those that went elsewhere, Mr. Tribune)."

The reason of Mr. Webster's early removal from Boscawen to Portsmouth, according to a gentleman who knew the facts, was that, "having an engagement to argue a cause in Rockingham County, he

was, at the close of the argument, forthwith retained in nearly all the remaining cases standing at that time upon the docket. Soon after his removal, his practice extended to all the counties in the State."

His practice, indeed, increased so rapidly that he could not long say, as he did in a letter written in the fall of 1807: "Thursday I tarried in Concord; Friday I came to this place [Portsmouth]; Saturday I got my office swept and my books put up, and this week I have been quite at leisure."

Before long he found himself contending with the first lawyers of the State. He said that "they compelled him to study; and, when once enlisted in this warfare, he was never allowed to doff his harness or sheathe his sword." His fees were, however, moderate. He once said: "I went the circuit of all the courts in New Hampshire, and engaged in every case in which I would consent to take a part. After such a term I once computed all my earnings, and found they only amounted to five hundred dollars."

The following story of Mr. Webster's meeting with that rough and ready veteran and patriot, General John Stark, has been told before; but I now give it as Mr. Webster himself related it to me.

It was while he was living at Portsmouth, that he was once obliged to go to Concord to attend court. The roads being bad, he adopted the familiar custom of the day, and went on horse-

back, carrying his papers in the saddle-bags. As he reached Hooksett, now Manchester, it began to rain. It was in the afternoon; and, finding a quiet, comfortable-looking hotel, he thought he would stop and spend the night, and ride up to Concord early the next morning. So he put up his horse, and went into the bar-room, where he found a half-dozen neighbors seated around the fire, drinking flip. Prominent among them was old General Stark. His house was just opposite, on the other side of the river; and everybody in that neighborhood knew him.

"When I went in," said Mr. Webster, "there was a pause in the conversation, as there was likely to be on the entrance of a stranger. I sat down by the fire, and there was a dead silence for some time. I observed that old Stark was getting into a doze, and did not seem to notice any thing. Pretty soon the conversation started up again, and the restraint imposed by the advent of a stranger wore away.

"'What do you think such a man is worth?' said one.

"'I guess he's worth five hundred dollars.'

"'I don't believe he is.'

"Old Stark roused himself, and remarked: —

"'Well, I don't know what *he* is worth; but I know what *I* am worth. They say a thing is worth what it will fetch. If that's so, I'm worth just forty pounds, for I once fetched that. In the French War I was taken by the Indians, and they took forty pounds as my ransom.'

"This raised a roar of laughter; and now General Stark looked around, and for the first time noticed the stranger.

"'Who are you?' said he.

"I thought that was rather a rude way of accosting a person; but of course any thing was permitted to the rough old hero of Bennington.

"'Who are you, I say?'

"'My name?'

"'Yes, your name. What's your name?

"'My name is Webster.'

"'Where are you from?'

"'From Portsmouth.'

"'Your name is Webster, and you are from Portsmouth. Where are you going?'

"'To Concord.'

"'To Concord; well, where did you come from originally? What Websters do you belong to?'

"'I came from Salisbury.'

"'Oh ho! from Salisbury. Are you one of the Salisbury Websters?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'Are you any way related to old Captain Eb.?

"'Slightly, sir; he was my father.'

"'Are you a son of old Captain Eb.? Let me see you [turning me round]. Why, I declare! Well, I am inclined to think you may be. In the war, we could not tell whether Captain Webster's face was a natural color or blackened by powder. You must be his son, for you are a cursed sight blacker than he was!'

"At this, a great laugh arose at my expense,

and the whole company were on good terms with me at once."

While Mr. Webster was living at Portsmouth, he had occasion one night to be out about the "small hours." It was an intensely cold, clear, moonlight night in December; the ground was thickly spread with snow, and the streets were quite deserted.

As he was proceeding homeward, he observed a woman at some distance in front of him; and from the lateness of the hour, the inclemency of the weather, and her peculiar movements, his attention was attracted to her.

She would trot on a little way, then stop and look back and listen, and then walk on again.

Mr. Webster, keeping himself out of sight, attentively observed her movements. She was going the same way that he was; and, on coming to the street that turned toward his own residence, she stopped again, looked cautiously around for a moment, and then went down the street. Mr. Webster's house stood with its gable end toward the street; from his front door-step to the sidewalk he had caused to be laid some loose boards over the snow. At his gate, the woman paused for a moment, looked around again, and quickly picked up one of the boards, put it under her arm, and made off. Mr. Webster continued carefully to follow. The poor woman hurried as fast as she could with her burden to a distant part of the town; and, coming to a small and ruinous wooden tenement, entered and closed the door.

The next day she received, to her surprise it may be supposed, a cord of wood.

It was during his residence in Portsmouth that Mr. Webster became the owner of a parcel of land in the vicinity of the White Mountains, with the buildings standing thereon, for the valuable consideration of his services as counsel in an important suit in one of the courts. The premises were known by the imposing name of "the farm." He left the tenant, who was living there at the time when he acquired the legal title to "the farm," in possession. After his removal to Boston, he heard nothing of his White Mountain estate for several years. One summer, as he journeyed north with his wife in quest of recreation, he resolved to turn aside from the travelled road, and ascertain the true condition of his property. He found a very miserable hut upon it, occupied by an aged woman as the only tenant of his farm. He asked for a glass of water, which she readily served in a tin dipper. He then began to make inquiries about her prosperity, and the present condition of things around her. She said that she did not own the farm, but that it belonged to a lawyer down in Boston by the name of Webster.

"Does he often come to see you, my good woman?" said Mr. Webster.

"No," replied she, "he has never been near his land since I lived here."

"Well," said he, "what rent does he make you pay for the occupancy of his farm?"

"Rent!" she exclaimed, "I don't pay him any

rent. It is bad enough to live here without paying any thing for it; and if he don't fix up the house, I don't mean to stay here freezing to death much longer!"

"Well, madam," returned the kind-hearted proprietor, "it is a pretty hard case, I confess. If you will accept this bill [five dollars] towards your holding on for another year, I will speak to Mr. Webster when I next see him, and perhaps he will do something more for you."

So he took final leave of his valuable farm and his interesting tenant.

Judge Parker gave the following, as an opinion which Mr. Webster expressed to him in regard to the administration of the law in New Hampshire when he practised there. Mr. Webster said that he had practised law before old Justice Jackman at Boscawen, who received his commission from George II., and all the way up to the court of Chief Justice Marshall at Washington; and "he had never found any place where the law was administered with so much precision and exactness as in the county of Rockingham."

Mr. Webster's rapid rise in professional distinction at Portsmouth soon brought him into close connection with the leading lawyers and judges of the State; and, among these, perhaps the most eminent figures at that time were Jeremiah Smith and Jeremiah Mason. Of these two great lights, Judge Smith's biographer says that "both were profoundly learned, but Smith the more accomplished scholar; both were profound thinkers, but

Mason's the more original mind. They were powerful combatants, less unequal than unlike. With perhaps equal industry in the preparation of causes, the one fortified his position with accumulated authorities, the other trusted more to his native strength and the force of reason."

Of Judge Smith Mr. Webster always spoke with veneration. In a letter to the judge's widow requesting an epitaph, he wrote: "For what I am in professional life I owe much to Judge Smith. I revere his character; I shall cherish his memory as long as I live. Would that an impression of his virtues and talents, fresh and deep as that which exists in my own heart, could be made immortal in stone!" He introduced Judge Smith to Chancellor Kent, and his letter bore the following testimony to his respect for the New Hampshire jurist: "There are few men in the world, I think, more to your taste. When I came to the bar, he was chief justice of the State. It was a day of the 'gladsome light' of jurisprudence. His friends (and I was one of them) thought he must be made governor. For this office we persuaded him to leave the bench, and that same 'gladsome light' cheered us no longer."

Mr. Webster's association with Jeremiah Mason was yet more intimate, and his recollections of that great advocate were far more minute and interesting. Of Mr. Mason's legal abilities he had the highest opinion. Indeed, he did not hesitate to pronounce him the first lawyer of his age.

These men, like Hannibal and Scipio of old,

mutually admired each other's greatness. Mr. Mason once said to a friend: "If there is any greater man than Webster in our country, it has not been my fortune to meet him or read of him." When Mr. Mason had grown old, and had virtually retired from business, Mr. Webster once invited him to take a tour with him into the country for recreation. Mr. Mason, knowing the desire of the people to see and hear Mr. Webster when he travelled, replied with characteristic bluntness: "No! I should as soon go with a caravan."

Mr. Webster's opinion of Mr. Mason is repeatedly expressed in his letters. Writing to his brother from Washington on March 28, 1814, he says: "Mr. Mason is growing to be a great man. He ranks in the Senate, *I* think, next to King and Gore. He has made some very excellent speeches."

Mr. Webster first met Jeremiah Mason on the occasion of a criminal trial. A certain Col. —— — a Democrat of note — had been put on trial on a charge of counterfeiting. The case against him was more than serious, for many acts of passing counterfeit money had been brought home to him. The Democrats, however, were very anxious that the colonel should be acquitted. Mason was secured as the prisoner's counsel, and money raised to support the defence. On the very eve of the trial the Attorney-General, who was addicted to drinking, failed the prosecution; whereupon Mr. Webster was called upon to act in his place. Mason had heard of his

promise, but remarked in his plain way that "he had heard similar things of young men before," and did not disturb himself about his antagonist. He soon found out that he had no common adversary to deal with. Webster "came down upon him," as he said, "like a thunder-shower." The prisoner was, indeed, acquitted; but this was, in Mr. Mason's own opinion, rather owing to the political leaning of the jury than to the superiority of the defence.

"Mr. Mason," says Judge Smith's biographer, "was particularly struck with the high, open, and manly ground taken by Mr. Webster, who, instead of availing himself of any technical advantage in pushing the prisoner hard, confined himself to the main points of law and fact. He said that he had never since known Mr. Webster to show greater legal ability in any argument."

The following anecdote of the two lawyers is furnished by a friend and admirer of both: "I happened one day," he says, "to enter the court-room at Portsmouth, where I often went to hear Webster and Mason, who were always opposed to each other in important cases. I accidentally overheard the following dialogue between them, when a new case was called, and the clerk of the court asked who the counsel were on each side:

"'Which side are you on in this case?' said Mason to Webster.

"'I don't know,' was the reply; 'take your choice.'"

Mr. Webster told me many interesting anecdotes

about this honored rival of his early triumphs. "When I went to Portsmouth," said he, "I was a young man of twenty-four, and Mr. Mason was forty. He was then at the head of the bar, and was employed in nearly all the great cases; a man who was a terror to all young lawyers, because he was not conciliatory in his manner. I had a sort of awe for Mr. Mason when I went to Portsmouth; but, in a residence and practice of nine years, nothing ever occurred to mar our friendship, although in almost all cases we went the circuit of the State on opposite sides. We travelled, boarded, and roomed together when on circuit. Mr. Mason was friendly and kind, and was one of my earliest, truest, and best friends. In only one instance did he ever treat me unkindly. It was in court at Portsmouth. I was proud of Mr. Mason's friendship, as any young man would be; and it was remarked by others, 'how fond Mr. Mason appeared to be of young Webster!' But on this occasion something irritated him in court, and he turned upon me with the ferocity of a tiger, and assailed me as bitterly as his tongue was capable of doing. I was grieved, and could not retort. I went home depressed, and my wife asked me what the matter was. I replied: 'Mr. Mason has treated me unkindly;' and I was speaking of it when Mr. Mason's servant came in, and said that his master wished to see me at his office. I immediately went thither. Mr. Mason met me in the most cordial manner, and said: 'I was irritated about something, when my eye fell on you, and I vented my feelings

in the way I did. Don't think of it, for I meant nothing of the sort.'

"I was most glad to have the matter end so; and that was the only time he ever treated me unkindly in any way."

"One day," said Mr. Webster, "Mr. Mason said to me: —

"'You graduated at Dartmouth College — I at Yale. I never was at Dartmouth at commencement; would not you like to go?'

"'Yes; I should be delighted if I had the means to afford it,' I replied."

Mr. Mason and Mr. Webster used to ride about together in a chaise, carrying their luggage in a trunk tied under the vehicle.

"'Well,' said Mr. Mason, 'I have been thinking it over, and I should like to go up to Hanover to commencement, and there is no reason why I should not. And besides, on the way there, at Enfield, lives a curious community of Shakers, in whom I feel interested. One of them, named Lucas, applied to me not long ago to assist in collecting a debt, and I became quite interested in the people and their curious customs. If you have a mind to go up to Hanover, I'll take you in my chaise, and we will stop and dine with these Shakers.'

"'I shall be delighted to go,' I replied.

"So the day was set; and, until it arrived, Mr. Mason talked of nothing but this excursion. We planned it all in advance; we were to start early, stop at Enfield and take dinner, spend an

hour or two with the Shakers, and then, in the cool of the evening, drive up to Hanover. The next day we would attend commencement; and on the third day return home. Mr. Mason was as delighted as a boy, and we started on this pleasant excursion according to the plan, and reached the Shaker village just about twelve o'clock. Mr. Mason talked all the way about the Shakers, — of their mode of life, what could induce them to live in seclusion, what a quiet people they were, and so on. As we drove up to the gate, the women were just passing from their dining-room across the green, a little above where we tied the horse. Mason had a long whip in his hand, and as they passed we deferentially stepped aside from their path. I noticed that the women, as they passed, dressed in their plain attire, looked at Mason's tall figure and smiled, and finally giggled outright. I knew his sensitiveness, and I attempted to draw his attention away; but the situation became painful, until the procession was out of sight. We moved towards the house, and pretty soon two or three Shakers came out. They looked at Mr. Mason in astonishment; they gazed at his feet, his head, and his legs, and walked around him to get a good view. I kept as far behind as I could, so as to avoid the coming wrath. Mason spoke up and said: 'We are going up to Hanover to attend commencement, and thought we would come this way. We have heard something about your people, and, if you would bait our horse and give us a little dinner, we should be grateful. We

have come from the lower part of the State.' Instead of saying, 'Certainly,' taking the horse, and giving us their best hospitality, they were evidently awe-struck at Mason's height, and stood still and stared. At last one of them said: —

"'Thou must be Jeremiah Mason, of Portsmouth. Friend Lucas saw Mr. Mason in Portsmouth, and since he returned he has talked of nothing but his extraordinary stature. We saw thee come in, and we thought thou must be he.'

"'Yes,' he replied, 'I am Jeremiah Mason; but I did not come here to be insulted. Come, Webster, let's leave this place.'

"'But,' said I, 'wait a moment.'

"'No!' he retorted; 'don't talk to me; come along! I did not come here to be insulted by a pack of broad-brims!'

"They now begged him to stop and dine; but he had begun to untie his horse, and would hear nothing. 'Come along, Webster!' cried he, 'I've had enough of these people; I did not come here to be insulted!' So I got into the chaise, and he put on the whip, driving the horse at top speed till we reached the next tavern. And, from that day to this, he has never said 'Shaker' to me."

Mr. Webster said that Mason, at various periods of his life, was differently affected by his gigantic stature. When young, he was annoyed by it, and could not bear an allusion to his height. "Probably," said Mr. Webster, "the stoop in his gait, which was quite marked in old age, was first acquired by an instinctive effort to seem shorter

than he was." In middle age, however, Mason seemed to him to change in his feeling as to his bodily peculiarity, and to become actually proud of his majestic port. In old age he became quite indifferent to what was said about it. Mr. Webster thought that the homely and blunt style which Mason adopted was assumed as a sort of bravado, and an exhibition of contempt for the remarks on his peculiarities. He was clownish, and could not be any thing else, he said. His voice had a strong nasal twang, and his movements were the most uncouth possible.

Once Mr. Choate, in order to draw out Mr. Webster's recollections of Mason, said to him:

"Your opinion of Jeremiah Mason is, I think, that he was, take him for all in all, your beau-ideal of a lawyer."

Mr. Webster leaned forward on his elbows, and replied: —

"I have known Jeremiah Mason longer, I may say, than I have known any eminent man. He was the first man of distinction in the law whom I knew; and, when I first became acquainted with him, he was in full practice. I knew that generation of lawyers as a younger man knows those who are his superiors in age, — by tradition, reputation, and hearsay, and by occasionally being present and hearing their efforts. In this way I knew Luther Martin, Edmund Randolph, Goodloe Hart, and all those great lights of the law; and, by the way, I think, on the whole, that was an abler bar than the present one, — of course with some bril-

liant exceptions. Of the present bar of the United States I think I am able to form a pretty fair opinion, having an intimate personal knowledge of them in the local and federal courts; and this I can say, that I regard Jeremiah Mason as eminently superior to any other lawyer whom I ever met. I should rather, with my own experience (and I have had some pretty tough experience with him), meet them all combined in a case, than to meet him alone and single-handed. He was the keenest lawyer that I ever met or read about. If a man had Jeremiah Mason, and he did not get his case, no human ingenuity or learning could get it. He drew from a very deep fountain. Yes," smilingly added Mr. Webster, to the great amusement of the company, "I should think he did, — from his height!"

Mr. Webster once told me a story of Mr. Mason, *apropos* of his connection with the defence of E. K. Avery, — a Methodist minister who was accused of murdering a Mrs. Cornell at Fall River. The Methodists, feeling the reputation of their denomination to be at stake, raised a large subscription, and employed Mr. Mason to defend Mr. Avery. The trial was a long and tedious one; and Mr. Mason was much perplexed and harassed by the constant stream of impertinent inquiry and suggestion which came from the prisoner's friends. A great deal of testimony was taken in the trial, which lasted for three weeks; and, as Mason was then old, and about giving up his profession, he wanted a quiet night to prepare himself physically

for engaging in the final arguments. He knew by experience that he must take precautions to avoid being roused from his sleep by some of these meddling friends; so he told the barkeeper at his hotel that he was going to bed early, and that he did not wish to be, and *would not* be, disturbed after he had retired to his room. He went to bed. About eleven o'clock, a ministerial-looking person came in, and said to the barkeeper: —

"I want to see Mr. Mason."

"You can't see him to-night. He is very tired, and gave orders that he should not be disturbed."

"But I must see him. If I should not see him to-night, and if to-morrow the case should go wrong, I never should forgive myself."

"Well," returned the barkeeper, "I'll show you his room."

This he accordingly did. Mr. Mason rose up in bed, and exclaimed to the barkeeper: —

"What did I tell you, sir?"

"Well," replied he, "the man must explain."

Mr. Mason thought the best way to get out of the difficulty was to hear what the intruder had to say; and he told him, rather roughly, to begin.

"I had retired to rest about an hour ago," said the man, "after having commended this case, Brother Avery, and everybody connected with it to the Throne of Grace, in fervent prayer that the truth might be elicited; and I do not know how long I had slept, when I was awakened by an audible voice. I saw an angel standing right at the foot of the bed, just as distinctly as I see you; and

in a very distinct tone of voice, it said: 'Mr. Avery is innocent of this crime,' and immediately vanished. Of this, sir, I am ready to take my oath."

Mr. Mason looked at him with an expression of mixed indignation and contempt; but was so much struck, after a moment, by the ludicrousness of the scene, that he began to question the man.

"You yourself saw this angel?"

"Yes."

"And he immediately vanished?"

"He did."

"Do you think there is any possibility of seeing him again?"

"It may be."

"Well, if you *should* happen to see him, you just ask him how he could prove it!"

Among Mr. Webster's reminiscences of his professional career at Portsmouth, and of Jeremiah Mason's connection with it, was one relating to a case in which a man named Bramble was implicated. Matthew Bramble, it appears, was a wealthy resident of Portsmouth, and, as the sequel proved, an unscrupulous man. His social position was good, but a feeling of distrust towards him existed in the community. It seems that Bramble had given to a man named Brown an annuity bond, agreeing to pay him one hundred dollars a year as long as he lived. This was to keep dormant a title to some real estate. Bramble had more than once tried to persuade Brown to take a "lump" sum of money, and cancel the bond; but this Brown persistently declined to do, and in this he was supported by the

advice of his friends. After in vain offering one thousand dollars, Bramble resorted to the following method of getting rid of his obligation. He was accustomed, when he paid the hundred dollars, to endorse it on the bond. The next chance he got, he endorsed, not one hundred dollars, but one thousand dollars, adding, "in full consideration of and cancelling this bond." Brown, who could not read or write, unsuspectingly signed his mark to this endorsement. Bramble then coolly handed him back the bond, and of course said nothing of the matter. When the year came round, an altercation took place between them. Bramble said: "I owe you nothing; I paid you a thousand dollars, and it is certified on your bond." Brown was a poor shoemaker — simple-minded, truthful, weak — not capable of coping with this wily scamp. He was friendless, while Bramble was a rich man. Poor Brown did not know what to do. He had convinced his neighbors that he was right. He went to Jeremiah Mason, who told him he was Matthew Bramble's lawyer. Mr. Mason had asked Bramble about the matter, and the latter had showed the bond; and Mr. Mason probably believed him. A friend then advised Brown to go to Mr. Webster; and, after hearing his story, Mr. Webster was quite convinced of the truth of Brown's statement. He had no confidence in Bramble. In relating the story, he said to me: "I knew nothing positively against Bramble, but something impressed me that he was not a man of honor. I was at once satisfied that he had committed this

fraud upon Brown, and I told the latter that I would sue Bramble for the annuity. He said he had nothing to give me in payment. I said I wanted nothing. I sent Bramble a letter, and he made his appearance in my office.

"'I should like to know,' said he sharply, 'if you are going to take up a case of that kind in Portsmouth. It seems to me that you don't know on which side your bread is buttered.'

"'This man has come to me,' I replied, 'without friends, and has told me a plain, straightforward story; and it sounds as if it were true. It is not a made-up story. I shall pursue this thing and sue you, unless you settle it.'"

Bramble went to Mr. Mason, who afterwards said to Mr. Webster: "I think you have made a mistake. Bramble is a man of influence. It can't be that the fellow tells the truth. Bramble would not do such a thing as that." Mr. Webster replied: "He has done just such a thing as that, and I shall try the suit."

So the preliminary steps were taken, and the suit was brought. The case came on at Exeter in the Supreme Court, Judge Smith on the bench. It created great excitement. Bramble's friends were incensed at the charge of forgery; but Brown, too, in his humble way, had his friends. Mr. Webster said: —

"I never in my life was more badly prepared for a case. There was no evidence for Brown, and what to do I did not know. But I had begun the suit, and was going to run for luck, perfectly satis-

fied that I was right. There were Bramble and his friends, with Mason; and poor Brown only had his counsel. And Mason began to sneer a little, saying, 'That is a foolish case.'

"Well, a person named Lovejoy was then living in Portsmouth; and when there is a great deal of litigation, as there was in Portsmouth and many towns in New Hampshire, there will always be one person of a kind not easily described, — a shrewd man who was mixed up in all sorts of affairs. Lovejoy was a man of this kind, and was a witness in nearly all the cases ever tried in that section. He was an imperturbable witness, and never could be shaken in his testimony. Call Lovejoy, and he would swear that he was present on such an occasion; and he seemed to live by giving evidence in this way. I was getting a little anxious about the case. I was going to attempt to prove that Brown had been appealed to by Bramble for years to give up his bond, and take a sum of money, and that he had always stoutly refused; that he had no uses for money, and had never been in the receipt of money; and that he could not write and was easily imposed upon. But although I felt that I was right, I began to fear that I should lose the case.

"A Portsmouth man, who believed in Brown's story, came to me just before the case was called, and whispered in my ear: 'I saw Lovejoy talking with Bramble just now in the entry, and he took a paper from him.' I thanked the man, told him that was a pretty important thing to know, and

asked him to say nothing about it. In the course of the trial, Mr. Mason called Lovejoy, and he took the oath. He went upon the stand and testified that some eight or ten months before he was in Brown's shop, and that Brown mended his shoes for him. As he was sitting in the shop, he naturally fell into conversation about the bond, and said to Brown: 'Bramble wants to get back the bond, — why don't you sell it to him?' 'Oh,' said Brown, 'I have; he wanted me to do it, and, as life is uncertain, I thought I might as well take the thousand dollars.' He went on to testify that the 'said Brown' told him so and so; and when he expressed himself in that way, I knew he was being prompted from a written paper. The expression was an unnatural one for a man to use in ordinary conversation. It occurred to me in an instant that Bramble had given Lovejoy a paper, on which was set down what he wanted him to testify. There sat Mason, full of assurance, and for a moment I hesitated. Now, I thought, I will 'make a spoon or spoil a horn!' I took the pen from behind my ear, drew myself up, and marched outside of the bar to the witness-stand. 'Sir!' I exclaimed to Lovejoy, 'give me the paper from which you are testifying!' In an instant he pulled it out of his pocket; but before he had it quite out, he hesitated and attempted to put it back. I seized it in triumph. There was his testimony in Bramble's handwriting! Mr. Mason got up and claimed the protection of the court. Judge Smith inquired the meaning of this proceeding. I said: 'Provi-

dence protects the innocent when they are friendless. I think I could satisfy the court and my learned brother, who, of course, was ignorant of this man's conduct, that I hold in Mr. Bramble's handwriting the testimony of the very respectable witness who is on the stand.' The court adjourned, and I had nothing further to do. Mason told his client that he had better settle the affair as quickly as possible. Bramble came to my office, and as he entered, I said: 'Don't you come in here! I don't want any thieves in my office.' 'Do whatever you please with me, Mr. Webster,' he replied; 'I will do whatever you say.' 'I will do nothing without witnesses — we must arrange this matter.' I consulted Mr. Mason, and he said he did not care how I settled it. So I told Bramble that, in the first place, there must be a new life-bond for one hundred dollars a year, and ample security for its payment; and that he must also pay Brown five hundred dollars, and my fees, which I should charge pretty roundly. To all this he assented, and thus the case ended."

Mr. Webster told me this at Exeter. We went over there from Portsmouth, dined, and went to the academy, where he had fitted himself for college, and to the court-house, where this Bramble trial took place. After dinner he took his nap, and, while he was in his room, several old men who were in the hotel came to me and said they had known Mr. Webster when he was a young man, and that they should like to see him. I said: "Certainly, after he finishes his nap." So when

he got up, I said: "These old men would like to speak to you." He came out into the bar-room, received them cordially, and was evidently very glad to see them. They talked over the events of the past quarter of a century with much interest. At last one of them spoke up and said: —

"Would you have any objection, Mr. Webster, to answering a question?"

"Certainly not."

"Do you remember the case of Bramble and Brown, the shoemaker?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, how did you know that Lovejoy had that paper in his pocket? We have been thinking of that ever since, and I was determined, if I ever saw you, to ask you how it was." After a hearty laugh, Mr. Webster satisfied their curiosity.

Mr. Webster's high respect for Mr. Mason's judgment is evinced in a letter which he wrote to him in February, 1824, in which the following passage occurs: "Of the compliments my Greek speech has received, I value your letter more than all; for although you say, of course, as much as you think, I presume your real opinion is so favorable that you believe the speech reputable. I am quite satisfied with that."

Mr. Webster delivered a eulogy on Jeremiah Mason before the Suffolk Bar, in which he said:

"The proprieties of this occasion compel me, with whatever reluctance, to refrain from the indulgence of the personal feelings which arise in my

heart, upon the death of one with whom I have cultivated a sincere, affectionate, and unbroken friendship, from the day when I first commenced my professional career, to the closing hour of his life. I will not say of the advantages which I have derived from his intercourse and conversation, all that Mr. Fox said of Edmund Burke; but I am bound to say, that of my own professional discipline and attainments, whatever they may be, I owe much to that close attention to the discharge of my duties which I was compelled to pay, for nine successive years, from day to day, by Mr. Mason's efforts at the same bar. *Fas est ab hoste doceri;* and I must have been unintelligent, indeed, not to have learned something from the constant displays of that power which I had so much occasion to see and feel."

But few anecdotes of Mr. Webster's manner at the bar in examining witnesses and meeting the assaults of his adversaries have been recorded. Many pleasing incidents of his life as an advocate still exist in the memories of living men; but for want of a scribe they are likely to be forgotten. When Mr. Webster, in company with Professor Ticknor, paid a visit to ex-President Madison in 1824, Mr. Madison remarked, in conversation, that he had often, in his public life, received credit for more wisdom than he really possessed; and yet the circumstances in any given case seemed fairly to warrant the public in forming their estimate of his abilities. Mr. Webster replied that the same thing had undoubtedly happened to every man

engaged in public affairs. The same had been true of himself. He said that, in the first years of his professional life, a blacksmith called on him for advice respecting the title to a small estate bequeathed to him by his father. The terms of the will were peculiar, and the kind of estate transmitted was doubtful. An attempt had been made to annul the will. Mr. Webster examined the case, but was unable to give a definite opinion upon the matter for want of authorities. He looked through the law libraries of Mr. Mason and other legal gentlemen for authorities, but in vain. He ascertained what works he needed for consultation, and ordered them from Boston at an expense of fifty dollars. He spent the leisure hours of some weeks in going through them. He successfully argued the case when it came on for trial; and it was decided in his favor. The blacksmith was in ecstasies; for his little all had been at stake. He called for his attorney's bill. Mr. Webster, knowing his poverty, charged him only fifteen dollars, intending to suffer the loss of money paid out, and to lose the time expended in securing the verdict. Years passed away, and the case was forgotten; but not the treasured knowledge by which it was won. On one of his journeys to Washington, Mr. Webster spent a few days in New York city. While he was there, Aaron Burr waited on him for advice in a very important case, then pending in the State court. He told him the facts on which it was founded. Mr. Webster saw, in a moment, that it was an exact counterpart to the blacksmith's will

case. On being asked if he could state the law applicable to it, he at once replied that he could. He proceeded to quote decisions bearing upon the case, going back to the time of Charles II. As he went on with his array of principles and authorities, all cited with the precision and order of a table of contents, Mr. Burr arose in astonishment, and asked, with some warmth: —

"Mr. Webster, have you been consulted before in this case?"

"Most certainly not," he replied. "I never heard of your case till this evening."

"Very well," said Mr. Burr, "proceed."

Mr. Webster concluded the rehearsal of his authorities, and received from Mr. Burr the warmest praise of his profound knowledge of the law, and a fee large enough to remunerate him for all the time and trouble spent on the blacksmith's case.

The following anecdote relates to the period of Mr. Webster's practice at the Portsmouth bar. It appears that, some years before, a certain teamster, named John Greenough, living in Grafton County, who was in the habit of stopping at Ebenezer Webster's house on his way to and from Boston, had on a certain occasion come within a mile or two of the house, and could get no further, owing to the weight of his load and the badness of the roads. He thereupon sent to Colonel Webster, and begged the loan of a span of horses. "Dan" was at once sent back with the horses. He was roughly dressed, wearing an old straw hat, and looking the stalwart country lad that he was. The teamster thanked him for

coming to his assistance, and proceeded on his way, and "Dan" was soon out of his thoughts. Years after, the incident was recalled to his mind under these circumstances: The teamster had been brought into litigation on account of a question respecting the title to his farm. His whole property was staked in the case. He engaged Moses P. Payson, of Bath, as his counsel; but, being very anxious about the result, he allowed Mr. Payson to associate another lawyer with him. A few days after, the teamster was told that Mr. Webster had been engaged. He remarked that he did not know any lawyer of that name, and asked if he was from Boston. "No," replied Mr. Payson; "he is Daniel Webster, son of old Ebenezer, of Salisbury." "What!" exclaimed the teamster, "that little black stable-boy that once brought me some horses! Then I think we might as well give up the case." He was told that the trial could not be postponed, and that they must make the best of it. The case was duly called. The teamster, with a gloomy countenance, took his place in court. When his turn came, Mr. Webster rose to make the closing plea. The teamster looked at him with a kind of idle curiosity, and something like contempt; but as his advocate proceeded with his argument, and brought the powers of his great mind to bear upon the subject, the man became wrapt up in his words, and gradually drew nearer to where he was standing. He listened with breathless attention until Mr. Webster closed; when Mr. Payson turned and asked, —

"What do you think of him now?"

"Think!" exclaimed the teamster. "Why, I think he is an angel sent from heaven to save me from ruin, and my wife and children from misery!"

The case was won in due course, and the teamster returned home triumphant and happy.

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE BAR. — CONTINUED.

MR. WEBSTER, in reflecting upon his qualities as a lawyer, was convinced that they did not lie in the direction of the bench. His talents, he saw, were less judicial than forensic. He wrote to a friend,[1] in 1840, as follows: "For my own part, I could never be a judge. There never was a time when I would have taken the office of chief justice of the United States, or any other judicial station. I believe the truth may be that I have mixed so much study of politics with my study of law, that, though I have some respect for myself as an advocate, and some estimate of my knowledge of general principles, yet I am not confident of possessing all the accuracy and precision of knowledge which the bench requires."

His main strength as a lawyer, indeed, rested upon his "knowledge of general principles." He read books in early life, and treasured in his mind the great maxims of the law and the famous decisions which largely control and direct practice at the bar. In later years he seldom consulted authorities. After his judgment had been ma-

[1] Mr. Ketchum.

tured by severe discipline, he trusted to its promptings. In difficult cases he often assumed what the law must be, and made his brief accordingly. He sometimes wrote down the positions he should take and the heads of the arguments he should present, and left it to his junior counsel to look up the authorities. He was seldom at fault in his opinions of the law. He knew better what the law must be in a given case than what it really was in the reports. Before he left New Hampshire, he had adopted, to some extent, this self-reliant method of pleading. He sometimes asked for the recollections of a brother lawyer about a legal point, as he entered the court-room, to see if they agreed with his own impressions. Parker Noyes, already referred to, was a legal oracle in the New Hampshire courts. He was quite as often consulted as Blackstone by members of the bar. In one instance, at Plymouth, Mr. Webster said to Mr. Noyes: —

"I have been asked to take charge of an important case to-day, involving such and such principles. I have no authorities at hand, but I shall assume that the law is so [stating his position]. Is this right?"

"It is right in substance," replied Mr. Noyes, "but I doubt as to details. However, you will not err materially if you state the law in your own language."

Mr. Noyes said that, on recurring to his authorities, he found that Mr. Webster was entirely right.

That eminent lawyer, Samuel Dexter, of Boston, had a mental constitution which resembled that of

Mr. Webster. In 1804, while studying in Mr. Gore's office, Mr. Webster wrote down his opinion of some of the distinguished characters at the Boston bar. Of Dexter, he says: —

"He is not a great student. Early attention has stored his mind with an immense fund of general principles, and he trusts his own power in the application. He is generally opposed in causes to Parsons, and their contest is that of exalted minds."

These two lawyers sustained to each other a relation similar to that which afterwards existed, in the New Hampshire courts, between Webster and Mason. Parsons and Dexter evidently impressed the young student with their manifest greatness. He drew portraits of both at some length. The sketch he has given of Parsons would not be inapplicable to Mason. He says:

"The characteristic endowments of his mind are strength and shrewdness; strength which enables him to support his cause, shrewdness by which he is always ready to retort the sallies of his adversary. His manner is steady, forcible, and perfectly perspicuous. He does not address the jury as a mechanical body, to be put in motion by mechanical means. He appeals to them as men, and as having minds capable of receiving the ideas in his own. Of course he never harangues. He is never stinted to say just so much on a point, and no more. He knows by the juror's countenance when he is convinced; and therefore never disgusts him by arguing that of which he is already sensible, or

which he knows it impossible to impress. A mind thus strong, direct, prompt, and vigorous is cultivated by habits of the most intense application. A great scholar in every thing, in his profession he is peculiarly great. He is not content with shining on occasions; he will shine everywhere. As no cause is too great, none is too small for him. He knows the benefit of understanding small circumstances. 'Tis not enough for him that he has learned the leading points of a cause; he will know every thing. His argument is, therefore, consistent with itself, and its course is so luminous that you are ready to wonder why any one should hesitate to follow him. Facts which are uncertain he with so much art connects with others well proved that you cannot get rid of the former without disregarding also the latter. He has no fondness for public life, and is satisfied with standing where he is, — at the head of his profession."

This youthful sketch reveals the accurate judgment and clear statement of facts which marked Mr. Webster in his maturity. It shows, too, the high estimate he then set on superior talents in his profession. The men whom he described, as the diversion of a leisure hour, in a commonplace book of daily expenses, were undoubtedly his models. He studied them at the bar and in private life. He was impressed with their eminent abilities and their unquestioned success; and thus compares the two great champions of city practice at that time: —

"In point of character, Dexter undoubtedly

stands next to Parsons at the Boston bar; and in the neighboring counties and States, I suppose, he stands above him. He has a strong, generalizing, capacious mind. He sees his subject in one view; and in that view, single and alone, he presents it to the contemplation of his hearer. Unable to follow Parsons in minute, technical distinctions, Parsons is unable to follow him in the occasional vaultings and boundings of his mind. Unlike Parsons, too, he cannot be great on little occasions. Unlike him, Parsons cannot reject every little consideration on great occasions. Parsons begins with common maxims, and his course to the particular subject and the particular conclusion brightens and shines more and more clearly to its end. Dexter begins with the particular position which he intends to support; darkness surrounds him; no one knows the path by which he arrived at his conclusion. Around him, however, is a circle of light when he opens his mouth. Like a conflagration seen at a distance, the evening mists may intervene between it and the eye of the observer, although the blaze ascend to the sky and cannot but be seen."

Many years after this minute comparison between the rival giants of the Boston bar at the beginning of the century was written, Mr. Webster told me that he regarded Chief Justice Parsons as one of the greatest men New England had produced, and laid special stress on his eminence as a judge. He said that while the Massachusetts Convention to adopt the Constitution was in session, and a doubt

rested on the whole question, Governor Hancock, whose influence and opinions had great weight with his friends in the convention, was ill, and did not attend its sessions until near the close of the debates. There were two parties, nearly equal in numbers, and there was some doubt as to which side Hancock would espouse. Near the close of the session, however, he read a speech in favor of adopting the Constitution, and voted in accordance with it. This turned the scale, and a majority sustained the Constitution. After Hancock's death, his papers were examined; and when this speech was found, it turned out to be written, from beginning to end, in the handwriting of Chief Justice Parsons.

I have in my possession several small memorandum books in which Mr. Webster jotted down, from time to time, a desultory diary, various notes, and accounts. One of these contains a curious record of the fees he received during several of the most active years of his practice. They may be compared with the much larger fees which the first lawyers receive in these later days. I find that, in the year ending September, 1834, his fees amounted to the sum of $13,140; in 1835, to $15,183.74; and in 1836, to $21,793. Here Mr. Webster's accounts stop, he having only jotted down his fees from September, 1834, to February, 1837. It must be added that these sums included his Congressional pay. The highest fee recorded during this period was $7,500, "in the New Orleans case;" the next highest is of $3,000, "in Florida land case, instead of land;"

the next, of $2,250, in case of the United States Bank; and there is one of $2,000. The smallest fee recorded is of $20, which I find twice in the account; and the fees range generally between that sum and $500.

Mr. Webster was fond of talking about the important cases in which he had been engaged, and especially of those which enabled him to bring out striking events and curious anecdotes. He always narrated their circumstances, not only with graphic minuteness, but with great spirit and zest. Many a time has he entertained me with these stories of the bar, in which he was most often the chief figure; and I am able to give some of the most interesting almost in his own language.

Few cases have excited more attention than that of John Sanborn against the administrators of Nathan Tufts, of Charlestown. It had been tried once, Jeremiah Mason and Rufus Choate having been the counsel, and the verdict had been set aside. In the second trial Mr. Webster was associated with Mr. Choate. The character of the parties lent added interest to the case, especially in Charlestown, where they lived. Nathan Tufts was a rich, retired tanner, who, having lived to a great age, died childless. His estate was found to be worth nearly half a million. He had a coachman, who was also a man-of-all-work, named John Sanborn. Sanborn had lived with Mr. Tufts twenty-five years, and everybody in Charlestown was familiar with him as "Mr. Tufts' man." He bought the provisions, drove the coach, settled

the household bills, and was one of those domestics who are indispensable.

Sanborn received small wages, and, as he had a family, he had several times threatened to leave Mr. Tufts and go West to better his fortunes. Mr. Tufts said he must not leave, that he would see that he was cared for, &c.; and Sanborn continued with him till his death, and indeed closed his eyes. It was well understood in Charlestown that Sanborn would be remembered in Tufts' will. The old gentleman had no very near relatives, only some nephews and nieces, for whom he cared very little. But, when the will was opened, Sanborn's name did not appear in it at all; and in a place like Charlestown, where such things are the subject of general conversation and remark, it is not singular that there was a general expression of indignation at the ingratitude of Mr. Tufts, who had left this large estate to remote heirs, and given nothing to the faithful Sanborn. No one joined more heartily in the cry of ingratitude than Sanborn himself. He went about complaining of Mr. Tufts' conduct. He had spent his life in his service, fully expecting that his wages were but a part of the consideration. Mr. J. P. Cook was the administrator of the will, and drew it up. He was a careful, painstaking lawyer, and had the will sent up and proved in due form; and the thing went so far that the heirs discussed among themselves the propriety of giving Sanborn five or six thousand dollars, feeling that more ought to be done for him. Finally, in about a year after Mr.

Tufts' death, the story being then a little old, Sanborn suddenly ceased his complaints, and brought forward a claim in the form of a note of hand from Tufts, to pay him ten thousand dollars one year after death, and to deed to him the house and land on which he lived, worth ten thousand dollars more. The administrator refused to recognize these claims, and a suit was brought by Mr. Choate to recover the value of this land from him, and of this ten thousand dollar note. The administrator set up forgery as his defence, relying upon the circumstances of the case, the improbability of the thing, and the denial of Sanborn that he had done any thing to deserve so much. The suit was tried in the Supreme Court in Boston, and Mr. Choate, junior counsel, employed Mr. Mason to argue it. The jury gave a verdict for Sanborn for the whole amount; but the verdict was set aside by the full bench as against the law and the evidence. When it came to a new trial, Mr. Webster was employed by Mr. Choate to take Mr. Mason's place. It was a question involving more than the mere sum of money claimed; for the same decision that rejected the suit declared Sanborn a forger. There was a good deal of excitement, there being a wide-spread feeling of sympathy for Sanborn on one side, and some suspicion of foul play on the other. Mr. Samuel Hoar managed the suit — with Mr. Cook himself, and Mr. Peabody, an old black-letter, technical lawyer — for the defence. I attended the trial, and heard the evidence and Mr. Webster's argument. Choate, as usual, was nervous. There

was a large mass of evidence on both sides by experts, as to the genuineness of the signatures. There was the testimony of bank directors, who were familiar with Mr. Tufts' handwriting, and of other people who had had dealings with him. Some said that the signature to the note was genuine, and others declared it was not; it was for the jury to decide. The whole case turned upon that. The incidents connected with the trial are quite fresh in my mind; and they were very interesting from the fact that, pending the examination of witnesses, Mr. Choate was very nervous, and said he did not think Mr. Webster felt much interest in the case. He was afraid he would not argue it well. The evidence was closed on both sides on a Wednesday afternoon, when the court adjourned. The next day was Thanksgiving day, and the arguments were reserved for Friday and Saturday. Mr. Choate said: —

"Mr. Webster, where can we meet to-morrow to talk over the case?"

"I am going to Mr. Paige's to dine," he replied, "and we will talk it over there."

Mr. Choate hurried up to Mr. Paige's the next day, and began almost at once to talk about the case.

"Mr. Choate," said Mr. Webster, "the governor of the Commonwealth has rather required us to abstain from all unnecessary labor to-day, and give our time to other topics of thought and reflection; and upon the whole I think we had better comply with his request." Mr. Choate was nervous, but

saw that he could have no consultation about the course of the argument. He went home and said to his wife: "I am sorry I am not going to argue that case myself, because I find that Mr. Webster don't care any thing about it." Choate was full of enthusiasm: his whole mind and soul and strength were given to his client.

When the case was resumed, Mr. Hoar made the final argument for the defence, and Mr. Webster was to close for the plaintiff. Mr. Hoar spoke from nine o'clock until one. Mr. Webster said that he would finish the argument with an hour then, and the rest in the afternoon. Judge Shaw remarked that they preferred to sit in the evening. So Mr. Webster began to speak an hour before adjournment. He put his hand to his head, tossed about irregularly, got names wrong, and seemed to wander. There sat Mr. Choate, as nervous as if mad dogs were at his heels, twitching about in his seat, and alternately watching Mr. Webster and the jury. The court adjourned at two o'clock. I was then boarding at the Tremont House, as was Mr. Webster and Mr. Hoar. Mr. Webster did not come to dinner. I met Mr. Hoar as he came in, and said he to me: —

"You have been listening to this case pretty attentively: did you think Mr. Webster opened his argument with much spirit, or with his usual ability?"

"I don't think he got on very brilliantly to start with," I replied.

"Well," said he, "it's an awful case. There's

nothing in his side of it; but then, sir, you can't tell what he will do before he gets through. I never predict till after the game is run to cover."

Mr. Webster came into court at three o'clock, a totally different man. He had an air that said, "Now the work is to be done!" He pulled off his overshoes, threw his coat over the back of a chair, took up his notes, and began the argument of the case in dead earnest. Choate said afterwards that he never heard Webster argue a case better. Nothing ever impressed me more with his power than that argument.

There are some points in taking testimony that no other living man could seize and grasp like Mr. Webster. It was necessary for Sanborn's counsel to have a theory about his denials for a whole twelvemonth. The theory was that Mr. Tufts, on the last night of his life, when Sanborn was watching with him, broached the subject of his will; and that he said: "Well, John, you have been a faithful servant to me, and I ought to reward you for it; if you will go and write an obligation, to give you the place where you live, and a note of hand for ten thousand dollars, I will sign them, on one condition: that you agree not to present them for a year after my death. I want my memory to be undisturbed for a year." John promised that he would keep the matter secret, and received the obligations.

Still, it was a pretty hard matter to get over. The question would arise, "How happened Sanborn to cry, and to say hard things of Mr. Tufts?"

Mr. Webster asked all the witnesses who testified to conversations of that sort on the part of Sanborn: "You say Sanborn told you that Mr. Tufts had not left him any thing; that was in answer to a question from you, was it not?" "Yes, sir," would be the reply. When that part of the testimony was reached in Mr. Webster's argument, he dwelt upon the fact that in every instance the witnesses for the defence, who were there to swear to the denials of Sanborn that he had received any thing, admitted that the matter was extorted from him. The question being, "Did Mr. Tufts leave you any thing?" he was bound to fib a little; he did not volunteer to say these things, and only said them when he was forced to do so, in order not to violate his pledge to Mr. Tufts.

Mr. Hoar rose and begged Mr. Webster's pardon: "There was no such testimony in the case."

Mr. Webster replied that he would refer the matter to the judge's notes; and there the judge found a minute of the evidence as stated by Mr. Webster in each one of the twenty cases.

Mr. Hoar, in arguing the case, said that it was absurd that a man in his right mind, who was dying, and with the age and experience which Mr. Tufts had, should make so silly a request, — that the note be kept secret a year. "What difference did it make to Mr. Tufts? It was a lie on the face of it! What difference was there to a dying man between a minute and a million years?" The question was put with all Mr. Hoar's power, and

evidently had its effect upon the jury. When Mr. Webster came to reply, he said he was only surprised that such an argument should come from such a source. "'What difference did it make?' is asked, as though there could be no difference. Why, the fact is just the other way. Men who have unimpaired senses and faculties, and are about to leave the world, do things every day which connect them with this world after they are gone. They take an interest in what is to follow their death. The very first professional act of my life," continued Mr. Webster, "when I was a young lawyer in New Hampshire, was to make a will for a strong-minded, sensible farmer, — a neighbor of my father. He was on his death-bed, with all his senses about him. I took down the conditions of his will, — so much for such a child, and such a provision for the widow; and finally he said, 'I wish to have such a field planted next spring with a certain kind of corn.' I threw down my pen, and asked him if that might not better be left to those who would own it. 'No,' cried he, 'it is my will!' What difference did it make to that man what his heirs should sow in that field? How many people provide for the erection of costly monuments after they are dead? 'What difference does it make?' What difference will it make to you, gentlemen of the jury, to the learned chief justice, to my learned brother on the other side, or to me, whether, after life has fled this mortal tenement, our poor bodies sleep in a beautiful cemetery, with Christian burial, or whiten and

bleach upon the sands of the seashore? Certain is it, that not one particle will be out of the reach of the trumpet of the archangel, which will call us to an account for the deeds done in the body, and among those deeds the manner in which we discharge our duty in this case."

Mr. Webster's method of examining witnesses may be judged from the following scene, which occurred in this case. Among the witnesses was a bank cashier, to whom Mr. Webster said: —

"You say you think this is not Mr. Tufts' signature. What means had you of knowing Mr. Tufts' signature?"

"I was cashier of the bank of which he was president, and used to see his signature in all forms; and very often to obligations and notes and bills."

"And you think that is not his signature? Please to point out, if you will, where there is a discrepancy."

"I do not know as I can tell."

"But a sensible man can tell why he thinks one thing is not like another."

"Well [examining the note], in the *n* the top used to be closed."

"Gentlemen of the jury, you hear: the top was closed. Go on."

"The *s* at the end of his name was usually kept above the horizontal line; this is below."

"Well; any other?"

"Not any other."

Mr. Webster then took one of the forty genuine

signatures which were in court, and, stating to the jury that it was admitted to be genuine, showed them that the very things the witness had testified Mr. Tufts never did, were to be found in this signature, and in nearly every instance.

The witness looked chapfallen, and took his seat; and nearly all the witnesses were floored in the same way. At last they came to William P. Winchester. He sat opposite to me, and looked at Mr. Webster with an air which said, "You won't get any such answers out of me." He took the stand, and testified that he did not think the signature genuine.

"Why?" asked Mr. Webster.

"I can't tell," was the reply.

"But, Colonel Winchester, an intelligent man can give a reason for his opinion. Pray, don't give such a statement as that without offering a reason for it."

"I can't give a reason; but if you will allow me to make an illustration, I will do so."

"Certainly."

"Suppose," said Mr. Winchester, "some distinguished man at home or abroad should be seen walking on 'Change; suppose you were there at high 'Change; it would be very natural to point out Daniel Webster, and say, 'There goes the defender of the Constitution.' Everybody would mark him, and nobody could mistake his identity. They would always know him afterwards. But if, in the afternoon, some man brought me a head and two legs and two arms on a platter, and asked me

to identify them separately as belonging to Daniel Webster, I could not swear to them. In the same way, there is something about this signature that does not look genuine; but I could not swear to the particulars." Mr. Webster smiled at this reply, and told the witness that he might be excused.

The following incident of the Sanborn suit may be related as an instance of Mr. Webster's keenness and power of repartee. Augustus Peabody, one of the opposing counsel, was very familiar with the "books," and no case could be cited which he could not find at once. He was a sort of walking dictionary of law. Mr. Webster was arguing to the jury, and cited some English case, when Mr. Peabody interrupted him, and asked where the case was to be found reported. Mr. Webster went straight on, paying no attention to the interruption, and Mr. Hoar and Mr. Peabody hurriedly consulted together. Then Mr. Peabody rose and claimed the protection of the court. He said that Mr. Webster was citing authorities to sustain his argument, and they wished to know where they were to be found, so that they could judge for themselves as to the pertinency of the citation. Judge Shaw remarked that counsel had a right to know where the cases were to be found, and that the court itself would like to know. Mr. Webster leaned against the rail, resting on his elbow, and looking at the court, said: —

"It is not very good manners to interrupt me in the midst of a sentence addressed to the jury. It is a practice in which I never indulge. I always

let counsel have their say, and if I can answer them, I do, as well as I can. This interrupting I don't like: it is rather a habit of my learned friend on the other side, and is quite annoying. He has appealed to me to know where the case that I have cited can be found reported, somewhat as if I had quoted a case that was fictitious. What I wish to say in answer to that is, that the case to which I referred was so and so [giving the names, &c.], and that it occurred in the third year of Lord Eldon in Chancery. In what particular volume of reports by Lord Eldon, on what particular page, and how many lines from the top of the page, I don't know. I never trouble myself with these little matters. Peabody has nothing else to do, and he can hunt it up at his leisure!"

In this Sanborn case, there was a witness whose testimony went quite strongly against Mr. Webster's side. He was asked about conversations that he had had with Mr. Webster's client, — how many times Sanborn had told him that Mr. Tufts had left him nothing? The witness very naïvely and honestly replied, —

"I should think a hundred times."

Only a year had elapsed, and the extravagance of the statement made the court and jury laugh Mr. Hoar, whose witness he was, saw at once that the force of the testimony was broken by the exaggeration, and said he supposed the witness meant that Sanborn had told him this a good many times.

"Think again, Mr. Skilton," said he; "how many times was it?"

"Well," was the reply, "it might not have been more than sixty or seventy times."

Upon being questioned again, he thought there might not be more than fifty times.

When Mr. Webster addressed the jury on this point, he said: "Now I come to the testimony of Mr. Skilton; and I can't better illustrate it than by telling a snake story that I once heard told by a man who was in the habit of drawing a pretty long bow. If he went out hunting or shooting, he always heard or saw something very wonderful. On one occasion he reported that he had seen a hundred black snakes, all in a row, and all twenty feet long. 'Why,' said a bystander, 'I don't believe you ever saw one hundred black snakes in the world.' 'Well,' replied he, 'there were seventy-five.' 'I don't believe there were seventy-five.' 'Well, there were fifty, at any rate.' 'I don't believe there were fifty.' 'Well, there were forty.' And he finally got down to *two*, when he planted his foot firmly on the ground, and said: 'I declare to you that I won't take off another snake; I'll give up the story first!' So this witness began at a hundred, and got down to seventy-five and fifty; but all my learned brother's efforts could not get him below fifty; he 'had rather give up the story.'"

Mr. Webster once told me some interesting facts about the trial of the Kennisons at Newburyport, for the Goodrich robbery. This was a case in which a drover robbed himself in such a manner as to induce the belief that it was done by the

Kennisons, who kept the toll-gate at Newburyport Bridge. He fired a pistol at his own hand, strewed gold along the road and in the cellar of the Kennisons, accused them of robbing him, and they were arrested. The object of this was to get rid of paying his debts. He made the excuse that he had been robbed, and could not. The case excited a great deal of interest, for the Kennisons bore a respectable name, and the circumstantial evidence against them was very strong. Most people did not believe that they were guilty, and their friends and neighbors prepared to assist them in their defence. I will give the rest of the story in Mr. Webster's own words: —

"I had been at Washington during a long session, and was on my return home. At Providence I got into the stage for Boston; and, after a while, naturally fell into conversation with the one or two persons besides myself that it contained. I asked what the news was, &c., and found one of my new acquaintances to be Mr. Perkins, of Newburyport, — a very intelligent, pleasant man. From one topic of conversation to another, we came to speak of this robbery. Mr. Perkins said there was a great deal of excitement in Essex County, and, indeed, even in Boston, at so daring a highway robbery; and there was much division of opinion about the affair. I recollected to have seen something about it in the papers, but had retained nothing, and now took no interest in the subject until Mr. Perkins said that his theory of the affair was that the man robbed himself.

"'Robbed himself!' said I. 'What could be his motive?'

"'To avoid the payment of money.'

"'What makes you think he shot himself?' I asked.

"'The wound was in the inside of the left hand,' replied Mr. Perkins, 'on the inside ends of the fingers. He was fired at, and the ends of his fingers were torn off. Well, suppose you were to be assaulted, would you be very likely to hold your hand open outwards? The bullet, if it hit your hand, would hit the back of it. Now, if a man were going to fire at himself, he would shoot himself just where this man is wounded, and would hurt himself as little as possible.'

"I became interested in the matter, and we talked of it till we got nearly home. I reached my house in Summer Street, tired and jaded. In the midst of my family the thought of every thing else went out of my head; but the next morning, after a pretty long night's rest, I got up refreshed to rather a late breakfast. The bell rang, and the servant came to the breakfast-room to say that some gentlemen, who had already called two or three times to see me, were in the library. 'Oh yes,' said my wife, 'they are two gentlemen from Newburyport, who are anxious to get you to go there, and defend some men for highway robbery. They seem to be very respectable men, and say that there has been a purse made up to give them good counsel. The court has also granted a delay, to give them a chance to con-

sult you.' The case related to me by Mr. Perkins instantly crossed my mind; but I said: —

"'I am tired, and shall not go to Newburyport to try any case.'

"'But,' said she, 'these men are very earnest, and you will have to see them yourself.'

"I finished my breakfast, and then went down into the library to see them. They were very anxious that I should go, and said they were ready to pay any fee I demanded. I replied that the fee was of no consequence, and that the reason why I would not go was that I had just returned from Washington, and really needed repose.

"'Besides,' I said, 'it isn't necessary that I should go; there are other lawyers who can try it better than I. There is Judge Prescott.'

"They replied that Judge Prescott was engaged on the other side, and that that was one of the reasons why they wanted me.

"'Well,' I said, 'I can't go; it is out of the question. You must get somebody else.'

"They looked very despondent, as much as to say, 'We are very sorry, but can't help it.' Their expression was one that rather overcame me, and I began to relent. I asked them when the trial was to come off. They replied, it would be called in a day or two. And, after a few more words, I told them I would go; and I did go.

"The evidence was strongly circumstantial, for Goodrich would not swear that Kennison was the man who assaulted and robbed him; but he said it was a man that looked like him. Taking all

the circumstances together, — the gold which was found and identified, the tracks, and so on, — the evidence was pretty strong against the accused. I had in my mind all the while what Perkins had said to me about shooting the inside of the hand; and, after the Government had examined Goodrich for three hours, and made him tell a pretty straight story, they said they were through, and gave him to me to cross-examine. Then, for the first time in the history of the case, the line of defence developed itself in the first question which was asked. I never saw a man's color come and go so quickly, as when I asked him to explain how it was that he was wounded on the inside of his hand. He faltered, and showed the most unmistakable signs of guilt. I made him appear about as mean as any man ever did on the witness stand. The Kennisons were triumphantly acquitted, and Goodrich fled. Every one saw at once that he had perpetrated this robbery himself. But he had a good many friends, and though an indictment was found against him, he was allowed to leave this part of the country.

"Some ten years afterwards," continued Mr. Webster, "I was travelling in Western New York with Mrs. Webster, and came, on a Saturday night, to a pleasant village near Geneva. We found a nice country hotel, selected rooms there, and made ourselves comfortable. It was a very warm evening, and my wife ordered some cold drink, — a pitcher of iced lemonade, I think. The barkeeper brought it into the room and put it on the table;

but as it was a little dark, I took no special notice of him. After he had gone out, Mrs. Webster said: 'Did you notice how agitated that person was?' I said, 'No, I did not notice him at all.' 'Well,' continued she, 'he eyed you very narrowly, and seemed to be very much frightened.'

"I thought no more of it then; but the next morning I was in the bar-room, and noticed that the man was very shy. As I approached, he would slip out and call some one else to attend me. I said to myself, 'What makes that man shun me? Who and what is he?' I pursued the subject in my mind, but could not make out who the man was. The next day I called for my bill. As he made it out, he kept his back to me as much as possible, but finally handed it to me receipted. It was not until I got into the carriage and drove off that I looked at the signature. I discovered, half obscured in the great inky border of the printed form, the name of Goodrich. Then the whole thing came to me at once. This man had escaped from the indignant eye of the world; had gone up there and engaged in this humble business of keeping a bar at a country hotel, and doubtless thought himself out of reach of old associations. No wonder that my presence agitated him so strongly."

In the spring of 1852, — the year he died, — Mr. Webster was asked to argue the great india-rubber case, which was tried before the United States Court at Trenton, N. J.; that of Goodyear *v.* Day. Day's counsel was Choate; and as Good-

year felt the importance of the suit to him, the legal fees which he should pay seemed a small matter. Mr. Webster was then Secretary of State, and no man occupying such a place had ever before taken a fee and gone into court. He was overworked and in feeble health. The labors of the State Department were heavy and severe; and when the proposition was made to him to go to New Jersey at that warm season of the year, to argue a case, it seemed almost an insult. He was nevertheless applied to, but said he could not think of it. I had seen Goodyear's agent, who told me that, if Mr. Webster would argue the case, he would give him a check for ten thousand dollars whenever he should signify his willingness to undertake it; and, if the case was decided in his favor, he would give five thousand dollars more. I told Mr. Webster of the offer; and, apparently struck with what I said, he replied: —

"That is an enormous fee. Can he afford it?"

My reply was that it was his business, and he was a shrewd man, with every thing now at stake.

"It's a hard thing to undertake," said Mr. Webster. "It is an unfavorable season of the year, and my duties at Washington are pressing; but really I do not see how I can forego the fee. This fee I must have, for it will pay fifteen thousand dollars of my debts, and that is what I am striving to do; it is what, if my life is spared, I mean to do. If I can pay my debts, I shall die in peace, a happy man. I do not see how I can begin to do it so well as in this way. I shall go and accept the fee."

He did go; received the fee, and won the cause. But he never put one dollar of the money into his own pocket. He appropriated it to pay his debts, in fact, before it was earned; and I never in my life saw him apparently more delighted than when he received the money. Said he to me: "Three or four more such windfalls as that will let me die a free man; and that is all I live to do."

Two weeks before Mr. Webster's death, I was at Marshfield, and intended to leave on a Monday morning. It was necessary to start very early, before the family should be astir, in order to get over to the dépôt at Kingston. The day before (Sunday), Mr. Webster had been distressed, and had had a really poor day. Something was said about the arrangements to get Mr. Paige and myself over to the dépôt. I said: —

"Mr. Webster, I wish you would not give it a thought; we shall get along very well."

"I should like to know how you are going to get over to the dépôt without my assistance," he replied; "nobody ever did it before. I shall send you over to the dépôt to-morrow morning with one black horse and one white one, — old Morgan. Is not he a noble horse? And the black horse, — I don't believe you have seen him. I call him 'Trenton.' You will see him, and tell me what you think of him. A few weeks ago, when I was in Trenton trying the Goodyear case, a noble and spirited black horse was driven up to the door of the hotel every morning, in a carryall, by Mr. Goodyear's servant, and I was carried to the court

When the court adjourned, I was returned to my lodgings by the same conveyance. This went on for a good many days; and one day I made some remark to Mr. Goodyear about the fine character of the horse. Said he: 'Do you like that horse, Mr. Webster?'

"'I think he is a very noble animal,' I replied.

"When I came home, a month ago, that horse stood in my stall, with Mr. Goodyear's compliments. Was not that generous? So I call him 'Trenton;' and I have had a blanket made for him, and had it marked 'Trenton.' You must tell me, the next time you come down, what you think of him. I think him a very noble horse."

Jonathan Smith, of Northampton, a wealthy bachelor, left all his estate, amounting to four or five hundred thousand dollars, in trust to the towns of North and East Hampton, for educational and philanthropic purposes. But he had a great many near and poor relatives, — nephews, nieces, cousins, and so forth; and none of them were even mentioned in the will. All his property was given to public purposes, and he entirely excluded his relatives from any part of it. They, of course, made a vigorous attempt to break the will, and to secure the property for themselves; but they had scarcely a pretext for a contest. The will was well drawn, and they could not plead insanity or any undue influence. There was only one slender circumstance on which their case could stand. The law of Massachusetts required three good witnesses to every will, and no will was valid

without them. The relatives undertook to break the will, on the ground that one of the witnesses was not of sound mind. If they could establish this, it would break the will, and the property would revert to the heirs. Mr. Choate was counsel for the relatives, against the validity of the will; while, besides Mr. Baker, a former member of Congress from that district, and nearly a dozen other lawyers, Mr. Webster was employed by the town of Northampton to sustain the will. The case came on for trial in the Supreme Court at Northampton, in the summer term. It was a very hot day when Mr. Webster returned to Boston after the trial. He came to my house fresh from court, and full of all the incidents connected with the contest. He gave me a very graphic account of the whole affair. The witness, whose soundness of mind was the turning point in the case, was a young law-student named Phelps, — a grandson of Chief Justice Parsons, whose daughter was Phelps's mother. Mr. Webster was exceedingly interested in this young man's character. When he arrived at Northampton, the suit was the sole topic of conversation among the townspeople; and the eminence of the counsel on both sides gave it an additional interest. He went at once into consultation with the other counsel for the will, — his information about the case being then very limited. His brother lawyers gave him their briefs, and a statement of the case; and he inquired into the history of this young man. They told him that the other side would not call him as a witness; and they

(the counsel for the will), from what they knew of the condition of the young man's mind and body, — both being in a morbid and diseased state, — did not consider it for their interest to call him, believing that to do so would tell decidedly against their case. Mr. Webster replied that he would decide upon that after an interview with the young man himself. They said that it would not do; that they knew all about him; that his father and mother said that it would not do; and that he was already in a very frightened and morbid state, for fear he should be called. "He has once attempted to take his own life," said the lawyers, "and they will question him about the matter, and he will show that his mind is not sound. We must make the best of our case by collateral and outside proof; and show, if possible, that his mind was sound enough to enable him to witness intelligently the signature of a will." "I shall see the young man," replied Mr. Webster, "and then I shall determine whether to call him or not." So he sent a messenger from the hotel to the residence of the young man's father, asking to see him. After an interview, he told the father that he wished to see the young man himself. The father was an intelligent, educated man, and, after some pleasant conversation, he departed, appointing an hour for Mr. Webster to call at his house that evening. Mr. Webster said to Mr. Phelps that he must be allowed to deal in his own way with the young man, who had become somewhat frightened at the idea of being examined on the stand

In the evening, Mr. Webster had an interview with young Phelps according to appointment. In describing him to me, Mr. Webster said: "He impressed me at once as a refined, gentlemanly, sensitive creature. When I attempted to draw him out in conversation, he was as timid as a child; but by degrees I won his confidence, and put him at his ease. Then we talked about general topics, I leading the conversation rather away from himself and his connection with the will case. I found him very pleasant and communicative; and after I had talked with him for three-quarters of an hour, I gently referred to the pending trial and the part that he would have to take in it. I asked him if he could give me a history of his brief career in life; and he immediately related to me one of the most interesting personal narratives to which I ever listened. He took me back to his earliest childhood, when he was the idol of his parents. They were very proud of him, and wished to educate him and put him forward in life. No lad at school could out-run or out-wrestle him; his health was perfect; he mastered his lessons with ease, and gave entire satisfaction to his teachers and parents. He soon and easily fitted for college; entered Amherst at an early age, and was as contented and happy a young man as any in the world. But in his second college year he began to lose his health. His appetite failed, and he became dyspeptic. A rapid change took place in his whole physical condition. He became languid and listless, and took no interest in any thing. With all this came great depres-

sion of spirits. It seemed to him as if every thing was a blank. As for life, it had no charms or joys for him. His father and mother were made unhappy by his changed condition, consulted physicians, took him to the mountains and the seashore; but nothing gave him benefit. His disease seemed to be settled, but he kept on with his studies and took his degree. He grew unhappy and disconsolate, and shunned every one. In relating this part of his story, young Phelps could hardly suppress his emotions. He said to me: 'I do not think I was morally responsible for what I did, and I never think of it without a shudder; but I threw myself into the Connecticut River, in a fit of desperation, for the purpose of committing suicide. [Here he burst into tears.] For this act I prayed God to forgive me. I think he has, because I feel that I was not guilty of self-murder. That has weighed upon me; but my health has lately improved, and I really feel more happy and contented.' After telling me this, we talked awhile about other things; and, when about leaving, I told him that I wished him, the next day, when I should summon him into court, to go there, and to consider me as his friend; that I would allow no questions to be put to him, or any thing to be said, that would wound his feelings. I said: 'You have the sympathy of everybody; and I wish you to tell, in answer to my questions, the story of your life as you have told it to me, merely to show to the jury and the court the condition of your mind. You may feel absolutely confident that nobody shall

harm you.' He went into court the next day, and told the story so eloquently that there was hardly a dry eye in the court-room. He trembled as he spoke, yet with a touching, truthful manner that had its effect. I had told Mr. Choate that if he did any thing to wound the feelings of that young man, merely for the sake of a triumph in the case, I should consider it a cruelty which nothing could justify. Mr. Choate promised me that he would say nothing, consistently with his duty to his clients, to injure the young man's feelings; and he kept his promise. When the young man had told his story and left the stand, I felt secure in my case; and it was won upon that single point.

"This Phelps was the grandson of Chief Justice Parsons, who, although one of the greatest of lawyers, had, as he himself well knew, a streak of insanity in his mind. He laid down the law that should govern the decisions of the courts in Massachusetts in cases of insanity, — what should be testimony and what should not. The law of Chief Justice Parsons has been the law of the Massachusetts courts from that day to this; and that was the very law laid down by the court in determining this case at Northampton."

Mr. Webster continued: "There was another interesting incident about this Northampton case. I found out that the foreman of the jury was a button manufacturer, — a Mr. Williston, who had made a gift of fifty thousand dollars to Amherst College, and founded an academy at Easthampton on a like sum. There he sat, — this button-maker, — as

meek as Moses, and tried this case. I discovered how he came to make his fortune out of the manufacturing of buttons. He had purchased some cloth for a coat, and his wife was going to make it up. He bought, among other trimmings, some lasting buttons, and paid a certain price for them, — say, seventy-five cents a dozen. His wife asked him what he paid for them, and he told her. 'Why,' said she, 'that is a large price; with button-moulds and a little lasting I could make these buttons for a quarter of that price. If you will take these back and get some button-moulds, I will show you.' He did so, and she made some buttons which to all appearance were as good as those that he bought at the store. That led to the idea of his making buttons to sell. He began by employing a few girls, and carrying his buttons to the country stores and selling them. He found it a profitable enterprise. The business grew. He then employed machinery; and now he is the greatest button-manufacturer in the United States. He has made an immense fortune, and employs very many hands and a great deal of machinery in making buttons."

The following anecdote was related by Mr. Webster, in reference to his connection with the celebrated Dartmouth College case, in which the New Hampshire legislature attempted to interfere with the ancient charter of that institution; in which, it may not be forgotten, Mr. Webster triumphed, by the decision of the United States supreme court, confirming the claim of the college.

While engaged in the case, Mr. Webster told the President that, as the original charter was granted and the endowment made by Lord Dartmouth expressly for the purpose of civilizing and instructing the Indians, a question might arise on this point; and as no Indian had been attached to the school for a long period, it would be well for the President to go into Canada, and bring some of the aborigines within the walls of the college, so that a jury could not find that the charter had been abrogated on that score. Accordingly the President went, and found three choice specimens, and brought them to the brink of the river; and after some delay he procured a boat and began to ferry them across,— when the young Indians, not precisely understanding the object of so much kindness on the part of the President, and espying the walls of the college on the bank, had not only their wonder excited, but grew suspicious that, if once within those walls, it might be difficult to escape. Whereupon, the young Indian at the bow of the boat cast a significant glance at his associates, gave the war-whoop, and quick as thought they all plunged into the middle of the river, and swam for the shore. Said Mr. Webster: "The falling of the walls of Jericho, on the sounding of the ram's horn, could not have astonished Joshua more than this unlooked-for escapade of the Indians astonished the President. He hallooed, entreated, and tried to explain all; but the Indians kept straight on their course to the shore, and made with all speed for the woods, — the last President Wheelock ever saw or heard

of them." So Mr. Webster had to go on with the case without the Indians. This anecdote used to amuse him exceedingly; and Judge Story would join in with his happy, light-hearted laugh, which only those who knew him can appreciate.

CHAPTER V.

AT THE BAR.—CONTINUED.

THE great law cases in which Mr. Webster engaged during his professional career were carefully studied, and the arguments, in every instance, were elaborately prepared. His briefs, notes, and memoranda prove this beyond a doubt. A large mass of legal documents still exist to testify to his diligence, research, and logical acumen. The papers belonging to each case are filed by themselves and properly labelled. The contents of some of these parcels have been carefully examined. The papers relating to the Dartmouth College case contain,—

1. Notes on the arguments of Messrs. Holmes and Wirt; topics of discourse, heads of their arguments, and authorities quoted by them are noted. Scarcely any reference contains more than one line; and important points are marked by an index and underscored, to call attention to them. These memoranda were evidently made while those lawyers were speaking.

2. In another parcel are found five sheets of letter-paper, closely written over with the main

arguments employed by him in the New Hampshire court, in defence of the college charter, as a contract between the grantor and the grantees.

3. A larger parcel, of fifteen sheets quite closely written over, seems to contain the substance of his plea in the United States court in that case. There are other papers containing abstracts of decisions from English authorities, and legal references relating to the subject.

There are some hundreds of similar cases on file. They contain a rich treasure of legal research, learning, and argument. If published precisely as they are, they would be of great value to students at law, as showing how one of the ablest advocates of the age prepared and managed his cases. As he made notes of the arguments of the opposing counsel as well as of his own, the substance of the reasoning on both sides is presented. These papers show how the mightiest champions of the forum were equipped for the contest; with what spirit they entered the lists; how bold and defiant were their challenges; and what were the strong and weak points of assault and defence with each combatant. Such a study would be eminently instructive to an inquisitive student, and not without practical utility to the mature advocate. It would be like learning the art of war from the study of the battle-grounds, strongholds, and warlike munitions of great armies. Thus the perils of actual participation in the conflict would be avoided, and all the benefit of personal inspection secured. If some competent jurist should edit these papers, the whole

legal life of Mr. Webster might be placed, as upon a canvas, before the reading public. It is well known that some of the most eloquent appeals he ever made were addressed to juries. No reporters were present; of course, no traces of such brilliant passages remain, except in the meagre notes which he prepared before entering the court. Some of these sketches may be so full as to enable a congenial spirit to clothe the skeletons with flesh, and give to arguments something of their original beauty and strength.

Mr. Webster gave his first impressions of the English courts in a letter to Mr. Healy, of Boston. Writing from London, June 9, 1839, he says:

"We arrived in London on the evening of the fifth instant. The sixth was rainy. I went out quite alone; looked into all the courts, — the whole four were sitting. I saw all their venerable wigs. I stayed long enough to hear several gentlemen speak. They are vastly better *trained* than we are. They speak briefly. They rise, begin immediately, and leave off when they have done. Their manner is more like that of a schoolboy, who gets up to say his lesson, goes right through it, and then sits down, than it is like our more leisurely and deliberate habits. Sergeant Wilde, who is esteemed a long speaker, argued an insurance question in fifteen minutes, that most of us would have got an hour's speech out of. The rooms are all small, with very inconvenient places for writing, and almost nobody present except the wigged population. I went to the Parliament

Houses (Houses not in session). Their rooms are very small. The room where the Lords sit, I was sure must be the old 'Painted Chamber,' where the committees of conference used to meet. On entering it, I asked the guide what committee room that was. He turned to rebuke my ignorance, and exclaimed: 'This is the House of Lords.' I was right, however. The House of Commons was burnt, you know, some time ago, and the Commons now sit in what was the House of Lords, and the Lords sit temporarily in the old 'Painted Chamber.' All these accommodations are small and inconvenient. New buildings are in progress for the use of both Houses."

In contrast with the description of the speaking in the London courts, Mr. Webster, in writing to Mr. Mason, in 1819, spoke as follows of the time occupied by American lawyers in arguing their cases in the supreme court of the United States:

"To talk is so much the practice here, that, in the few cases I have, I find my attention wholly engaged in listening. We have, for instance, an equity case here from the Massachusetts district. Mr. Bigelow, Mr. Amory, and myself argued it in half a day in Boston. It comes up here on precisely the same papers and the same points. We have now been two whole days upon it, and Wirt is not yet through for the appellee; and I have yet to close for the appellant. In Mr. Bell's case, Mr. Pinkney was near two hours in opening, and full four in the close."

Mr. Webster's estimate of what constituted a

good jurist may be learned from his frequent commendation of the men who, in his opinion, best deserved that distinction. In a letter to Mr. Blatchford, in 1849, he writes from the court-room: "Mr. B. R. Curtis is now speaking in reply to Mr. Choate, on the legal question. He is very clever. With very competent learning, his great mental characteristic is clearness; and the power of clear statement is the great power at the bar. Chief Justice Marshall possessed it in a most remarkable degree; so does Lord Lyndhurst. If to this character of clearness you add fulness and force, you make a man, whether as a lawyer, an historian, or indeed a poet, whose discourse or writing merits the application of those lines of unsurpassed beauty in Denham's 'Cooper's Hill:'

> "'Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
> Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full.'

I think the judgment of Lord Mansfield came the nearest to this high standard."

Mr. Webster soon confirmed his good opinion of Mr. Curtis by securing for him a seat upon the bench of the United States supreme court, for which his eminent talents and legal learning so well prepared him. He did not disappoint the expectation of his friends, but constantly gained golden opinions for his clear, full, and forcible decisions until his retirement from the bench.

Mr. Webster's relations with and opinions of the eminent judges and lawyers of his time are worth recording; and the following account of his

intercourse with some of the most celebrated will prove interesting.

One day, I had been asking him some questions about his controversy with John Randolph. It was said, I told him, that John Randolph had challenged him. He replied that that was not true.

"But," said he, "he sent Colonel Benton to me to know if I meant such and such things; and I told him that I did not choose to be called to account for any thing I had said, and that I meant just what I said. It was evident that there was a purpose to have a row with me."

"Of course," I remarked, "you would not accept a challenge."

"Of course not," said he; "I despise the whole thing. I have given them something that was, perhaps, more disagreeable than buckshot."

I asked him if he had ever, in those violent, troublous times, carried pistols.

"No," said he, "I never did. I always trusted to my strong arms, and I do not believe in pistols. There were some Southern men whose blood was hot, and who got very much excited in debate; and I used myself to get excited: but I never resorted to any such extremity as the use of pistols."

"The nearest I ever came to a downright row," continued Mr. Webster, "was with Mr. William Pinkney. Mr. Pinkney was the acknowledged head and leader of the American bar. He was the great practitioner at Washington when I was admitted to practise in the courts there. I

found Mr. Pinkney, by universal concession, the very head of the bar, — a lawyer of extraordinary accomplishments, and withal a very wonderful man. But with all that, there was something about him that was very small. He did things that one would hardly think it possible that a gentleman of his breeding and culture and great weight as a lawyer could do. He was a very vain man. One saw it in every motion he made. When he came into court he was dressed in the very extreme of fashion, — almost like a dandy. He would wear into the court-room his white gloves, that had been put on fresh that morning, and that he never put on again. He usually rode from his house to the Capitol on horseback ; and his overalls were taken off and given to his servant, who attended him Pinkney showed in his whole appearance that he considered himself the great man of that arena, and that he expected deference to be paid to him as the acknowledged leader of the bar. He had a great many satellites, — men, of course, much less eminent than himself at the bar, and of less practice, — who flattered him, and employed him to take their briefs and argue their cases, they doing the work, and he receiving the greatest share of the pay. That was the position that Mr. Pinkney occupied when I entered the bar at Washington.

"I was a lawyer who had my living to get ; and I felt that, although I should not argue my cases as well as he could, still, if my clients employed me, they should have the best ability I had to give

them, and I should do the work myself. I did not propose to practise law in the Supreme Court by proxy. I think that, in some pretty important cases I had, Mr. Pinkney rather expected that I should fall into the current of his admirers, and divide my fees with him. This I utterly refused to do. In some important case (I have forgotten now what the case was), Mr. Pinkney was employed to argue it against me. I was going to argue it for my client myself. I had felt that, on several occasions, his manner was, to say the least, very annoying and aggravating. My intercourse with him, so far as I had any, was always marked with great courtesy and deference. I regarded him as the leader of the American bar: he had that reputation, and justly. He was a very great lawyer. On the occasion to which I refer, in some colloquial discussion upon various minor points of the case, he treated me with contempt. He pooh-poohed, as much as to say it was not worth while to argue a point that I did not know any thing about; that I was no lawyer. I think he spoke of the 'gentleman from New Hampshire.' At any rate, it was a thing that everybody in the court-house, including the judges, could not fail to observe. Chief Justice Marshall himself was pained by it. It was very hard," added Mr. Webster, "for me to restrain my temper, and keep cool; but I did so, knowing in what presence I stood. I think he construed my apparent humility into a want of what he would call *spirit* in resenting, and as a sort of acquiescence in his rule. However, the

incident passed; the case was not finished when the hour for adjournment came, and the court adjourned until the next morning. Mr. Pinkney took his whip and gloves, threw his cloak over his arm, and began to saunter away. I went up to him, and said very calmly, 'Can I see you alone in one of the lobbies?' He replied: 'Certainly.' I suppose that he thought I was going to beg his pardon and ask his assistance. We passed into one of the anterooms of the Capitol. I looked into one of the grand-jury rooms, rather remote from the main court-room. There was no one in it, and we entered. As we did so I looked at the door, and found that there was a key in the lock; and, unobserved by him, I turned the key and put it in my pocket. Mr. Pinkney seemed to be waiting with some astonishment. I advanced towards him, and said: 'Mr. Pinkney, you grossly insulted me this morning, in the court-room; and not for the first time either. In deference to your position and to the respect in which I hold the court, I did not answer you as I was tempted to do, on the spot.' He began to parley. I continued: 'You know you did: don't add another sin to that; don't deny it; you know you did it, and you know it was premeditated. It was deliberate; it was purposely done; and, if you deny it, you state an untruth. Now,' I went on, 'I am here to say to you, once for all, that you must ask my pardon, and go into court to-morrow morning and repeat the apology, or else either you or I will go out of this room in a different

condition from that in which we entered it.' I was never more in earnest. He looked at me, and saw that my eyes were pretty dark and firm. He began to say something. I interrupted him. 'No explanations,' said I: 'admit the fact, and take it back. I do not want another word from you except that. I will hear no explanation; nothing but that you admit it, and recall it.' He trembled like an aspen leaf. He again attempted to explain. Said I: 'There is no other course. I have the key in my pocket, and you must apologize, or take what I give you.' At that he humbled down, and said to me: 'You are right; I am sorry; I did intend to bluff you; I regret it, and ask your pardon.' 'Enough,' I promptly replied. 'Now, one promise before I open the door; and that is, that you will to-morrow morning state to the court that you have said things which wounded my feelings, and that you regret it.' Pinkney replied: 'I will do so.' Then I unlocked the door, and passed out. The next morning, when the court met, Mr. Pinkney at once rose, and stated to the court that a very unpleasant affair had occurred the morning before, as might have been observed by their honors; that his friend, Mr. Webster, had felt grieved at some things which had dropped from his lips; that his zeal for his client might have led him to say some things which he should not have said; and that he was sorry for having thus spoken.

"From that day, while at the bar, there was no man," said Mr. Webster, "who treated me with

so much respect and deference as Mr. William Pinkney."

"Just before Mr. Pinkney died," Mr. Webster went on to say, "we were trying a case in the Supreme Court, — I on one side, and he on the other; and, as he finished his argument, I noticed that he was laboring under considerable pain. I was about to begin my reply, when he rose from his seat, having just thrown his cloak over him, addressed the court, and said that if I would consent, and if the court would consent, he would beg it as a favor that the court should adjourn to another day; as he was afraid that he should be utterly unable to remain and listen to my argument, which he really desired to hear very much. I acquiesced cheerfully, and so did the court; and the case was adjourned for the day. I then went and spoke with Mr. Pinkney. He said he felt chilly all over, and had, he thought, a sort of ague shock. I helped him to adjust his cloak, and he drove to his lodgings. In forty-eight hours from that time Mr. Pinkney was dead, having been prostrated by a violent fever."

It is remarkable that two of the ablest of American lawyers should have made their last pleas in opposition to Mr. Webster. Mr. Emmet died with even less premonition than Mr. Pinkney, after having finished a brilliant reply to Mr. Webster.

Mr. Pinkney once availed himself of Mr. Webster's ready memory in stating principles of law at the bar. Pinkney had, in this respect, all the assurance for which John Randolph was noted.

Randolph, not too punctilious about giving credit, never hesitated to appropriate anybody's store of learning, when occasion offered. In a certain case in the Supreme Court, the lawyer opposed to Pinkney made a glaring blunder in quoting authorities. Webster turned to Pinkney and whispered: "Blackstone's assertions are precisely the reverse." "Can you show me the place?" asked Pinkney. "Oh, yes;" and Mr. Webster passed into the court library, found the volume, and handed it to Pinkney, open at the right quotation. Pinkney studied it attentively for some time; then he laid the book carefully away. After his opponent had finished, Pinkney rose to reply. When he came to that part of his adversary's speech in which the misquoted passage occurred, he said: —

"I am greatly surprised — if, indeed, my feelings are not of a stronger nature than surprise — at the manner in which the counsel for the plaintiff has laid down the law. There are some principles so universally admitted, and so elementary, — principles which the youthful student is taught at the very threshold of his instruction, — that no well-read lawyer could ever be supposed to be ignorant of them, or to forget them. May it please the court, it is some years since I have looked at Blackstone, and perhaps, at my time of life, my memory may be at fault; but, if I mistake not, your honors will find in the first volume, somewhere about the one hundredth page, the following language."

Then he recited, as if by difficult recollection,

slowly, and word for word, the exact language of Blackstone, which he had just before committed to memory.

Mr. Wirt and Mr. Webster were friends. When the former was attorney-general, Mr. Webster had occasion to call upon him. They sat opposite each other, engaged in conversation. There was a glass in the room, which, as Mr. Wirt raised his eyes, revealed to him whatever was going on behind him. One of his daughters, — a little girl of four or five years, — without knowing anybody was there, had pushed the door open to come into the library. She saw Mr. Webster's large figure, and hesitated. Mr. Wirt watched her face, and she had an expression something like fear; but it was only for an instant. He saw her features relax as Mr. Webster looked at her; and it was not two minutes before Mr. Webster's arms were stretched out, and the child rushed into them. Mr. Wirt said this little incident touched him as much as any thing that ever occurred to him. He said to Mr. Webster: "This has revealed to me a trait of character I did not suppose you possessed. I thought you cold; but I see a child knows where to find a warm heart."

Mr. Webster had the most exalted opinion of Chief Justice Marshall. In a letter to his brother, in 1814, he says: "There is no man in the court who strikes me like Marshall. He is a plain man, looking very much like Colonel Adams, about three inches taller. I never have seen a man of whose intellect I had a higher opinion."

Mr. Webster had a very high appreciation of Judge Shaw as a jurist. He once said to me: "Massachusetts is indebted to me for one thing, if for nothing else. I have been the cause of giving her a chief-justice to her highest court for more than a quarter of a century; one unsurpassed in every thing that constitutes an upright, learned, and intelligent judge. Massachusetts is indebted to me for having Judge Shaw at the head of her judiciary for thirty years; for he never would have taken the place had it not been for me. When Levi Lincoln was governor, the vacancy occurred, and was to be filled. Shaw was then in a very large practice, yielding him fifteen or twenty thousand dollars a year; and he had a growing family to maintain. Governor Lincoln consulted me about filling the vacancy, and I said: —

"'Appoint Lemuel Shaw, by all means.'

"'But he won't take it,' said the governor.

"'We must make him take it,' said I.

"I approached him upon the subject. He was almost offended at the suggestion.

"'Do you suppose,' said he, 'that I am going, at my time of life, to take an office that has so much responsibility attached to it, for the paltry sum of three thousand dollars a year?'

"'You have some property,' I replied, 'and can afford to take it.'

"'I shall not take it under any circumstances,' was his answer.

"I used every argument I could think of. I

plied him in every possible way, and had interview after interview with him. He smoked and smoked, and, as I entreated and begged and expostulated, the smoke would come thicker and faster. Sometimes he would make a cloud of smoke so thick that I could not see him. I guess he smoked a thousand cigars while he was settling the point. He would groan and smoke. He declared, by all that was sacred, that he would resist the tempter. I appealed to his patriotism. I said he was a young man, and should take it for that reason. A long judicial life was the only useful one to the State. His decisions would give stability to the government. And I made him believe that it was his duty, — as I think it was under the circumstances; and the result has justified my conclusion. Although he accepted the office with the greatest reluctance, he has filled it with unsurpassed ability; and to-day there is not in the world a more upright, conscientious, and able judge than Chief Justice Shaw. He is an honor to the ermine. For that, I repeat, the people of Massachusetts owe me a debt of gratitude, if for nothing else."

Of Judge Sprague Mr. Webster had a very high opinion. He told me once that, of the members of the United States Senate, among the first as a debater was Peleg Sprague, of Massachusetts. "He is what I call a very eloquent man. He is able; a man of great dignity; and there is scarcely his superior in the Senate."

George Blake was one of Mr. Webster's particular friends, although he was fifteen or twenty

years his senior, and had pretty much retired from practice at the period of their intimacy. They were often, however, on opposite sides of cases. They lived in the same street (Summer), and there was a close friendship between their wives. Mrs. Blake was a very accomplished woman; and Mr. Blake, who was very able as a lawyer, and a noted wit, had some striking peculiarities. One was a habit of audacious exaggeration in his statements, which seemed perfectly natural to him. He often said things which were never intended to be believed; and his manner was always earnest. Mr. Webster used to relate many anecdotes of him with great gusto.

He told me that, on one occasion, Mr. Blake went fishing in his boat, he being as fond of that sport as was Mr. Webster himself. Mr. Webster had been engaged in court, and had just reached home, when in came Mr. Blake's house-servant, bringing a splendid cod on a salver, with Mr. Blake's compliments. Mr. Webster asked what luck Mr. Blake had had.

"First rate," replied the man; "he caught one enormous fish, — so big that we could hardly get him into the boat."

"I suppose Mr. Blake was delighted," said Mr. Webster. "What did he say?"

"Oh, he said he would give an *ingot of gold* if Webster was there to see it."

Blake was a visitor at Marshfield in its early days, at a time when the guests were numerous, and they had to be quartered with lodgings in the

neighboring farm-houses. This was in summer, and Mr. Blake had his room at Porter Wright's house, a little way off. One evening, at the mansion, something was said about the next day. Besides the family, there were present the two Misses White, — one of whom afterwards married Fletcher Webster. Both were beautiful girls. Miss Ellen White remarked: —

"To-morrow is my birthday."

"And pray," said Mr. Blake, "may I be allowed to inquire how many summers have dawned on that beautiful brow?"

"Eighteen."

"Eighteen summers! I shall feel it not only a duty, but a very great privilege and a high obligation, to commemorate the event. I shall do it in the first instance, by firing eighteen guns from my chamber window at sunrise to-morrow morning."

Next morning he came into the house.

"Aha!" said Miss White; "just what I supposed. The men are always very willing to promise, but they are slow to fulfil their promises."

He expressed a good deal of surprise.

"You need not deny it," said she; "you promised."

"Yes, Blake," said Mr. Webster, "the young ladies have you. It's of no use; you did not cover your retreat well."

"Even in uncivilized communities," retorted Mr. Blake, "those who are accused of crime are informed, before judgment is pronounced, with what crime they are charged. I should like to know

in what I have offended this very respectable family."

"You have forgotten, Mr. Blake."

"Forgotten! What?"

"Why, did not you promise to fire eighteen guns this morning at sunrise from your chamber window, in honor of my birthday?"

"Do I remember? Have I forgotten? Can a mother forget her sucking child? Forget a promise made to you, Miss Ellen White? Never!"

"But what have you to say for yourself?"

"I have this to say for myself: I did promise most solemnly to fire eighteen guns from my chamber window this morning at sunrise, in honor of Miss Ellen White's birthday; but I have not the slightest recollection of promising that you should *hear* them!"

Blake always had a fire in his library, even in July; and people would come in and say, "What have you got a fire to-day for?" It was rather hard work for him to find an excuse for this fire. One day, Mr. Webster was speaking of Professor Smith, who was at the head of the medical department of Dartmouth College, and a man of great intelligence and skill, both as a physician and surgeon. He held the post rather as an honorary one, being a man of wealth. He was very benevolent, and performed operations gratuitously for the poor, spending much of his time in that way; indeed, Professor Smith gave the last ten years of his life to the poor. He was quite a friend of Mr. Webster, being an old acquaintance of his father.

Mr. Webster used to visit at his house, when in college, and often attended his lectures. He said that he received a great deal of pleasure and instruction from the professor's society. On one occasion, Professor Smith, in talking about his experience with the diseases of the poor, said that he thought there was more suffering from want of proper ventilation than from disease itself. He added, that it had been very much impressed upon his mind that people did not know the value of good ventilation. He often had been called to cases of fevers and the like among poor people; and, upon arriving at the house, he would find, perhaps, nobody but a child in attendance, — the husband and sons being away at work. He had often, before even feeling the pulse of the patient, gone to the woodshed, taken wood and split it up, carried it indoors in his own arms, built a fire, and thrown open the windows; and he could see the patient begin to revive before he had thought of medicine. Ventilation he thought of the utmost importance in such cases.

In speaking of this to Mr. Blake, Mr. Webster noticed that he took a great degree of interest in the story. He inquired very minutely about it; and the next thing Mr. Webster knew, Blake was using this story as an excuse for always having a fire in his library. When he was asked why he had it, he would say that "Professor Smith of Dartmouth College, — whom he knew very well, a very eminent man, — had told him that fires were absolutely necessary for the preservation of health, by producing

ventilation. It was the professor's invariable practice, when visiting sick patients, if he did not find any fire in the room, before he prescribed or felt the patient's pulse, to build a fire and throw up the windows. I have always felt it to be my duty to my health to keep a little fire to promote ventilation." Mr. Webster said that Blake told this so many times that he probably at last actually came to believe that he was the person with whom Professor Smith had conversed on the subject.

Blake, in speaking once of what he had seen in Paris, and on what a grand scale every thing was there, said: "You can't imagine it. I saw candles in the Palais Royal as big as the columns in front of the Tremont House (Boston); and some of them were fluted!"

Although Blake was a very eloquent talker, he had a hesitating sort of way. Mr. Webster told me that he had heard Blake argue a case, and try legal questions, with as much eloquence and ability as he ever heard from any man. He had no fluency, and would hesitate and stutter; but the ideas and the language were very fine. Mr. Webster was very fond of Blake, for their tastes were quite similar; although, in the matter of exaggeration, they were as unlike as two men could be. Mr. Webster was a most exact man in all his statements, never overstating, and never straining an expression to make a flourish of speech. If he was arguing a case to a jury where there was a chance for latitude, he never enlarged on the truth. He kept everybody down to the facts; you had no chance

to poetize with him. Blake's habit amused him very much. He used to say that he was surprised that any man should resort to it, and especially Blake, who was a man having ideas and logic and learning of his own. Still, they sympathized in their pleasures; both were very fond of fishing and shooting, field sports, the country, and country life. Blake was a healthy man, with no bad habits; a gentleman in the strict sense of the word.

On one occasion, Mr. Webster was counsel in a case in which Blake was on the other side. The matter in dispute was the quality of a parcel of shoes. A down-east logging-man had made a contract for a large quantity of shoes; but, upon receiving them, thought they were not as good as the contract promised, and refused to pay for them. The man who made the shoes insisted upon having his money, and sued the defendant. Mr. Webster brought the suit for the shoe manufacturer, and Mr. Blake defended the purchaser. It became a matter of less moment in dollars and cents than of feeling, the fees being larger than the whole amount of the contract. Mr. Webster took occasion, in referring to the shoes, to remind the jury that it would be quite as safe for them, when they retired to deliberate on their verdict, to remember the testimony as it was given, rather than his learned brother's statement of it, as he was somewhat in the habit of exaggeration. Blake was always indignant at any allusion to his weakness, and this remark nettled him. He rose to reply, and said: —

"The learned gentleman on the other side has

seen fit to warn you against what he is pleased to term my habit of exaggeration. How, gentlemen of the jury, this may be in ordinary cases it is not worth while now to stop to inquire. I might be ready to join issue with that distinguished gentleman on that point; but in this case there is no occasion for it, because it is not in his power, with all his ability, to exaggerate this case. There is no language that I can use that can come up to the fact. The counsel has told you that these shoes were not only according to the contract, but that they were good shoes, and that they never wore out. I grant that the shoes never wore out; but the poor unfortunate men who wore them, did! And I will prove by indisputable evidence, to your entire satisfaction, that the unfortunate men could be traced for miles by the blood that ran from their feet by the action of the pegs that were put in those shoes!"

Whenever Mr. Webster and Mr. Blake went out fishing or hunting together, the latter betrayed a passion for excelling, and would boast of catching more fish or shooting more birds than his companion. They would take their bags and lines, and be gone for hours. On their return with the result of their day's sport, Blake would say: "Well, Webster, how many did you catch?" Mr. Webster had a habit of answering by repeating, "How many did you catch?" Blake would reply, setting the number pretty high, and Webster would then retort by stating a number a trifle less; and that would satisfy Blake. Mr. Webster said to me: "If

I had told my gains after he had, and had named more, he would have been very unhappy. He would strain a point tremendously to get a superior position in this respect."

One day I was going down Milk Street with Mr. Webster, and he suggested that he wanted to buy a chaise. So we went into Bayley's store; and, while we were there, Blake came in. There were some very nice chaises in the store, and we looked them over. Blake finally said to me: "Do you suppose that Webster will buy one of these chaises? If he does, it will break down before he gets to Marshfield. I have a chaise, Harvey, in my chaise-house, that I have owned for thirty years. Chaises that are made now-a-days aren't good for any thing. I would not give my chaise, thirty years old, for as many chaises like these as you could put between here and Worcester, *thills under!*"

Mr. Webster, on one occasion, was going to Marshpee brooks to fish, with Blake, Isaac P. Davis, Ben Gorham, and Perkins. They went on horseback, leaving Boston in the morning, and arriving at night at Mrs. Hungerson's hotel in Plymouth, where they lodged. The next morning they were to go on, and arrive early at the fishing-ground. But, when they rose in the morning, it was raining; in fact, it was an old-fashioned New England rainy day. Of course, that was the end of the sport so far as that day was concerned; for they were on horseback, and could not comfortably ride on in the rain. There was no fishing and no moving, and they took to whist. As only

four were needed to make up the game, Mr. Webster, who was not fond of it, said: —

"You play whist, and I'll read some of the books and briefs I have in my saddle-bags, and amuse myself in my way, while you amuse yourselves in yours."

It was a little cold and raw; he sat down by a table to study, and they to their whist. Mr. Webster could hear, at the same time, all their conversation. Isaac P. Davis and Blake were partners, with Perkins and Gorham on the other side. Blake was constantly scolding Davis.

"What made you play the deuce of clubs?" he would say.

Mr. Davis would quietly answer, —

"Play away, and don't get excited. I know what I am about."

"Know what you are about! I should like to know what upon earth possessed you to play the deuce of clubs!"

"Be quiet; you'll see before we get through the game."

"I shall see before we get through the game! Why, you played the deuce of clubs! It is barely possible that you may live long enough to give me a satisfactory reason for having played the deuce of clubs, — but I very much doubt it."

Pretty soon they heard a tremendous thump on the old brass knocker of the door. Mr. Webster looked up, and saw that Blake was annoyed by the repeated knocks, to which no one belonging to the house seemed to answer. Finally, Blake rose, with

his cards in his hand, and pulled open the door. There sat a tall, stalwart yeoman, fully six feet high, on a horse about as large in proportion, the rain pouring down upon him without hindrance.

"What do you want?" asked Mr. Blake.

"I want to see Mrs. Hungerson."

"You want to see Mrs. Hungerson! If you will please to get off your horse and come into the house, I have no doubt that you will be able to see Mrs. Hungerson."

"I can't dismount, nohow. If I get off, I can't get on again."

"So you can't dismount, nohow?" said Blake, with a quizzical expression; and he pulled the door open wide, so that the man could not get hold of the knocker, and left him standing there. The man, after waiting ten or fifteen minutes in vain, and receiving no further attention from any one, finally rode off in despair, and Blake then got up quietly and shut the door.

It is always interesting to know what estimate men who have attained fame in intellectual pursuits put upon their own powers, and to compare this with the estimate of others who have had good opportunities of observing them. In early life, Mr. Webster took a very modest view of his abilities and his prospects of professional success. His ambition was never fully aroused till Governor Gore advised him to refuse the clerkship. In his letters to his friends, written before this, he often spoke timidly and sometimes disparagingly of his legal attainments and prospects. He once spoke

of a young lawyer who had not had a brilliant success, but whose degree of success would amply satisfy his own ambition. That he was conscious, however, of the latent powers within him is seen by his writing for the papers in college, and delivering a Fourth of July oration during his college term. He never shrank, moreover, even at that early age, from any responsibility that was laid upon him; and whatever he undertook, he did well. This gained him distinction among his college mates, who did not hesitate to predict great things for him.

In 1802 he wrote to a classmate: —

"The talent with which Heaven has intrusted me is small, very small; yet I feel responsible for the use of it, and am not willing to pervert it to purposes reproachful or unjust, nor to hide it, like the slothful servant, in a napkin. If I prosecute the profession, I pray God to fortify me against its temptations. To the winds I dismiss those light hopes of eminence, which ambition inspired and vanity fostered. To be honest, to be capable, to be faithful to my client, I earnestly hope will be my first endeavor."

When Mr. Webster, laboring under the affliction of an annual catarrhal cold, or hay fever, which was very painful to him, was obliged to keep his eyes shaded most of the time, and of course was unable to occupy himself in reading or writing, I used to go and sit with him, and read and talk to him.

Speaking of his speeches, one day, I said: —

"Mr. Webster, your speech in answer to Hayne has been read, I think, by more intelligent persons than any speech in the English language."

"Oh, no," replied he, "I think you must be mistaken about that. You must remember that the speeches of English orators and statesmen were not reported, as ours are; neither were the English, to a great extent, a reading people. Every thing that is worth reading, and is eloquent, our people read."

After a pause, he went on: —

"Well, I don't know; you may be right in that. But that was not my best speech."

I said that, if it was not the best speech, it had the greatest fame.

"Well," said he, "I suppose it has. Nevertheless, it was not, in my judgment, the best speech I ever made; but, as a popular effort, it was undoubtedly more read than any other speech."

"What do you regard as your greatest speech?" I asked.

"My forensic efforts have been those which have pleased me most. The two arguments that have given me the most satisfaction were the argument in the 'steamboat case,' and the Dartmouth College argument. The steamboat case, you remember, was a question of the constitutionality of the right of New York State to give a monopoly to Fulton, and his heirs for ever, of the privilege of plying the waters of the Hudson with his steamboats. The value of such a right was not then and could not have been, from the nature of the case, fully

understood. But it seemed to me to be against the very essence of State rights, and a virtual dissolution of the Union in a commercial sense. If New York had a right to lay tolls upon her rivers for everybody that should pass, then all the other great international rivers and lakes would have the same right, and we could not be one as a commercial people. The people of New York felt that their rights were at stake in the contest; and their great lawyers — and they had many of them — were engaged on that side; the Livingstons and Clintons and others of like calibre. Mr. Wirt and myself were employed against the monopoly. When the case came to be argued before the supreme court at Washington, Chief Justice Marshall presiding, Mr. Wirt and myself met for consultation. Mr. Wirt asked me upon what grounds I based my case, upon what clause of the Constitution. He had a right to ask, as he was my senior in years and professional fame. My reply was, that the clause of the Constitution which ceded to the general government the right to regulate commerce was that upon which I based my defence. Mr. Wirt's reply to that was, that he did not see, in that line of argument, any ground for our case to rest upon. I said: 'Very well; what is yours?' So he told me. I do not recollect what it was, but it was a totally different clause in which he found the grounds for his argument. I said to him: 'Mr. Wirt, I will be as frank with you as you have been with me, and say that I do not see the slightest ground to rest our case

upon in your view of it.' 'Very well,' replied Mr. Wirt, 'let us each argue it in his own way, and we will find out which, if either, is right.'

"The case came on for argument. Mr. Wirt made one of his brilliant arguments before the court. I followed with my view.

"I can see the chief justice as he looked at that moment. Chief Justice Marshall always wrote with a quill. He never adopted the barbarous invention of steel pens. That abomination had not been introduced. And always, before counsel began to argue, the chief justice would nib his pen; and then, when every thing was ready, pulling up the sleeves of his gown, he would nod to the counsel who was to address him, as much as to say, 'I am ready; now you may go on.'

"I think I never experienced more intellectual pleasure than in arguing that naval question to a great man who could appreciate it, and take it in; and he did take it in, as a baby takes in its mother's milk.

"The result of the case was just this: the opinion of the court, as rendered by the chief justice, was little else than a recital of my argument. The chief justice told me that he had little to do but to repeat that argument, as that covered the whole ground. And, which was a little curious, he never referred to the fact that Mr. Wirt had made an argument. He did not speak of it once."

Then Mr. Webster added: —

"That was very singular. It was an accident, I think. Mr. Wirt was a great lawyer, and a great

man. But sometimes a man gets a kink, and doesn't hit right. That was one of the occasions. But that was nothing against Mr. Wirt."

When Mr. Webster visited Savannah, in 1847, Hon. J. M. Wayne, one of the judges of the Supreme Court, welcomed him. His address contains the following paragraph, illustrative of Mr. Webster's influence before the most august tribunal in the United States. Judge Wayne thus addressed him: —

"When the late Mr. Thomas Gibbons determined to hazard a large part of his fortune in testing the constitutionality of the laws of New York, limiting the navigation of the waters of that State to steamers belonging to a company, his own interest was not so much concerned as that of the right of every citizen to use a coasting license upon the waters of the United States, in whatever way his vessel was propelled. It was a sound view of the law, but not broad enough for the occasion. It is not unlikely that the case would have been decided upon it, if you had not insisted that it should be put upon the broader constitutional grounds of commerce and navigation. The court felt the application and force of your reasoning, and it made a decision releasing every creek and harbor, river and bay, in our country from the interference of monopolies, which had already provoked unfriendly legislation between some of the States, and which would have been as little favorable to the interests of Fulton as they were unworthy of his genius."

One of the judges who made the decision here admits their indebtedness to Mr. Webster for the liberal and enlarged views of the Constitution of a sovereign State which the exigencies of the case required. Every man in the country was personally interested in a decision which might have been in accordance with the partial views of State legislation, had not Webster's logic demolished the temple of their idolatry. Even the learned court might not have comprehended the full importance of the question to be adjudicated, had not the "Defender of the Constitution" poured light upon their waiting minds by his unanswerable arguments. I have often heard Mr. Webster say that he regarded this decision as fraught with more vital consequences to the welfare of the commerce of the United States than any other ever made.

It was in the conversation just referred to that I repeated to Mr. Webster an eloquent extract from one of his speeches. Mr. Webster turned towards me, and with a half-smile said: —

"That is pretty fine; did I say all that?"

"You did, sir." And I mentioned the occasion to him.[1]

"Yes," said he, "and I got that impression as I stood on the walls of Quebec for the first time; and, casting an imaginary glance over the broad

[1] The passage referred to was in a speech delivered in the Senate, May 7, 1834, on the "Presidential Protest." It was as follows: "A power [the British] which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts; whose morning drum-beat, following the sun, and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England."

extent of that dominion, thought of the magnitude of the power that governed half a civilized globe by her superior intellect. And I was proud," he added, "that the blood of the Englishman flowed in my veins!"

It may be worth while to add to these reminiscences of Mr. Webster's legal career Rufus Choate's opinion of him as an advocate. No man knew better how to address a court or jury than Rufus Choate; he was most persuasive, forcible, and eloquent. He often met Mr. Webster as an adversary, and could judge well of his legal powers. Mr. Choate said of him: —

"He spoke with consummate ability to the bench; and yet exactly as, according to every sound canon of taste and ethics, the bench ought to be addressed. He spoke with consummate ability to the jury; and yet exactly as, according to every sound canon, that totally different tribunal ought to be addressed."

Mr. Webster always treated the bench with the studied deference which judges, by reason of their office, should command from the bar. On one occasion, Mr. Webster was engaged in a case in a New York court, in which he was preceded by John Van Buren. In the course of his speech, Mr. Van Buren rather flippantly congratulated the court on "yielding to the popular impulses of the day." Mr. Webster began his reply by complimenting his opponent on "the talent and legal knowledge of his address." He then went on to speak with strong censure of Mr. Van Buren's remark about "yielding to popu-

lar impulses." "This," said Mr. Webster, "may be a compliment; but it is a compliment which I would not address to this court, nor to any court for which I entertained a feeling of respect"

CHAPTER VI.

PUBLIC LIFE.

The public career of Daniel Webster, as statesman and orator, is too well known to need detailed repetition in these pages. The record of it exists in the volumes of his speeches and in the work of his able and chosen biographer. The most lofty and brilliant passages of his addresses, whether within or outside of the halls of Congress, are familiar to every schoolboy throughout the land; while no historical sketch, however slight, of the political history of this country during the past half a century, could omit giving testimony, by a record of his many public acts, to his inestimable value as a statesman and an adviser in the national councils.

A few dates marking events in his public life, however, may serve to lend new interest to the informal personal recollections which follow.

Mr. Webster was first chosen a Representative to the national House of Representatives by the Portsmouth (N. H.) district, and took his seat in May, 1813, while the nation was still engaged in war with Great Britain. He was re-elected in 1815; and, at the end of his second term, retired for a while from public office, removing to Boston

during the interval. In 1822, he was once more elected to Congress, as a representative of Boston. He continued in the lower House of Congress from 1822 to 1827, when he was chosen a United States Senator from Massachusetts for the full term of six years. Re-elected in 1833, and again in 1839, he retired from the Senate in 1841 to accept the office of Secretary of State under President Harrison. In 1839, he made a brief tour in Europe. Upon the accession of President Tyler, Mr. Webster, unlike the rest of the Harrison Cabinet, remained in office; and, in 1842, he concluded the famous treaty with Lord Ashburton, defining the north-east boundary between the United States and Canada. Retiring from the State Department shortly after, he remained in private life until 1845, when Massachusetts once more sent him to the Senate. He was a member of that body during the eventful period of the Mexican War, and during the administration of President Taylor. Upon the latter's death, in 1850, Mr. Webster succeeded John M. Clayton as Secretary of State, and became the leading member of President Fillmore's Cabinet. In this high office death found him.

Mr. Webster was several times a prominent candidate for the Whig nomination to the Presidency of the United States. He was brought before the country as a Presidential candidate, in 1834, by the Massachusetts Whigs. In 1840, he was a formidable competitor of General Harrison; and, in 1844, of Henry Clay. In 1848, he once more

contested the nomination at Baltimore. Again, in 1852, and for the last time, his name was conspicuous among those who were in the field for the choice of the Whigs, at Baltimore, when the nomination, greatly to Mr. Webster's disappointment and disgust, was finally awarded to Winfield Scott.

These facts being stated, I proceed to give such recollections as I have preserved of various incidents and opinions relating to his public career.

Beyond all doubt, Mr. Webster's greatest and most renowned oratorical effort was his speech in reply to Robert Y. Hayne of South Carolina, delivered in the Senate on Tuesday, the 26th of January, 1830. Mr. Webster was fond of dwelling upon this speech and the incidents connected with it, and prided himself very much upon the reception it met.

I heard Mr. Everett, in Mr. Webster's presence, relate an incident connected with the reply to Hayne, which is worth repeating.

Mr. Everett did not hear the Hayne speech, to which Mr. Webster was to reply. "There was," he said, "a very great excitement in Washington, growing out of the controversies of the day, and the action of the South; and party spirit ran uncommonly high. There seemed to be a preconcerted action on the part of the Southern members to break down the Northern men, and to destroy their force and influence by a premeditated onslaught.

"Mr. Hayne's speech was an eloquent one, as all know who ever read it. He was considered the

foremost Southerner in debate, except Calhoun, who was Vice-president and could not enter the arena. Mr. Hayne was the champion of the Southern side. Those who heard his speech felt much alarm, for two reasons; first, on account of its eloquence and power, and second, because of its many personalities. It was thought by many who heard it, and by some of Mr. Webster's personal friends, that it was impossible for him to answer the speech.

"I shared a little myself in that fear and apprehension," said Mr. Everett. "I knew from what I heard concerning General Hayne's speech, that it was a very masterly effort, and delivered with a great deal of power and with an air of triumph. I was engaged on that day in a committee of which I was chairman, and could not be present in the Senate. But, immediately after the adjournment, I hastened to Mr. Webster's house, with, I admit, some little trepidation, not knowing how I should find him. But I was quite reassured in a moment after seeing Mr. Webster, and observing his entire calmness. He seemed to be as much at his ease and as unmoved as I ever saw him. Indeed, at first, I was a little afraid from this that he was not quite aware of the magnitude of the contest. I said at once: —

"'Mr. Hayne has made a speech?'

"'Yes, he has made a speech.'

"'You reply in the morning?'

"'Yes,' said Mr. Webster; 'I do not propose to let the case go by default, and without saying a word.'

"'Did you take notes, Mr. Webster, of Mr. Hayne's speech?'

"Mr. Webster took from his vest pocket a piece of paper about as big as the palm of his hand, and replied, 'I have it all: that is his speech.'

"I immediately rose," said Mr. Everett, "and remarked to him that I would not disturb him longer; Mr. Webster desired me not to hasten, as he had no wish to be alone; but I left.

"The next morning when I entered the Senate Chamber and listened to his reply, of course that was an end of apprehension. The speech was such a triumphant answer, such a complete refutation, not only in the judgment of friends but of foes, that it left nothing to be wished for."

In connection with this Hayne speech, Mr. Webster once told me this incident.

I was riding with him one morning in 1846 or 1847, to attend a cattle fair at Dedham, when the conversation turned on different ways of preparing speeches. He said that no man who was not inspired could make a good speech without preparation; that, if there were any of that sort of people, he had never met them. He added that it had often been remarked that he had made no preparation for the Hayne speech.

"That was not quite so," said he. "If it was meant that I took notes and studied with a view to a reply, that was not true; but that I was thoroughly conversant with the subject of debate, from having made preparation for a totally different purpose than that speech, is true. The preparation for

my reply to Hayne was made upon the occasion of Mr. Foot's resolution to sell the public lands. Some years before that, Mr. McKinley, a senator from Alabama, introduced a resolution into the Senate, proposing to cede the public domains to the States in which they were situated. It struck me, at that time, as being so unfair and improper that I immediately prepared an argument to resist it. My argument embraced the whole history of the public lands and the Government's action in regard to them. Then, there was another question involved in the Hayne debate. It was as to the right and practice of petition. Mr. Calhoun had denied the right of petition on the subject of slavery. In other words, he claimed that, if the petition was for some object which the Senate had no right to grant, then there was no right of petition. If the Senate had no such right, then the petitioners had no right to come there. Calhoun's doctrine seemed to be accepted, and I made preparation to answer his proposition. It so happened that the debate did not take place, because the matter never was pressed. I had my notes tucked away in a pigeon hole; and, when Hayne made that attack upon me and upon New England, I was already posted, and only had to take down my notes and refresh my memory. In other words," said Mr. Webster, "if he had tried to make a speech to fit my notes, he could not have hit it better. No man is inspired with the occasion; I never was."

There are many anecdotes about what took place between Mr. Hayne and Mr. Webster, and among

them a great many absurdities. I had read a large number of these stories; and I asked Mr. Webster about the truth of them. Mr. Webster replied:

"Not one of them is true."

He said, however, that it was true that, when he had finished his speech, some Southern member, whose name he did not mention, approached him cordially and said: —

"Mr. Webster, I think you had better die now, and rest your fame on that speech."

Mr. Hayne was standing near and heard the remark, and said: —

"You ought not to die: a man who can make such speeches as that ought never to die."

Mr. Webster met General Hayne at the President's reception on the evening of that day, and, as he came up to him, Mr. Webster remarked pleasantly: —

"How are you to-night?"

"None the better for you, sir," was the General's humorous reply.

General Hayne remained only a short time in public life after that debate. He seems to have lost all taste for the Senate after his signal discomfiture. He visited Mr. Webster at Marshfield. Their personal relations were always kindly and affectionate, and these were never disturbed.

While Mr. Webster was Secretary of State, under President Fillmore, a young clergyman, who was visiting the White House, sought his society whenever he dined there. Once, this clergyman happened to be seated next to Mr. Webster. After

dinner, Mr. Webster entered into a free conversation, and the young clergyman made bold to ask him whether the Hayne speech was really, as had been asserted, extemporaneous.

"Oh, no," replied Mr. Webster; "the materials of that speech had been lying in my mind for eighteen months, though I had never committed my thoughts to paper, or arranged them in my memory."

He was then asked about other speeches of his, which were said to have been delivered on the spur of the moment, or at brief notice.

Mr. Webster opened his large eyes, with apparent surprise, and exclaimed: —

"Young man, there is no such thing as extemporaneous acquisition."

The word "acquisition" was exceedingly well chosen. Mr. Webster knew that there was extemporaneous speaking every day. What he evidently intended to convey was, that knowledge could not be acquired without study; that it did not come by inspiration or by accident.

While the whole country was resounding with the praises of his reply to Hayne, Mr. Webster seemed almost unmoved by them, and to be scarcely conscious of the great forensic victory he had achieved. In reply to a letter congratulating him, from Warren Dutton, he wrote as follows, on the 8th of March, 1830: —

"I thank you for your friendly and flattering letter. Your commendation of my speech was measured less by its merits than by your bounty.

If it has gratified my friends at home, I am rewarded for any little trouble it has cost me. The whole debate was a matter of accident. I had left the court pretty late in the day, and went into the Senate with my court papers under my arm, just to see what was passing. It so happened that Mr. Hayne rose in his first speech. I did not like it, and my friends liked it less. I never spoke in the presence of an audience so eager and so sympathetic. The public feeling here was on our side almost invariably."

A gentleman, who enjoyed Mr. Webster's confidence, hearing him on one occasion praising Marshall, King, Gore, Mason, and other friends of his, when he first entered Congress, expressed the opinion that Mr. Webster's fame would outlive them all, and that his speeches, especially the one in reply to Hayne, would be read in the schools when all that they had said would be forgotten. Mr. Webster replied with much feeling: —

"That, my friend, is a partial speech, dictated by your kindness and generosity. Still, I do not pretend to be unaware that my humble efforts to serve my country have been useful, and will probably influence many minds in years to come."

Writing to William Plumer, in April, 1830, Mr. Webster thus refers to the Hayne speech: —

"If my speech has done, or shall do, the slightest good, I shall be sufficiently gratified. I am willing to confess that, having the occasion thus forced upon me, I did the best I could, under its

pressure. The subject and the times have given it a degree of circulation, to which its own merits would not have entitled it. Connected with this subject, one good thing, excellent and most important, will ere long be made known. At present, it is locked up in confidence. All I can say is — and I would not have this repeated, except, perhaps, to your father — that the world will one day, perhaps a not distant one, know Mr. Madison's sentiments on these constitutional questions, fully and precisely; together with his understanding of the Virginia Resolutions of 1797–98. It will be an important paper."

The allusion to Mr. Madison's opinions refers, with little doubt, to a highly laudatory letter which he wrote to Mr. Webster after the reply to Hayne.

In another letter, written soon after the debate, Mr. Webster said: —

"You are very civil in what you say about my speech. It has made much more noise than it deserved. The times favored its impression."

It is related that Judge Story called on Mr. Webster on the evening previous to the delivery of the speech, and, after expressing some anxiety as to the result of the debate, offered to aid him in looking up materials to be used in his reply. Mr. Webster thanked him, and said: "Give yourself no uneasiness, Judge Story; I will grind him as fine as a pinch of snuff!"

Apropos to Mr. Webster's oratorical powers, certainly no one could have been a more critical

judge of them than that other and only less celebrated orator, Edward Everett. Mr. Everett once said to me, that nothing impressed him more with Mr. Webster's extraordinary talent, than the speeches he delivered when making his trip over the Erie Railroad.

"I took pains," said Mr. Everett, "to read every speech he made, from the time that he left Washington till he got back to New York. He made eleven speeches, distinguishing between speeches and mere snatches of remarks at stations. They were made when he was well advanced in years, and probably every one of them was extemporaneous. He could not have known, when he went out of the cars to the platform, what he was going to say, and yet every one of them was singularly adapted to the place and occasion; indeed, each speech was so complete, that, if he had intended only to make any one, and had carefully prepared it, it could not have been improved. Every one of those eleven speeches — and I have read them carefully — would have added greatly to the reputation of any other man in the United States: made as they were without preparation, they impressed me more than any thing else with his extraordinary capacity."

One day I was repeating to Mr. Webster some extracts from one of his speeches, when he interrupted me, saying, —

"Why, you know more about my speeches than I do. I never read them. I once undertook to read my eulogy on Adams and Jefferson; but I

choked up, and could not go on. You are more familiar with them than I am."

I once heard Mr. Webster make an amusing comparison, *apropos* of the criticisms which so freely assailed his "7th of March" speech. We were on State Street one day, and I proposed that we should go into the North American Insurance office, and see who was there.

We found, among others, Benjamin Rich and Caleb Loring. After some general conversation, Mr. Rich said: —

"Mr. Webster, they are assailing you about your 7th of March speech; I hope you will say something in your defence."

Mr. Webster smiled, and replied: —

"I knew an old deacon down in Connecticut, — a pious, good old man, — who shared the fate of many other good men in being slandered without cause. He took no notice of the accusations made against him, but as they were uncontradicted they spread; and, by being repeated from mouth to mouth, of course they lost nothing, and finally came to the minister's ears. The rumors began to be spoken in an audible voice. At last his pastor went to him, and said: 'They are saying so and so about you. I don't suppose it's true, but why don't you say something to deny it?' The old deacon replied: 'I always make it a rule never to clean out the path till the snow has done falling.' I am of the deacon's way of thinking; and I don't think I shall clean out the path till it has done snowing."

Speaking of his purpose in making the 7th of March (1850) speech, Mr. Webster wrote to a friend in September of that year: —

"Long before General Taylor's death, I made up my mind to risk myself on a proposition for a general pacification. I attempted to sound two New England men, but found them afraid. I then resolved to push my skiff from the shore alone, considering that, in such a case, if I should be foundered, there would be but one life lost."

Mr. Webster had a habit, as the reader may have already observed, of illustrating his ideas and opinions by happy anecdotes and comparisons; and these he used in regard to serious as well as unimportant matters. He would often characterize the political situation of the hour by this device, hitting the mark exactly. This faculty is well shown in what he said to Mr. Crowninshield about the troubles in the Jackson administration, in 1832. The administration appeared to be on the point of breaking up in confusion. General Jackson had quarrelled with Mr. Calhoun, the Vice-president, and difficulties had occurred in the Cabinet. It looked as if the Government would soon come to a dead-lock. Mr. Crowninshield's son, a young man, was visiting Washington, where his father was serving as member of Congress from the Essex district. The father and son were riding up to the Capitol one morning, when they observed Mr. Webster walking in the same direction. Mr. Crowninshield the elder told his coachman to stop, and asked Mr. Webster to take a seat in the car-

riage. He did so, and on the way the conversation turned on existing troubles.

"How is the administration going to get along, Mr. Webster?" asked Mr. Crowninshield. "What is to be the result of these difficulties? The President and Vice-president are not on speaking terms; the Secretary of the Treasury has resigned, and there is a general state of anarchy."

"Well," replied Mr. Webster, "I hardly know. Did you ever see, in the country, an old rickety sled, loaded with green wood to the tops of the stakes, creaking and shrieking along over the cradle-holes, at which you look with amazement that it does not fall to pieces? But, somehow or other, it gets to its place of destination, unloads its wood, and goes back for another load. I think the old thing will rub along somehow; but how, I don't know."

Mr. Webster became Secretary of State under General Harrison, in 1841. They had no interview before he was appointed. It was done by correspondence; by an offer of the place on the part of General Harrison by letter, and acceptance by letter on that of Mr. Webster. They did not meet until eight or ten days previous to the inauguration. General Harrison arrived at Washington, from Cincinnati, about the time Mr. Webster arrived from Massachusetts. Mr. Webster was invited by Mr. Seaton, one of the editors of the "National Intelligencer," and a very warm personal friend of his, to come to his house, as he would be more quiet there, and less exposed to

intrusion than at a hotel; and to stay until he should get a house and move his family into it. He was constantly occupied with General Harrison on matters connected with the formation of the Cabinet, from early morning until the dinner hour, which was six o'clock. It seems that he had prepared an inaugural message for General Harrison. One day, among other arrangements, he suggested to the new President, in as delicate a way as he could, the fact that he had sketched an inaugural, knowing that General Harrison would be overwhelmed with calls and business after his election, and he himself having leisure to write. The General at once replied that it was not necessary; that he had prepared his own inaugural.

"Oh yes," said he, "I have got that all ready."

"Will you allow me to take it home and read it to-night?" asked Mr. Webster.

"Certainly," the President replied; "and please to let me take yours."

So they exchanged the documents; and the next morning, when they met, General Harrison said to Mr. Webster: —

"If I should read your inaugural instead of mine, everybody would know that you wrote it, and that I did not. Now, this is the only official paper which I propose to write, for I do not intend to interfere with my secretaries; but this is a sort of acknowledgment on my part to the American people of the great honor they have conferred upon me in elevating me to this high office; and although, of course, it is not so suitable as yours,

still it is mine, and I propose to let the people have it just as I have written it. I must deliver my own instead of yours."

Mr. Webster told me that he was a good deal annoyed; because the message was, according to his judgment and taste, so inappropriate. It entered largely into Roman history, and had a great deal to say about the States of antiquity and the Roman proconsuls, and various matters of that kind. Indeed, the word "proconsul" was repeated in it a great many times.

When he found that the President was bent upon using his own inaugural, Mr. Webster said that his desire was to modify it, and to get in some things that were not there, and get out some things that were there; for, as it then stood, he said, it had no more to do with the affairs of the American government and people than a chapter in the Koran. Mr. Webster suggested to General Harrison that he should like to put in some things, and General Harrison rather reluctantly consented to let him take it. Mr. Webster spent a portion of the next day in modifying the message. Mrs. Seaton remarked to him, when he came home rather late that day, that he looked fatigued and worried; but he replied that he was sorry that she had waited dinner for him.

"That is of no consequence at all, Mr. Webster," said she; "but I am sorry to see you looking so worried and tired. I hope nothing has gone wrong. I really hope nothing has happened."

"You would think that something had hap-

pened," he replied, "if you knew what I have done. I have killed *seventeen Roman proconsuls* as dead as smelts, every one of them!"

Perhaps the official act with which Mr. Webster's name was most prominently connected, which called forth more adverse criticisms on the one hand, and more encomiums on the other, than any other of his public life, was the negotiation of the so-called Ashburton treaty. This he negotiated while Secretary of State in President Tyler's Cabinet. The object of the treaty being to define certain boundaries between the United States and the British possessions in America, Lord Ashburton was sent to this country for the purpose, and came in great state in an English man-of-war. I recall one incident relating indirectly to that treaty, in which a distinguished rival statesman bore a conspicuous but not very pleasant part.

General Cass was our minister at the French Court at the time the Ashburton treaty was negotiated and ratified. He had been sent to Paris by Mr. Van Buren; and he was not recalled on the accession of General Harrison. General Cass was, in his own estimation and that of his friends (and this opinion was afterwards confirmed by the act of the National democratic Convention), the prominent Democratic candidate for the Presidency. He took occasion, just before asking his recall from Mr. Tyler's administration, to make a written protest to the State department against the provisions of the treaty; although he, not being the minister accredited by the United States to the nation with

whom the treaty was made, had really no business with it. Everybody saw that it was done for political effect at home. There were many criticisms on the treaty; among others, that it made too great concessions to England: and General Cass seemed to have the idea that any thing said in hostility to England would be popular at home. So he made this elaborate protest, and addressed it to the Secretary of State, and asked to be recalled, giving, as his reason, that he could no longer be of use to his country abroad.

He came in one of the British steamers to Boston. I remember it well. A great demonstration was made in his honor by the Democratic politicians. He had been absent several years in France. He was a very prominent public man. He had been in Jackson's Cabinet, possessed large wealth and wide political influence, and was one of the leaders of his party. He spent a day or two in Boston. He was surrounded by the leading Democrats, prominent among whom was Mr. Bancroft. General Cass took occasion to say confidentially to Mr. Bancroft, that he had written a despatch to Mr. Webster about the Ashburton treaty, protesting against its provisions; which letter, if it were ever published, would overwhelm Mr. Webster with obloquy. "Most likely," said General Cass, "he will take very good care of this sort of official despatch, and keep it buried in the department; but if it should come out, it would cover him with humiliation." So delighted were Mr. Bancroft and his friends, that they did not hesitate to tell

it in their circles, and spoke of it as something which was going to overwhelm Mr. Webster with confusion.

It seems that the despatch had been received at the State department a fortnight or three weeks before General Cass returned; and that Mr. Webster had replied to it, and sent that reply to General Cass at Philadelphia, that being the point where he thought he would be most likely to receive it. To General Cass's great astonishment, his letter to Mr. Webster, and Mr. Webster's reply to it, were soon after published in the official organ at Washington. Mr. Webster's reply to General Cass's protest was one of the most powerful pieces of irony that was ever addressed by one man to another. It put him in a light in which no one would care to be held up. General Cass, when he got the reply, saw at once where it placed him; that it made him almost a laughing-stock, instead of overwhelming Mr. Webster with confusion. A leading Democrat and politician, one of Cass's friends, said to me: —

"What a fool he was to attack Webster! No matter whether he was right or wrong; the man who attacks Webster in correspondence has got to have the worst of it, anyhow. I never," he added, "saw a man so completely overwhelmed."

When General Cass went to Washington to pay his respects to the Secretary of State, and was received by him, he said to Mr. Webster: —

"I have read your reply, and it has overwhelmed me. It is more than I can bear; it is terrible."

"It is no more so," replied Mr. Webster, "than the circumstances warrant. In the first place, the whole tone and purport of your despatch was entirely out of place; it was none of your business to protest against the Ashburton treaty, any more than it was that of any private citizen. The Constitution places the treaty-making power in the hands of the President of the United States and the Senate. The President made the treaty, and the Senate ratified it by a decided majority; and that was the end of the matter. What you had to do with it, Heaven only knows; I cannot see."

"Well, now, Webster," said General Cass, "as to a friend, I say to you that I cannot afford to have the thing rest there; I shall be filled with mortification, and shall be the laughing-stock of the country. What I want you to do, is to let me reply to your despatch, and to agree in advance that you will not rejoin."

"Your request is entirely inadmissible," returned the Secretary; "it cannot be. This is a public matter; if it were a mere personal matter, it would be different. You began a correspondence with me which makes an assault on my official character as Secretary of State, and a reply is made to it to show the absurdity of your propositions; and then you ask to throw back a shaft at me, and beg that I will not defend myself. No, I cannot do any thing of the kind."

"Well," said General Cass, "let me write you a letter and show it to you, and you may fix it in any way you please."

"I cannot do it," replied Mr. Webster; "if you reply to my despatch, you must do it officially, and I shall, if it requires an answer, give you one; if not, I shall not answer it. You can judge of that as well as I."

General Cass did reply to it, but very tamely. Mr. Webster made a rejoinder, in a very short note, and demolished it completely.

When Lord Ashburton came to this country to negotiate the treaty known by his name, Mr. Webster wished, after settling the boundary question, to discuss the question of the right of search. He said to me that he had long wished for an opportunity to express his views, in a way that would have weight, on that long-disputed subject. Nothing had surprised him more than the failure, on the part of eminent American statesmen, to get at the real point of that controversy.

"Even John Quincy Adams," said he, "with all his knowledge of diplomacy and international law, failed, I think, to meet the case; and if he failed to meet it, it would be pretty hard for anybody else to meet it, for he was exceedingly apt in those things. Mr. Adams talked about latitudes and longitudes: that conceded away the whole case. In my judgment, there was but one course, — flatly to deny the right. Nothing short of that would meet the trouble. That is the only ground to take. Every ship that sails the ocean must find its protection in its flag. Well, when I proposed, after the boundary question was done with, to settle this disputed question, Lord Ashburton said he did

not wish me to write him any letters on that subject. Consequently, the despatch which I wrote on the right of search was sent to our minister to present to the English minister. Mr. Everett was then our envoy to the Court of St. James. He told me that he read the despatch to the Earl of Aberdeen, who was foreign secretary, and who was a tough-headed, bluff old Scotchman. As usual, he did not pay much attention at first to the reading; but finally he became interested, and, interrupting, said: 'Won't you read that again, Mr. Everett?' He did so, and, as soon as he had finished reading, Lord Aberdeen asked for a copy of the despatch. 'Mr. Everett,' said he, 'that American Secretary of State writes very extraordinary papers. That is a remarkable document. The argument in that paper cannot be answered. Mr. Webster has got the right of it.' Mr. Everett of course enjoyed the compliment very much; and, after parting from the Earl of Aberdeen, he received a note from him requesting that he would please consider their conversation private and confidential. The next time they met, the Earl said: 'I have not altered my opinion about that despatch. It has been before her Majesty's ministers, and they say it must be answered; but I do not know who is going to answer it.' And Lord Aberdeen was right: the argument is unanswerable. There was no very extraordinary ability in my paper, but the common sense of the thing was apparent. The English government turned round and attempted to say: 'Then, you will allow your flag to be desecrated to the

practices of piracy. A suspicious looking craft may be sailing under the flag, and a cruiser may have every reason to suppose that she is a pirate, and she cannot be brought to.' Now, I claim no such thing as that. If there is a robber in a man's house, and you break down the doors and go in, and find you have got a robber, you are all right; but, if you find that he is not a trespasser, you must pay the damage: and that is precisely what I say in this matter. You can stop and search this supposed pirate; and if she is a pirate, and has assumed a flag that does not belong to her, then let her be dealt with as such. But suppose it turns out that you were mistaken; that she is no pirate, but a lawful ship, pursuing her voyage for her owners with regular papers, and that the cruiser was mistaken. What then? Pay the damage, just as you would do in any other case of trespass. That is the distinction. If you had the right to stop everybody, it would kill all commerce."

This despatch of Mr. Webster was never answered. He said: "There is one thing you may rely upon. The English government have never answered that despatch of mine denying the right of search, because they cannot. The common sense of the thing settles that. But they will, perhaps, never admit it either. The English minister will not probably sit down and write a despatch, saying that he is convinced that the English view is wrong. But they will never again attempt to exercise the right of search. When the issue arises again, they will abandon it." And the

result has so proved. During Mr. Buchanan's administration, the question did come up; and when our Government called England to account for attempting to exercise the right of search, they hastened to disclaim it, and at once gave orders to their cruisers not to touch any ship sailing with the American flag. They apologized to our Government, and declared that the vessels which had been engaged in searching American ships had transcended their orders. The question was settled by Mr. Webster, and not by the Buchanan administration. He said to me: "That thing is settled. I have had letters from English statesmen, admitting to me that the right of search was out of the question, and that they could do no less than yield the point. My argument could not be answered, and the English government would not practically attempt to enforce it."

After the election of General Taylor to the Presidency, the members of the Massachusetts Electoral College met, as usual, to have a dinner, — the practice being then for the Suffolk elector to give a dinner to the other members of the college. There had been a good deal of excitement. The electors for Suffolk and Middlesex were Albert Fearing and Isaac Livermore, both of whom were pretty active politicians. They agreed to unite in giving the dinner, and to invite the active political men in the city and State to attend it. I think there were one hundred and twenty plates laid at the Tremont House for this occasion. Mr. Webster was on the point of leaving for Washington with

his family, he then being a Senator. He was invited by Mr. Fearing to be present at this dinner. It was inconvenient for Mr. Webster to remain in town, but he was strongly urged both by Mr. Fearing and myself; and at last he said: —

"I will make a sacrifice of my personal convenience, and accept your invitation. Besides, if I did not go, it might be said that I was not satisfied with the election of General Taylor, which is not the fact. I am quite glad that he is elected, although I think it was a nomination not fit to be made. I am glad of his election, if he is a Whig, as I trust he is."

At the dinner he sat at Mr. Fearing's right, and of course he was the first person called upon to respond to a toast. He made one of his conversational, sensible speeches, in which he referred to the occasion that had called the assembly together, — to cast their votes for a Whig President; saying that the event was a subject of congratulation to the Whigs of Massachusetts; that, however, when General Taylor was nominated, considering that he never had been in public life, that he was not even a civilian, nor a man whose views on the great national issues were well known, he (Webster) had felt some doubts about the General's fitness for the Presidency; but that he had no doubt General Taylor was a man of honor, and that having accepted the nomination of the Whig party, and been elected by them, he would now carry out their views. He believed him to be an honest man, and the more he had heard of him since his election,

the better pleased he was with him. He wound up by saying, that, whether in public or in private life, General Taylor's administration, if governed by the principles which brought it into power, should have his cordial support. "There is no more contented man," he added, "around this board or in Massachusetts, than I am." Great applause followed, and speeches were then made by some of the high officials present, among whom were the judges of the Supreme Court. Governor Briggs was present and made a speech, in which he took occasion to say that his pleasure in the result of the election was not unalloyed; that if they could have been there to congratulate one another upon throwing the electoral vote for their own great statesman, who, he believed, would have received the votes of the United States if he had been nominated, he should have been glad; that when he thought they might have had a man so fitted and so deserving, it somewhat marred the pleasure of the triumph to a Massachusetts man. This was received with loud cheers, and the speakers who followed seemed to be animated by the same feeling of regret, — that they could not congratulate Massachusetts upon the elevation of her own great son and statesman to this office. A great many speeches were made, and after a while it came the turn of Mr. Abbott Lawrence.

He rose, and said: —

"Gentlemen, I rise to address you, and to express my feelings, with different sentiments from

those of the gentlemen who have preceded me. My candidate is in. I repeat, that I have no regrets; for my candidate is in. Gentlemen now say they have found out that General Taylor is a Whig, and a man of ability, integrity, and honesty. I knew it at the time. I had the evidence in my pocket that General Taylor was not only a Whig but a man of ability, of the sternest integrity, and of the highest patriotism; and I say here now, from my acquaintance with General Taylor, and from the evidence I have in my pocket, that it is my firm opinion, — asserted with all the responsibilities that belong to my position and to what I say, — that, since General Washington, the father of his country, filled the Presidential chair, no more worthy or fit person has been selected to fill that chair than General Zachary Taylor."

There were a few hisses and a general feeling of annoyance. The table was in an uproar, and everybody looked at Mr. Webster. It seemed to be a direct insult to him. He sat at the head of the table, with his head resting on his hands. His son Fletcher spoke to me, and said: —

"I hope father will say something;" and went round to speak to him.

Mr. Webster said to him: —

"I think I will speak before I leave."

After Mr. Lawrence sat down, Mr. Fearing rose and said that their illustrious guest was about to retire, as he had a long journey to make on the next day; but, before leaving, he would propose a sentiment. Every one listened with intense inter-

est and even excitement, as Mr. Webster rose with a majestic grace, and said : —

"I am about to propose a sentiment to which I know every gentleman here present will respond with all his heart. I am about to propose to you, and do now propose to you, this sentiment : The State of Massachusetts — the Bay State — the State that contains within its borders Boston, Concord, Lexington, Bunker Hill, and Faneuil Hall — the mother of States — the Revolutionary State ! It is fit and proper on all occasions, when any considerable number of the sons of Massachusetts are assembled for any festive purpose, especially on an occasion like this, that they should not fail to remember, with feelings of deep gratitude and affection, this ancient and venerable Commonwealth ; that they should repeat the vow to stand by her and her interests. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I was not born on the soil of Massachusetts ; I am not a native of the old Commonwealth : but Massachusetts early adopted me, and for an unprecedented length of time, in a public capacity, has adhered to me with a fidelity and warmth of affection that calls for my most hearty acknowledgments. For it I thank her, now and always. On more than one occasion, she has expressed for me, in resolutions and in other forms, her desire that I should fill that office, — the highest in the gift of any people. For that I thank her, now and always. On one occasion, she has given to me her vote in the College of Electors, assembled as you are to-day. For that I thank her. On a recent occasion, through her

accredited organs, at a national convention composed of Whigs, she has expressed her unanimous preference for me for that office. For that I thank her; ay, and honor her, too, most profoundly. She could have done nothing less, let me say, consistently with her own self-respect and honor. My friends, you will bear me witness that I seldom speak of myself; but there are times when a public man may so speak. I say here and now, that I am quite aware that I am a man of considerable public importance, not only within the boundaries of Massachusetts, but without her boundaries, and throughout the length and breadth of this continent. [Great shouting.] I took occasion, when you did me the honor and kindness to call on me before, to express my respect for and confidence in General Taylor; and to say that I believed he was an honest man and a Whig, and that I trusted he would surround himself with men of ability and experience, and would administer the government upon Whig and national principles; that, from what I had learned of his character — which was very little — as a public man, previous to his being nominated for this office, I considered him an honest man. I have said that, with the aid of the abler men whom he may call around him, he may administer the government on Whig principles; and I have further said that, so far as my influence goes, it shall be given in support of his administration, if it is so conducted. Having said this much, I will not so far forfeit my self-respect as to say that I think this man fitted

for this high trust. He is not fitted for it. He lays claim to no high qualifications himself. No intelligent man lays any such claim for him."

Great shouting and some hisses followed this speech.

During the month of June, after the inauguration of President Taylor, I drove, in company with Mr. Webster, from Washington to the Virginia shore, to a place called "the Falls." As we were passing through Alexandria, Mr. Webster ordered the coachman to stop; and, pointing to an old and decaying mansion, he said: —

"That large white house, with dilapidated walls and broken fences, was the hotel where I boarded when I first entered Congress from New Hampshire. It was then the Federal headquarters. Governor Gore, Rufus King, and John Marshall were fellow-boarders. Governor Gore used to drive out of that gate in a coach drawn by four horses, and attended by servants in livery."

After proceeding thus far, Mr. Webster seemed to be lost in a profound reverie, and apparently soliloquizing, he exclaimed: —

"All gone! All gone! They were extraordinary men. We shall never see their like again! Our country has no such men now; but they are gone! all gone! I shall soon follow, and I care very little how soon."

He was deeply affected, even to tears. Being quite excited by the scene, I attempted to awaken more pleasing emotions in his mind. After a brief pause, I said to him: —

"I know that you will give me credit for sincerity in what I am about to say, for neither my taste nor my sense of propriety would allow me to address flattery to you. You will pardon me, I trust, while I express my decided conviction that, when future generations shall pass those places which your residence or your eloquence has rendered immortal, their reverence for your name and character will as far exceed that awakened by the memory of the men you have named, as their character transcends that of ordinary men."

He turned toward me his burning eyes, still suffused with tears, and laying his hand upon my arm, he said: —

"That is very strong language. A part of it must be attributed to your partiality and warm friendship. Still," he added, "I am not unaware, — and it would be affectation in me to deny it, — that I have a public reputation to leave to posterity; but it has been earned with difficulty! If I were to live my life over again, with my present experience, I would, under no circumstances and from no considerations, allow myself to enter public life. The public are ungrateful. The man who serves the public most faithfully receives no adequate reward. In my own history, those acts which have been, before God, the most disinterested and the least stained by selfish considerations, have been precisely those for which I have been most freely abused. No, no! have nothing to do with politics. Sell your iron; eat the bread of independence; support your family with the rewards of honest

toil; do your duty as a private citizen to your country, — but let politics alone. It is a hard life, a thankless life. Still, I know it has its compensations. There are some green spots, occasional oases in the life of a public man; otherwise we could not live. The conviction that the great mass of the intelligent and patriotic citizens of your country approve of well-directed efforts to serve them is truly consoling. That confidence on the part of my fellow-citizens, I think I possess. I have had, in the course of my official life, — which is not a short one, — my full share of ingratitude; but the unkindest cut of all, the shaft that has sunk deepest in my breast, has been the refusal of this administration to grant my request for an office of small pecuniary consideration for my only son."

He then straightened himself up, and, with conscious dignity, added: —

"I have not deserved such treatment. I have served my country too long and too assiduously to receive such a slight from this administration. However, let us say no more about it; the whole thing is too contemptible to claim from me a moment's thought. Drive on, Dennis!" cried he to the coachman.

In all Mr. Webster's long public life, he very rarely asked the Government for favors for himself or friends. He often interceded for those who asked his aid in securing offices for themselves; indeed, a very large portion of the letters left on file by him are petitions of all sorts of people for

places of trust and profit supposed to be in his gift, or to be commanded by his influence. It would appear from this correspondence that, when men want offices, they make personal applications for them; that most men who obtain executive patronage secure it by their own importunity; and that men who thus apply for places of power always hold a high opinion of their own qualifications. Sometimes the request for office is a general one, indicating a willingness to serve their country in any capacity that will secure them a competency. Sometimes anxious mothers, with the garrulity of dotage, ask for appointments for their promising sons, bearing ample testimony to their qualifications for any desirable place in the gift of the Government. Again, some amiable wife, unfortunately wedded to an inefficient husband, begs of a friend at Washington to call on the Secretary, and ask for some office. In some instances, ambitious young men ask for the secret of the Senator's success in life, alleging that they have taken him for their model, and desire most earnestly that he would give them some rules for the regulation of their conduct, that they may attain to a like eminence with himself.

A very large number of these letters are simply complimentary, originating, evidently, from every variety of motive. Some persons, though entire strangers, are moved by an overpowering sympathy with Mr. Webster's expressed opinions, or by unfeigned admiration of his oratory, to reveal to him their secret worship, and offer to him the

incense of cordial approval. Others wish to force themselves into notice, and condescend to patronize a great man's sentiments. Others, high-minded and honorable men, express their approbation of the conduct of a public man, from patriotic motives, because they verily believe that he is doing his country noble service.

Mr. Webster was exceedingly averse to direct personal applications for office. His general rule was never to petition for himself or his friends. His sentiments on this point frequently appear in his correspondence. In a letter to Mr. Ketchum, in 1848, he says: —

"Sometimes members of Congress obtain an influence with the Executive by assiduity and importunity. These are not accordant with my habits. I could volunteer no advice; and, in the course of things, my advice would be seldom asked, notwithstanding I might be on friendly terms with the President."

At the time of the difficulty in New Orleans with the Spanish consul, Don Calderon de la Barca was the minister plenipotentiary residing at Washington. The controversy had been pretty much settled between the two Governments, by diplomatic notes. Don Calderon, wishing to do something to make himself important to his Government, called one day on the Secretary of State to present the claims of the Spanish consul for pecuniary remuneration. He gave his own account of the interview to a third person. He said: "I did call on Mr. Webster; I did make a formal

demand upon the government of the United States for pecuniary compensation for the losses sustained by the Spanish consul, by the mob. I stated my complaint and demand. I did it with precision and force. When I got through, what do you think Mr. Webster said to me? He rose from his chair; he made me one bow, and he said: 'Good morning, Don Calderon; good *morning*, Don Calderon; good MORNING;' and I did leave the room!"

The French minister asked Mr. Webster, while Secretary of State, whether the United States would recognize the new government of France under Louis Napoleon. The Secretary assumed a very solemn attitude, saying: "Why not? The United States has recognized the Bourbons, the Republic, the Directory, the Council of Five Hundred, the First Consul, the Emperor, Louis XVIII., Charles X., Louis Philippe, the —" "Enough, enough!" cried the French minister, perfectly satisfied with such a formidable citation of consistent precedents.

Mr. Webster was making a short visit to Marshfield in 1851, the year after he delivered his 7th of March speech; and the citizens of Boston, without distinction of party, invited him to a meeting in Faneuil Hall, where they might receive him, and take him by the hand. He had reluctantly acceded to this request. Mr. Choate was to address him on the part of the citizens. The preliminaries had been arranged as such things always are, the day fixed, and the formality gone through — which

was regarded as only formality — of procuring a petition of a hundred signers for the use of the Hall on that day. The proposed reception was openly announced; and it was arranged that Mr. Webster should be received by the citizens without distinction of party, and be addressed by Mr. Choate on their behalf. We sent our petition to the Mayor and Aldermen, at their Monday meeting: Thursday was the day fixed for the reception. On Tuesday morning, what was our astonishment, on looking at the proceedings of the Mayor and Aldermen, to find that they had voted that the citizens who had petitioned should not have the Hall for the desired purpose. Upon inquiry, it was ascertained that the reason given was, that Wendell Phillips and the Abolitionists having asked for the Hall, and it having been refused to them by the city government, for fear of a riot, they therefore could not consistently grant the Hall to any one else.

I do not think I ever knew so much indignation expressed by people of all shades of politics, as there was on this occasion. There was one perfect storm of indignation. When the Mayor and Aldermen found out what the feeling was, they were about as severely frightened as any class of official men that I ever knew. They undertook by cards in the papers to explain their action. They said that there was no disrespect intended to Mr. Webster and his friends, and all that. However, there was the significant fact that Faneuil Hall had been refused to Mr. Webster and his friends, and it must go out to the country and the world. All classes

of people were expressing their opinions. Some were for doing this, and others for doing that, and all sorts of propositions were made.

I felt that Mr. Webster would see the exact position of the thing, and that his own judgment would dictate to him the course to pursue. Mr. Choate sent for me, and said: —

"Of course this thing will be given up. Mr. Webster will place these people in the position in which they should be placed. The city government of Boston undertakes to compare him and his friends with the Abolitionists and Garrisonites, and, because the Hall was refused to them, they refuse it to Mr. Webster and his friends. It shows the character and calibre of the city government of Boston. The only thing Mr. Webster has to do, — and I don't think he will need any advice on the subject, — will be to throw himself upon his dignity, as his friends certainly will."

I had spoken to Fletcher Webster, who lived near his father, and who was going out on the two o'clock train, and asked him to communicate to his father all the facts. I told Mr. Choate that he had better write a note in the mean time, and give it to Fletcher, which he did; and there we rested it.

But Mr. Choate came to my house when I was at dinner, about three o'clock, and said: —

"I think you had better go down. Fletcher has gone down and carried the note; but I think your presence will be the best explanation you can give. For I think Mr. Webster will feel very badly, and he cannot know but that this action of the city

government represents the citizens. But you can assure him that it represents only a paltry handful of men. He will be very unhappy if you don't."

I acted upon his advice, took the four o'clock train, and went to Kingston. The weather was very stormy. It was the beginning of the great storm which continued three days, and carried away the Minot-Ledge Lighthouse. I was at Mr. Webster's when the Lighthouse was swept away. When I reached his house in Marshfield, it was raining in torrents. I jumped out upon the piazza, and, as I passed opposite the window, I looked in; and, noticing Mr. Webster sitting by the open fire in his dressing gown, and Mrs. Webster at the centre-table in the rear, I could not help pausing a moment before I went in, to gaze upon the picture. I saw upon his face an expression of deep thought. I rang the bell. Mrs. Webster did not wait for the servant, but came to the door herself. As soon as she saw me, she lifted up her hands, and exclaimed: —

"Is it possible that you have come, our good angel? Did you drop down from heaven in the clouds? How did you come from Boston? Where is your horse?"

"The horse has gone back to Kingston," I replied.

As for Mr. Webster, I have often been received by him with great cordiality, but I do not think I ever saw him so delighted to see me as he was then. His demonstration was very marked, and he used the most kind and endearing expressions.

"Now," said he, "before you say a single word,

you must just take off your coat, for you are wet, I know; and you must take off your boots;" and he pulled them off himself, and made me take off my coat. Then he called Monica, and said to her: "Get Mr. Harvey some tea and toast."

"Never mind about that," said I; "I ate dinner just before I left home."

But Monica came in again soon, and I refreshed myself with a cup of tea. Then Mr. Webster said: —

"Now tell me what it means."

So I began deliberately to go into the whole subject, stating the causes, and telling him who the men were that did it, and what their motives were; and, furthermore, that there was one shout of indignation from all quarters.

"If you should come to Boston to-morrow," said I, "you would be received with demonstrations of affection that you never thought to find even there; but it would be mingled with a feeling of indignation that a few men, clothed with brief authority, should have the power to commit an act that would wound you, and go to the country as an expression of the citizens of Boston. But," added I, "a reaction has taken place; and it is frightful. I have thought that the houses of these aldermen were almost in danger, and they themselves are greatly frightened."

"Fletcher came down," rejoined Mr. Webster, "and merely told me the bald fact that the city government had refused the Hall, and brought me a note from Mr. Choate, which I could not read.

By the way, tell Mr. Choate to write better; his handwriting is barbarous. I could not read a single word. There is the letter; just look at it! Tell Mr. Choate to go to a writing-school, and take a quarter's lessons. Fletcher did not give any explanation, only that the city government had refused my friends the Hall. And I have been ruminating, for two hours past, since Fletcher went to his own house; in the mean time, I had come to the conclusion, which you and other friends suggest, to forego the occasion altogether. I had written a letter, which is out in the office in the garden."

"What I wish, Mr. Webster," said I, "and what Mr. Choate wishes, is that you should write a letter, — one of your best, — a letter that shall have an effect, and tell."

"Well," returned he, "I have written it."

He sent over and got the portfolio in which it was; and handed it to me. It was in Fletcher's handwriting, dictated by Mr. Webster, and it was something like this: —

I have had the honor of receiving your communication of —— in regard to the matter of meeting my fellow-citizens, without distinction of party, in Faneuil Hall, on a day agreeable to myself. I had accepted that invitation at some little inconvenience, and fixed upon the time, which was to be next Thursday. Since that acceptance, for some cause, undoubtedly a proper one, best known to yourselves, the city government of Boston, the Mayor and Aldermen, have refused the use of the Hall to our fellow-citizens; and consequently I shall postpone any visit I had contemplated.

I have the honor to be,

Very truly yours,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

"That is not the letter we want," I said.

"Does not that tell the story?" he asked.

"Yes," said I, "but it doesn't tell the whole of it. We want a letter that shall express every thing. In other words, we want you to remind the people of Boston of your services to this State."

"No!" he exclaimed, "I cannot do that. If I have done any services to the State of Massachusetts, and they have to be reminded of it by me, they will never be reminded. No; I never speak of myself."

"There are times," I urged, "when that may be properly done; and I think this is eminently one. Fanaticism and foolishness seem to run wild; and if this sort of men have refused you the Hall, and such an expression goes out to the country as the sentiment of Boston, it will be an outrage upon the facts and history."

"Well," said he, "I cannot help that. If that were so; if the people of Boston had said this, and if this was their expression, — I had said that I would go quietly through the city of Boston on my way back to Washington; and I had almost resolved that I would never come again within the borders of Massachusetts. What you have said relieves me upon that point; and I shall rest upon it. Let it pass."

Then he cheered up. There was a great deal of conversation, and he became thoroughly well satisfied that the citizens of Boston were not in any true sense represented in this action of their city government.

"And now," said he, "let us drop that matter, and not say another word about Faneuil Hall, the Mayor and Aldermen of Boston, or any other unpleasant subject; let us have some cheerful talk, and you take your cigar." He never smoked.

So I lighted my cigar. He told Mrs. Webster that she had better retire; that he would show me to my bed-room. We chatted on all sorts of topics; he just as cheerful and interesting as I ever saw him.

As, later in the evening, he lighted me up the broad stair-way to my chamber, he said: "I have got a little inkling in my mind of the letter I shall write; and after I get you into your bed-room, I think I shall go and write it."

He examined the bed to see if it was all right, and gave some directions in regard to it. Then, as I bade him good-night, he turned to me, with a significant look, and said: —

"I think I shall retire too, and to-morrow morning, a little before the cock crows, I shall be up, and I will try and write a letter."

The first thing I heard in the morning was a gentle tap upon my door. I said, "Come in."

Mr. Webster entered, holding in his two fingers, the ink hardly dry, a large foolscap sheet, — the letter. He came up to the bed, and, with a very expressive glance, remarked: "This is the creature;" and laid it down on the table. "Sleep a little longer," said he; "and, after you have got up, read it."

As soon as he left the room I read the letter,

which I enjoyed exceedingly. It was dignified, and very pointed. It was the letter in which he used this expression: "I shall defer my visit to Faneuil Hall, the cradle of American liberty, until its doors shall fly open on golden hinges to lovers of Union as well as lovers of Liberty."

When I went down to breakfast, he asked: —

"What do you think of the letter?"

"It is all right," I replied; "it is all just as it should be."

Before leaving for the city, as I did that morning, he charged me to show the letter, before I gave it to the committee, to Mr. Choate. Said he: "Show it to Mr. Choate, and ask him if that is what he wants. Tell him you have my full authority to make any additions, and to take out any thing he chooses. Tell him I will stand by it; let him amend it in any way."

On reaching the city, I went directly to Mr. Choate, gave him an account of my interview, and showed him the letter, telling him what Mr. Webster had requested me to do. Mr. Choate, having read the letter, looked at me in astonishment.

"*I* amend a letter of Mr. Webster!" said he; "I should as soon think of amending the Acts of the Apostles! The letter is perfect. Nobody else could write such a letter."

The sequel to this incident was a complete triumph for Mr. Webster. He came up to the city, after the storm subsided, and was there three or four days before he returned to Washington. He stayed on that occasion at the Revere House. In

the mean time, both branches of the city government had met in their respective chambers, and passed unanimously a series of resolutions inviting Mr. Webster to Faneuil Hall, on any day that would suit his convenience, he to be received as the guest of the city. They then appointed a very large committee to wait upon Mr. Webster and tender to him these resolutions. It was eating humble-pie, a complete backing down.

Mr. Webster was dining with his brother-in-law, Mr. Paige, in Summer Street, on the evening of the day when this committee was appointed. Several gentlemen were present, of whom Mr. Choate was one. The names of the others I do not remember. Near the close of the dinner, and after the ladies had left the table, the servant entered the dining hall and spoke to Mr. Paige, who went out. In a few moments he returned, and said that a committee of the city government, the bearers of resolutions, were in the drawing-room, and desired to see Mr. Webster. Mr. Webster was about to go out. I sat beside him, and being indignant at the action of the city government, and wishing to annoy them all I could, I suggested to Mr. Webster that, if I were in his place, I would not go down.

"Tell them," said I, "that you are out to dine."

Whereupon he turned to Mr. Paige, and said: "Tell them I am stopping at the Revere House, and they can call there at twelve o'clock to-morrow, if they desire to communicate with me."

The next day at twelve o'clock he had prepared

himself. He was dressed in full costume, — blue coat with brass buttons, buff vest, white cravat, silk stockings, and low shoes, and was only awaiting the arrival of this committee. Promptly at twelve o'clock the servant came up, and announced that the committee were in the ladies' drawing-room. He went downstairs, asking me to go with him; which I did. He stopped as soon as he had crossed the threshold of the room. The committee stood near the door; I should think there were fifteen of them. The chairman of the committee was one of the aldermen who had refused him the Hall. He made a movement to come forward; but Mr. Webster's manner was very forbidding, and the alderman saw that he was on dangerous ground. He merely made a formal bow, with his hands behind him, and said: —

"We are a committee of the two branches of the city government, and have come for the purpose of presenting to you some resolutions passed unanimously on a joint ballot, requesting you to meet your fellow-citizens in Fâneuil Hall, at such a day and hour as may suit your convenience. And I assure you that it is the unanimous wish of both branches of the city government that you should accept this invitation; that what is past should be forgotten as a mistake; and we hope that nothing will prevent your acceptance. It is the wish of every member of the Board of Aldermen that you should accept this invitation; and let us make amends so far as we can. I have the honor to read the resolutions."

The resolutions were then read. Mr. Webster stood perfectly still while they were being read. When the chairman had concluded, he said: —

"I thank you for the resolutions."

The chairman advanced and offered the resolutions to Mr. Webster; he took them, and added, curtly, —

"I will answer the committee in writing; good morning, gentlemen."

He then left the room. When we got upstairs, I remarked: —

"That was a pretty cool proceeding."

"But," said he, "I felt just so."

"You are right," I replied.

"To think," said he, "that it is flying all over the country, in the press, and everywhere, that Faneuil Hall has been refused to my friends by the city government of Boston, — a thing which they would grant to a company of blacklegs, — and that, too, after a hundred citizens had petitioned for it! I cannot express the indignation which I feel."

"You are right," I repeated.

Mr. Webster then wrote the following reply, in substance: —

REVERE HOUSE, 12½ o'clock.

Mr. ——.

Chairman of Committee: — I have had the honor to receive the resolutions passed by the City Government, which you have presented to me this day; and beg to say, in answer thereto, that it will not be convenient for me to accept the invitation contained in them.

Respectfully yours,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

"If I could word it in any colder or briefer way than that," he said, "I would."

The reply was sent down to the City Hall. That ended the affair. He told me that he never would enter Faneuil Hall while that Mayor and Board of Aldermen were in office. It may be recorded here that neither that Mayor nor that Board of Aldermen were re-elected. How much their action in regard to this proposed reception of Mr. Webster had to do with it, I do not know; but that is the historical fact.

Not long after the 7th of March speech, Mr. William Appleton was nominated for Congress in Boston. There was then a division among the Whigs about sustaining Mr. Webster; and he was naturally anxious that a man should be sent to Congress who was not only a personal but a political sympathizer with him. There was a strong minority, to say the least, who were disposed to send a person who did not agree with the doctrines of the 7th of March speech, and who was not a particular friend of Mr. Webster. Mr. Stevenson had been nominated, and had declined. The nominating convention was so equally divided, that it was feared that what was called the opposition would carry their candidate, unless some very unobjectionable man could be found in the mean time. After Mr. Stevenson's declination, Mr. Webster's friends cast about to see what other person they could find. Mr. William Appleton, who never had been a public man, and never had held any office, was suggested; and very much to the sur-

prise of many people, when asked if he would accept, he did not reply positively in the negative. His reply left the inference that he did not seek the office, but would take it if nominated. The convention met, and nominated Mr. Appleton by only one or two majority. The committee waited on him, and he accepted the nomination that night, — the nomination being equivalent to an election, as the Whigs were three to one in the district.

Mr. Webster was at that time in Franklin, recruiting his health. I went up there the day after the nomination, and when I informed him that Mr. Appleton had been nominated and had accepted, he jumped up and began to dance about the floor in the most hilarious manner. He said it was the best news he had heard for twenty years.

"How delighted I am!" he exclaimed. "Why did not somebody think of that before? He is the very best man who could be nominated. Boston should send commercial men to Congress; they are infinitely more useful than lawyers; and when Boston has been represented by commercial men she has always been better represented than at any other time. Mr. Appleton will have more influence than a dozen lawyers. He is a high-toned gentleman; and I am exceedingly gratified by his nomination."

He had a very high opinion of Mr. Appleton, and Mr. Appleton was always a very warm friend of his.

At the Whig Convention, which met in Baltimore on the 17th of June, 1852, Mr. Webster was an unsuccessful candidate for the nomination

to the Presidency. I was at that convention, and after its conclusion went to Washington, to Mr. Webster's house. He was alone, with the exception of his family and perhaps one other guest. Of course the result of that convention and its proceedings were known to him. He met me at the door, knowing I was coming, with an expression of grief; but said not a word as to the result, only inquiring for Mr. Choate, who had taken a very prominent part in the convention in Mr. Webster's favor. I told him that Mr. Choate would be down in a later train from Baltimore; and some two hours later Mr. Choate arrived. He came immediately to Mr. Webster's house, and remained to tea. Not a word was uttered in regard to the doings of the convention by Mr. Webster; he seemed really too full for utterance. He did not make any comment as to the successful candidate, nor as to the result. Mr. Choate, after tea, had an interview of an hour or so with him, after which he went to his hotel, and returned to Boston the next day. I remained a day or two in Washington. Mr. Choate, on meeting me after my return to Boston, spoke of the interview as one of the most affecting he had ever had. He said that the appearance of the family, and every thing about the house, seemed to remind him of scenes that he had witnessed in families which had lost a beloved member. "And that sad meal," added he, "which we partook of with Mr. and Mrs. Webster that night, reminded me strongly of the first meal after the return from the grave, when the full

force of the bereavement seems to be realized. It was too deep an emotion for utterance."

Not long after this, Mr. Webster left Washington, and returned to his home at Marshfield. He was ill, and I was much with him at that gloomy time.

One day I was dining at Marshfield, Mr. Webster being now confined to his room. I was sitting at the table, when his body servant came and whispered to me that Mr. Webster wished me to come to him when I had finished my dinner. I immediately put back my chair and obeyed the summons.

Mr. Webster was lying at full length on the sofa, with a pillow under him. As soon as he heard me, he remarked: —

"I said, when you had finished your dinner; you have not finished it, and I don't want to see you."

I approached him and replied: —

"I have eaten all the dinner that I want; I very much prefer to come here and listen to any thing you may say."

He then ordered William to bring in a little camp chair, and I sat down by his side.

He put his hand in mine and said: —

"Now, I may never have another opportunity to say a few things that I propose to say to you to-night. This is perhaps my only, and certainly the best, opportunity I shall have. William, shut the door, and don't let anybody in here until I give you permission."

He then began by saying that Fletcher had told him — for he read no newspapers himself, and

allowed none to be read in his presence — that Mr. Choate was going to make a speech for General Scott in Faneuil Hall, and that the "Atlas" had announced the fact. I said: —

"I am very glad, Mr. Webster, that you mention that to me; because I can contradict it emphatically. Mr. Choate says that, having participated in the convention which nominated General Scott, and having failed in his purpose to nominate you, he certainly did not think himself bound in honor to take any part in the election of General Scott; and sooner would he lose his right hand than to say a word or do a thing in favor of General Scott; that his obligations to the Whig Convention do not require this at his hands; and any statement that the 'Atlas' may make to the contrary is gratuitous and without foundation."

This seemed to please him very much; and he remarked: —

"I did not suppose that Mr. Choate would. I think I know him too well; I think I know that his friendship and love for me are too great to allow him to do a thing that would be so wounding to my feelings. I may never see him again, but do you tell him that I thank him for this communication."

"Mr. Webster," said I, "if you recover from this sickness, you should write a sort of farewell address to your countrymen."

"I write a farewell address? Oh, no! that would be both useless and presumptuous."

"There is no person," I replied, "who has a

better right to do so, or whose opinions would have more weight with the American people."

"When I look back," he went on, "over the past quarter of a century, on the course of the Whig party, and the events connected with it, and see where it now is, I say, What a fall! I want you to tell Mr. Choate — and this is the last time that I shall speak of political subjects to any one, for I do not allow them to be broached in my presence — that the Whig party, after the 4th day of November, will cease to exist. It has been for thirty years a noble party, — a party of which I have been one of the leaders; a party to which I have been devoted, because it was a party of principle, a party in favor of administering the general government according to the charter, and never, until recently, disposed to adopt a policy of expediency. But it began its downward course when it nominated General Harrison. Before that it had always taken, instead of an available man, an able man; a man fit to be its standard-bearer, and fit to be President. But somehow or other new leaders got in, who wanted office; and they said: 'In order to succeed, we must imitate the action of our opponents; we must take available men; we must have no reference to high qualifications.' With that spirit they nominated General Harrison, a respectable man, but not a fit man to occupy that high position. They succeeded in electing General Harrison, but his early death rendered their victory abortive. Then they nominated Clay at the next election; and that was a nomination fit to be made.

That was proper, because he was fit to be President. They were beaten. But still they continued to hurrah for availability. The battle of Buena Vista was fought, and then there was a hero in General Taylor. They did not know whether General Taylor was a Whig or a Democrat, or what he was; but he was a hero, and nominate him they would, and nominate him they did. But Providence removed him. They happened to nominate an able man for Vice-president in Mr. Fillmore, who succeeded to the government after a year; and I think that Mr. Fillmore has given us as fair and impartial and able an administration as the government has had for many years. To say nothing of the part I have taken in it, I think it is an administration that has done credit to the Whig party. And now comes another dose of availability. General Scott has been nominated. Let me say to you here to-night, — I make this prophecy, and you may write it down and bear it in mind, — that General Scott will not receive the electoral vote of six States of the Union. I know that they say I am no politician, and know nothing about the feeling of the masses of men. 'Mr. Webster is,' they say, 'a great man, an able man, but he has no sympathies with the people; the people know nothing about him, and their wants and tastes he knows nothing about.' Now I say, with all deference to these young men of the party, that I do know a great deal more about the temper of the American people than they give me credit for, and a great deal more than they know. This one thing I know; that the American

people will not elect General Scott President, with the surroundings that they well know he has. General Scott himself is well enough. He is a man of good principles, a conservative man. But he would be a mere tool in the hands of the New York Whig regency, headed by William H. Seward; and, if he should be elected, he will not be President of the United States, but William H. Seward will. One of the convictions of my mind, and it is very strong, is that the people of the United States will never intrust their destinies and the administration of their government to the hands of William H. Seward and his associates. Mr. Seward is in some respects an able man, but subtle and unscrupulous, and will make every thing bend to the one idea of making himself President of the United States. He has been catering, first for the vote of the Catholics, and then for that of the Abolitionists: it is no matter whose votes they are, if they only lift him to the great office. General Scott would be a puppet in his hands; and I again predict that he will not receive the electoral vote of six States in the Union on the 4th of November. I predict also that, after that election, the Whig party will cease to exist. So much for that. There are some persons friendly to me — and their kindness I appreciate and respect — who are even now making an electoral ticket with my name upon it. I have not said any thing about it; but I am free to mention it now, for I think it a very foolish movement. Besides, I had made up my mind to take no part whatever in this election."

"That kind of ticket would please your enemies more than your friends," said I, "because it cannot receive more than a mere handful of votes; and then your enemies will say, 'There is the strength of your popular candidate.'"

"Precisely so," replied he.

"And therefore my course," said I, "is not to vote."

"Well," rejoined Mr. Webster, "that won't do. Now, let me tell you, General Pierce as the candidate of the Democratic party will be elected overwhelmingly. General Pierce is not a great man in the proper acceptation of the term; but he is not by any means a small man. He is a well-informed, intelligent, ripe, talented man. General Pierce entered the Senate just over the age when he was eligible. I was with him six or eight years in that body; politically opposed all the while. Although a very young man, and although his associates of his own party were some of them very eminent and tried statesmen, — such as Benton and Calhoun and all that class of men, — his career was a very respectable one. He always acquitted himself with credit. So far as I was personally concerned, our relations were always of the most friendly and cordial character, although we were in the Senate together when party spirit ran unusually high, and when it had an effect to alienate persons holding different political views, and was carried into social life. General Pierce was always kind and courteous to me. I well recollect him when he first entered the Senate, and his cre-

dentials were presented, — a handsome, youthful person. I very soon made his acquaintance; and I said to him: 'Mr. Pierce, you come from my native State; we are natives of New Hampshire, and we both love the mother that bore us. Your father I was early taught to respect; he fought side by side with mine in the Revolution; they were early friends and patriots. Now, these political differences need not interfere with or disturb our social intercourse. I always love a New Hampshire man; I never shall cease to. Let me say now, that you always will be welcome to my house; and I here promise you that the subject of politics shall never be broached by me there. Mrs. Webster will be glad to see you, and will always have an empty chair for you at our tea-table: come in as a younger brother.' He availed himself of that proffered civility; and, during his whole career in the Senate of the United States, although differing politically and voting on opposite sides on almost every question, there never was a word uttered by him, to my knowledge, in any way disrespectful or unkind to me. Since the events of two years ago, — the passage of the Compromise bills, — all that class of men have been not only courteous, but they have been friendly; and you know how they feel, because you dined at New Hampshire with forty of them, at my invitation, General Pierce among them. A few weeks ago, since his nomination to this office, while I was in New Hampshire with Mrs. Webster, spending a few days at 'The Elms' farm,

he drove over in a chaise, on a pretty warm day, twelve miles from his residence in Concord, with his wife, who is not a strong person, to call on me and Mrs. Webster. I appreciated that kindness and civility, and was intending to return it; and had ordered a carriage, — Mrs. Webster's carriage and horses being up in New Hampshire, — for the purpose of making a formal call upon the next President of the United States and his lady. This sickness intervenes and prevents my design, and he must take the will for the deed. If I never see him again, — and I probably never shall, — I wish you to give him my warm regards and sympathies. And now, having said that, and knowing that you will not vote for General Scott, — as you say you shall not (and I should know you would not if you had not said so), — and as it is not quite manly not to vote at all, let me advise you to vote for General Pierce. If you vote for a man, you have a right to advise him: if you don't, you haven't."

And he added: —

"If I had a vote to give, I should cast it for General Pierce."

"My mind is made up," I replied; "I shall cast my vote for him." And I did.

Mr. Webster's prophecy as to the result of the election of 1852 calls to mind another prophecy of his, made long before, which was yet more worthy of note. Talking, in 1840, with Mr. Thomas Tileston, soon after his return from Europe, about the union of California with the United States, he showed a thorough appreciation

of the importance of California to this country. He said : —

"I have been looking over some maps of California, and informing myself more particularly about that distant country; and, in tracing up the western coast of America, my eye instinctively rested on a spot that, sooner or later, must become part and parcel of the United States. Do you know that that beautiful bay of San Francisco is capable of accommodating the whole naval power of the world?"

Nobody then thought of the value of California. Mr. Webster, however, with the eye of a statesman, saw not only its commercial value, but the necessity of its union with this country. He added : —

"I know not how this will come about; I cannot see so far as that. I hope we shall acquire it by purchase; but one of these days we shall have it."

Within ten years the prophecy was fulfilled.

Mr. Webster did not have a very high opinion of the science of political economy. He once wrote to a friend : —

"For my part, though I like the investigation of particular questions, I give up what is called the science of political economy. There is no such science. There are no rules on these subjects so fixed and invariable that their aggregate constitutes a science. I believe I have recently run over twenty volumes, from Adam Smith to Professor Dew; and from the whole, if I were to pick out with one hand all mere truisms, and with the other all the doubtful propositions, little would be left."

CHAPTER VII.

MR. WEBSTER AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

Mr. Webster was at once cautious in speaking of those with whom he came in contact in public life, and liberal in his estimate of the talents of his political and oratorical rivals. Indeed, he was usually reticent on political subjects, seldom referring to them in hours of leisure, and only now and then opening his mind upon them and the men connected with them.

In a letter written in 1827 to a Philadelphia friend, he speaks thus : —

"It would give me serious pain if any reference were made to any supposed opinion of mine on such a subject as is referred to in your letter. I endeavor in all instances, and I thought I had carefully done so in this, to observe an entire abstinence from putting forth my own sentiments, when it is proper that the feelings and wishes of others should prevail."

In speaking of his contemporaries, Mr. Webster seemed to avoid with conscientious care all bitterness of expression and all undue severity of judgment as affected by his own personal feelings or prejudices. In his reply to Hayne, he declared :

"I thank God that, if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit which would drag angels down. When, sir, I shall be found, in my place here in the Senate or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit because it happens to spring up beyond the little limits of my own State or neighborhood; when I refuse, for any such cause, or for any cause, the homage due to American talent, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or, if I see an uncommon endowment of Heaven, if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue in any son of the South, and if, moved by local prejudice or gangrened by State jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, — may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!"

The acts of Mr. Webster's life and his conversations practically exemplified this generous sentiment. He was the most truly and distinctively American statesman since Washington. I once heard him say that the great defect of our public men lay in their too narrow views. "Their policy," said he, "is bounded by State lines. Their patriotism is hemmed in by the horizon that encircles their own neighborhood. I have often been astonished at the legal acumen and extensive research of some of the lawyers in our county courts, and have asked myself why they are not better known. They fail to rise in the public esteem because their ambition is satisfied with a local popularity; and

they regulate their conduct and opinions by the public sentiment of their own village. They look not beyond the shops, churches, and hotels that are visible from their own doors."

Mr. Webster always chose to judge of men by their excellences rather than their defects. His letters amply show this. Both friend and foe received full justice at his hands. He was the last man to disown an obligation for information that he received. Whenever he received advice, legal or political, that afforded him aid, he was not slow to acknowledge it, either in public or in private. Many readers will remember the delicate and responsible position he held in President Tyler's Cabinet. Dissatisfied politicians were reluctant to award to Mr. Tyler even the negative credit of non-intervention in the settlement of the difficulties relating to the north-eastern boundary; but Mr. Webster always acknowledged his cordial co-operation in that critical and difficult negotiation, and till the close of his life maintained a sincere respect for the ex-President.

Nothing could be more interesting and valuable than Mr. Webster's opinions of his eminent contemporaries. Such opinions as follow I heard, for the most part, from time to time, from his own lips. His keen powers of observation of character were brought into action early in his Congressional career. He wrote thus of some of his colleagues in 1824: —

"I find Mr. Plumer, who is on the committee with me, a very pleasant and respectable man. I

see more of him than of all the rest of our delegation."

The friendship thus formed with Mr. Plumer lasted till the latter's death. They corresponded often; and in his letters Mr. Webster frequently alluded kindly to Governor Plumer, his colleague's father, who had long been a warm and decided political opponent.

Of another member of Congress from New Hampshire he spoke, in the same letter, in a different strain, as follows: —

"You doubtless saw how Messrs. Clay and Bartlett settled their matter; or rather how somebody else settled it for them. I presume you are right as to the motive which led Bartlett to make a conned speech against my motion. That was all fair enough; at least, I could not complain. But when he brought into debate his broad Dover court wit, I thought it better to settle the account on the spot."

In a letter written to Judge Smith, soon after his first appearance in Congress, Mr. Webster thus gave his impressions of the leading lawyers practising at that time before the supreme court: —

"I have been a good deal in court; generally finding there more entertainment than elsewhere. Pinkney, Harper, Dexter, and Stockton have argued most of the cases. Dexter made an eloquent argument on the question of domicile; but, on the whole, I thought his efforts did not more than equal expectation. Pinkney, with all the folly and flip-

pancy of his manner, seems to me to be a very able lawyer. He and Dexter did not take to each other much. There is no great love lost between them. They both argued one side of a great cause. Dexter opened, and laid down his principles and doctrines. Pinkney followed, and made a direct attempt to overthrow Dexter's whole argument! For half an hour he combated it with all zeal; and Harper, in reply to both, excused himself from answering Dexter, because, he said, Dexter's colleague had effectually done that for him! Stockton is an able man. He has no rubbish about him. His manner is plain, his logic sound, and his powers of enforcing and illustrating his positions great. These lawyers have made a great deal of money at this time out of the prize causes. Very great divisions have prevailed on the bench, as you have probably heard, — Marshall, Livingston, and Johnson one way; Washington, Todd, Duval, and Story, the other."

Mr. Webster, himself in early life a Federalist, always had a profound veneration for that Revolutionary statesman and sturdy old Federalist leader, John Adams. This regard, conceived in his early youth, lasted to the venerable ex-President's death.

On one occasion, while the Constitutional Convention was in session in Boston, Mr. Adams and a number of other gentlemen dined with Mr. Webster. Their time was short, the Convention having adjourned from two to three o'clock, leaving thus but an hour for dinner.

In those days smoking was an almost universal

habit; and though Mr. Webster himself never smoked, he kept cigars for his guests. His residence was near the State House, where the Convention held its sessions. The dinner was prolonged as much as possible, considering the time, and, on rising to depart, each gentleman lighted his cigar. Mr. Adams, remarking that time was short, lighted two cigars, and put one into each corner of his mouth; and in this fashion proceeded to the Convention, of which he was President.

I was once dining with Mr. Webster in Washington, when the mood of story-telling came upon him, and he related the following anecdote about the elder Adams. He said that it was his habit, in passing through Quincy, during the later years of Mr. Adams's life, to stop and call upon him, and pay his respects. On one seventeenth of June, near the close of the day, he was driving down, and halted at Mr. Adams's door. I think it was the very year that the "President," as Mr. Webster was wont to call him, died. It was a hot afternoon, and as Mr. Webster went in, he found the President lying on the sofa, while some female relative was cooling his brow by fanning him. He went up to the sofa, and said: "I hope the President is well to-day."

"No," replied Mr. Adams. "I don't know, Mr. Webster; I have lived in this old and frail tenement a great many years; it is very much dilapidated; and, from all that I can learn, my landlord doesn't intend to repair it."

Mr. Webster once gave a very graphic description

of Thomas Jefferson, whom he had seen at Monticello.

"He looked to me," said he, "very different from any ideal that I had formed of him. He was a tall, gaunt, light-haired, light-complexioned man, and not a person of impressive aspect. Among his strong characteristics was a great dislike for Patrick Henry. He conversed freely about Henry, and spoke of his being a very illiterate man. He pretended to be a lawyer, but he was a mere pettifogger, a man of talent, a great declaimer, a splendid orator, but not profound. For such a state of things as existed at the breaking out of the Revolution, he was the sort of person who would make a successful denunciatory speaker; but, if he had lived in a quiet time, he would have passed along without being observed by anybody, because he was ignorant and uneducated, coarse, and very lazy. He had no habits of industry. Mr. Jefferson told me that he did not think that Henry ever read three law books in his life; and yet on jury trials he was quite a famous man. Some days before my visit, Wirt's Life of Henry had appeared. It had been out long enough to have been read and somewhat discussed. I spoke of the book, and Jefferson smiled, and said: 'As you see, I so arrange my library as to have in one department history, in another biography, in another poetry, and so forth; and one department I reserve for works of fiction. I have not yet placed this book of Wirt's, and I have not decided whether to put it in the department of biographies or in that

of fiction; I rather think, however, it is best suited for the latter.' "

Mr. Webster was greatly interested in this visit to Jefferson, and he said that very much of the early prejudice which he had imbibed with his political opinions in youth, when he considered Jefferson a great heretic, was dispelled when he came into personal contact with the aged statesman, and saw him in his home. Jefferson's great simplicity impressed him. Mr. Webster believed him to be a sincere man, very true to his convictions; and was convinced that much of the abuse heaped upon him by the opposite party, which had accused him of being a demagogue and an anarchist, was unjust. Mr. Webster said to me once, in speaking of Jefferson, that he had more deeply impressed his opinions and theories, as well as his practical ideas of government, upon the legislation and destinies of the country, than any man that had lived. The government was new under the first President, and a great deal of form was adopted by Washington as necessary to the dignity of office. He felt the need of a sort of court. He had his military notions of preserving the dignity of position, which was manifested in his going to open Congress in a coach and six horses, dressing in a military costume, and observing very elaborate forms in his receptions and visits of courtesy. He thought it necessary to have the chief executive officer of a great country so elevated and so surrounded by these forms and trappings, that it might inspire a feeling of respect and awe. Jefferson showed

great contempt for all that sort of thing. He said that our Republic should not take pattern from any other Government in these respects. It was, and ought to be, emphatically a democratic government. The Executive was one of the people, selected as their agent for the time being. There was no reason in the world why he should be at all removed from the people. It was for him to administer the government as their agent for a limited time, and then return to them to get his living as other people did. Jefferson added, that General Washington was of opinion that it was necessary to grant retiring pensions to ex-Presidents; but it was not necessary in Washington's case, and he would not have taken it had it been offered him. Jefferson's ideas of republican simplicity became the settled policy of the country, and were carried out in all our intercourse with foreign nations. Our ministers were required to be dressed plainly. Jefferson's instructions were that they should appear at foreign courts as the envoys of a republic, in citizens' costume. He would have it understood, not only that this was a republic, where the people were sovereigns, but that we carried out our republicanism in our intercourse with foreign governments.

Mr. Webster's comment was that he thought it fortunate that Jefferson's ideas prevailed. They were, undoubtedly, more in accordance with the spirit of our institutions. He said that, in carrying out his idea of republican simplicity, Jefferson had to contend with ideas and precedents derived from

the Mother Country, from which we inherited so many of our laws, habits, and customs. Jefferson, however, stamped his individuality, his peculiarities of character, upon the institutions and government of the country more strongly than any other statesman of the Republic's infancy.

From the beginning of Mr. Webster's public career till the last year of his life, Henry Clay was his foremost political and oratorical rival; and for at least a quarter of a century these two famous men contended for the leadership of the Whig party and for its preference for the Presidency. Their terms of public service were almost identical in point of time. They served side by side, first in the House, and then in the Senate; each in turn occupied the high office of Secretary of State, and Webster only outlived Clay a few months. There was little question that, during this long period, the palm for statesmanship and eloquence lay between these two, who towered so conspicuously above all the rest of their companions in the service of the nation. Two characters more dissimilar, however, could scarcely be imagined; and so different had been their bringing up, their methods of thought and motives of action, their temperaments and their aims, that it scarcely could be expected that they should become familiar and cordial friends. To this striking diversity of character add the circumstances of their earnest rivalry, their equal ambition for leadership and for the highest office, and the divided allegiance which they held from the party to which both belonged, and which

both so nobly adorned, and we see at once that there was ample reason for coldness between them.

Mr. Webster's opinion of his great rival could not but be deeply interesting. He talked very freely of Mr. Clay. He frankly admitted that he did not like him. They belonged to the same party, and their political ideas harmonized; but these were the only matters in which they agreed. Mr. Webster was magnanimous enough to support Mr. Clay heartily, when he was nominated against Polk, in 1844. He went to Pennsylvania and took the stump in his behalf. This was an act involving great inconvenience as well as generosity on Mr. Webster's part; for it was a laborious and exhausting task, and he felt no warmth of personal regard for the man whose claims he was advocating. When he was about starting off upon this tour, I said to him: —

"I should let Mr. Clay get elected to the Presidency in his own way, if I were you."

"It is not Mr. Clay," he replied: "it is the cause, the great cause, the success of which I believe to be for the interest of the country. Men are nothing, principles are every thing. Besides, Mr. Clay is fit to be President. He is qualified for the station. His principles are such as I approve; and his ability nobody can question. Therefore, I am bound as an honest man to do every thing I can. And when I say that, I am perfectly well aware that Mr. Clay would not do the same thing for me."

Nothing in the course of the events which de-

feated Mr. Webster at Baltimore, in 1852, wounded him more than what Mr. Clay said to some of the delegates who were on their way to attend the convention. Mr. Clay's remarks were repeated to Mr. Webster, and by him in turn to me. At that time Mr. Clay was within three weeks of his death, lingering as it were in the last hours of his existence. The delegates called to pay their respects to him, and he admitted some of them to his presence. They naturally asked his opinion as to whom it was best to support at Baltimore. He said: "Fillmore, by all means."

"But," said they, "some advocate Scott; and others, Webster."

"General Scott is a very good man," Clay replied; "he is a political friend of mine, and a good soldier. I have a great respect for him. Mr. Webster is of course an eminent man, and all that; but neither of these men has ever been tried in the office. Mr. Fillmore has: why not go for him?"

Mr. Webster said that scarcely any thing wounded him more than this suggestion of Mr. Clay, that Mr. Fillmore should be preferred because he had been tried and found competent, and that he (Webster) was not fit to be President, simply because he never had been tried in that office! "The thing is too absurd," said he, "for anybody to believe that it was sincere. I think my treatment of Mr. Clay did not justify such a comment, at such a time, upon my qualifications for the Presidency. It wounded me very much."

I think Mr. Webster appreciated all Mr. Clay's good qualities. He said that, with a great deal of native talent, and a little smattering of law, — less than that possessed by mere office boys in some large offices, — Mr. Clay went into the wilderness of Kentucky; and with a good address, natural eloquence, perseverance, boldness, and all those qualities that are admired by a new people, he became an influential man. In Kentucky, while there was no lack of talent in the legal profession, neither the judiciary nor the bar could be called learned. In that State, therefore, Mr. Clay became almost supreme as an advocate. In the class of trials and suits that would naturally come before the courts of such a district, where disputes and brawls of all sorts were constantly arising, the man who employed Mr. Clay was usually the successful party. He had great power among all classes of the people. He early went into public life, of course without having had much opportunity to study, and thus make up for the deficiencies of his early training. Going to Washington with a brilliant reputation, he was naturally employed in a great many cases in the Supreme Court. He was not, however, adapted by training or education to the class of cases that were tried before that tribunal. There were no juries there; it was all dry law, all logic.

"In the course of my professional life," said Mr. Webster, "it has happened many times that I found myself retained in the same cause with Mr. Clay. He was my senior by several years, in the

profession and in age. That fact gave him the right to speak first in all such cases. Often, before beginning my argument, I have had to labor hard to do away with the effect and impression of his. Some of the most laborious acts of my professional life have consisted in getting matters back to the starting point, after Clay had spoken. The fact is, he was no lawyer. He was a statesman, a politician, an orator; but no reasoner."

Mr. Webster talked with me about Mr. Clay's speech on the Compromise Measures, and declared that it was a prodigy. He said that when Mr. Clay spoke, the mercury in the Senate chamber was at 100°. "He was incapable," added Mr. Webster, "of a long, protracted, sustained physical effort; and I could hardly conceive how it was possible for him to endure the labor necessary to speak as he did. He spoke nearly three hours, to a densely crowded Senate. I never listened to him with so much admiration and wonder as on that occasion. He is a very great man; there is no mistake about that; he is a wonderful man."

Sometime during the year 1844, when Mr. Clay was a candidate for the Presidency, the news-boys were very busy hawking his Life about the streets of New York. One day, as Mr. Webster was entering his carriage, in that city, a boy called out to him with great earnestness: "Life of Clay, Life of Clay, sir! Will you take the Life of Clay?" "Take Mr. Clay's life? Not for the world!" replied Mr. Webster.

The personal relations between Mr. Webster and

Mr. Calhoun were of the pleasantest and friendliest character. They had a high mutual esteem for each other, and this feeling existed down to the time of Mr. Calhoun's death. Mr. Webster had the most exalted opinion of the great South Carolinian's genius. I once asked him whom he considered the greatest man he had met in the Senate, or with whom he had come in contact in public life. He replied without hesitation, "John C. Calhoun." He said of him that he was "long-headed, a man of extraordinary power, — much the ablest man in the Senate."

When Mr. Webster was about to deliver his 7th of March speech, he invited me to come on to Washington to hear it. He intended to make it a great effort, the crowning address of his later public life; and, as he knew beforehand that his action and motives would be misconstrued, and that the speech would bring down upon him condemnation from many quarters, he was resolved that he would make use of all his powers to render it worthy of his really high motives and his fame. Early on the morning of the 7th, I was sitting with him in his house, when the sergeant-at-arms of the Senate came in. He told Mr. Webster that already not only the Senate chamber itself but all the approaches to it were crowded by an eager multitude. A great speech from Mr. Webster was a national event. Mr. Webster looked at me and, in a sad voice, spoke of this as being one of the last times that he should ever address listening masses on the floor of the Senate, and of the

rapidly approaching close of his public life. Recovering his spirits again in a moment, he turned to the sergeant-at-arms, and said: —

"However crowded the Senate chamber is, I want you to be sure and save two good seats; one for Mrs. Webster, and the other for my old friend Harvey here, who has come all the way from Boston to hear my speech."

The sergeant-at-arms promised that he would do so. On going to the Senate chamber at the proper time, I found an excellent seat reserved for me, near and a little in front of the spot where Mr. Webster would stand when he made his speech. While he was speaking, an affecting incident occurred, which illustrated the warmth of feeling between Mr. Calhoun and himself. It appeared that, several days before, Mr. Webster had paid a visit to Mr. Calhoun in his sick room at the old Capitol building. The venerable South Carolina Senator was very ill, and it was thought that he would never be able to appear in his seat again; the conversation turning upon the speech that Mr. Webster was about to make, the sick statesman expressed an earnest wish to hear it. Mr. Webster replied that he hoped he would be able to get to the Senate, as he himself was anxious that Mr. Calhoun should be present. Mr. Calhoun shook his head sadly, and said that he feared he was on his death-bed; and Mr. Webster parted from him, fully impressed with the belief that the venerable invalid must soon pass away.

Mr. Webster had not been speaking long, on

this occasion, when I saw a tall, gaunt figure, wrapped in a long black cloak, with deep, cavernous black eyes and a thick mass of snow-white hair brushed back from the large brow and falling to the shoulders, advance with slow and feeble steps through the lobby behind the Vice-president's chair, and then, aided by one of the Senators, approach and sink into a chair on the opposite side of the chamber. I looked at Mr. Webster, and observed that as he spoke his face was turned the other way, so that he had not seen the almost ghostly figure come in. He went on speaking in his deep and sonorous tones; and at last came to a passage wherein he alluded to something Mr. Calhoun had once said in debate, as "the utterance of the distinguished and venerable Senator from South Carolina, who, I deeply regret, is prevented by serious illness from being in his seat to-day." At this I glanced towards the tall, gaunt figure across the chamber. He was moving restlessly in his chair; his head and body were bent eagerly forward, and he made an effort as if trying to rise and interrupt the orator. But the effort seemed to be too much for him, for he sank back in his chair, evidently exhausted. The noble current of Websterian eloquence flowed majestically on, all unconscious of the intended interruption. Presently the speaker once more had occasion to refer to some statement of Mr. Calhoun; and again he alluded to him as "the eminent Senator from South Carolina, whom we all regret so much to miss, from such a cause, from his seat to-day."

The figure again grew restless; the hands nervously grasped both arms of his chair; the black eyes glared and shone in their eagerness; and now, half rising from his seat, and unable any longer to bear the thought that Mr. Webster should remain unconscious of his presence, he exclaimed, in a feeble and hollow voice, which yet was heard throughout the chamber: —

"The Senator from South Carolina is in his seat!"

Mr. Webster turned towards him with something like a start, and when he saw that his friend had actually risen from the bed of death, and had indeed dared death itself to creep to the Capitol and hear his speech, he for a moment betrayed visible signs of deep emotion. Then, acknowledging this touching compliment by a bow and a smile of profound satisfaction, he went on with his speech.

A few days more, and Calhoun lay dead, in state, within those very walls.

A year or two before Mr. Webster's death, he related to me an incident which illustrated the great change that came over Mr. Benton at one period of his life. Mr. Benton carried his political and party prejudices to the extreme.

"We had had," said Mr. Webster, "a great many political controversies; we were hardly on bowing terms. For many years we had been members of the same body, and passed in and out at the same door without even bowing to each other, and without the slightest mutual recognition; and

we never had any intercourse except such as was official, and where it could not be avoided. There were no social relations whatever between us.

"At the time of the terrible gun explosion on board the 'Princeton,' during Mr. Tyler's administration, Mr. Benton was on board; and he related to me with tears this incident. He said he was standing near the gun, in the very best position to see the experiment. The deck of the steamer was crowded; and, with the scramble for places to witness the discharge of the gun, his position perhaps was the most favorable on the deck. Suddenly he felt a hand laid upon his shoulder, and turned; some one wished to speak to him, and he was elbowed out of his place and another person took it, very much to his annoyance. The person who took his place was ex-Governor Gilmer, of Virginia, then Secretary of the Navy. Just at that instant the gun was fired, and the explosion took place. Governor Gilmer was killed instantly. Mr. Upshur, then Secretary of State, was also killed, as was one other man of considerable prominence. Colonel Benton, in relating this circumstance, said: 'It seemed to me, Mr. Webster, as if that touch on my shoulder was the hand of the Almighty stretched down there, drawing me away from what otherwise would have been instantaneous death. I was merely prostrated on the deck, and recovered in a very short time. That one circumstance has changed the whole current of my thoughts and life. I feel that I am a different man, and I want in the first place to be at peace with all those with whom I have been so

sharply at variance. And so I have come to you. Let us bury the hatchet, Mr. Webster.' 'Nothing,' replied I, 'could be more in accordance with my own feelings.' We shook hands and agreed to let the past be past; and from that time our intercourse was pleasant and cordial. After this time, there was no person in the Senate of the United States of whom I would have asked a favor, any reasonable and proper thing, with more assurance of obtaining it, than of Mr. Benton."

In the year 1847, just after the discovery of gold in California, and after Colonel Fremont had wrested the territory from Mexican rule, a great deal was said about the glory of his achievements. There was a great rush of settlers to the newly-acquired territory, and universal excitement about it. Colonel Benton was in "high feather" at the success of his son-in-law, Colonel Fremont, and was full of the topic, talking of nothing else. In almost every debate in the Senate he alluded to it. Colonel Fremont's name was in everybody's mouth, and his wonderful deeds were the subject of general laudation. Everybody who went to California sought Benton to get letters to Fremont, who was a sort of viceroy out there.

One day after dinner, as Mr. Webster was seated in his library, the servant announced "Mr. Wilson, of St. Louis;" and John Wilson came into the library. Mr. Webster at once rose and greeted him. Narrating the visit to me he said: —

"Mr. Wilson was a gentleman whom I had known more or less for a quarter of a century;

a lawyer of pretty extensive practice and with a good deal of talent; a man of very violent prejudices and temper, who had spent most of his public life, after he reached manhood, in violent opposition to Colonel Benton. It was not so much an opposition to Colonel Benton's democracy as it was a personal feud, as bitter and malignant as any that ever existed between two men. It was notorious in St. Louis that, when Colonel Benton went on the stump, John Wilson would always be there to meet him, and to abuse him in the most virulent terms; and that Mr. Benton would return the fire. I had not seen Wilson for a good many years, and had only met him occasionally in court. He came to me now, a broken man, prematurely old, with a wrecked fortune; and, after some conversation, he said: —

"'I am going to emigrate to California in my old age, Mr. Webster. I am poor; I have a family; and, although it matters but little to me for the short time that remains to me, if I am poor, yet there are those who are dear to me, whose condition I might improve by going to a new country and trying to mend my fortunes. My object in calling on you is to trouble you for a letter to some one in California; merely to say that you know me to be a respectable person, worthy of confidence.'

"After expressing my regret that he should feel obliged to emigrate to such a distance, — for then it looked like a formidable undertaking to go to California, — I asked him if he was fully determined.

"'Yes,' said he, 'I have made up my mind.'

"Then I set about thinking what I could do for him. I saw no way to give him assistance. I had no particular influence with the Government at that time; and finally I said: —

"'I am sorry, Mr. Wilson, to say that, so far as I am aware, there is not a human being in California that I know. If I were to undertake to give a letter to any one in California, I should not know to whom to address it.'

"'That makes no difference,' said he: 'everybody knows you, and a certificate that you know me will be the most valuable testimonial I could have.'

"'I will write one with great pleasure, although you probably overrate the influence of my name in California. I want to do you a service. I want to give you something that will be of benefit to you. Let me see, Mr. Wilson. Colonel Benton almost owns California; and he could give you a letter to Fremont and others that would be of first-rate service to you.'

"He looked me in the face, half astonished and half inquiringly, as much as to say: 'Can it be possible that you are ignorant of the relations between Colonel Benton and myself?'

"I said: 'I understand what you mean; I am perfectly well aware of the past difficulties between you and Mr. Benton, and the bitter personal hostility that has existed. But I want to say to you, that a great change has come over Colonel Benton since you knew him. His feelings and sentiments are softened. We are all getting older. Our fiery hot blood is getting cooled and changed. It is

hardly worth while for men, when they are getting up pretty near the maximum of human life, to indulge in these feelings of enmity and ill-will. It is a thing that we ought to rid ourselves of. Colonel Benton and I have been engaged in a war of words, as you and he have; and, up to two or three years ago, we went out of the same door for years without so much as saying 'Good-morning' to one another. Now, I do not know a man in the Senate to whom I would go with more certainty of having a favor granted than to Colonel Benton. He feels that age is coming upon him, and he is reconciled to many of his bitterest opponents.

"'Is thy servant a dog,' replied Wilson, 'that he should do this thing? I would not have a letter from him, I would not speak to him, I would not be beholden to him for a favor, — not to save the life of every member of my family! No, sir! The thought of it makes me shudder. I feel indignant at the mention of it. *I* take a letter from Mr. Benton? I —'

"'Stop, stop!' said I; 'that is the old man speaking in you. That is not the spirit in which to indulge. I know how you feel.' And while he was raving and protesting and declaring, by all the saints in the calendar, his purpose to accept no favor from Colonel Benton, I turned round to my desk, and addressed a note to Benton, something like this:

Dear Sir, — I am well aware of the disputes, personal and political, which have taken place between yourself and the bearer of this note, Mr. John Wilson. But the old gentleman is now poor, and is going to California, and needs a

letter of recommendation. I know nobody in California to whom I could address a letter that would be of any service to him. You know everybody, and a letter from you would do him a great deal of good. I have assured Mr. Wilson that it will give you more pleasure to forget what has passed between you and him, and to give him a letter that will do him good, than it will him to receive it. I am going to persuade him to carry you this note, and I know you will be glad to see him.

"Wilson got through protesting, and I read him the note. Then I said: —

"'I want you to carry it to Benton.'

"'I won't!' he replied.

"I coaxed and scolded and reasoned, and brought every consideration, — death, eternity, and every thing else, — to bear; but it seemed to be of no use. Said I: —

"'Wilson, you will regret it.'

"After a while he got a little softened, and some tears flowed; and at last I made him promise, rather reluctantly, that he would deliver the note at Colonel Benton's door, if he did not do any more. He told me afterwards that it was the bitterest pill he ever swallowed. Colonel Benton's house was not far from mine. Wilson took the note, and, as he afterwards told me, went up with trembling hands, put the note, with his own card, into the hand of the girl who came to the door, and ran away to his lodgings. He had been scarcely half an hour in his room, trembling to think what he had done, when a note came from Colonel Benton, saying he had received the card and note, and that Mrs. Benton and himself would have much

pleasure in receiving Mr. Wilson at breakfast, at nine o'clock, the next morning. They would wait breakfast for him, and no answer was expected!

"'The idea!' said he to himself, 'that I am going to breakfast with Tom Benton! John Wilson! what will people say; and what shall I say? The thing is not to be thought of. And yet I must. I have delivered the note, and sent my card; if I don't go now, it will be rude. I wish I had not taken it. It doesn't seem to me as if I could go and sit there at that table.' 'I lay awake,' said he afterwards, to me, 'that night, thinking of it; and in the morning I felt as a man might feel who had had sentence of death passed upon him, and was called by the turnkey to get up for his last breakfast. I rose, however, made my toilet, and, after hesitating a great deal, went to Colonel Benton's house. My hands trembled as I rang the bell. Instead of the servant, the colonel himself came to the door. He took me cordially by both hands, and said: "Wilson, I am delighted to see you; this is the happiest meeting I have had for twenty years. Give me your hand. Webster has done the kindest thing he ever did in his life." Leading me directly to the dining-room, he presented me to Mrs. Benton, and then we sat down to breakfast. After inquiring kindly about my family, he said: "You and I, Wilson, have been quarrelling on the stump for twenty-five years. We have been calling each other hard names, but really with no want of mutual respect and confidence. It has been a mere foolish political fight, and let's

wipe it out of mind. Every thing that I have said about you I ask your pardon for." We both cried a little, and I asked his pardon, and we were good friends. We talked over old matters, and spent the morning till twelve o'clock in pleasant conversation. Nothing was said of the letter, until just as I was about departing. He turned to his desk, and said: "I have prepared some letters for you to my son-in-law and other friends in California;" and he handed out *nine sheets* of foolscap.

"'It was not a letter, but a ukase; a command to "every person to whom these presents shall come, greeting;" it was to the effect that whoever received them must give special attention to the wants of his particular friend, Colonel John Wilson, of Saint Louis. Every thing was to give way to that. He put them into my hands, and I thanked him, and left.'"

Mr. Webster continued: "Colonel Benton afterwards came to me, and said: 'Webster, that was the kindest thing you ever did. God bless you for sending John Wilson to me! That is one troublesome thing off my mind. That was kind, Webster. Let us get these things off our minds as fast as we can; we have not much longer to stay; we have got pretty near the end; we want to go into the presence of our Maker with as little of enmity in our hearts as possible.'

"I told him how much pleasure it gave me to reconcile persons who had been alienated. It was better than a great senatorial triumph. 'And now,' I added, 'I have one other thing in my heart, and

I am determined to bring it to pass. We have talked these matters over, — of how little consequence are all these personal bickerings and strifes to a man when he gets near the end of life. What are all these honors and contests to a man when the interests of the future life begin to magnify in his eyes, and those of this life to dwindle away? Now, colonel, look at me. You have been a great many years in the United States Senate, and your relations to Mr. Calhoun are not friendly. I want to reconcile you and Mr. Calhoun, and then I shall be content!'

"'Webster,' he replied, curtly, 'don't you mention that to me! Anybody else — anybody; you may tell me to go and ask the pardon of a negro in the jail, and I will go and do it. But I won't be reconciled to Calhoun, — I won't, sir! Calhoun is a humbug. I won't have any thing to do with him, — I won't, sir! My mind is made up. Anybody else, but not Calhoun. He is a humbug, and I won't do it, sir!'"

Mr. Webster said that when Mr. Calhoun's lifeless body was brought into the Senate, the committee of arrangements who had charge of such matters of course selected from the contemporaries of Mr. Calhoun such gentlemen as they thought would esteem it a privilege to speak.

"I never in my life," said Mr. Webster, "performed a more pleasing duty at a service of that kind, — sólemn and touching; for I had very great respect for Mr. Calhoun. He was a man of great worth, most sincere, upright, — and with all the

qualities, not only of a very great man, but of a very estimable one."

The committee invited Colonel Benton to speak, not with the expectation that he would consent to do so, but because they thought it was due to his age that he should have an opportunity at such an hour, when every thing should be banished from the heart but kindness, to say a word. But he declined without comment. Mr. Webster said:

"His seat was directly opposite mine, and while I was making the few remarks which the state of my feelings would allow, I looked across, and saw that Benton had his back turned to the Senate, and was twirling his spectacles inattentively. So strong was the feeling of dislike which he entertained for Mr. Calhoun."

Mr. Benton had all sorts of knowledge, and seemed to have acquired more political facts than any man Mr. Webster had ever met; even more than John Quincy Adams. He had a wonderful memory, and read every thing; and gave his whole time and attention to politics, never practising his profession. During the discussions on the Oregon bill, Mr. Benton made a speech, as did many other members; and near the close of the debate Mr. Webster was about to speak, and wanted to get a book, of which he had an indistinct recollection, for some geographical fact to illustrate a point in his remarks. It was something that he had seen a great many years before in a book which was now probably out of print. He only knew the name of its author, but he set to

work to find it. He asked Peter Force, who had collected a great political library at Washington; but Mr. Force could not find it. He then got the librarian of Congress to hunt for it; but he, also, had no success. Mr. Webster was about giving it up in despair, when it occurred to him to speak to Benton. He went to him, and said: —

"You know every thing, colonel, and where every thing is. Have you any recollection or knowledge of such a geography, such a book, or such an author?"

The colonel stopped a moment to think, and then replied: —

"I know what you want; I'll see if I can find it."

An hour afterwards, Mr. Webster, having left the Senate, returned to his seat; and, as he said to me, "There, lying on my desk, was an immense book, with a leaf turned down to the place that I wanted to find, although I had not said a word as to the particular *part* of the book I wanted to consult. Without any suggestion of mine, Mr. Benton had guessed at what I wanted, and turned down the leaf. I looked up from my desk to his, and there he was, bowing to me, as if to say, 'That's it.' I do not suppose there was another man who could have found that book for me."

Of Silas Wright, Mr. Webster had a very poor opinion.

"He is the most over-rated man," said he, "that I have ever met. He is oracular, wise-looking, taciturn, and cunning as a fox. He was the most inferior man in debate that sat in the Senate. You

have seen boys at school who would contrive in some way to skip the hard spelling. He always skipped the hard places. His arguments, besides being weak and fallacious, were always evasive. He would try to make the crowd think he had answered, when he had not touched the point. In my judgment he was a very small man, — a mere politician, and no statesman."

Of James Buchanan he said: —

"Buchanan is a good politician, but he is no statesman. He merely looks at things as they affect the party."

Mr. Webster always cherished a very profound regard and love for Rufus Choate. No man lived for whom he had more affection. This regard was heartily reciprocated. Mr. Choate could always be relied upon to serve Mr. Webster's interests, and his friendship and advocacy of Mr. Webster were valuable, because there were few other such men as he. Mr. Webster used often to send to Mr. Choate for advice; and I was frequently the bearer of messages requesting Mr. Choate's counsel upon matters more particularly connected with Mr. Webster's political prospects and plans. Their confidence in this respect was complete. Mr. Webster used to talk of Choate a great deal; and, after he had been away, on his return one of his first inquiries would be, "How is Choate?" When I visited him at Washington, on one occasion, I recollect Choate was the first person he inquired about. We were driving out one afternoon, and he began talking about Choate.

I said: "There are many persons in the profession who envy and slander him, and attempt to make light of and to ridicule his elocution."

"When I was a young man," responded Mr. Webster, "and first entered the law, my style of oratory was as round and florid as Choate's. I do not think it is the best. It is not according to my taste. But then there is no man in the world beside Choate who could succeed with that style. It is his own. It is peculiar to him. It is as natural to him as any constitutional trait about him. Nobody can imitate him. He imitates nobody. And his style is most effective. I have had occasion to know, and I can say to those who criticise him what they themselves know, that, had they the power to use his style of eloquence, they would not be long in forgetting its bad taste, and would soon be using it for the benefit of their clients. It is a great mistake to suppose that Mr. Choate, in that flowery elocution, does not keep his logic all right. Amid all that pile of flowers there is a strong, firm chain of logic. He never loses sight of that. He never forgets that, or is carried away from it. He is very keen and very effective."

When Judge Woodbury died, in 1851, and there was therefore a vacancy in the United States Supreme Court, something was said about conferring the appointment on Mr. Choate, and Mr. Webster said: —

"Mr. Choate will have the offer of this, but I do not know as he will take it. The offer is due to him as the first lawyer in New England. I shall make him the offer."

And he did; but Mr. Choate declined to take it.

Mr. Webster related to me an interesting incident relative to his first introduction to Senator Preston, of South Carolina. Mr. Preston was a grandson of Patrick Henry, and was said to be, in some respects, the most eloquent man in the United States Senate; he certainly was a brilliant man and a great declaimer. In nullification times, Mr. Preston was a nullifier, a disciple of Calhoun. After the great debate on Foote's resolutions between Hayne and Webster, Preston changed his views, and became a Unionist. Party politics were divided in South Carolina differently from what they were in any other part of the country. There were the nullifiers, or States'-rights party, and the Democrats. There was no Whig party there. Preston belonged to the States'-rights or Calhoun party. That party embraced the talent and nearly all the brilliant men in South Carolina, including Governors Hayne and McDuffie. After the great debate between Hayne and Webster, there was a marked revolution of feeling in all parts of the country, even in South Carolina itself. Some of the ablest men in that State, who were honest in their views, and among them Mr. Preston, became satisfied that their position was wrong. Mr. Preston had not then come into public life, had never been in Congress; but he was, some years after that, elected to the United States Senate as a Union man. When he first went to Washington, he had never seen Mr. Webster; but soon after his arrival they were at some house, by invitation, and he was intro-

duced to Mr. Webster. After the ordinary courtesies of an introduction had been exchanged, the conversation dropped; but Mr. Webster noticed that Preston was scrutinizing him, and gazing at him in a manner which was almost rude. Preston said nothing, but did not remove his eyes from Mr. Webster's person. Mr. Webster felt a little annoyed at that sort of staring; and, as it was continued for a minute or more, he turned upon his heel and went to some other part of the room: but, in a moment, Mr. Preston came up to him, and said:

"Excuse me, Mr. Webster, for what may seem to be my rudeness in gazing at you. My apology is this. I have had a very strong desire to meet you, and have anticipated with a great deal of pleasure the event of seeing you, and of gazing for the first time upon the man who cured me of that abominable heresy, nullification. You were to me what God was to St. Paul; I was travelling in the way, verily thinking I was doing God service, when the light burst upon me, the scales fell, and I saw the truth."

George Evans was a personal and political friend of Mr. Webster, but opposed his nomination at Baltimore, in 1852, and went with the Maine delegation for General Scott. Among the many unpleasant incidents of that convention, — old friends deserting him and the like, — this affected Mr. Webster more than any thing. It wounded him, and he very seldom spoke of it without considerable feeling. Mr. Evans was one of the few men whom he regarded as his equals in the Senate. They were on inti-

mate social relations, constantly at each other's houses. Mr. Evans would go into Mr. Webster's almost like a brother, and stop to dine and chat. He was always most profuse in his protestations of regard for, and interest in, Mr. Webster; and the feeling was reciprocated. The greatest compliment ever paid to Evans was by Mr. Webster, just before leaving the Senate; when he spoke of the retirement of Mr. Evans from that body. Mr. Webster said that "The country would lose the services of the distinguished Senator from Maine, who had been Chairman of the Committee on Commerce, and whose reports were models, long unsurpassed in ability, on the subject of Finance. The country had more to regret than the gentleman, in losing the services of such a man at such a time."

Mr. Evans went into the Baltimore Convention, and worked with all his might for the nomination of Scott. The only reason he gave was, that it was of no use, they could not nominate Webster; that it lay between Scott and Fillmore, and that Scott was the most available man. My comment was, that a man who held that relation of close friendship should, from good faith, whatever he might have thought, have stood by the man who had been his friend, as Mr. Webster had been to Mr. Evans. But he looked upon his duty in a different light. Mr. Webster could hardly believe that Evans would go into the Convention from Maine against him, although he was elected as a Scott delegate; and he never believed, up to the time that the Convention

met, that Evans would be found opposed to him. He thought Evans had taken the nomination as a Scott man, and that he would figure for Webster when it came to the vote. Evans was made temporary chairman by the Scott delegates, and acted all through with them. I think Mr. Webster never saw him after that. After Mr. Webster's return home in July, in speaking as he did frequently and freely to me of that Convention, its doings, and the part men took in it, he did not show the slightest bitterness. He never uttered one word of reproach against anybody. When I was pretty severe in my comments upon some of the men, he would say: —

"Well, they were perhaps acting conscientiously, and did what they deemed to be their duty; and in this they did right. We must not be too harsh, or judge them too severely; we must make allowance for the selfishness of public men. They thought, perhaps, that their own prospects might be injured by advocating the interest of a man who was not likely to be successful in the Convention."

I told him that if we could have got the Maine delegation, her thirty-three votes, with the Southern votes that we knew we could get when they were needed, would have nominated him.

"I could not have believed," he replied, "that George Evans would have gone against me under those circumstances; I never could have believed that he would be found working against me." This he said with a good deal of feeling.

"I regret more than I can express," he added, "that it was done by my friend; by a man that I esteemed as one of my warmest and best friends. But that has passed; he probably thought he was acting honorably. He had a perfect right to do it, and I have no right to complain. Let it go."

For Mr. Hiram Ketchum Mr. Webster had a great regard. He told me once that there was nobody in whom he felt so much confidence, in political matters, as in him. He did not have a very exalted opinion of New York politicians generally, but made an exception in favor of Mr. Ketchum. Blatchford, too, — who never professed to be much of a politician, and with whom in political matters Mr. Webster did not have much to do, — won his esteem and confidence. He was a disinterested, warm, true, personal friend. Their correspondence shows the cordial feeling which existed between them.

Mr. Webster had cordial and friendly relations, while in the Senate, with many of the most prominent and earnest of his political opponents. The following letter written by him to Hon. Daniel S. Dickinson, on Mr. Webster's retirement from the Senate and acceptance of the office of Secretary of State, shows that, while there had once been serious differences between the two statesmen, their later intercourse had been of the kindliest: —

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27, 1850.

MY DEAR SIR, — Our companionship in the Senate is dissolved. After this long and most important session, you are

about to return to your home; and I shall try to find leisure to visit mine. I hope we may meet each other again two months hence, for the discharge of our duties, in our respective stations in the Government. But life is uncertain; and I have not felt willing to take leave of you without placing in your hands a note, containing a few words which I wish to say to you.

In the earlier part of our acquaintance, my dear sir, occurrences took place which I remember with constantly increasing regret and pain; because, the more I have known of you, the greater have been my esteem for your character and my respect for your talents. But it is your noble, able, manly, and patriotic conduct, in support of the great measure of this session, which has entirely won my heart and secured my highest regard. I hope you may live long to serve your country; but I do not think you are ever likely to see a crisis in which you may be able to do so much, either for your own distinction or the public good. You have stood where others have fallen; you have advanced, with firm and manly step, where others have wavered, faltered, and fallen back; and for one, I desire to thank you, and to commend your conduct, out of the fulness of an honest heart.

This letter needs no reply; it is, I am aware, of very little value; but I have thought you might be willing to receive it, and perhaps to leave it where it would be seen by those who shall come after you. I pray you, when you reach your own threshold, to remember me most kindly to your wife and daughter. I remain, my dear sir, with the truest esteem.

Your friend and obedient servant,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

Hon. DANIEL S. DICKINSON, U. S. Senate.

Speaking once of Senator Thomas J. Rusk, of Texas, Mr. Webster said: —

"Good sometimes comes out of evil. How earnestly we opposed the admission of Texas, and how deeply the country felt that we were taking

a stranger into our family that was not of us, and that we were going to bring into Congress the representatives of a people entirely unlike ourselves! Just think of it! There is Texas, whose first senators are Houston and Rusk, who, in all the legislation in which they have been called upon to act, have represented their State as well as any State in the Union has been represented. Rusk is one of the very first men in the Senate. He is a man of perfect integrity, and of a very high order of ability. I like him very much. So we see that the things which we sometimes think are going to injure us the most are really blessings. Providence overrules. In many emergencies we could hardly have done without the conservative vote of Texas. She has always been in favor of conservative measures. She went for the Washington Treaty; and, on all measures calculated to strengthen the condition of the whole country, we have found Texas with us."

For Samuel A. Eliot Mr. Webster had a very warm friendship. Mr. Eliot stood by him when he came to Congress for the short term, during the discussion of the Compromise Measures. Mr. Webster was actively engaged in carrying those measures through, and he used to say that he got great aid and comfort from Samuel A. Eliot. Mr. Eliot was a man who had decided opinions of his own, and who asked no favors. He went to Washington to do what he thought was right, and did it boldly and fearlessly. He was not a politician, and did not think about how he was to get re-elected. He had nothing to do but what he considered his

duty, and he did it bravely. I said to Mr. Webster something about a public dinner on the anniversary of the 7th of March, and he wrote to me: —

"If any thing of that kind is proposed to me, — which I do not seek, — I shall certainly take no compliment of that kind, unless Mr. Eliot is included. Every thing is due to him that is to any body. He has been faithful and true, and deserving of all the honor that can be given him in that way."

In the autumn of 1850, Mr. Webster was at the North, as usual, spending his time between Marshfield and New Hampshire. The Democrats of New Hampshire, who had always before treated him with a good deal of coldness and abuse, were very lavish in their attentions and kindness. They seemed to have changed; there was a returning warmth and sympathy among them, and he received cordial letters from a good many of them. He received one from Isaac Hill, with whom his relations had been any thing but friendly, asking his pardon, and assuring him of his respect and good wishes. While he and Mrs. Webster were spending a few days at Franklin, I went up there to visit them; and he told me that he had calls from two or three of the leading men of New Hampshire almost daily. They would drive over from Concord and have a pleasant chat; and these visits were very grateful to Mr. Webster. I had returned to Boston, and been at home only two or three days, when, on a Friday night, I received a telegraphic despatch from Mr. Webster, saying: "If

possible, you will oblige me very much by taking the early train to-morrow morning and coming up here." I did not know why the summons came, but supposed he might wish some company over Sunday; and I went, although I had so recently visited him. I made my arrangements, and left in the early train. Nothing particular happened on the way up, till the train stopped at Manchester. There I saw quite a number of gentlemen get into the car in which I was, — men whom I knew by sight, and only by sight. There was one tall, striking looking man, whom I knew as Squire ———, the father-in-law of Isaac Hill; and also his son and Senator Norris. The train went on and stopped at Concord, and many others got in; among them General Pierce. There were in the car General Low, Judge Hubbell, and Isaac Hill, and twenty-five more of the leading men of the State. I did not know what was going on; but finally General Low came and sat on the seat with me.

"Going up to Franklin, I suppose," said he. "I guess we shall have a pretty good time."

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"We are going up to dine with Mr. Webster," he replied.

It was a very rainy day, but the rain was warm and pleasant; and as the railroad track ran right by Mr. Webster's place, a station was established there, called the "Webster Station." There we stopped, and all jumped out and went into the house. I carried up the news of the nomination

of William Appleton for Congress from the Fifth District.

Mr. Webster seemed perfectly happy, and, indeed, he said to me: —

"How happy I am here! This is where I breathe my native air. I am in better health here. There is something in the air that invigorates me; disease doesn't seem to flourish here."

He was most cordial and delightful to his guests. They were all highly pleased. He went through the various rooms, making everybody feel at home, and chatting with each guest by turns. The dinner-hour was announced. Mr. Webster said to me: —

"You take General Pierce and Senator Norris up to that end of the table [there were fifty or sixty people]; go up there and seat yourself and them."

Previous to that, General Pierce had come to me, Mr. Webster having made us mutually acquainted, full of enthusiasm about Mr. Webster; and, taking me aside, said: —

"I am going to write a toast."

He took a pen and dashed off a very complimentary and enthusiastic toast, and gave it to me to show to Mr. Webster. I went down into the kitchen, where Mr. Webster was supervising the arrangements for dinner.

"General Pierce has written a toast to call you out," I said.

"Oh!" replied he, "have nothing of that kind. I have invited my old friends and neighbors, just

to pay my respects to them and receive their kind wishes. It would not be in good taste to make labored speeches."

I returned to General Pierce, and told him that Mr. Webster preferred to have nothing of the kind.

"He has got to make a speech," replied the general. "There will be two speeches made to-day, — one I will make, and one he must make."

I went back and told Mr. Webster what General Pierce's determination was.

"Well, then," said he, "tell him to come on. If that is the decision, I am prepared to abide by it."

I returned again, and told this to General Pierce. Then we went into the library and called out Squire ———, to whom General Pierce said: —

"You are the head of the Democracy in New Hampshire: physically you are a head taller, and democratically you are three heads taller, than any man in the State. We want to corner Mr. Webster with a sentiment. I have prepared one, and I want you to propose it. It will come with grace and propriety from you."

The squire read it, and replied: —

"I approve of it with all my heart."

"Well," said Pierce, "when the dinner is over, rise and propose that."

"I will do so," replied he, "with the greatest pleasure."

I sat at one end of the table, and there were Mr. Green, Dr. Wood, and two or three clergymen near. Mr. Webster called upon a venerable clergyman

to ask a blessing, and he made a very impressive and appropriate prayer. The dinner was very informal. It was a plain, nicely-cooked, country dinner. At my end of the table there was a leg of roast mutton, and at the other end a piece of roast beef. When the roast meats were removed, there was a course of poultry. Some of it had been brought on and removed; but there were still some roast chickens to come, when old Squire ———, thinking the dinner was over, got up, and put on his spectacles. Pierce whispered to me:

"He thinks the dinner is over, and he is going to give his toast. Let's see what Mr. Webster will do."

So the squire read his toast, and there was a great hurrah, with three cheers for Mr. Webster. General Pierce was much amused, and was very curious to see how Mr. Webster would get over the matter. He rose, wearing his peculiar air of dignity and simplicity which made you feel a sort of awe and reverence. He bowed, and with considerable emotion thanked his venerable friend for the kind sentiment he had pronounced, and his friends around the table for the warm response they had given to the sentiment. Then he stopped, with one of his peculiar expressions, and added:

"I believe that John Taylor has some nice roast chickens that he proposes to let us try; and after he has done so, I will endeavor to respond to the sentiment."

He sat down amid some laughter, but the squire was not at all embarrassed. The chickens were

brought on; and when the dinner was over, Mr Webster rose and made a speech, — such a speech as I never heard before nor since. It was an address that ought to be preserved in its fulness. It was one of the most touching and beautiful ever made, even by him. The circumstances under which it was made were very peculiar. It was at the close of an extraordinary career. Up in that little hamlet which he had left some half a century before, penniless, unknown to fame and to the world, without friends or patronage, he was now closing his illustrious career, receiving the benedictions of men who had opposed him throughout his political life from what they deemed true principles. They seemed to have come almost to admit the wrong they had done him. He had not changed; they had. He referred to that fact in his speech. He said that in some respects this was the best, and in others the saddest, day of his life. As life advanced, and as he approached the end of his term on earth, — which he felt was not very far distant, — there was something peculiarly dear to him in the scenes of his early life. He said that every blade of grass that grew about that spot seemed to have an interest for him. There was no spot on earth he loved so much. Pointing out of the window to the graves of his father and mother, which were marked by simple white stones, he said that this was the house in which those who gave him birth, the authors of his existence, had lived and died; from that spot they were buried, and their dust reposed within our present sight. He

said that, after having passed through a stormy political quarrel, he had always turned his steps to that loved spot. Every year he visited those graves and called to mind the remembrance of the virtues of those who once inhabited that house; and yet even this pious pilgrimage had been made the subject of political abuse. He had been accused of ambition, of selfishness; and he could not say that he did not feel keenly the injustice of such treatment, — treatment that he would rather have received from any other people that the sun shone upon than the people of New Hampshire.

"I felt sure," he went on, "that my motives, as a public man, which had been misrepresented, would at last have justice done to them, because my motives throughout my public career have been pure; but I did not expect to live to see it. I did not expect to live to see what I see here to-day, — this acknowledgment of the honesty of my course. I thought it would come, but I thought it would come after I was gone. It has come in my lifetime, and sooner than I expected; and I thank you, gentlemen, and I thank my God, that it has come. This has been a day full of pleasant memories."

He proceeded to pronounce a eulogy upon the virtues of his parents, and again thanked the company for their visit and their attention. That great man standing there, with but two persons about him who were not politically opposed to him, — myself and a kinsman of his, Worcester Webster, — all the rest being Democrats, ex-

hibited to all the greatest tenderness and gentleness. After alluding, in the concluding portion of his speech, to the Compromise Measures, which had led to his 7th of March speech, which was now creating a good deal of feeling in the country, he closed by offering a sentiment complimentary to Senator Norris, who sat on my left, and who was a plain, sensible man, but not a great speech-maker.

Mr. Webster said that "New Hampshire had true men in the councils of the nation; and he wished to bear testimony that day, in the presence of some of his constituents, to the fidelity and patriotism of one of their Senators, who was his guest to-day. Mr. Norris had stood in no little peril, so far as his political career was concerned; but he had acted conscientiously, and from a high sense of duty and patriotism, in his vote in favor of the Compromise Measures; and he was sure that, whatever the result might be, Mr. Norris would have the consciousness of having done his duty to his country, — which was really of more value to an upright public man than popular applause."

"Come, Norris," said General Pierce, "get up now and make a speech; you will never have such a compliment as that again."

Mr. Norris arose, and made an appropriate and pertinent response.

"He considered it," he said, "a great compliment to be thus publicly toasted in presence of the leading men of his State. It would not be becom-

ing in him to bandy compliments with the illustrious gentleman; and he would only say that, without his strong arm and influence, those measures of healing would never have passed. If the weight of his influence had been cast in the scale of opposition, the result would have been disastrous; and what the consequences might have been, he shrank from predicting."

General Pierce then rose and made one of his fiery, eloquent, and rather extravagant speeches. In the course of it he related this anecdote. He said that, for political effect, some resolutions were introduced into the New Hampshire legislature by the Abolitionists, denouncing the Compromise Measures. He had a brother in the New Hampshire legislature, a young man, and like himself a Democrat. It was pretty well understood that New Hampshire was going to repudiate the Compromise Measures, and range herself on the side of the opposition: some of the leading Democrats, indeed, showing a disposition in that direction. He (Pierce) was trying a very important case at Manchester, where the court was sitting. Late one afternoon, a man in whom he had confidence came to him and said that his brother was going to vote for the abolition resolutions.

"I was full of my case," added General Pierce, "examining my brief, and preparing for argument. But I did not hesitate a moment; I went to the railroad station, but found there was no train till the next morning. I made up my mind to go that night. I sent for the superintendent of the road,

and asked him to carry me to Concord and bring me back that night. He said there would be some risk in running a train not set down in the time-table; but I told him that I must see my brother before I slept. He finally consented to send me to Concord, where I arrived safely. I found my brother in bed. By this time I was a good deal excited. I said to him: —

"'Ben, they tell me you are going to vote for the abolition resolutions. Now, I am not here, of course, to dictate to you; but if you vote for those resolutions, disloyal as they are to the United States, to the Union and the Constitution, — disloyal to every sentiment for which your father fought, — from the time that you cast a vote for those resolutions you are no brother of mine: I will never speak to you again.' My brother looked at me in some astonishment, and then said: —

"'You might have saved yourself all this trouble, for I had no more idea of voting for those resolutions than of knocking you down.'

"I grasped him by the hand, thanked him, and went back to Manchester. The Compromise Measures, which our illustrious host has perilled his popularity in his adopted State by having exerted his influence to pass, I glory in; they are the salvation of the Union; and I thank him here to-day. They tell me that Massachusetts proposes to repudiate him, and leave him out of the councils of the nation. Let her do it! Norris, you will resign; and if Mr. Webster will come up here we will give him a unanimous election. His mother State will

send him to the Senate, and feel prouder of the act than of any thing she has ever done. They say we are a small State. They say that our products are granite and ice. Be it so. Of one thing, however, New Hampshire can boast over her sister States, — that she has given birth to the greatest man, far the greatest man, that was ever born on this continent, and, I verily believe, on any continent. New Hampshire bore Daniel Webster, and she wears that honor proudly. No State can divide it with her; it is hers, and it is worth more than all the territory that other States may possess!"

This was received with great enthusiasm; and after some further speeches the company dispersed. General Pierce remained at Franklin till Monday, and we had a great many pleasant chats together.

On the very day that General Pierce was nominated for the Presidency, he came into my store, and asked me whom I thought the Whigs would nominate. Their Convention was to be held a month later.

"You know whom we want," I said.

"Well," replied he, "will they nominate him?"

I said that I hoped, but feared, and considered the result doubtful.

"There is no doubt," said he, "about what they ought to do."

We walked out together, and as we approached the Tremont House I remarked: —

"You will be nominated at Baltimore I should judge."

This was the third day that his friends had been talking about him as a candidate. He spoke as if he very much doubted it; but when we reached the Tremont House, the news had arrived of his nomination.

"Well," said he, "all I can say is, and I say it in sincerity, if the people of the United States were to repudiate caucuses, conventions, politicians, and tricksters, and rise in the glory of their strength and might, without waiting for any conventions to designate a candidate, but bent on placing in the Presidential chair the first citizen and statesman, the first patriot and man, Daniel Webster, — it would do for republican government more than any event which has taken place in the history of the world. Those are my sentiments, democracy or no democracy."

General Pierce felt under great obligation to Mr. Webster; he was true to his memory; he was true to the bond of personal friendship which existed between them. Notwithstanding the objections of some of his Democratic friends, General Pierce showed a real constancy and devotion in his regard for Mr. Webster. In the general's speech at Franklin, he referred to their personal acquaintance, and particularly to this incident. He was known to be pretty intimate at Mr. Webster's house in Washington. Isaac Hill was Pierce's colleague in the Senate of the United States; and rather blamed him once or twice for his intimacy with Webster. This was when party spirit ran very high. One day he received a note from Hill,

in which it was hinted that he (Pierce) was rather too intimate at Webster's house; and that he had better not go there quite so much. The note was answered pretty promptly, in this way: —

"So long as I feel that the friendship and intimacy of Daniel Webster are more honor to me than a seat in the United States Senate, as I do feel it, I shall not be likely to be intimidated by any threat like the one in your own note. You can take your own course; I shall take mine."

Mr. Webster told me of numerous conversations which he had with Louis Philippe when in Europe, and among others one that occurred when he was presented by Mr. Cass. He did not stay long in Paris at this time, his family, Mrs. Paige, and Mrs. Appleton being with him. The etiquette of the court, as he was told by Mr. Cass, made it necessary to dress in a sort of military costume when he was presented. He said that General Cass further told him that the etiquette of the court was that, at the presentation, he must never ask questions, only answer them; and that he must introduce no conversation except such as was elicited by questions put to him. Mr. Webster appropriately arrayed himself, and went with General Cass. He was ushered into a number of rooms, until he came to a very large but very plain and comfortable-looking drawing-room, in which were seated quite a number of ladies, including the queen and her daughters, — all busy, some writing, and some at needle-work. They all seemed to be on the most familiar footing

with General Cass. The queen inquired after the health of his family, speaking in English. The young ladies engaged in the conversation, and the talk was very much such an one as would take place in a well-bred family in America. But there was no presentation! In some eight or ten minutes a side door opened, and the king entered.

"He was about your size," said Mr. Webster, speaking to me, "and wore a frock coat, a black cravat without a stiffener, tied in a hard knot; his collar was negligently turned down, and limber; his hair was white, as indicated by the locks which came down from under the black wig that he wore. There were no ornaments about his person, except that there hung down at his right pocket a bunch of seals, attached to his watch, almost as big as a calf's head. He knew I was coming, and he approached me with a hurried step, while General Cass presented me. The king was very informal and very rapid in his movements. He began to ask me a succession of rapid questions which it was impossible for me to answer, and repeated himself somewhat, speaking in English all the while. He said: —

"'I knew that you had arrived in Europe, Mr. Webster, and I had been looking for you, and began to fear that you would not honor my capital with a visit. It would have been a source of great mortification to me if you had not. I know all about you, sir; and I am delighted to welcome you to Paris. I have your speeches in my library, and often consult them; on some subjects they are

models, particularly those relating to Finance. I study them more than any other speeches. I know all about your public career. I wish to say many things to you, and hope I shall have an opportunity before you leave Paris.'

"The next day the ladies were presented at court, and on the third day we were all invited to dine with the king and queen; and there I found every thing just as one would desire in a well-regulated, highly intellectual, and cultivated American family."

Mr. Webster had a great many interviews with the king, who sent for him a number of times. The king told him that he saw General Washington return the sword of the Revolution to the Congress at Annapolis. He said: —

"I saw him, as I sat upon one of the benches, — that great and good man, who had achieved the liberties of his country, and who had tasted supreme power, — return his sword, in a speech which, for sublimity and grandeur, has never been surpassed. I can see him now, so deeply is the scene impressed upon my memory, and could, were I master of the pencil, delineate his personal appearance, even to the very turn of his shoe-buckle. I could almost give every hair of his head faithfully, so deeply was the scene impressed upon me."

The king spoke of Washington as the most extraordinary man who had ever lived. Mr. Webster added: —

"When I heard, in such a presence and by such

a person, — then the most intelligent, most powerful, and best-informed sovereign in Europe, — so high a eulogy and so noble a recognition of the merits of the father of my country, it made me prouder of my country than any thing that had been said or done during my absence from it."

Mr. Webster heard Lord Lyndhurst make a speech in the House of Lords, which was a thing of rare occurrence, as he seldom spoke after retiring from the chancellorship, except when the House was divided upon some important occasion. Mr. Webster went to the House with Lord Brougham, who said he had not seen it so full for three years. The crowd was brought out by the fame of Lord Lyndhurst, who was the leading debater on the Tory side.

"The question," said Mr. Webster, "I hardly remember. It was a matter in which I felt no interest; but I felt great interest in the debate. I took particular notice of Lord Lyndhurst. He wore a gray frock-coat; and, after he rose to address the Peers, he spoke for forty-five or fifty minutes, moving scarcely more than a statue. He only moved his right hand to his left breast occasionally, and so lightly and easily that the wrinkle in the lap of his coat was hardly disturbed."

I asked Mr. Webster how Lyndhurst impressed him.

"His style," was the reply, "was conversational, argumentative, logical, without any attempt at brilliancy or rhetoric. One great merit of his speech was, that, in discussing the different points,

he seemed always to stop when he got through. He did not use a superfluous word or argument.

"Lord Brougham told me," added Mr. Webster, speaking of the debaters in the House of Lords, "that my countryman, Lord Lyndhurst,[1] was, he thought, the ablest debater in the House of Lords; and I rather think that would have been the opinion of a majority of the ablest men of England."

Mr. Webster said he was very much disappointed in Lord Brougham, who was one of the men whom he had felt an intense interest and curiosity to see; because he was a famous lawyer, and had occupied a very important place for many years, both in the legal profession of England and in the Parliamentary discussions. Mr. Webster had some correspondence with him, and felt a friendship for him. He said, however, that Brougham's personal appearance and manners were not equal to his reputation. He was rather a trifler in manner, — something of a coxcomb, — and dressed peculiarly. He seemed, from his general tone, to be vain. He was very kind to Mr. Webster, and offered him every facility for seeing every thing and everybody. Among other attentions, he was invited to dine with the Duke of Buckingham at the London Tavern, on white bait. Mr. Webster had so many engagements that it was rather inconvenient for him to accept this courtesy. He was about to decline, and expressed his intention of doing so to Lord Brougham. Brougham replied: —

[1] John Singleton Copley (Lord Lyndhurst), son of the painter of that name, was born in Boston, 1772.

"I beg that you won't decline; the dinner was made chiefly for you. I wish you would go."

Mr. Webster accepted and went to the dinner, which was rather an agreeable one.

Lord Brougham took him to the courts, and of course he was much impressed with the relations between the ex-Chancellor and the judges. When Mr. Webster went into the Court of King's Bench, the judges insisted upon his sitting on the bench beside them. One night, in the House of Lords, Lord Brougham insisted upon his taking one of the niches that were reserved for very distinguished persons, — such as the royal family, or noblemen of another country. But Mr. Webster asked to be excused, as he said he should prefer to have an unobtrusive place and take a quiet view of the House and its proceedings. He was much struck with the novelty of the mode of doing business; and, among other things, noticed that there was a constant appeal to "the noble and learned lord" (Brougham), to know what the law was on the subject in debate. Brougham would state the law, and that seemed to settle the point without further discussion. On the evening that he was introduced, he had been dining with Lord Brougham, who was in especial good humor, and disposed to be facetious. He had been appealed to several times for his opinion on legal points, when he rose and said: —

"If it should have happened that a stranger to our mode of proceeding — a member, for instance, of a distinguished legislative body from another country — should be here to-night; if any such

person were within the sound of my voice, from what has taken place here to-night he might imagine that I was the most important personage in your lordships' House. I should say to that person, if he should draw any inference like this, that he would be very wide of the mark; for there is no person who has less influence than he who is now addressing you."

The ardent admirers of Kossuth complained of Mr. Webster, that his speech at the Kossuth dinner in Washington was not sufficiently enthusiastic. No language, probably, which Mr. Webster could have used, consistent with his taste and prudence, would have satisfied the crowd, or risen to the boiling-point of popular enthusiasm at that time. He understood the character of Kossuth then as perfectly as the intelligent public now know it. From the few intimations of his opinion left on record, it is evident that Mr. Webster regarded Kossuth as a true patriot, a devoted advocate of liberty, and a brilliant orator; but too impulsive in his feelings, too poetic in his temperament, and too visionary in his proposed measures, to be a safe leader of reform or a judicious statesman. Still, he admired the man, and wished success to his cause. Writing to Mr. Blatchford, in January, 1852, he alludes to his dinner speech in these terms: —

"I wish to act a conservative part always; but then, two things I had to think of: first, to say nothing inconsistent with what I have said so often about the principles of the Holy Alliance; secondly,

to take care that our political opponents shall have no well-founded charge against us for coolness in the cause of liberty. Then again, I wished to give as little offence as possible to governments with whom we are at peace."

These certainly are very proper considerations to influence a statesman of "large, roundabout common sense," looking before and after, and weighing the effect of his words, both upon the American people and foreign nations. The enthusiastic patrons of the exiled Magyar wished Mr. Webster to use such language as would be appropriate to a village caucus, where the approaching town election might be affected by the public favor shown to this European reformer. The result has proved where true wisdom lay, and that the language of Mr. Webster was all that a conscientious regard for duty required.

GREEN HARBOR, MARSHFIELD.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOME LIFE: MARSHFIELD AND FRANKLIN.

To every one who was at all familiar with Mr. Webster's habits and feelings, it was evident that his home, and every thing connected with it, were peculiarly dear to him. After absorbing labors in the capitol or in the court-room, he always turned his face gratefully toward Marshfield. It was there that he sought leisure to meditate upon his triumphs; it was thither that he turned for consolation, when harassed and overcome by disappointment. No doubt, he enjoyed the excitements of his profession and of public life: to gain a forensic victory was certainly a delight to him; to mingle in the fray of party warfare, to be the champion of principles he had embraced against foemen worthy of his steel, were sensations not disagreeable to him. But he always seemed most happy and most contented at home in Marshfield, surrounded by a family to whom he was tenderly devoted, within reach of the scenes of favorite sports and pastimes, and absorbed by the many quiet interests of the homestead and the farm. He never lost the fondness for agriculture which grew in his early childhood, and which he inherited from his ancestry of New Hampshire yeomen. When most

deeply engaged in duties of State at Washington, he always snatched time to keep watch of his farms, and to send John Taylor and Porter Wright instructions, the most minute and careful, concerning the planting of his crops, and the raising, buying, and selling of his horses, cattle, and poultry. His fondness for the home of his childhood at Franklin has already been remarked; and it was one of the happiest circumstances of his life, that he was able, so long as he lived, to retain possession of the fields and pastures familiar to the sports and labors of his early years.

Before the year 1825, it had been Mr. Webster's custom, for several years, to pass a part of each summer at Sandwich. There, in company with his friend, George Blake, he indulged his taste for shooting and fishing. But the establishment of a large glass manufactory, and the arrival of many operatives, who, on their holidays, overspread the country with guns and dogs, had thinned out the game to such an extent that the neighborhood ceased to supply good sport. Mr. Webster mentioned this to his friend, Isaac P. Davis; who thereupon recommended him to apply to Captain John Thomas of Marshfield, whom Mr. Davis knew well, and who, he was confident, would gladly entertain Mr. Webster at his house, and grant him the freedom of his marshes, where he would find a great abundance of sport.

Mr. Webster resolved to act upon the suggestion. He took his wife and eldest son in a chaise and drove to Marshfield.

As they passed over the brow of Black Mount, in front of Captain Thomas's residence, Mrs. Webster, without knowing that it was the very place they were to visit, called her husband's attention to the beautiful prospect before them, and bade him stop the horse to gaze at the scenery; remarking that, if she ever were to have a retreat in the country, she should prefer the one before her to any she had ever seen. They drove up to the house. Captain Thomas received the party with great cordiality, and in his hearty manner embraced and kissed Mrs. Webster. He shouted with stentorian voice to his excellent wife, and then opened the door and ushered the visitors into his cosey old house. His wife and sons soon made their appearance, and were introduced; and in a short time the unexpected guests were as much at home as they ever were afterwards during their residence at Marshfield.

It was this strong preference of his wife that first suggested to Mr. Webster the thought of purchasing the place, which he afterwards did; making large additions to the estate and to the dwelling-house.

There are some interesting points in the history of Marshfield, which give an additional charm to its delightful scenery. It was early settled by the Pilgrims and their followers. It was the residence of Peregrine White, the first white child born in New England; and his remains are buried in the old Winslow grave-yard on the premises of Mr. Webster.

The family of Winslow, so distinguished in colonial days, were natives of this place. The first Governor of that name married the mother of Peregrine White, after the death of her first husband. The Thomases were another distinguished family, and with the Winslows owned nearly all of that domain which is now known as South Marshfield.

Many anecdotes of the various members of these two families are still current in that part of the country: one for its quaintness is worth preserving.

On the death of Dr. Winslow, the good parson of the parish preached a sort of funeral oration. He began by speaking of the death of that great and good man, Governor Winslow. He had hoped at his decease that his valiant son, General Winslow, would have succeeded to all his father's graces; and on the death of General Winslow he had prayed that *his* son and successor might be no worse a man than his father; it was, he said, a small request, but Heaven had not seen fit to grant it!

Just before the breaking out of the Revolution, Nathaniel Ray Thomas, who was a royalist, had been appointed one of the king's "Mandamus Counsellors," a sort of appointment very offensive at the time to all the Whigs. General Gage was then with his troops in Boston. The times were so troubled, and the people so threatening, that it was thought necessary to despatch a party of troops for Mr. Thomas's protection. Accordingly, a hundred picked men from the British army were sent

down and stationed at his house, to guard the property and to keep the neighbors in awe.

On the day after the battle of Lexington, however, a despatch was sent from headquarters at Boston announcing the event, and ordering Captain Balfour, who commanded the detachment, to return at once to Boston. This news, communicated to the British officer, was in advance of any received by the Whigs, who were hovering around the residence and along the roads, not wishing to be the first to attack, but desiring good cause of open resistance. Captain Balfour was able to make good his retreat to Boston before those who were watching his movements knew their cause; otherwise, it is not unlikely that he and his men would never have lived to take part in the battle of Bunker Hill where they fought, and where he fell, pierced by seven bullets, though he survived his wounds.

As soon as the force was withdrawn, and the knowledge of what had taken place at Lexington had transpired, Mr. Thomas knew that his residence was no longer safe; and, fearing to travel by the road, he mounted a swift horse, and took to the beaches, swimming the various rivers that divided them, and arrived safely at Hingham. There he chartered a small vessel, and made his way to Boston; thus suddenly and for ever taking leave of his home and estate at Marshfield.

His family soon followed, with one exception; and on the evacuation of Boston by General Gage, they repaired to Nova Scotia, where their descendants now remain.

The one exception to this exodus was in the person of the youngest son, John Thomas, who was a Whig, or rebel, and stoutly refused to leave, or to join the royal cause. The property was confiscated by the General Court of Massachusetts, and thus passed from the family. After the Revolution, however, Mr., then Captain, John Thomas, applied to the Legislature for a restitution to him of some part of the estate; and by the friendly assistance of Perez Morton, afterward Attorney-General, obtained his mother's dowry, — one third of the real estate.

Captain Thomas, at the time of Mr. Webster's first acquaintance with him, was in embarrassed circumstances, and his estate was mortgaged. He was already advanced in years, and most of his children had received their portion, and left the old homestead. Two sons only remained with him. They were quite willing that the farm should be sold. Mr. Webster purchased it on condition that Captain Thomas and his wife should remain there as long as they lived. Accordingly, the kind, hospitable old gentleman occupied his favorite room in the house till the time of his death, which took place some years after, at an advanced age.

Mr. Webster became interested in the family, and undertook to provide for the remaining sons. The elder of the two engaged in business at Hingham; and the younger went into the counting-house of Stephen White, of Salem. He was afterwards sent into the Western States, by Mr. Webster, as a land agent, and died while visiting Washington to see his employer.

The intimacy and friendship between Captain Thomas and Mr. Webster were peculiar. The captain, though much Mr. Webster's senior, soon learned to look up to him with respect and admiration; he made Mr. Webster his Magnus Apollo, and at the same time entertained for him a sort of paternal affection. He deferred to Mr. Webster in all matters, excepting in some practical rules of farming, the nicer points of sporting, and the habits of birds, wild fowl, and fish, — in all which matters the captain was Mr. Webster's instructor. Their association, always pleasant, grew into mutual affection; and Captain Thomas, who, at Mr. Webster's suggestion, subscribed for the semi-weekly "Columbian Sentinel," watched, with the most intense interest, Mr. Webster's course in the Senate, as reported in that journal.

In 1829–30, the good captain read Hayne's first speech. He waited, in confidence, for a triumphant reply. It came, and he was entirely satisfied. The faithful "Sentinel," however, soon brought him Hayne's second speech. He read it with extreme and painful interest.

It excited in him the gravest apprehensions for the idol of his old age. He was overwhelmed with grief. His hero, his great man, his beloved, almost worshipped friend, was overthrown in debate by his Southern antagonist. The kind old gentleman's pride was humbled; he was in despair, — his heart almost broken. Casting away the paper, he rose and retired slowly to his room, directing some one to come and take his boots away, as he should

never want them again. His family tried in vain to console him. He refused to be comforted. Like one of old, he was ready to exclaim: "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?"

For three days he kept his bed, mourning over the fall of his friend, and refusing all consolation. His eldest son tried to persuade him that Mr. Webster was able to defend the cause of New England, and would yet have his triumph. His only reply was: "It can't be answered, Henry, it can't be answered."

The fatal semi-weekly "Sentinel" came again in due course. It was evening. The family were gathered around the fire in sad apprehension: the old man's mind seemed almost unhinged, — they even feared for his life. The captain still kept his bed, and appeared to have determined to hold to his vow never to rise from it. All their efforts to rouse him had, thus far, proved ineffectual. On opening the paper, it was found to contain Mr. Webster's second reply to Colonel Hayne. The family at once resolved that Henry should assume the task of carrying it to his father, and try the effect of this medicine to "minister to a mind diseased." Henry entered his father's room with the paper and a candle. The old man groaned, and asked what he wanted. Henry replied: —

"Father, I have brought you the 'Sentinel;' I thought you might like to look at it."

"No, Henry, I don't want to see it."

"It contains a second speech of Mr. Webster, in reply to Colonel Hayne."

"Oh, Henry!" said the old gentleman, "it is of no use; it can't be answered; I don't want to see it."

Henry lingered, and seemed greatly distressed at his father's refusal. At last, Captain Thomas consented to have the paper and candle left, and said that perhaps he would look at it. Henry went downstairs, and reported the apparently unsuccessful result of his mission; and the little family drew closely around their winter fire more gloomily than before.

Some time had thus elapsed, when they were all suddenly startled by a tremendous shout from their father's room. They all rushed upstairs together to see what had happened. The captain was sitting on the side of the bed, with the paper in one hand and the candle in the other. As Henry entered, the captain roared out: —

"Bring me my boots, Henry! bring me my boots!"

Captain Thomas's recovery was so complete, that he never again suffered a relapse of that mental complaint.

Mr. Webster, in a speech at Rochester, said:

"Why, gentlemen, I live on the sandy seashore of Marshfield, and get along as well as I can I am a poor farmer upon a great quantity of poor land; but my neighbors and I, by very great care, — I hardly know how, — contrive to live on."

What he says of the soil of Marshfield is literally true. Where it is neglected and not enriched by

the frequent application of manure, it soon loses its productive power, yielding nothing but stunted trees and a peculiar light-colored moss, which crackles beneath the feet of the traveller like dry shavings, and is just about as nutritious for sheep and cattle. Mr. Webster did not select this place for his residence because it yielded the best crops; but because, all things considered, it combined the advantages of sea and land, of running streams and quiet lakes, and presented more attractive scenery than could be found elsewhere in New England. It abounded in game of all descriptions. The land yielded animals and birds; the ocean, fishes. His tastes were therefore gratified. Finding a thin and barren soil in many places, denuded of trees by the axe, he studied the capabilities of his land, and sought at once the means of enriching it and clothing it with trees.

Mr. Webster had a passion for planting trees, as well as for rearing fine animals. He often said to young farmers, "Plant trees, adorn your grounds, live for the benefit of those who shall come after you." He spoke with contempt, almost with indignation, of the stupidity and selfishness of those who refuse to plant trees because they may not live to see their maturity or taste their fruit. It was his practice to try experiments with every variety of forest trees, shade trees, and fruit trees, from different States and countries. Of course, many of them failed; but a larger number succeeded, and the trees "still live" to bear witness to his wisdom and benevolence.

Finding the soil of his farm naturally poor, he proceeded to invent ways and means of enriching it. He found the law of "compensation," which in other instances so fully marks the works of the Creator, in operation here also. The ocean, which made the adjacent soil so sandy and gravelly, contained in its bosom, and often cast upon the shore, the very best materials for enriching that soil. Though the land in the vicinity had been occupied for two centuries, no one had thought of enriching it with the products of the sea. Mr. Webster began to inquire at once, whether the kelp and menhaden from the adjacent waters could profitably be used as manure. The only obstacle in the way was the want of access with teams to the beach. A bridge and causeway were wanted over a small creek and the adjacent marsh, which lay between his arable lands and the ocean. The necessary improvements were made by the subscription of neighboring farmers at Mr. Webster's instigation, he himself heading the contribution and paying most liberally for the purpose. The fish which he used for manure are a species of herring not known in Europe, but called in the United States "hard-heads" and "menhaden." In summer they migrate North, and appear off the shore at Marshfield in June or July. When the weather is mild and the sea smooth, they approach the shore and enter the mouths of rivers and creeks, and sometimes seem to be driven almost out of the water by sharks and other large fishes that feed on them. They are taken in

seines, are drawn off by cartloads, and spread upon the land. Mr. Webster sometimes used ten or twelve loads to the acre. Occasionally, a compost was made by mixing large quantities of loam or muck or decayed vegetable matter with the fish; and, by digging it over once or twice in the autumn, a very excellent manure was prepared for the next spring. The use of the fish, when spread upon the soil, always brought with it swarms of flies of a peculiar hue and size, which for a time were very troublesome to laborers and housekeepers in the neighborhood. General Lyman gives a conversation which he had about them with a man in Pembroke, Mass.

"I told him," said he, "that I was going to Marshfield.

"'Well,' said the man, 'you will, of course, see the squire's farm.'

"'Quite likely,' I replied.

"'Well,' said he, 'you will see something worth seeing; yet I did not know, two months ago, but that he would drive us all out of Pembroke. I believe the squire spreads on his land, in the summer, about all the fish he can find in the sea and get out of it. These breed a pestilent quantity of black flies; not our common house-flies, but black, glossy fellows, that come about two hundred times as thick as you ever saw common flies about a plate of molasses. When the wind is east, it brings them here, and they remind us of Scripture times and the plagues of Egypt. However, they don't trouble us long; for when the wind changes, they make off

for Cape Cod.' " These insects were known in the neighborhood as "Webster flies."

The effect of this kind of manure is felt by the soil for many years, and when once put into good condition by a liberal outlay for fish, it amply repays all expenses by the abundant crops which it afterwards yields. This species of fish has now become an article of commerce in the vicinity of the ocean. The usual length of the menhaden is from ten to fifteen inches; its weight, about one pound. Two hundred of them fill a barrel, which is worth at the shore fifteen or twenty cents. It is thought that one fish is equivalent to a shovelful of common manure. Very large quantities are taken by fishermen at a single haul, — often from one hundred to five hundred barrels. They are too oily to be valuable for food, and are used chiefly as fertilizers of the land or as bait for larger fish.

The kelp, or rock-weed, was another product of the sea much employed by Mr. Webster to restore his worn-out lands. After an eastern storm, large masses of this weed are thrown upon the beach; and, if drawn off and applied immediately to the soil, it is found to be worth as much as three times the quantity of ordinary barn manure. It costs nothing except the drawing; but, when green and wet, it is exceedingly heavy and difficult to be moved. After the building of the bridge over the creek, most of the farmers, for many miles around, began to visit the beach with their teams and draw off the kelp. This has greatly increased the productive power, and of course the value, of their soil. The kelp

brings with it no troublesome weeds, like manure from the barn-yard. Its odor is agreeable, having the peculiar scent of salt-water vegetation, and it is clean and conducive to the health of those who handle it. Mr. Webster applied it with great success to the potato crop, especially after the potato disease appeared. It was found very useful in the raising of all root crops, as well as hay; indeed, it is an inexhaustible treasure to those who occupy the thin, pebbly soils on the Cape and its vicinity.

In process of time Mr. Webster became very much attached to Marshfield. It was never out of his mind, whether he were there or absent; and it is worthy of notice that, however much he might be burdened with public and private cares, he seldom failed to write daily to some one at Marshfield. When he returned to this cherished retreat like an accepted lover, he wrote to his absent friends of the charms of his "sweet home." He was an enthusiastic admirer of fine stock, and gave strict attention to their accommodations and comfort. After the building of his large barn, he used daily to visit and feed his cattle after they had been "tied up" according to size and age.

One day he invited Fletcher and myself to go with him, and see the animals settle among themselves their own rank and precedence, as they were brought in to be tied up for the night. Farmers very well know that cattle are as particular about their position in society and their accredited stanchions as diplomatists at a royal court.

After each animal was secured in his place, Mr.

Webster amused himself by feeding them with ears of corn from an unhusked pile lying on the barn floor. As his son was trying to keep himself warm by playing with the dog, he said: —

"You do not seem, my son, to take much interest in this; but, for my part [and here he broke an ear and fed the pieces to the oxen on his right and left, and watched them as they crunched it], I like it. I had rather be here than in the Senate." Adding, with a smile which showed all his white teeth, "I think it better company."

On another day, we had been out fishing; and on our return, as it was pleasant weather, he proposed that we should go and see his fine yearlings. So he took in his hand a Malacca joint, nearly ten feet long, which his son Edward had given him, and we started out over the hill. Porter Wright went with us, and we examined the yearlings. Mr. Webster knew them all, — how many there were, their breed, their value, their ages, how they were to be kept, and all about them. I used to take the greatest interest in hearing him talk about cows, horses, and farm topics generally. After examining the yearlings, he said: —

"We will now go over to Burial Hill, half a mile off. I want to show you some fine native sheep."

He stopped a moment or two to give Porter Wright some directions about salting the yearlings, and Fletcher and I walked down the hill ahead. We were talking pretty intently, and heard no noise, till we were startled by our hats

tumbling off and rolling down hill. We looked up as Mr. Webster ran by us, flourishing the Malacca joint, with which he had knocked off our hats, in the air, and crying out in a laughing way: —

"How 's your folks?"

Mr. Webster had a cordial fondness for animals. I never knew a man more devoted to all kinds of domestic creatures. He was very kind to them, as he was to every living thing. He delighted in fine cattle and sheep. When he lived in Washington, he always kept around him some animals to remind him of rural life. He had a cow in his yard and some favorite fowls. He had a number of hens, which he took peculiar pleasure in feeding and watching. He used to come from the State Department to his parlor, and, finding Mrs. Webster's little work-basket on the sideboard, he would go up softly and say, "I think I may venture to take this little basket;" and he would empty it of its contents, and go to the barn to get the hens' eggs. He would bring them in and talk about them with all the glee and joyousness of boyhood. This he did every day. It was one of those little pleasures which reminded him of his early home. He loved also every thing which reminded him of his mother. For many years he retained a little poem which he wrote to his mother from Hanover, on his first return from college, specifying what he would like her to get for his dinner. He could find nothing away from home that equalled his mother's cooking. So he wrote to her a poetical letter to herald his arrival, and to ask her to cook

for him, in her own rare manner, his favorite dish of chickens and pork.

He took great interest in all agricultural matters and improvements, and tried to procure and introduce among his neighbors the best breeds of domestic animals, — cattle, sheep, swine, fowls, — the best grains, esculent roots, and fruits.

Mr. Webster's farming was always on a large scale; he disliked small fields and scrimped patches. One of the charms of Marshfield to him was the extensive range it afforded him for the gratification of his bucolic tastes.

He never liked to hear any one speak of "his grounds." He would say: —

"I have no grounds; mine is a farm."

The distance from his house to the mouth of Green Harbor River is about two miles. At this place Mr. Webster kept his boats, and it was his custom to spend a large portion of his time upon the ocean, when he was at Marshfield. He had his boat furniture made after a pattern of his own, expressly for himself, and stamped with the initials of his name. Several large tin pails, divided into separate compartments, contained the salt beef, the brown bread, the cheese, knives and forks, vinegar cruet, mustard pot, and other little necessaries for a brief cruise. To the storing of these things he always gave personal attention, and served out to his companions their rations with his own hand. Whatever he did, he did with his might; and both as a fowler and a fisherman he was remarkably successful, though he enjoyed the withdrawal from society

which his boat afforded, whether he was successful in his sport or not. He could there reflect and commune with himself, uninterrupted by any intruder, and gaze upon the sky and ocean, forgetful of all less peaceful things. He never, on such occasions, whoever might be on board, allowed any conversation on politics or business. To any one who could give him information about natural objects he lent a willing ear. He had the faculty of judging wisely as to each man's ability to give information on any particular subject; and was pretty sure to exhaust his informant's store of knowledge before his examination closed. He studied carefully the habits of birds and fishes, the influence of tides and currents, the changes of the sky and winds; and related with zest, or listened to with interest, anecdotes of adventure by sea or land, and occasionally humorous stories. He never tolerated any thing indelicate or profane in the stories to which he listened, and under no circumstances was he ever known to utter, on such occasions, any language which might not be repeated with propriety in a lady's drawing-room.

Pleased thus to escape from business and all its vexations, he was always greatly annoyed when his plans for recreation were interrupted. Some time during the year 1842, he, with Peterson, his faithful friend and constant attendant, and Hatch, were at sea in his little yacht "Comet." They were some miles from shore, and lay at anchor, fishing. The sport was good, and all were busy drawing in the cod and haddock, when a sail was

descried bearing down upon them from the northward. Mr. Webster scrutinized it for a while through his pocket glass, and, not recognizing it, said to Peterson: —

"Commodore, you know 'the cut of the jib' of every boat or vessel that is commonly seen in these waters. Take my glass and tell me what craft that is yonder."

Peterson looked, and pronounced it a strange sail. Mr. Webster then said: —

"Upon which point of the wind will the 'Comet' sail fastest?"

The commodore replied: —

"About half free."

"Where will that take us, as the wind now is?" said Mr. Webster.

"To Provincetown," was the reply.

"Weigh anchor then," said Mr. Webster, "and put her under full sail. That stranger is an office-seeker, and we will give him a wide berth."

Away scudded the "Comet" to Provincetown; the breeze was fresh, and Peterson was at the helm. After an hour's sail the strange craft was "hull down." Taking a long breath, grateful for his escape, Mr. Webster anchored again and resumed his fishing. On his return home, at evening, he learned that his suspicions respecting the character of the strange sail were correct. Some person from one of the towns along the coast towards the north was an applicant for the post of lighthouse-keeper. He had taken the precaution to go to Marshfield by water, thinking that possibly Mr. Webster might

be out on a fishing excursion, to solicit the statesman's influence in securing the appointment.

As Mr. Webster was fond of manly sports, of course he liked a good horse well, though he liked handsome cattle better. He was very particular to have his horses well cared for and well groomed. He seldom sold one that had done him good service. Three of his favorite horses were buried on his farm, on the top of an eminence visible from the house. He had them buried, as he said, "with the honors of war;" that is, standing upright, with their halters and shoes on. For one of them, remarkable as a roadster, named "Steamboat," the following epitaph was written: —

> "Siste, Viator!
> Viator te major hic sistit."

He had a favorite black mare "Jenny," — a fine, spirited animal, and an excellent traveller. One warm day in May he invited a relative, Mr. Joy, who was visiting Marshfield, to go trouting with him. "Jenny" was harnessed to his open wagon, and they proceeded to try the brooks in the north part of Marshfield. After trying several with tolerable fortune, as they were going to another, the sun pouring down upon their heads, along an uninteresting stretch of straight road without a tree on either side, but leading to a pleasant grove on a hill about half a mile off, he began to touch the mare with the whip.

"Mr. Joy," said he, "we hear much of the wonderful instinct of Arabian horses; that they dis-

cover the existence of water at a great distance on the desert, when they are thirsty [here he touched up the mare]; but this horse [another touch] is vastly superior to them [here another touch, and by this time "Jenny" was going at her utmost speed. They had nearly reached the grove]. This horse not only knows when she is thirsty, but when her master is also. See how she presses on to that grove, where she knows we shall stop and take a drop."

As he uttered these words, he pulled up undei the trees, and, with his pleasant laugh, offered Mr. Joy his little flask of spirits and water.

To his guns he gave names after the fashion of most old hunters. He had his "Mrs. Patrick," his "Learned Selden," his "Wilmot Proviso," and several others. His trout rod, with which he used to fish about Sandwich and Marshfield Rivers, was "Old Killall," made for him by the notorious John Trout. It was with this rod in his hand, as he waded Marshfield River, that he composed a portion of his Bunker-Hill oration, as he writes in his biography. His son, Fletcher Webster, remembered the occurrence well.

No one enjoyed the incidents of shooting and fishing more than he. He liked to commune with plain people, living in out-of-the-way places, whom he encountered; and occasionally he would derive more amusement from the men he met than from the fish he caught. His son Fletcher has left the following account of a fishing excursion on the Cape: —

"I was taken along with him, to make trial of a certain brook of which we had heard, but had never visited, the name of which I have forgotten. It was some eight or ten miles from Sandwich. We drove through the pine woods, and at last reached the stream. It ran through an open meadow, near which, on the rising ground, stood the owner's house. My father drove up to the fence, and, finding the occupant there, very civilly asked permission of the old man to fasten his horse for an hour or two. This was readily granted. He knew the man's name, which, I think, was Baker, with whom he commenced a conversation by some trivial remark about the weather, and received a similar reply. As he was preparing his rod and line, the conversation proceeded.

"WEBSTER. 'Well, Mr. Baker, with your leave, we thought we would like to try and take a trout in your brook.'

"BAKER. 'Oh, yes, sir, very welcome to.'

"WEBSTER. 'I have heard that there was very good fishing in it, Mr. Baker.'

"BAKER. 'Well, a good many folks have been here, and taken a good many trout out sometimes.'

"WEBSTER. 'We must try and see what we can do this morning. Where do they usually begin to fish?'

"BAKER. 'Oh, I'll show you.'

"The old man accompanied my father to the brook, and pointed out the spot. It was where the brook was thickly overhung with alders, and

the ground was very miry. Father sank into the mud half-way up his leg.

"WEBSTER. 'Rather miry here, Mr. Baker.'

"BAKER. 'Yes, that 's the worst on't.'

"After throwing several times, and catching his hook in the alders: —

"WEBSTER. 'These alders are rather in the way, Mr. Baker.'

"BAKER. 'I know it. That 's the worst on't.'

"The mosquitoes now began to bite most annoyingly; one hand was busy all the time slapping them off the face and the other hand.

"WEBSTER. 'These mosquitoes are pretty thick and very hungry, Mr. Baker.'

"BAKER. 'I know it. That 's the worst on't.'

"Now the heat in the low ground, without a breath of air, had become intense. My father wiped his forehead and rested a moment.

"WEBSTER. 'It is very hot down here in these bushes, Mr. Baker.'

"BAKER. 'I know it. That 's the worst on't.'

"My father resumed his fishing, and after an hour's struggle with the heat, the bushes, the mire, and the mosquitoes: —

"WEBSTER. 'There seem to be no fish here, Mr. Baker.'

"BAKER. 'I know it. That 's the worst on't.'

"There was no resisting this. My father put up his rod and departed; but he laughed all the way home at the 'worst on't,' and always took pleasure in recalling the occurrence to mind."

There was no sport into which Mr. Webster en-

tered with more zest than fishing: it seemed as if he never tired of it. I remember that we were once going out quite early for a day's fishing, at a place about two miles from the house, near where his boat was moored. Fletcher and Edward, his two sons, went with us. We rode in an open wagon, Mr. Webster driving. When we got almost to the gate leading to the main driveway down to the ocean, he reined up the horse, a spirited animal, and hallooed to his man Baker, who was a matter-of-fact sort of man. Baker came trotting along.

"Baker," said Mr. Webster, "bring me my military hat. I have taken the wrong one."

So the man trotted back to the house and brought the hat, and started to return. He had gone but a short distance, when Mr. Webster called out to him again; and Baker once more retraced his steps.

"Baker," said Mr. Webster, "shall I catch for you to-day some large cod, or some small ones? Which do you prefer?"

The man looked perfectly amazed, and stopped to think.

"Baker will solve that problem by the time we get back," said Mr. Webster. "We will go out and catch some fish, and then come in and dine."

At Marshfield, it was always Mr. Webster's custom to retire very early at night and to rise early in the morning.

On one occasion we had started on a day's excur-

sion. The hay had been cut on the lawn, and was piled up in stacks. We had on our tarpaulin suits. Mr. Webster gave me a sly wink, and said: —

"Let us see who can jump over that high cock."

"I dare you to," said I.

"Harvey," he returned, "I don't propose to be dared."

He started away, and ran, and jumped over it. I was not quite so alert, but I followed, and succeeded in clearing the top of it. Fletcher came next, and he went over.

"Now, Ned!" said Mr. Webster, "start!" Ned ran for it, but owing, I suppose, to heedlessness, it happened that he hit the cock, and pitched head over heels. That amused Mr. Webster, causing him to laugh very heartily.

"What an athletic fellow you are!" said he. "What a wrestler you would make!"

Ned was of a very sober cast, never entering into any thing hilarious, but being very temperate in his manner.

When we got to the boat, and were having good sport and luck, Mr. Webster called out, —

"Where is that military hero?"

We were all busy with our affairs, and I did not observe Ned. Mr. Webster shouted out again, laughing, "Where is that military hero?"

By and by I looked into the cuddy, or the little cabin, and there Edward lay stretched out.

"I have hurt myself, by father's fooling," he said; "he is always suggesting something for a scrape to break my neck."

"Where did you hurt yourself?" I asked.

"I hurt my knee; and it pains me so that I thought I would leave off fishing."

When I went back to the rail, where they were hauling in the fish, I whispered to Mr. Webster, and told him that Edward had hurt himself in that jump, and that he was in a good deal of pain.

Mr. Webster dropped his line instantly, and his countenance fell.

"Let me go right to him," said he. "Why, how cruel I have been! My son, I ask your pardon; I had not the remotest conception that you had hurt yourself; let us bathe it in something."

"Oh, no," said Ned.

"Oh, yes, but I will," replied his father.

And Mr. Webster soothed him, found out where the pain was, got some spirits, and had them applied. This little affair seemed to mar Mr. Webster's whole sport for the day.

"We will go home," he said; "we won't pursue this sport any longer." And he continued to show the greatest interest and tenderness towards his son.

Mr. Webster told me a great many times afterwards, and once after Edward's death, how badly he felt about that accident.

On one occasion in Washington, which I will mention in this connection, two or three years before he died, I had noticed a little tendency to wateriness in his eyes; and I spoke to him about it.

"There is a history about that eye," said he; "and I will tell it to you. But it must not go any further."

Mr. Webster then related to me the following story: —

Some two years before, while fishing in the "Julia," which was the name of his boat (so named for his daughter), Fletcher was fishing by his side, and their lines got crossed and tangled. There was a fish on both lines. In the excitement of the sport, which any one accustomed to fishing will appreciate, Fletcher gave a tremendous pull upon his line, and the fish broke from it. Mr. Webster was on his left, and as Fletcher pulled his line up, soaked in salt water, it came right into Mr. Webster's eye. He said that for a moment the pain was more excruciating than any thing that he ever suffered. It seemed to pull across the pupil of his eye. He said that Fletcher, although he was not to blame in the least, felt that he had been the cause of this accident.

"I made as light of it as possible," Mr. Webster went on, "and the intensity of the pain was over in a few hours. Fletcher was worried constantly about it, though I told him that it amounted to nothing. But that eye is weak yet, and it has its fits of watering and discomfort, and will, I suppose, as long as I live. If Fletcher knew it, it would make him perfectly miserable to think that he was the innocent cause of giving me this permanent injury. Now," added he, "say nothing to any one; for you are the only person in the world to

whom I have ever told this story. I have had it suggested by others that that eye was watery; but I could only give some evasive answer."

Mr. Healy, Mr. Webster's law partner, once went fishing with him from Marshfield, but they had no luck, and got no fish. They were absent eight hours, and did not have a bite. When they returned they found three or four persons standing near the boat-house. Mr. Webster kept a stable there for the convenience of putting up his horses when he went fishing. These men had also come there to go fishing, and had put their horses into the stable without permission. When Mr. Webster approached, they showed a good deal of trepidation, and began to apologize. He said that no apology was necessary; the stable was built for the purpose of holding horses.

"You are welcome," said he, "to keep your horses here, while going out fishing; but there is no probability of your getting any fish, for we have been out and could not get any."

He found that they were people who had come seven or eight miles across the country for the sole purpose of fishing, and he freely offered them his boat, tackle, and bait; and wished them better luck than he had had. He left them, and drove along home. On the way he said to Mr. Healy: —

"These people have come a long distance, expecting to have a chowder, and I feel sorry that they will fare no better."

When Mr. Webster got home, he divided the fish which he had purchased for his own use, and sent

half of them to these men. This simply illustrates his great kindness to everybody.

An old and intimate friend[1] relates the following recollections of Mr. Webster at home. As he was walking with Mr. Webster near the Marshfield house one morning in June, he observed that the small birds were numerous and more tame than usual, and mentioned it to his host.

"I take great pleasure," replied Mr. Webster, "in cultivating a good understanding with these annual visitors. I love their company and their songs."

While he was speaking, a musket was fired not far from them. Mr. Webster spoke to one of his men near by: —

"Drive that fellow from my premises! I don't want these little creatures disturbed. I watch them with delight, and protect them; their nests have my constant care and oversight, and I never permit any one to disturb them."

The same friend describes a fishing excursion in company with Mr. Webster, during this visit, in which the statesman seemed to be abstracted for some time, and far away from the scene of his recreation. Finally he shouted, —

"I've got him!"

He had hooked a very large halibut, which he tried to draw gently up to the surface, ordering his men to be ready with the boat-hooks to secure him as soon as he should appear. Just as the fish rose in sight the line broke, and the fish was off. Mr.

[1] Thomas Tileson

Webster was greatly excited, and exclaimed as he darted away, —

"Was he not a noble fellow?"

Returning from their fishing excursion, a farmer from the vicinity approached Mr. Webster, and, taking from his pocket a long leather purse, handed Mr. Webster half a dollar, saying, —

"Your men have been very successful to-day in taking menhaden, and I have loaded my wagon with them. It is right that I should pay for them."

Mr. Webster was taken by surprise; and though he did not want the half dollar, he disliked to refuse it, fearing he might give offence. The farmer then drove off, and Mr. Webster, turning to his friend, said that this was the first money that he had ever received from his Marshfield estate. He probably meant the payment of money to himself personally, as he was not accustomed to sell his own produce. At the same interview, Mr. Webster being questioned respecting the truth of the anecdote that he had once carried two young men (strangers to him) on his back across a creek on the marsh, admitted that he once performed such a service, and was offered half a dollar by each of the young men for his welcome assistance.

Soon after Mr. Webster went to Marshfield, he was one day out on the marshes, shooting birds. It was in the month of August, when the farmers were securing their salt hay. He came, in the course of his rambles, to the Green Harbor River, which he wished to cross. He beckoned to one of

the men on the opposite bank to take him over in his boat, which lay moored in sight. The man at once left his work, came over, and paddled Mr. Webster across the stream. He declined the payment offered him, but lingered a moment, with Yankee curiosity, to question the stranger. He surmised who Mr. Webster was, and with some hesitation remarked: —

"This is Daniel Webster, I believe."

"That is my name," replied the sportsman.

"Well, now," said the farmer, "I am told that you can make from three to five dollars a day, pleadin' cases up in Boston."

Mr. Webster replied that he was sometimes so fortunate as to receive that amount for his services.

"Well, now," returned the rustic, "it seems to me, I declare, if I could get as much in the city, pleadin' law cases, I would not be a-wadin' over these marshes this hot weather, shootin' little birds!"

During a summer and autumn in the early years of his residence at Marshfield, Mr. Webster was in the habit of visiting Cohasset, Chelsea Beach, and Nantasket Beach, to enjoy the shooting of wild fowl. It was in the day of single-barrelled guns and flint locks, and before percussion caps had come into use. It was the custom of sportsmen, in those days, to apply their lips to the muzzle of the gun after a discharge, to blow the smoke from the barrel. This practice often repeated smutted the face very considerably; and in Mr. Webster's case added rather a grim ap-

pearance to his usually swarthy complexion. On one occasion, Mr. Webster, being at Chelsea Beach, had for some hours been lying among the tall grass which grew abundantly on the high bank overlooking the beach, and from his concealment shooting at the flocks of birds as they sailed along over the beach and the adjacent waters. Suddenly a flock appeared, flying quite low. He was obliged to lower the muzzle of his gun below the horizontal range to bring the birds before his eye. The moment he had fired, he heard an outcry from some one on the beach below. He instantly sprang up, and looking over the bank discovered a man rubbing his face and shoulder, and showing indications of being hurt. Mr. Webster, in his soiled sporting costume, and with his face and hands begrimed with powder, rushed down to the the stranger in some alarm, exclaiming: —

"My dear sir, did I hit you?"

The man gave a single look at the sportsman, and replied with spirit: "Yes, you did hit me; and from your looks, I should think that I am not the first man you have shot, either."

It has already been said that Mr. Webster divided his affections and his leisure between his home at Marshfield and the old farm at Franklin. Scarcely, perhaps never, did a year pass that he did not go to Elms Farm at Franklin, not only for rest, but to make a personal inspection of his fields and live-stock. It was at Franklin, too, that he often received, with a genial hospitality, many of his personal and political friends. I have

already related a memorable meeting which once took place there, when General Pierce was the specially honored guest. A visit to Elms Farm, when its lord was there, was indeed a rare and happy privilege. There he fairly unbent and became the easy and social companion, as well as the wise and thoughtful teacher. The atmosphere and surroundings there seemed to lure him to deeper contemplation than ever. His moods at Franklin, sometimes sunny and sometimes sad, were seldom gloomy.

His interest in the farm itself was not only very great when he was upon the spot, but when absent as Senator and Secretary of State, his letters and talk showed that a week never passed in which his thoughts did not revert to the cattle, the crops, and other matters relating to Elms Farm. His knowledge of farming and live-stock, too, was equal to his interest in them. He was a true yeoman's son to the day of his death; and the manner in which he addressed his steward at Franklin (John Taylor), as "Brother Farmer," indicated, as indeed he often betrayed otherwise, that he was proud of belonging to the sturdy craft of husbandry. John Taylor was a sterling farmer, and his qualities were thoroughly appreciated and highly valued by Mr. Webster, who trusted him implicitly, and treated him rather as a friend than as a dependent. Taylor was not only an efficient tiller of the soil, but a man of marked character, and a wit of no small calibre. Mr. Webster once told me the following anecdote of him:—

After the exciting controversy to which his 7th of March speech was incident, Mr. Webster felt quite wearied and ill from the exertions he had undergone. Dr. Warren was called in, and told him that he was not suffering from any disease, but that he was excited. His brain was exhausted from overwork. Rest and freedom from excitement were the proper remedies. He must leave his books, go fishing, and lie off quietly. He went to Marshfield, but it was difficult to isolate himself. People from Plymouth and Duxbury, and his friends from Boston, would come down to see him.

"We cannot get on here," said he, "there is too much company."

I was down there with him, and I suggested that Franklin would give him the desired retirement. So he went to Franklin; but it was the same there. When it became known that he was at the farm, people began to come in from the neighboring towns to see him. Sometimes there would be a dozen wagons at a time surrounding the house. He received all comers kindly, and had a pleasant word for everybody.

He had been there a fortnight, and the crowd of visitors did not decrease. The doctor went up to see him, and did not find him much improved. He saw at a glance what the difficulty was, for there were numbers of people then about the place. After they had gone, the doctor said: —

"Mr. Webster, it is my duty, as your physician, to say to you, that it is a case of absolute necessity

for you to cease receiving this company. You can't get on at all till you stop it."

"But what am I to do?" said Mr. Webster. "These people come great distances to pay their respects to me. How can I say that I won't see them?"

"But is it not better to let them know that you are sick and need repose? If they are friends, that will be a sufficient excuse to them."

"Well," said Mr. Webster, "I will."

The doctor left him, and he immediately called in John Taylor, and said: —

"John, I am going up to my chamber to lie down and rest. I am tired. John Taylor, do you see that poker?"

"Yes, squire."

"Well, you have my warrant and full permission to use that poker upon anybody who undertakes to enter this house to disturb me. Do you understand?"

"I understand, squire; you need not trouble yourself."

"And I went upstairs," said Mr. Webster, "and lay down and fell asleep. How long I slept I do not know, but I woke up refreshed. It was near sundown, and no noise was heard save the chirping of the crickets; every thing was as still as in the midst of a wilderness. By and by I heard that heavy tread of John Taylor downstairs. I shouted: —

"'John Taylor, come up here!'

"He came up, and said he: —

"'Squire, you have slept longer than you have before since you came up here.'

"'Well, how goes it with the company? Have you had occasion to use the poker?'

"'Yes, squire; seventeen souls are done for, and two-thirds of them are crippled for life!'"

The correspondence which constantly passed between Mr. Webster and John Taylor, and which grew more frequent than ever toward the end of Mr. Webster's life, well illustrates many of his qualities. His kindness and consideration, his knowledge of cattle and farming, his talent for order and administration, his quick appreciation of work well done, and his leniency in regard to faults, appear clearly in the often hurried lines, scratched off amid the bustle of the Senate chamber or the crowding business of the State Department, to his "brother farmer" at Franklin. A large number of these letters having come into my possession, I have made selections from them, and now present some of the more interesting and characteristic to the reader. The letters which I have range over the period between 1847 and 1852.[1]

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9, 1847.

DEAR SIR, — I have just arrived here, and find your three letters, — which is all right. I do not wish to let anybody into the old house in the absence of your family. It is better to keep it shut up. Probably I shall write soon for Mr. George to move the T and finish off the house as early as

[1] Mr. Fletcher Webster published a number of letters of his father to John Taylor in his "Private Correspondence." None of the letters which follow, however, appeared in that work.

may be in the spring. You will write me at least once a week, according to arrangement. I have no doubt you will take good care of every thing, and carry on the business with spirit. If you need money, let me know.

Yours truly,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

MR. TAYLOR.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15, 1848.

DEAR SIR, — As you have now snow enough, I expected to hear of your being engaged in hauling wood for Mr. Nesmith. You must take right hold, and take hold strong. You have four oxen and a pair of horses. You know that good farmers must not suck their claws in the winter. I suppose the boys' school is through by this time. Now, if necessary, buy a cheap pair of oxen, and get needful help. At any rate, put two teams right to the work, and keep them at it close till I come. You must earn me two or three hundred dollars this winter in drawing wood, and no mistake. Enclosed is fifty dollars; you can have a little more when needed. Now, dear sir, let me know that you have taken hold and are going right ahead.

As to selling the timber trees, I will think of that. I shall be with you soon. Let Mr. Nesmith know at once that you are going to draw a great part of the forest down to the railroad. We have beautiful weather here now. We expect Mrs. Webster home again this week. I hope you are all well, and expect to hear from you as usual. How many calves have you? Yours,

D. WEBSTER.

MR. TAYLOR.

BOSTON, Oct. 30.

MR. TAYLOR, — In husking your corn, I wish you to trace up several hundred dozens of handsome ears for seed corn, one dozen in a bunch. Keep them dry and safe till spring, and they can be sold here high. We got here well.

D. W

FRIDAY, NOV. 30.

DEAR SIR, — If the weather holds fair, come down on Monday, bringing the mutton with you, and also your two turnips in a little bag. If Monday should not be a good day, come down the first day that is good. Leave the turkeys fattening. Yours,

D. W.

JANUARY 6.

DEAR SIR, — I am glad to learn that you are all well and doing well. I cannot buy Mr. Farewell's oxen. Money is too scarce. Besides, it is not good management to exchange young cattle for old. The growth is lost when that is done. We can get you something to do your work in the spring. I hope to hear from you regularly. D. W.

J. T.

WASHINGTON, March 7, 1851.

DEAR SIR, — We are quite distressed to hear of so much sickness in your family; but, as neither of the diseases is positively dangerous, I hope you will all be soon growing better. I send you a check for thirty dollars, as you may be in want of some money, and shall write you again soon.

Yours truly,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

MR. TAYLOR.

WASHINGTON, March 9, 1851.

DEAR SIR, — I sent you a check for thirty dollars a few days ago. I now enclose seventy dollars, making one hundred dollars in all. This is to enable you to buy lime, plaster, &c. I have ordered a considerable quantity of guano to be sent to you. I do not wish to make any small experiments. What I propose to do is this, to wit: let ten measured acres on the north end of the ploughed land in the pasture be harrowed as early as possible with a heavy, long-toothed harrow; then spread the guano, mixed with plaster, broadcast by the

hand; let there be three times as much bulk of plaster as of guano, all mixed in and sown carefully and evenly, and then harrow again, and perhaps harrow a third time. My object is to get the guano well into the ground, so that its strength shall not evaporate into the air. Put one ton and a half of guano upon ten acres. When you have got it well under, then plant the potatoes in drills as mentioned in your letter, putting in, wherever a potato is dropped, a handful of lime and plaster and a very little salt, according to Mr. Nesmith's ideas. Get the potatoes into the ground as early as possible. As to sorts of seeds, I doubt whether you can do better than to plant a good many of the York reds. Mr. Nesmith is a good counsellor on this subject. Now you have your directions. Follow them exactly and to the letter, and whatever may be said to the contrary, vary not one hair's breadth from these directions. I hope to see you by or before the first day of April; and then we will decide what to do with my six oxen. Ask Mr. Osgood why he does not send me the deed of the old house, as requested. I trust your family are getting better.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

JOHN TAYLOR.

P. S. The ton and a half to the ten acres is to be *guano*, not calculating the plaster.

JUNE 11, 1851.

DEAR SIR, — I came home eight days ago well, and found Mrs. Webster well. Letters from you were found here, as well as at New York. I am very happy to hear you are all in health. The weather has been and is rather cold. I fear your corn will not come on fast. It seems a good year for grass; and I hope oats, turnips, and potatoes will do well. I think a great deal every day about Franklin. To-morrow is the day for a letter from you. Remember me kindly to all your family. Your friend,

DANIEL WEBSTER

JOHN TAYLOR.

WASHINGTON, July 2, 1851.

JOHN TAYLOR, — I have returned and find your letters. I cannot lay out a dollar in horse-flesh, and the rule is, you know, to have no trading in horses. Your horses have worked well enough together heretofore, and I hope will do so still. Keep your own team, do your own work; do not trouble yourself about the Sawyer place, give your whole attention to your own farm and your own business, — then all will go well. Never mention the word horse to me. I expect you to hire all the labor which may be necessary to carry on the farming briskly, — hoeing, haying, and all the rest. Employ good men at fair prices, and their pay shall be ready when their work is done, or as it goes on. I enclose one hundred dollars to pay for labor. Go ahead! I hope you and your family are all well. D. W.

Mr. Webster enclosed a letter to John Taylor received by him from Porter Wright, telling of the quantities of kelp procured from the beaches near Marshfield for manure. On the back of the letter appears this endorsement: —

MR. TAYLOR, — Do you not wish that kelp was found in Merrimack River? D. W.

MARSHFIELD, Sept. 5.

DEAR SIR, — We had up our five yoke of four-year old steers to-day, and measured them. The smallest girded six feet seven inches, the largest six feet eleven inches. The black steer and his mate went six feet nine inches. If you get in the rye this week, and all necessary things done, you may come down the early part of next week, leaving Henry to take the lead and go ahead with the men. Let me hear from you. D. W.

MARSHFIELD, SUNDAY EVENING, Sept. 14.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter arrived, with great punctuality, last evening, and I was glad to hear from you. You appear to be getting along with work very well. I have felt quite anxious about the potatoes, and am glad to learn that, as late as Friday, no signs of rot appeared. My own health is much improved; and, indeed, I now call myself well. I walk as well as ever, and have very little trouble from catarrh. The greater part of this week I shall be in Boston; and, on the receipt of this, I wish you to write to me to the Revere House, Boston, and tell me about the potatoes. I suppose that this week you will have finished any thing which may remain at Northfield, got in all the grain, burnt the bushes, &c. I wish you to send down our two men next Saturday, and, if every thing should be perfectly safe about the potatoes, I think you may as well come down yourself at that time for a day or two, as I shall probably then be here. Please take the best care of the beef cattle. As the Pemberton oxen are not quite large enough or fat enough, I am willing they should be exchanged for a larger and fatter pair. Mr. Noyes has more leisure than you have, and you may ask him to look out and attend to this. I should like a pair so large and fat that one of them would suit you for beef, and the other do to come down here with the large oxen. We are all pretty well here except Mr. Morrison's children, two of whom are sick, but not dangerously. Do not leave home for a single day so long as there is any uncertainty about the potatoes. Your friend,

DANIEL WEBSTER

JOHN TAYLOR.

[Private altogether.]

DEAR SIR, — I write you this as a private letter, because I wish to speak of things which I do not wish you to mention or give any hint of, even to any of your own family. It is probable that I shall leave my present office for good in June, or not later than the fourth of July. What then remains of the summer I shall spend, as usual, at Marshfield and Franklin, and in some short journeys. In the fall, when

it gets too cold to stay longer at Marshfield, it is probable we shall take some small place in Boston for the winter. Therefore, I wish you to be in season in looking out for some things.

1. Potatoes. You are more likely to raise a crop of good potatoes than Porter Wright. I think the white Mercers are, on the whole, the best potato you can raise for the table. The red Mercer is not so good. For stock and other uses it may be well to use other good sorts, which are greater yielders; but I want one hundred bushels of first-rate white Mercers. If you have not the right seed, send for it to Mr. Breck, unless you can get it nearer. Probably you have it. Be careful on this point.

2. Beef. Instead of selling all our beef in the summer, I propose to keep four or six of your four-year old steers till fall, and then feed them a time, so that we can have a fresh bullock whenever wanted. Four-year old steers are a very good age for fresh beef.

3. Mutton. If you can, I wish you to buy fifteen or twenty wethers, now or whenever you can do it best; not under two years old, and preferring three. The object is to keep them through the summer, and fatten a little in the fall.

4. Poultry. This is quite important. I doubt whether your boys can do much with geese and ducks; but I wish them to lay out for a great flock of turkeys and chickens, — say one hundred of each. If you have not breeders enough, buy some good ones. Buckwheat is excellent for poultry. If you can find a couple of acres to sow with it, write Porter Wright to send you the seed and inform you what time to sow it.

5. Wood. I wish a good quantity of firewood — oak and pine — to be cut, corded up, immediately after planting. When I see you we will agree where to cut it; but, in the mean time, you can be looking out for some good hands to do the work. You will keep all these things entirely to yourself, and think of them. Yours,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

JOHN TAYLOR.

P. S. If there is any of this which you do not understand, write for explanations.

BOSTON, SUNDAY MORNING.

MR. TAYLOR, — You may come down with the cattle on Wednesday, as my time grows short. I suppose you can bring them directly to Boston. I will see that somebody is at Foster's stable on Thursday morning, with directions that, if the cattle are not there, to go to Cambridge for them. You will come on to Marshfield in the cars. You may bring down samples of your potatoes, and leave them at the Revere House for examination and trial. Inquire for Mr. Stevens or Mr. Pierson. I send you fifteen dollars to pay expense for bringing down the cattle, &c. If you prefer it, your William may come down with you, and drive the cattle to Marshfield, in which case, I need send nobody. If you like this, you must send me a letter Tuesday morning to Marshfield, which will arrive Wednesday eve. If, when you get the cattle on board the cars, you think they will be quite safe with William, you may take the passenger train and come directly through to Marshfield. I would not dig many more potatoes till the weather is cooler.

Yours,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

DEAR SIR, — I think I shall be up on Tuesday, first or second train, — perhaps one friend with me. We will dine at four o'clock. Boil a leg of mutton and a bit of pork, and roast a small turkey. I should like to see the oxen and steers which Mr. Joseph Noyes bought at Meredith. Could you have them all down to your house Tuesday afternoon?

D. WEBSTER.

On the back of a letter from John Taylor, relating to some farming proposals, is endorsed the following: —

BROTHER FARMER, — I agree to all that is written within, with two exceptions, or three. (1) I should be glad if you could put twenty instead of fifteen loads of manure on the

corn land. (2) Three acres for turnips is not enough; you should have six acres. (3) You must have somewhere, by the roadside, one acre or more of buckwheat. D. W.

WASHINGTON, April 14, 1852.

DEAR SIR, — I am sorry for the loss of the ox, but hope it was produced by no carelessness. The Vermont oxen must go immediately to Marshfield. I hope George Andrews did not stop with them at Franklin: he had no instructions for that. If he left them there, send them down without the loss of a day. You must buy a mate for the living ox, or put him to fat and buy another pair. Your boys must be careful of such valuable cattle. This is the second ox we have lost by some accident, not well explained.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

WASHINGTON, June 1, 1852.

JOHN TAYLOR, — By this time, I suppose, you have committed the greater part of your grains to the earth, and the rest remains to the providential arrangements of the season.

> "Be gracious, Heaven! for now laborious man
> Has done his part. Ye fostering breezes, blow!
> Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, descend!
> And temper all, thou world-reviving sun,
> Into the perfect year!"

D. W.

WASHINGTON, June 14, 1852.

JOHN TAYLOR, — I expect to leave this place before this month is out, and think I shall go to Elms Farm before I go to Marshfield. I wish you immediately to employ a proper hand to put the boat in order. Let her be thoroughly repaired, with new timbers and sides if necessary, so that she may be perfectly safe, strong, and tight. See that she has good oars and a paddle and is well painted. Let the perch in Lake Como know that Mr. Blatchford is coming.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

New York, July 8, 1852.

John Taylor, — I received Mr. Noyes's letter yesterday, and am exceedingly sorry to hear of your accident. I had no idea the bull was so vicious. It is well he did not kill you. Mr. Lanman says he means to take the law on him. I expect to be in Boston to-night, and in Franklin some time on Monday. As you are disabled, you must have your long scythe ready for me. Mr. Lanman will go with me. He will supply us with fish from Lake Como. We shall take Monica along to cook them. Get Miss Tandy or some one else to put the house in order. Mrs. Webster will go to Marshfield. I hope to find my mother's garden looking well. Be of good cheer!

Daniel Webster.

Washington, Aug. 18, 1852.

Dear Sir, — I have received your letter of the 15th, and have only time now to say that you may engage Mr. Carr to remove the house, and the sooner the better.

Yours truly,

Daniel Webster.

John Taylor, Franklin.

P. S. They are flooded with rain at Marshfield. Porter Wright cannot hoe his turnips, the ground is so wet. Grass is abundant, and all the farm most beautifully green. Keep the Marshfield men as long as you think proper. I shall probably send two horses, to be wintered at Franklin. If you think, in addition to these and to your present stock, you have fodder enough for twelve or fifteen yearling steers, you may be looking out for them, or for ten or a dozen good wethers. Engage no mean things. Tell Mr. George to go right ahead with the poultry yard. D. W.

Marshfield, Sept. 13, 1852.

John Taylor, — If my health should be good enough, I hope to be in Franklin the latter part of this month, and stay till the early part of October. We shall have many

things to do, and I hope you will get your affairs out of the way, so that I can have your entire personal attendance. Many arrangements are to be made for the farm where you are, and more for the Sawyer place. And then our accounts are all to be brought up and settled. You must excuse yourself from all cattle-shows; nor must any of my stock of any kind be sent to any cattle-show this year. We shall have quite as much as we can do with our own affairs, as I wish to settle up every thing at Franklin as far as possible. Mrs. Webster will go with me. Probably we shall send up a pair of horses, and you must take care that the wagons and harnesses are all in good order. As you may have occasion, and if you can obtain decent prices, you will do well to sell off some cattle, till you bring your stock within your means for the winter. Your friend,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

Mr. Colt, of New Jersey, once sent Mr. Webster some Hungarian cattle, among them a bull, — a small and rather vicious animal. John Taylor was taking him out of the barn one day, when the bull got away from him, threw him down, and began goring him. This was seen by some people who were standing near, but they did not dare to lend their aid. Finally, John got his fingers into the bull's nose, and held on tightly, but found his strength giving way; when three or four men came up, took the bull by the horns, threw him down, and tied his legs. John was put under the physician's care immediately, for his wounds were serious, though not dangerous. The bull was tied up, and after that he was given a wide berth. This news went to Washington about the time Mr. Webster was coming on, and he said he would go and see John Taylor at once. He did

so; found John convalescent, and finally asked him what they should do with the bull. John did not know.

"Well," said Mr. Webster, "if he can't be managed, we shall have to kill him."

John Taylor replied: —

"I have no feeling of enmity against the bull. I'll tell you what it is, squire, I have not a very good opinion of Hungarian bulls. This one is a dangerous creature; but he's not much more dangerous than that other Hungarian, Kossuth, who is going round the country making speeches!"

The following letters from Mr. Webster to John Taylor relate to these Hungarian cattle: —

TRENTON, March 25, 1852.

JOHN TAYLOR, — I am here, attending a court, and shall return to Washington about next Monday. Mr. Colt, of this State, an old friend of mine, has made me a present of three imported Hungarian cattle, — one bull, one cow, and one yearling heifer. He will start them to-morrow for Boston, where they will be by the time you receive this letter; and I wish you to go immediately down and take them to Franklin in the cars. Mr. Colt does not like Kossuth, and requests that the bull shall not be called by that name. You may call him "Saint Stephen." I do not propose to keep these Hungarian cattle on your farm, to mix with your stock. We will find room for them in due time on the Sawyer place, or elsewhere. I enclose you a check for thirty dollars. When you have seen the cattle, write me and tell me how you like them. If Southern corn is cheap in Boston, you may get as much as you will want at Mr. Otis Munroe's, Commercial Street. If you think it better to buy country corn, you may do so, and I will send you the money. It

seems time that Dr. Knight should be paid something for his kind professional services to me last fall. Please speak to him on that subject; ask him to let me know what will be agreeable. He did me great good. Tell Mr. Horace Noyes that when I get to Washington I shall send him a check for Captain Sawyer, and write him also respecting the Sawyer place. I hope you are all well. Take good care of "Saint Stephen" and his two females.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

WASHINGTON, April 10, 1852.

JOHN TAYLOR, — I am glad the Hungarian cattle arrived safe, and that you liked them so well. I wish you to take the very best care of them, and keep them where they cannot be hurt. What I shall do with "Saint Stephen" I cannot yet tell. He has cost a mint of money; and, unless the farmers in your neighborhood, and a good many of them, shall be willing, I shall send him to some part of the country where the people are more willing to be at some expense for the introduction of a new breed of cattle, — perhaps to the western part of New York. I shall write you again soon. The weather here is clear, but the mornings quite cold. You will buy whatever hay and corn you want to keep the cattle well. The great oxen should have meal, and be kept till there is a good bite of grass for them in the great pasture. What do you propose to do with the Stevens oxen? Having the Marston oxen, and the black and red, and a pair of likely four or five year old steers, I presume they will be team enough. Let me know your ideas. . . . I shall see you before planting.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

Mr. Webster, on one occasion, when he began housekeeping at Washington, applied at an intelligence office for servants, and among others for a cook. The office sent to him Monica McCarty. She was rather young, probably not more than

twenty, and a professional cook. She was a slave of the late Judge C., then of the Circuit Court. It was usual for owners of slaves to hire them out, precisely as they would their oxen and horses, to do service. Mrs. Webster was pleased with Monica. She was a good cook, and an excellent servant; and the family became interested in her. Judge C. proposed to sell Monica to Mr. Webster; but he was shocked at such an idea. He told the judge that he would not for any consideration on earth ever be the owner of a human being; that the very thought of such a thing pained him. But he said he should like very much to procure by purchase Monica's freedom, and then employ her as a servant to work it out. Judge C., who himself was a humane man, and who had no surplus of wealth, said he thought Monica was worth a thousand dollars, but he would sell her freedom to Mr. Webster for six hundred. Mr. Webster told Judge C. that, if he would give him an opportunity for easy payment, he would pay him a hundred dollars down, give him a note for five hundred dollars, and pay the note in instalments. Judge C. acceded to this proposition, and Mr. Webster carried and put upon record the papers making Monica a free woman. He then told her that he would charge her with the money and credit her liberally for her wages, giving her in the mean time enough for her support; but she must be his debtor for the amount, because he was a poor man himself, and could not afford to contribute the whole of it. She proved to be every thing that he anticipated, a most faith-

ful servant and excellent cook. After Mr. Webster's death, Monica told me that he always paid wages to her without any reference to the money that he had paid for her freedom; that she had always had full wages, and that she had never had to spend a dollar for clothes, Mrs. Webster, by presents and otherwise, furnishing her with them: so that at Mr. Webster's death she had about two thousand dollars in the savings' bank. Monica's devotion to Mr. Webster, and her affection for him, were very remarkable. A single fact will illustrate the pride she had in his service.

General Pierce, who was elected President shortly after Mr. Webster's death, knowing that he had this famous cook, and supposing that Mrs. Webster would not wish to keep her, applied to me to know if I thought he could get Monica to superintend the kitchen of the White House.

I told him I would speak to her, and see what she said; which I did.

"I cook for General Pierce?" she replied: "No, to be sure, I won't. After I have been Mr. Webster's cook, I never will be General Pierce's. I'll come and cook for you, Mr. Harvey, but I wouldn't cook for General Pierce."

On the night on which Mr. Webster died, Monica was in his room; and I think I never witnessed grief more marked and deep than hers, so much so that she was almost beside herself. She went up to Dr. Warren, when Mr. Webster appeared to be suffering a great deal, and said: —

"You are a doctor, and you have no right to let

him suffer so; can't you give him something to keep him from such pain?"

The next day she said: —

"Oh, he was the best friend, and the only real friend, I ever had; oh, what shall I do?"

Monica was a very devoted Methodist. In Washington, she always attended the Methodist church half a day each Sunday. Mrs. Webster had taught her to read, and her memory was pretty good: she could repeat almost the whole of Watts's Hymns. Mrs. Webster always made it a point on Sabbath evening to take Monica to her room and read to her from the New Testament, and from other religious books; for which she was very grateful.

Monica returned to Washington, where she was recently living, and perhaps still is, at a very advanced age.

In connection with this story of Monica, I may speak of another slave whose freedom Mr. Webster assisted to purchase. Mrs. Webster had a female servant who was free, but who was married to a man who was a slave. His name was Bean. He was a valuable man, very competent, and Mr. Webster had suggested to him to purchase his freedom from his owners, who were merchants in Alexandria, and members of a large forwarding house. They told him that he might have his freedom for fifteen hundred dollars, and that he might go wherever he pleased and earn it, and bring it to them from time to time. Whenever he should bring them fifteen hundred dollars, they said, they would give him his freedom papers. Mr. Webster assisted

Bean in drawing up an agreement with his owners; and his money, as he earned it from time to time, was confided to a wealthy banker in Washington who allowed him interest on the money he deposited, to help make up the amount. Mr. Webster gave him his own cast-off clothes, and as Bean was about the size of Mr. Webster, he could wear his clothes very well. Bean worked bravely, and made good progress in paying off this mortgage on himself.

In 1846, I think, I was in Mr. Webster's house in Washington, and we had been to church and returned. Before dinner Mr. Webster said to me:

"Let's go into the kitchen and see Monica."

We went down, and found Monica cooking the dinner. This man Bean was also there; he had come over to see his wife. He was dressed in a suit of Mr. Webster's, about half worn, — a nice suit; and he looked as respectable as any man, in Mr. Webster's cast-off blue. Mr. Webster began a conversation with him in regard to the financial condition of his freedom fund. Bean told him that he had accumulated, I think, all but one hundred and seventy-five dollars (it was certainly less than two hundred dollars) of the sum required to complete the purchase of his freedom. He was still earning wages; and he added: —

"I am bringing every thing to bear upon that result. I am spending nothing; and I am looking for the hour to arrive in which I shall be a free man. I make every corner cut, and where I can't make it cut, I make it bruise."

I laughed over that expression, and it also pleased Mr. Webster very much. He said to Bean, smiling: "Go on; don't relax a muscle; make every corner cut, and where you can't make it cut, make it bruise; and when the month of September arrives [this, perhaps, was June], whatever you lack of this two hundred dollars I will make up. I know," he added, "that you will not relax exertion in consequence of this promise of mine. You know that I am poor myself; but you shall be free in September."

Bean was very grateful for this promise, and he did go bravely on. Mr. Webster made up the difference, which was about sixty dollars, and Bean was free in September. He showed his gratitude to Mr. Webster in every way that was possible.

CHAPTER IX.

PERSONAL TRAITS.

To the outer world, beyond the immediate circles of his friends and companions, Daniel Webster seemed to be a reserved, reticent, even austere man. It was only to the familiar and trusted few that he unbosomed himself; and they alone could form a full judgment of his virtues and failings. He had few intimate advisers, and knew how to keep his own secrets. It was rarely that he talked even with his friends about public men or measures; rarely that he touched upon the deeper problems (of which, nevertheless, he thought much and often) concerning the soul and its destiny. He did not "let himself out," and display his lighter, frolicsome, and humorous moods, except in presence of those whom he had known long and well, and between whom and himself there existed strong mutual attachment. Those who did know him as he was, however, were aware that not only was he simple in manners, and often boyish in spirits; not only was he hearty, hospitable, and affectionate, steadfast in his love of his family and his attachment to his friends, kind of heart towards men and towards animals, courteous to his adversaries,

courageous, benevolent, — but that he was also fond of fun, and had a very keen zest for, and sense of, the humorous.

Nothing was more touching and pleasant to see than his tender devotion to his family. His respect and affection for his parents have already been remarked. Through life he kept their revered memories green in his heart. He was always fond of talking about them, and often recalled incidents of his childhood and youth in order to illustrate their parental virtues. One of these incidents, which he related with a certain pride, may be told. His constitution in youth was very delicate, and it was partly for this reason that he was sent to college instead of being kept at home to work on the farm. His head was always large, and he was supposed to be threatened with the rickets. His mother on one occasion took him to the sea-side, to the Boar's Head at Hampton Beach, that he might try the sea-bathing. There were no coaches in those days in that part of the country; and his mother travelled to the coast alone, on horseback, carrying him in her arms. As Mr. Webster told this, he would exclaim with much feeling: —

"There was a mother for you!"

As he matured in life he grew stronger: his early indulgence in field sports confirmed his health, and provided him at last with unusual physical vigor and strength. He was a capital wrestler, and often, when his two sons had become men grown, he would challenge them to wrestle, and could

very readily throw either of them. The habit of out-door recreation was continued throughout his life.

Fletcher Webster said that the first he could remember of his father was when they lived on Mount Vernon Street, in Boston.

"I can see him now distinctly," said Fletcher, "dressed in a frock coat, with tight pantaloons, a pair of long blucher boots reaching to the knee and adorned with a tassel, a bell-crowned beaver hat set a little on one side of his head, and a riding whip in his hand as he proceeded to mount his horse for his morning ride. He drove out some ten days prior to his death, when he went to give some directions for breaking up a piece of greensward, and to visit the tomb, and tell me where he wished the monuments for his wife and children to be placed. After indicating the position of each, he pointed to one other spot, and gave me a look. I understood him well, but neither of us spoke. His monument now stands upon that spot. It may be remarked here that he always avoided as much as possible any allusion to sad things and unpleasant occurrences; not that he had any superstition, such as was common to the ancients, in their disinclination to use words of ill omen, but from regard to the feelings of others, and a desire to be and to make others cheerful."

To the memory of the lady who won his earliest affection, who shared the trials and the triumphs of his early manhood, Mr. Webster retained to the end of life an unfaltering devotion. He could

never speak of his first wife without visible emotion. Grace Fletcher Webster was a person of very delicate organization, both physically and intellectually; yet she was energetic, and when occasion required, she exhibited a rare fortitude. To her husband's welfare she was entirely devoted. She presided over his household with peculiar grace and dignity, and really seemed to live for him. When he was at home, she sought his comfort and pleasure; when he was absent, her thoughts, as her beautiful letters testify, were of him day and night. Many of these letters remain to tell us still of her gentle and winning traits, her kind and persuasive discourse, her generous and confiding love, and her wise appreciation of her husband's talents and character. She wrote to him almost daily. Each letter reported the condition and feelings of each child, was a complete photograph of the household, and showed in every line her steadfast interest in the idol of her heart. These letters are redolent of home, of domestic joys, of the innocent pursuits and trials of children, of the fond solicitudes of a loving mother and admiring wife. No one can read these transcripts of Mrs. Webster's daily life without recalling Wordsworth's tribute to such a wife: —

> "A perfect woman, nobly planned,
> To warn, to comfort, and command;
> And yet a spirit still and bright,
> With something of angelic light."

Indeed, she might have sat, too, for that beautiful picture of the wife drawn by Washington

Irving: "As the vine which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and been lifted by it into sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling round it with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs; so it is beautifully ordered by Providence that woman, who is the mere dependent and ornament of man in his happier hours, should be his stay and solace when smitten with sudden calamity, winding herself into the rugged recesses of his nature, tenderly supporting the drooping head and binding up the broken heart."

On one of Mr. and Mrs. Webster's journeys to Washington, they were detained at New York by the serious illness of Mrs. Webster; at which time they received the hospitality of Dr. Cyrus Perkins, one of Mr. Webster's early friends. Here they found all the comforts of their own fireside, and the best of medical advice besides. Mr. Webster's attentions to his wife during her last illness were constant, and his devotion to her slightest wishes was intense and unwearied. Mrs. Perkins said that he allowed himself scarcely any rest day or night, so great was his anxiety for his wife's relief from pain. He became purveyor at the market and the shops to find little delicacies that would suit her taste. If she did not relish the flavor of the tea, he begged the privilege of purchasing a different kind for the common use of the family while they remained as guests in it. When Mrs. Webster was able to listen, he read to her from her favorite authors, watching with most affectionate interest the mo-

ment when her interest flagged, or her eye drooped. Then he instantly changed the themes, or sought for her some other solace. One day she expressed a wish for a wood fire such as she had been accustomed to have at home. He replied at once, "You shall have it;" and forthwith he sent for a mason, removed the coal grate, and had a wood fire built in the fire-place. He did not even stop to consider that he was altering the house of another; his beloved wife would be cheered by it in her anguish, and this was enough. He watched every article of food prepared for the patient, and insisted that the same dish should not be offered twice to her. One morning, Mrs. Perkins ordered for her a roasted quail, but Mrs. Webster felt no inclination to taste it then. It was served up for her warmed, at another hour of the day. Mr. Webster seemed quite hurt that this delicate morsel should be presented after it had been once refused. He thought that something new should be set before her every time she would consent to taste of food.

Observing the nurse to be dispirited and sad, he went out directly and purchased for her a new dress of gay colors as a present, hoping, as he said, that it would make her more cheerful. He was himself seized with illness from over anxiety and exertion, in tending his wife; and while confined to his own room, he insisted on being informed every hour, by day and night, of the progress and symptoms of Mrs. Webster's malady. All who witnessed his unwearied devotion to her welfare were

deeply impressed with the strength of his affection for her. The love of youth seemed to have acquired new strength with increase of years.

Having been permitted to copy a few of these letters for publication, I have thought that they would give the reader a better idea of Mrs. Webster's character than any commentary could do. Several of those selected were written near the time of the death of her beautiful little boy, Charles, in 1824, and are tinged with a mellowed and touching sadness, though the general tone of her epistles was joyous and hopeful.

December 29, 1824.

Till yesterday, my dear husband, I have not, for a long time, had the satisfaction of writing to you. I should not again attempt it, with the difficulty I find in holding the pen, but for the hope that it may be some small consolation to you.

Yours of Friday I received this morning. I am well aware how different must now be your feelings at the coming in of the mail, now that *hope* is dead. Yes, my dear, we were too happy, and no doubt needed to be reminded that treasures which we call *ours* are but lent favors. From the moment I receive them I endeavor to consider them as such; but I have need to be reminded of the frail tenure of this mortal life.

Poor Eliza is indeed a ministering angel to me. None but yourself could have afforded me so much consolation; and yet I felt as if it was wrong to suffer her griefs to be renewed for me.

Every consolation that the kindness and sympathy of friends can give is mine.

Heaven bless you, my dear, and comfort and sustain you in every trial, and bring you at the end to the reward of the righteous!

Prays your affectionate G. W.

Eliza has gone.

FRIDAY MORNING, December 31.

This, my dear husband, is dear little Charles's birthday. But where is he? In his bed of darkness. Every thing looks bright and gay, but nothing can bring joy to the heart of a mother who mourns the untimely death of a beloved child.

Three years since, I sent you a lock of hair with emotions how different from the present! I now send a precious little lock which you have often seen on his beautiful brow. I think it will be some satisfaction to look on it once more.

I am sorry not to send the pin, but it is not quite done. I have often thought why was the pin you had made for me, with the little lock I sent you, a mourning one. But it is all right now.

I am indebted to you for two letters, my dear husband, and it is so difficult for me to write I should hardly attempt it, but for the fear you will be discouraged with writing to me. I can only hold the pen between my fingers; my thumb is still useless.

I am greatly obliged to all our friends at Washington and elsewhere for their sympathy and kindness. I have received two letters from Portsmouth, — one from Mrs. Mason and another from Mrs. P., — full of kindness and sympathy. The interest our friends there seem to take in us and in our children is grateful, particularly at such a time as this.

I find it is only six weeks since you left us. I have passed through such painful scenes, and have had so many wearisome days and nights, that the time seems very lengthened.

I heard yesterday that Eliza is sick. I feel very anxious lest she has a fever. Mr. Blake offered to carry me to see her, and I am to go at eleven o'clock.

I am very glad that you say you are well. May Heaven long continue the blessing! The children are now all well, and all at school.

Yours ever, G. W.

JANUARY 10, 1825.

I have just received yours of the 5th, my dear husband, which I am very glad to see, as I have had no letter from

you for two days, and I feel uneasy if a longer time elapses, lest something should be wrong with you. I hope your health is better than it was the last winter.

I thank you for the enclosed scrap of poetry, which I found in your letter. It is very beautiful. It makes me think of Edward's reflections on dear little Charles : though he saw him committed to the silent tomb, he always speaks of him as alive. If any one mentions him as dead, Edward says : " No, he is not dead ; he is alive in a beautiful place, where he has every thing he wants." The poor little fellow was at first inconsolable. I never saw a child so affected at such an event. He wept till it seemed as though his little heart would break. Among other things which seemed to renew his grief, was the little wagon. He said he had "no one now to help him drag the wagon." Dr. W. was here and saw Neddy's grief, and he tried to console him by describing the pleasures of the place to which the dear child had gone; and Edward smiled, and said he would not cry any more. And the idea that Charles has every thing he wants has perfectly satisfied him. Is he not more rational than those who are older? *I* feel that he is.

Julia saw a beautiful pair of socks which she wished to buy for Mrs. Jaudon's baby, and I intended she should have had the pleasure ; but I forgot it, or I could not attend to it, for I have been reminded.

We are almost frozen here. I hope it is more mild where you are.

Mrs. Blake, I think, will go, though she does not say much about it. Her only difficulty is to know what to do with George. I shall be too late for the mail. Adieu.

Yours ever, G. W.

Boston, Jan. 14, 1827.

I was very happy, my dear husband, to receive a short letter from you yesterday, and was very sorry not to answer it, as I did not write the day before. I went to see Mrs. Bliss, and stayed some time, and then good cousin Eliza came and stayed till it was too late.

Julia is sitting by me, and trying to write with red ink; so I use the same, as she thinks it looks prettier. She desires me to say it is our birthday. I have seen too many to feel it a joyful anniversary, though as our dear little daughter's is united with mine, it cannot fail of being interesting to me. The dear little soul has been saving every cent of her money for a long time for something, — no one in the world knew for what, — counting it almost daily, to see if she had gained any thing. She said she took as much pleasure as a miser in counting her money.

To-day the secret is out. She wished to buy mother a pair of bracelets to match her pearl ornaments, with amethyst clasps! As she was not able to go out herself, she confided it to William; but he persuaded her to wait till she was well enough to select them herself.

I thank you, my dearest love, for a short letter written Thursday evening. I rejoice with you on the arrival of Mr. Bliss. He will be a comfort to you, and I am most happy to say their baby is considered out of danger. I saw Mrs. B. yesterday, and she was in good spirits. I have heard this morning that it is almost well.

Cousin Eliza is coming to dine with us to-day. Julia sends much love, and wishes me to say that she hopes for a letter. She thinks it is our due.

I received with delight Mr. Canning's speech in Parliament. He is a jewel in the crown of Great Britain. Such a mind is one of Heaven's best gifts. Every other earthly possession is dross to it. You will think, I fancy, that I am in the heroic vein this morning. I do feel inspired, with two letters from you, and reading Mr. Canning's speech; but I am, As ever, entirely yours,

GRACE WEBSTER.

BOSTON, Jan. 18, 1827.

I have been reading this morning a speech of yours, my beloved husband, which makes me hail this anniversary of your birth with increased delight. May Heaven add blessings with years; and many, many may it add to a life so valued

and so valuable! I pity the man so dead to every sentiment, not only of honor but honesty, that could need an argument to convince him of the justice of the claim you urged; and I blush for the honor of our country that there should be a majority of such sordid souls in Congress. I hope you will pardon me for meddling with such high matters. I hope you will find some relief from your labors now you have Mr. Bliss. I am sorry he should be made unhappy by the illness of their little boy; but he will be doubly happy to know that it is quite well again. Oh, that is happiness beyond expression!

We are all well, though very cold. Our windows have not been free from frost since night before last.

Julia wrote you a letter, which I shall send with this. She is mortified to send it, but it costs her a great deal of labor to write, and I am not willing she should go over it again. It is her first attempt at writing.

Aunt Mary, Daniel, and Julia join with me in love. Daniel says, tell papa I have read his speech. And he as well as Julia are very decided in favor of the bill. Adieu.

Yours ever, G. W.

P. S. I have said nothing of poor Neddy. He has not yet returned from school. Here he comes, almost frozen. He says his feet were freezing at school, and Miss B. would not let him warm them! He wishes me to give a great deal of love to papa. We have had quite a discussion about the seal. "Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here" is the one Julia has chosen for hers. Neddy says that he thinks it is a good one, for we did not want papa to go away.

FRIDAY MORNING, 11 o'clock, Dec. 1827.

The first tribute of my heart is to the God who gives me strength to write, and the first of my pen to you, my best beloved.

I need not say how much I rejoice to hear of your safe and rapid journey; but I do not trust myself to say one

word further on the subject, so different has Providence ordered things from what I had promised myself. I am as comfortable since you left, but I fear I do not make much progress; but I beg you will not be too anxious about me, nor too much enhance the value of this poor life by your love for me.

Dr. Post is to be here this morning. I have rather a dread of seeing him. I fear I am apt to be depressed more after a consultation. I can hardly tell why.

This is not such a letter as I would write you, my dearest husband; but such as it is, I know you will be glad to receive it from

Your devoted G. W.

SATURDAY MORNING, 10 o'clock.

I wrote you yesterday, my beloved husband, a very poor letter; but I flatter myself that a poor letter from me will be as acceptable as a good one from another.

I am sorry you do not get letters every day; but do not, my dear love, be too anxious about me. I felt in better spirits after Dr. Post was here, though I dreaded to see him. I would not have you, my dear husband, put yourself to the hardship of returning so soon as you talked of when you left, if I should continue as comfortable as I am now, though I sometimes feel the want of your cheering presence, and dear Daniel's kind and affectionate looks. But I am, in other respects, as well off as I can be anywhere. I am greatly obliged to all my friends for their kindness, and for all the kind inquiries of those at Washington. Please return my acknowledgments and my love, particularly to Mr. and Mrs. Agg. It was among my most pleasant anticipations that I should have a sincere and hearty welcome from them; but I endeavor to be perfectly submissive to this dispensation of Providence. I feel persuaded it is all for some wise purpose; but it is sometimes hard to say, "Not my will but Thine be done."

I fear you will hardly be able to read this, which I write lying on the sofa.

I hope your health still continues good, and that we shall meet again under more favorable circumstances than we parted.

Farewell, dearest and best. May Heaven bless and keep you! prays

Your own affectionate G. W.

P. S. Julia desires much love. Neddy is upstairs.

This was the last letter she ever wrote to her husband; and upon the back of this and that which precedes it Mr. Webster wrote, "My dear Grace's two last letters."

The following has been related as the manner in which Mr. Webster became engaged to this loving and devoted wife. He saw her first, when he was a young lawyer at Portsmouth, and she was Miss Grace Fletcher. At one of his visits he had, probably with a view of utility and enjoyment, been holding skeins of silk thread for her, when suddenly he stopped, saying, —

"Grace, we have been engaged in untying knots; let us see if we can tie a knot which will not untie for a life-time."

He then took a piece of tape, and, after beginning a knot of a peculiar kind, gave it to her to complete. This was the ceremony and ratification of their engagement. And in the little box marked by him with the words "Precious Documents," containing the letters of his early courtship, this unique memorial was found, — the knot never untied.

The same warmth of feeling which he exhibited towards his wife, extended to the other members

of his family. He was very affectionate, tender, and considerate in his home life.

Fletcher Webster used to tell an anecdote which, with others already related, serves to illustrate Mr. Webster's gentle method of treating his children. Fletcher observed, one rainy night when his father was out, that the front door was locked. Thinking that if his father should return he would be locked out, and perhaps be put to much inconvenience, Fletcher unlocked the door. It so happened that on that very night some rogue slipped into the hall, and stripped the hat-tree of all the garments that were hanging upon it.

"I first heard of the robbery at breakfast," said Fletcher; "and instantly remembered that I had unfastened the door on the previous evening. In a faltering voice I told what I had done. My father and mother exchanged glances; and seeing me about to burst into tears, father called me to him, took me upon his knee, and after speaking some gentle words of comfort, explained my mistake. He told me why the door should be locked, and how he could enter, though it might be fastened."

A few years before his death, Mr. Webster had a double and terrible affliction. At the same time that his daughter, Mrs. Julia Webster Appleton, lay dying of consumption, the remains of his son Edward were being brought back from Mexico, where he had lost his life fighting the battles of his country. Mr. Webster was in Boston, awaiting the arrival of the remains of the son and the last

hour of the beloved daughter. He was very much bowed down and broken with grief. He had been retained by the Lowell Railroad to go before a committee of the Legislature which was then in session, to procure some grant, or to resist some measure directed against their charter. The hearing was held in the hall of the House of Representatives; because, when it was known that Mr. Webster would appear as counsel, there was always a crowd anxious to see and hear him. He appeared before the committee, with other counsel, to argue his client's cause. When the committee adjourned, and he came out, he took my arm and we walked down the steps of the State House, toward Mr. Paige's house in Summer Street, where he was stopping with Mrs. Webster. As we came into Winter Street (Mr. Appleton's house was in this street) he stopped at his daughter's door. I saw that he was very much affected.

"Come in a moment," said he, "and see poor Julia; I cannot pass the house without stopping, although I have been in four times to-day already."

So I entered the hall.

"Go up," he whispered.

It was a raw July day, I remember, although the sun shone brightly; it was one of those deceitful days peculiar to our climate. The door which led to Mrs. Appleton's room was thrown open; she was seated in front of an open grate, surrounded by her nurses. The glass over the mantle revealed her face to me, although I was behind her; it was more corpse-like than any living face I had ever

seen. She had her father's eyes, those great black lustrous eyes; and the contrast with this deathly expression was very startling. Mrs. Appleton had recognized the voice of her father, who had remained downstairs. I was announced, and stepped forward and took her hand. She merely grasped my hand in return, and immediately spoke of her father.

"Did he wear an overcoat to-day?" said she.

I told her that he did not.

"Father, oh, how can you expose yourself so? Do, for my sake, put on an overcoat! It is very imprudent in you to be out in such weather without an overcoat."

She seemed absorbed in his welfare. He did not come into the room; and when I shook her hand and passed out, he was waiting by the foot of the stairs; he was in tears, but restrained any audible expression of grief.

As soon as we had passed out he took my arm, and we started down the street to Mr. Paige's house. His whole expression was that of the deepest grief. He seemed to be absorbed in a terrible struggle until we got to the door of Mr. Paige's house. We passed in, and Mr. Webster threw himself upon the sofa in the parlor. No one was there, and he burst into a paroxysm of grief, such as I do not think I ever before witnessed. He wept and wept, as if his heart would break.

"That poor child," said he, "there she is suffering and dying, and, just like her mother, thinking

of everybody but herself. That is what affects me so, — to see the poor child dying, and not thinking of herself, but of everybody else first. She is the best woman that ever lived except her mother! What shall I do? What shall I do?"

Mr. Webster was completely overcome by his grief. He dropped asleep after a while, and I left him.

Mr. Webster was very tenacious of early friendships. Those which he formed in college he cherished with unabated interest till death. Letters written at different times in the course of nearly half a century breathe the same spirit of devoted attachment. Writing to a friend of his youth, Mr. Bingham, in 1802, he says: —

"I thank you for the expressions of friendship your letter contained, and for the assurance that a part of your time is devoted to me. At this period of our acquaintance I need not tell you what pleasure I receive from your letters, nor with what exultation my heart glows under the impression that our early congenial attachment will never be sundered. It may look a little like vanity, flattery, and puerility; but I think I may say that you will continue to occupy the parlor of my affections till Madam comes. Madam, you know, must have the parlor; but even then you shall not be cast off into the kitchen."

Such professions of lasting friendship are often made by the young, and forgotten. Not so with Mr. Webster. A letter from him to the same gentleman, dated Washington, Feb. 5, 1849, shows the

sincerity with which he wrote in 1802. It is as follows: —

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5, 1849.

MY DEAR OLD CLASSMATE, ROOM-MATE, AND FRIEND, — It gives me very true pleasure to hear from you, and to learn that you are well. Years have not abated my affectionate regard. We have been boys together and men together, and now are growing old together. But you always occupy the same place in my remembrance and good wishes. You are still James Hervey Bingham, with your old bass-viol, with "Laus Deo" painted upon it (I hope you have got it yet); and I am the same D. W. whom you have known at Exeter, at Lempster, at Captain John McClure's, at Hanover, at Charlestown, at Salisbury, at Alstead, at Portsmouth, Claremont, Boston, and Washington.

And now, my dear friend, after this retrospective glimpse, let me say that I know nothing of those who are coming into power; that I expect to possess no particular influence or association with them: but that, if any occasion arises in which I can be useful to you, you can command my most attentive services.

Will you please give my love to a lady whom I had once the honor of knowing as Miss Charlotte Kent?

DANIEL WEBSTER.

J. H. BINGHAM, Esq.

Writing to another classmate, in 1803, he says: "Enviable was my fortune, last week, in having Bingham with me three days. Seven years of intimacy has made him dear to me; and he is like a good old penknife, — the longer you have it the better it proves, and wears brighter till it wears out."

In another letter, written in 1804, to the same gentleman, Rev. Thomas A. Merrill, of Middlebury, Vt., he says: —

"I am happy in the opportunity of spending — I mean, of enjoying — a half-hour with Merrill. What is this world worth without the enjoyment of friendship and the cultivation of the social feelings of the heart? For a life consumed in money-making, fame-seeking, and noise-making I would not give more than eighteen pence, which is seventeen pence half-penny and one farthing more than it is worth. O Thomas, Thomas, I wish I could see you! . . . My heart is now so full of matters of importance to be whispered into the ear of a trusty friend, that I think I could pour them into yours till you would have no room to receive them."

The entire correspondence of these gentlemen evinces a mutual confidence and esteem which continued during a long life.

Mr. Webster loved those friends most who sought his society from unselfish motives; who expected neither office nor emolument of him. Writing to Mr. Blatchford, in 1851, he says: —

"It is my fervent wish that your friendship, as a source of happiness to me, may continue to refresh and gladden my way through all the little remainder of the path which is yet to be trodden by me. Heaven's blessing rest on you and yours, and may you see many, many happy days when all that you know of me shall be matter of memory!"

Mr. Isaac P. Davis used to say that, during his long acquaintance with Mr. Webster, he never knew him to speak ill of anybody; nor would he ever

allow scandal of others to be spoken in his presence. He always checked young people, if he heard them discussing freely the faults of others. To his own children he would say, on such occasions: "Come, my children, have you not said enough?" He once remarked to Mr. Davis: "In my youth, I used sometimes to be severe in my criticisms; but my feelings have now changed. I always regret the utterance of a harsh word." The desire to obliterate the memory of bitter political controversies is nowhere more strongly manifested than in his request to the editor of his Works, to blot out all personal allusions and soften all harsh expressions. This, too, was made with special reference to his reply to one of the most malignant attacks ever made upon a public man. The accomplished scholar who had that work in charge (Mr. Everett) said in reply: "I will try to soften the language of that speech, but it is difficult to make a trip-hammer strike softly." Mr. Webster loved to see old disputes adjusted, and alienated friends reconciled. For this purpose his own kind offices were often tendered to others. This trait of his character is happily illustrated in the history of two eminent Missourians, Colonel Benton and John Wilson, which I have already narrated.

It was Mr. Webster's custom in debate to give to an opponent all the advantage which his character, station, and ability ought in reason to command. He admitted the full force of his opponent's arguments, and stated them in reply with all fairness and candor, sometimes even more forcibly and clearly

than the opponent himself. He considered well the strength and munitions of the fortress before he opened his fire. He calculated carefully the enemy's advantages, and compared them with his own. When convinced that his own position was impregnable, he dismissed care and gave himself up to the "repose of conscious power." There is a single expression of his which indicates a governing principle of his public life, — one which ought to be engraven in letters of gold over the entrance of every court of justice, every hall of legislation, and every church in the land. It is this: "I war with principles, and not with men." The occasion on which it was uttered was this: During the heated controversy about nullification, men became personal in their debates. Sometimes violence was threatened to individuals. Many armed themselves to repel an assault if they should be attacked. Mr. Webster was prominent in the debate; but, as usual, discussed the avowed sentiments of his antagonists, and not their private character. His son, anxious for his father's safety, once inquired of him why he, too, did not arm himself. Other gentlemen did, and advantage might be taken of his defenceless condition. His reply was: —

"My son, I war with principles, and not with men. I give no occasion for a personal assault. Besides," he added, drawing himself up to his full height, "few men would venture to assail me in the street; and, if one should, he would probably be put to rest for a fortnight for his temerity."

If every public speaker and writer would adopt

the same rule of controversy, to "war with principles and not with men," it would almost regenerate our politics. It would allay party animosities and soften sectional prejudices. Only in two instances during his long public life did Mr. Webster call forth the personal animosity of any opponent. Twice he was challenged to fight a duel by John Randolph, of Roanoke. The first challenge was in 1816, for words spoken in debate by Mr. Webster. The quarrel appears to have been amicably adjusted, as a letter from Mr. Randolph shows. Mr. Webster kept no copy of his reply to the challenge.

On one occasion, his public life and principles had been severely handled by an ardent politician in the Senate. The attack lasted for some two hours. Mr. Webster seemed, in the mean time, to be writing at his desk, taking notes and preparing for a reply. After the gentleman had closed his remarks, Mr. Webster rose with great deliberation and dignity. All eyes were turned towards him. After a telling silence, he began: —

"Mr. President, if the Senator who has just taken his seat is not too much fatigued, I move that the Senate do now go into an executive session."

He made no other reply.

One of the most graceful and courtly passages in intellectual jousting, which the history of legislation records, is found among the last words of debate which passed between the two great champions in the contest between the Federal Government and South Carolina. Mr. Calhoun rose to

explain some language of his on which Mr. Webster had been commenting.

"That explanation," said Mr. Webster, "brings us back upon the old field of controversy where we have already broken many a lance. I am not disposed to measure weapons again with the Senator from South Carolina."

"Nor I," replied Mr. Calhoun, "with the Senator from Massachusetts."

Among the many instances of Mr. Webster's thorough kindness of heart, the following may be related: —

Many years ago, a man by the name of Joshua Bean, a classmate of Mr. Webster at Dartmouth, lived in Boston. His wife kept a straw-bonnet shop in Newbury (now Washington) Street, next door to the corner of Winter Street, and contrived to support herself, her husband, an aged mother, and one child. Mr. Bean, though college-taught and a very polite and kind-hearted man, had no faculty for business of any kind, and had failed previous to his removing to Boston from the country. His creditors several times attached the little stock in trust of his wife, and poor Bean, in such emergencies, always went to Mr. Webster for aid; and the distinguished lawyer and generous-hearted man, as often as he came, took up his case and went into court and cleared him. Mr. Bean often told of this assistance with grateful pride, and of Mr. Webster's refusal to receive any pecuniary reward for his services.

A young man, son of an humble mechanic of

Boston, desirous of admission to West Point Military Academy, but having no friends to aid him in a cause requiring very influential agency, once went into Mr. Webster's office in Court Street, in Boston, introduced himself, and solicited that his name might be proposed. Mr. Webster interested himself in the matter, and obtained the appointment. The young man rewarded his generous confidence by diligent study and good conduct; stood with the first four in his class through the whole course, graduated with honor, received an appointment, and afterwards withdrew from the service to act as civil engineer.

Mr. Webster, on one occasion, went down to Dennis, Cape Cod, to recreate himself with gunning and fishing, and stopped over night at a public house. Rising very early the next morning, in his rambles he met with a retired sea-captain, and asked him if he knew of a place where he could get boarded. The captain replied by directing him to the tavern. Mr. Webster rejoined that he already boarded there, but wanted a more retired place. The captain told him that he did not himself take boarders, but he might come and get breakfast with him, and take such fare as they had. They went home together, became better acquainted, and the result was that Mr. Webster became a boarder in the captain's family, to their mutual satisfaction, — he liking the terms of sociability on which they stood, the table and lodgings, the intelligence of his landlord, who had been a merchant captain and was full of information about

foreign cities; and they admiring Mr. Webster's good nature and condescension and endless fund of entertainment. A few months afterwards, a vacancy occurring for a lighthouse-keeper near by, the distinguished boarder procured it for the captain, he having intimated that he should like such an appointment to help along his livelihood on the shore.

Mr. Webster's pastor at Marshfield, soon after the statesman's death, wrote as follows of his neighborly kindness and generosity: —

"Mr. Webster was a remarkably kind neighbor. He was free to lend any thing that he had upon his mammoth farm, that would be useful to his neighbors. Though he was at so much expense to introduce improvements upon his farm, he was desirous that the neighboring farmers should reap all the benefit they could from them. If he had any thing particularly nice or rare to eat, he did not forget to send portions to the poor and to his neighbors.

"As his parish minister for years, the writer can say that Mr. Webster was uncommonly kind and generous to him. Scarcely did I ever make a pastoral call upon him (and Mr. Webster was very fond of having his minister come to see him at any time, and frequently without ceremony), but what he was ready to impart golden stores from his lips to encourage and instruct; and also would order fruit or vegetables, or something useful for my family, to be put into my carriage to take home.

" Another mark of Mr. Webster's thoughtfulness, justice, and generosity may be mentioned here: that, among the last acts of his life, he ordered that the parish at Marshfield should be settled with and paid all that was its due; and he made a handsome present beyond his tax and subscriptions. Both minister and parish remember this noble act, and will not cease to mourn the loss of their best friend and parishioner, Daniel Webster."

During the winter of 1845, Mr. Webster and Mr. Edward Curtis took the cars together for Washington. Mr. Webster was quite ill, and felt the need of repose. As the cars when they entered were not very much crowded, Mr. Webster turned over the back of one of the seats, and, wrapping his feet in a shawl, placed them on the seat before him and addressed himself to a little quiet slumber. Meanwhile his friend sat on the seat in front of him. The cars gradually filled up, and all the seats were occupied. At this moment a stranger entered, looking about for a seat; and seeing these four places occupied by two gentlemen, he approached, and with the air of a traveller resolved to assert his rights, requested them to make room for him. Mr. Webster was already asleep, and unconscious that anybody was incommoded by his rest. Mr. Curtis informed the stranger that his friend was ill, and greatly needed repose; and begged of him to find a seat in another car, or at least to wait till his fellow-traveller had ended his nap. The stranger would not listen to this proposal; he had paid for his ticket, he said, and had a right to any

vacant seat in the car. Mr. Curtis was loath to disturb Mr. Webster, and still remonstrated, admitting that in ordinary cases the stranger had reason on his side, but in the present instance he thought he ought to yield his claim. The loud conversation aroused the sleeper; and, learning the point in dispute, Mr. Webster said: —

"If I incommode any one, I will make room for him."

He at once gave the stranger a seat, and very soon fell asleep again. Presently the conductor came along to take the tickets. He at once recognized Mr. Webster, who had a free pass on all the roads, North and South, except the Baltimore and Washington road, and the Old Colony road. The conductor inquired of Mr. Curtis in a subdued tone about Mr. Webster's health. Mr. Curtis told him that Mr. Webster was not well, and greatly needed rest; but his duties at Washington were pressing, and he was obliged to take the cars, though his health required the attention of a physician and a nurse.

The conductor said that he would presently make arrangements in one of the saloons for Mr. Webster, where he would be more at his ease.

After the conductor had passed on, the stranger spoke to Mr. Curtis with evident anxiety about their recent conversation.

"Allow me," said he, "to inquire if this gentleman by my side is Senator Webster."

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Curtis, "that is Mr. Webster."

"Is it possible?" said the stranger. "How unfortunate I am! What a blunder I have made! I am very sorry for my apparent discourtesy; it was quite unintentional. I must ask your kind offices to explain the matter to Mr. Webster. Sir, I am an Englishman; I have come to this country on important business; I have just arrived at New York, and am now on my way to Washington to secure advice respecting my affairs. I have letters to Mr. Webster from his friends in England. The chief object of my present journey to the Capital is to see him. I hope you will explain all this to Mr. Webster, as he will certainly recognize me as the intrusive stranger who annoyed him upon the road. I would not for the world have disturbed him, had I known his real character and the delicate condition of his health."

Mr. Curtis assured him that Mr. Webster would take no offence, and that he might be entirely at rest on that point. When the facts were related to Mr. Webster, he only smiled at the stranger's anxiety, and observed that the slight interruption of his sleep had quite escaped his memory.

Mr. Webster had many enthusiastic admirers, who never saw his face, and whose only knowledge of him was derived from his speeches. Men who have thus learned lessons of wisdom from the pages where his words, so fitly spoken, were printed, have often manifested an intense anxiety to see the orator, to gaze upon his form and face, to watch his movements and gait, and to listen with eager curiosity to stories of his social and domestic

life. I made one of my visits to Washington in 1846. Mr. Webster preceded me on the road by a single day. I took the boat from Philadelphia to Baltimore, where I accidentally met a gentleman who was on his way to Washington. We entered into conversation. He said: —

"I am from Kentucky, and have just been North for the first time in my life. Yesterday, much to my gratification, I had a sight of Mr. Webster. We passed each other on the steps of the Astor House. I had seen descriptions of his person, and had formed in my mind an idea of the man. I knew him the moment my eyes fell upon him, for I felt certain there could be but one man in the country who could present such a figure, face, and eyes. I inquired at the bar if Daniel Webster was stopping at that house. I was told that he had just left for Washington. I at once followed his carriage to the dépôt to see him alight, and to have an opportunity of observing him more accurately. I regretted that I could not leave in the same train which he took, and resolved to see more of him at Washington."

This gentleman was perfectly enthusiastic about Mr. Webster. He talked of nothing else while we were together. On our arrival at the city, he went to Willard's Hotel, and I to Mr. Webster's house. He gave me his name, and requested me to call on him at his lodgings. Going to church the next day, Mr. Webster said: —

"Corwin is in the city, and will take a quiet dinner with me. Have you any friend whom you would like to invite to occupy a seat with us?"

I mentioned my new acquaintance, and remarked that he told me he knew Mr. Corwin. "I will send a note to Corwin," said Mr. Webster, "and ask him about your friend."

He wrote with a pencil on a card, "Do you know C. A., of Kentucky?"

The servant took the card to Mr. Corwin, while we waited in the street, and brought back the following reply: —

"I know him well, and a glorious good fellow he is, too."

I thereupon invited Mr. A. to dine at Mr. Webster's. He came in full dress, and seemed delighted with the invitation. Mr. Webster was in one of his happiest moods. He talked, in monologue, for several hours on topics appropriate to the day; the Sabbath services which we had just attended; the Bible, its poetry, sublimity, and pathos; contrasting the Hebrew lyrics with the Odes of Anacreon and Horace; quoting passages from the book of Job and the prophets, and pointing out their infinite superiority to Homer and Virgil. The stranger was completely fascinated, and forgot the hasty flight of the hours. At ten o'clock we took our leave. I went with Mr. A. to his hotel. After we passed out of Mr. Webster's house, he threw up his hands and shouted for very gladness.

"That exceeds all that I have ever heard," said he. "I always thought Mr. Webster had the greatest intellect of the age, and have read and studied every speech he has made. But while I supposed he stood in unapproachable grandeur as an orator,

I thought him cold. I supposed he had no soul; that his manners were forbidding and repulsive. But I see my mistake. He excels more in genial conversation than in oratory. His heart is as great as his head. If every citizen in the United States could have enjoyed that interview to-day, Webster would be chosen President by acclamation."

One of Mr. Webster's most prominent traits was his fondness for old familiar scenes, and his kindly and retentive memory of old acquaintances and friends. In the summer of 1845 I went with him to Rye Beach. He said he wished to see the ocean from the point where he first saw it in his life.

"I saw the ocean for the first time that I remember," he said, "from Rye Beach. I was then a boy, at Exeter Academy. I walked with another lad from Exeter to Rye Beach, ten miles, and arrived just before the sun was setting. I remember distinctly the impression made upon me at that time, — a sensation such as has never since come to me, much as I have looked at, and love to look at, the sea. I never have seen Rye Beach from that day to this, and I want to see if it looks as it did then."

We went down there, and among other places visited Exeter and Little Harbor; and then he gave me an account of the Wentworths. Old Governor Benning Wentworth was the elder, and John was his nephew. They held their offices under the Crown, and made Little Harbor their place of residence. The old family mansion stands

there now, and it has the aspect of a sort of a fortified place.

This old Benning Wentworth was an aristocrat, and John was an ambitious and roguish fellow who was fond of racing horses. His uncle was rather hard upon him, and finally John went home to England. There he attended races the greater part of his time. The Earl of Wentworth, with whom he was connected, was a peer and statesman in England, and a great sportsman. John Wentworth went to the races, and bet heavily on the Earl of Wentworth's horses. Without knowing any thing of their quality, he bet on the Earl's horses wherever they ran. The Earl heard of it, and asked who this young fellow was? The reply was that he was from America, bore the name of Wentworth, and was the nephew of the Colonial Governor of New Hampshire.

"Well," said the Earl, "bring him to me."

The Earl liked John so well, that he took him to his house, and made a favorite of him. The result of it was that the governorship was taken from the uncle and given to John. A great sensation was created at the time by the change. The two lived in the old mansion at Little Harbor; and in it were many family portraits and much plate well worth seeing. A visit to it brought up many reminiscences to Mr. Webster. The person then occupying it was a Mr. Cushing, who married a daughter of Jacob Sheafe, he being one of the wealthy and influential men of that name and family in Portsmouth, when Mr. Webster was

a young man practising law there. This daughter was then a young lady, and had not seen Mr. Webster for more than thirty years. She was now a matron, and resided on the Wentworth estate. On the morning that we were there she was away from home, shopping in Portsmouth. The servant gave us permission to look about the house as we waited, and we examined with considerable interest the family portraits which hung about the walls. In one of the rooms was a portrait of Jacob Sheafe. Mr. Webster said: "That is an excellent likeness of old Jacob Sheafe, at whose table I often used to dine when I was in Portsmouth." When Mrs. Cushing returned, she did not recognize Mr. Webster; and she looked a little surprised to see strangers there. She evidently had not the most remote suspicion who her guest was; but Mr. Webster said: —

"Don't you know me, madam? I have taken the liberty to come in on account of old acquaintance."

"I am very happy to see you," she replied; but in a way which showed that she was still in the dark as to who he was.

Mr. Webster then observed: —

"I presume you don't recollect me, but I recollect you. I have often dined at your father's table when I was a resident of Portsmouth, — then a much younger man, as you were a younger woman. Would not you remember Daniel Webster?"

"This is not Daniel Webster?" said she, in surprise.

"It is, what is left of me," replied he.

She took his hand most warmly; said she was much honored; and, her feelings overcoming her, she wept freely. She gave us a lunch; and, as we sat about the table, reminiscences of past events gave rise to considerable conversation.

"Mrs. Cushing," said Mr. Webster, "when I was in Paris, in 1842, at the French court, one of the first questions asked me by Louis Philippe, in speaking of friends made by him while in exile in America, was of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Sheafe. He told me that he was a guest of your parents when he was friendless and penniless in this country. There, in that humble family, he found hospitality and kindness. I told him they had long been dead. After some further conversation, he told this anecdote of your mother. He said that, on one occasion, at a dinner where there were numerous guests beside himself, there was on the table for dessert a large, rich, and rare pineapple, — that being then an uncommon luxury. He said it was near him; and as he was a sort of a member of the family, having been domesticated with them for some time, he began to cut this pine. Mrs. Sheafe caught sight of him, and cried out: 'O Lord, Prince, don't cut that! We did not intend to have it cut; it was only put on for an ornament!' The King of France told me that anecdote of your mother, at the same time telling me of the hospitality and kindness which he received from both your parents, and of the simplicity and honesty which marked their

manners. He said he never found more true and hospitable friends than old Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Sheafe, of Portsmouth."

Mr. Webster's personal courage is well illustrated by the following anecdote. During the violent party excitements of 1812, about the time of the declaration of war against England, the press of Mr. Hanson — the proprietor of the "Federal Republican," at Baltimore — was destroyed by a mob. On the revival of the paper in another building, the premises were again assaulted, and the mob was fired upon by Mr. Hanson, General Henry Lee, of the Revolutionary army (father of General R. E. Lee), General Lingan, another Revolutionary officer, Dr. Warfield, an intimate friend of Washington, and other Federal gentlemen, who had assembled as volunteers to protect the doomed press. The mob numbered two thousand, and the city authorities advised the besieged party to surrender their arms and to allow themselves to be locked up in the city jail, to secure their personal safety. They consented to be so treated, though they were assailed by missiles while under the escort of the mayor to the jail. During the afternoon of the same day, the mob again assembled about the jail, threatening the lives of those within. They soon broke open the doors and cells of the prison, and proceeded to beat the men who had been there secluded to save them from violence. The mob was led by an athletic butcher, named John Mumma. General Lingan was killed by him on the spot. General Lee was wounded, so that

he became a cripple for life, and died six years later of his injuries; and several of the other gentlemen were left for dead near the jail who afterwards revived. The scene was terrific, and the leaders of the mob were regarded as monsters of cruelty. The name of John Mumma became notorious throughout the country; and to those who met him his ferocious aspect revealed his brutal character.

Some months after this occurrence, Mr. Webster and a party of friends, being on their way to Washington, were delayed by the breaking down of the coach some fifteen miles north of Baltimore. It was evening. The driver had no means at hand of repairing the coach; he therefore returned with the horses to the last station, to procure another carriage. Some of the passengers went with him; others took shelter in the nearest houses. Mr. Webster, who was in great haste to reach Washington to attend a trial before the Supreme Court, resolved to push on to the nearest village, some three miles ahead, and procure a private conveyance to Baltimore that night. He at last reached the tavern of that village, and was ushered by the landlord into a small room which opened into the bar-room, which was crowded with people engaged in loud and angry discussion. Supper was ordered; and while it was preparing Mr. Webster sent for the landlord, to find out whether he could procure a chaise and driver to take him to Baltimore. He told the innkeeper who he was, and why he was in haste. The man made some

objection on account of the darkness of the night and the lateness of the hour; but finally said that he would try to accommodate him. He went off, and soon returned to say that he had found a man who was willing to take him to Baltimore. As the landlord passed in and out, Mr. Webster watched the movements and character of the men in the bar-room. He noticed that their leading speaker was a tall, muscular man, of rather fierce and truculent aspect, who seemed to take the lead of the conversation and to be the oracle of the crowd. Mr. Webster asked the maid-servant in attendance at his supper-table who that man was.

"Why," said she, with great simplicity, "don't you know him? That's John Mumma, the butcher."

Mr. Webster then recollected Mumma's share in the Baltimore riots, but gave himself no further thought about the man. As soon as his hunger was appeased, he notified the landlord that he desired to set out for the city forthwith. The chaise was immediately driven to the door, and Mr. Webster discovered, by the light of the landlord's lantern, that the identical leader of the mob, John Mumma, was to be his driver. It occurred to him at that moment, as he afterwards said, that, as this man had butchered General Lingan for being a Federalist, he might deem it an act of patriotism to dispatch Mr. Webster also. There was no time for deliberation, however; he had proceeded too far to recede. Said he: —

"I felt young and strong, and thought that no man could easily put me under the wheel."

The crowd, having learned the name of the stranger, huddled round the chaise to get a look at his face. Mr. Webster sprang into the vehicle, followed by his companion. The two drove for three or four miles at a rapid pace, without exchanging a word. At length, after entering a dense grove, Mumma drew in his horse and came to a dead halt. Turning to his companion, he said: —

"Are you Daniel Webster?"

"That is my name," replied Mr. Webster.

"Do you know who I am?" said the driver.

"I do," was the reply. "You are John Mumma, the butcher."

"You know me, then," he resumed; "and are you not afraid to drive over this road alone with me in the night?"

"Not in the least," said Mr. Webster. "Why should I fear you?"

"I don't know," said the murderer; "but I think there is not another Federalist in the country who would say as much. I am glad to see you," he added, "and to free my mind about those Baltimore riots. We who attacked the jail had no ill-will against General Lingan, General Lee, and the other men shut up there. We were misled by others. We were told, out in the country, that the Republic was to be ruined and betrayed to the enemy by traitors; that a nest of them had a press in Baltimore, and were every week publishing their treason to the world, and plotting the ruin of the nation. We thought it would be a good

deed to destroy them. We went to the city under this impression. When the crowd assembled, all seemed crazy with excitement, and we thought we were doing the best thing we could for our country in attacking those men as we did."

Mumma's story was long and minute, and when it was finished they had reached Barnum's Hotel, in Baltimore. Mr. Webster alighted in safety; and when he offered the stipulated fee to Mumma, he refused to take it, saying that he was glad of a chance to explain the part he took in the Baltimore riots to one of the injured party; and, wheeling round his chaise, he rattled away over the pavements on his way home.

CHAPTER X.

PERSONAL TRAITS. — CONTINUED.

MR. WEBSTER'S sense of humor was keen and easily provoked. He saw the ludicrous side of things, and was quick to seize upon it and make the most of it. Some anecdotes may be related which serve to exhibit how largely this trait was developed in him.

Fletcher and I once went to New York to meet Mr. Webster; and in the cars I saw for the first time one of those lanterns that have since become so common, through which the conductor puts his arm, beneath the light, and with which he is thus enabled to use both hands while holding his own light. I happened to think of this a few days after, while we were all at dinner in New York, and I described the lantern to Mr. Webster. He saw at once what it was, and said: —

"What a grand thing that is! Is it not surprising that it was not invented before? Fletcher, order two or three of those, and send them down to Marshfield. They will be very convenient for the man to use about the barn, when he is called on to harness the horses in the night, and so on. Get two or three of them to send to Marshfield."

He turned to me with rather a significant look, and added: —

"What might a man be said to be doing, if he went into battle with one of those lanterns?"

"Give it up," said I.

"Fighting with light arms!"

We laughed, and there was a call from the other end of the table to know what the joke was. This was just after Mr. Webster had delivered his address before the New York Historical Society, in which he had spoken of the lost books of Livy; and to the call for the joke at which we had been laughing, he replied: —

"No; it is gone. It is like the lost books of Livy, it can never be brought to light again, — it's too late!"

One day I was present at a gathering at a gentleman's house in Boston, and stood leaning against the mantel, engaged in conversation with another person. I was commenting on one of those hideous-looking, white-cravated engravings of Mr. Webster which was in the room. He was to be present, but had not been announced. As we stood there talking, I turned about, and there was Mr. Webster.

"Ah!" said I, "we were commenting on this picture, and it does not please us. How does it strike you?"

"The last time that I went up to New Hampshire," he replied, "before the railroad was built above Concord, I rode in a stage, with but one other passenger, an old gentleman. I asked him

where he was from, and he said, 'Salisbury.' Then I was interested, and tried to find out his name.

"'Did you know Mr. Webster?' I said.

"'Old Captain Eb. Webster? I guess I did. I knew him and all his family. They were my neighbors and friends; and a nice old man he was.'

"'Did you know him intimately?'

"'Very intimately. He had a son who was a very extraordinary man. Ezekiel Webster was a son of Captain Webster, and was the greatest man New Hampshire ever raised. I was in the Concord court-house, where I was a juryman at the trial, when he fell dead. He was arguing a case very eloquently, when he suddenly fell to the floor. It made much excitement among the people. He was a great man, and there is nobody left like him. He was a powerful, noble-looking person. We were all proud of Ezekiel Webster; very proud of him. We should have sent him to Congress, if he had lived.'

"'Had Captain Webster any other children?'

"'There were one or two girls, but they died young, I believe; and there were one or two other sons.'

"'Do you remember any thing about any of Ezekiel's brothers?'

"'He had a brother, I think, — a younger brother.'

"'What was his name?'

"'Let me see. Oh, yes; I think his name was Daniel.'

"'Did you ever see him?'

"'I used to see him when he was a boy.'

"'Did you know him at all?'

"'Oh, yes, very well.'

"'Well, is he living?'

"'Well, I guess he is: I never heard of his dying. I never thought any thing about it; but I believe he is a lawyer down about Boston somewhere.'

"'Do you remember what kind of a looking lad he was?'

"'Well, so far as I remember, he was rather a *starn*-looking young man.'

"And," said Mr. Webster, "this is rather a '*starn*' looking portrait! Such is fame."

On one occasion, in a Massachusetts court, Mr. Webster and Mr. Choate were observed frequently interchanging notes. The spectators supposed, of course, that it was the discussion of some legal question. It turned out, however, that they were sending to each other quotations from the English poets. Finally, Mr. Webster sent an extract from Cowper, which Mr. Choate corrected and returned, intimating that there had been a misquotation. Mr. Webster repeated his first version, and claimed that it was right. A messenger was sent for Cowper's "Task;" the place was found, and Mr. Webster saw that the sentiment was as Mr. Choate had corrected it. He smiled, and wrote with a pencil upon the margin of the page containing the disputed passage, "A spurious edition;" and so, like a judicious critic, retreated with honor.

Mr. Webster used to tell the following story. He once had occasion to attend court at Haverhill, in New Hampshire, after his removal to Boston. Among other early friends, he there met an old college chum named Grant, who was a member of the Grafton bar at that time. At the hotel where the lawyers chiefly boarded, there was a good deal of mirth and fun during the evenings. As various parties were joking each other, Mr. Webster drew a bow at a venture, and in one or two instances made a decided hit. He proceeded, as he said, to "call out" Mr. Grant, who was regarded as rather a dull wit. As Mr. Grant had for the moment become the target of their sharpshooting, Mr. Webster went on to say: —

"The first time I ever met Grant was in Hanover, when I was about to enter college. Grant had just taken a ride on horseback, having hired a horse of one man and borrowed a saddle and bridle of another. He had turned the horse into a pasture, and, with the bridle over his head and the saddle upon his back, was returning to his room; and I thought the harness became him well."

After the merriment had subsided, Grant replied: —

"I remember the circumstance well. I was returning home just as the sun was setting, and feeling the chill of an unusually dark shadow falling upon my face, I turned to see who was passing. I noticed a tall, swarthy native, as I supposed, with straight hair and black eyes, who at once inquired

if I could direct him to Moor's Indian Charity School."

This happy retort was enjoyed by none more than by Mr. Webster, and he never forgot the incident. He used to say that this same Grant was quite an original in college. Grant found, at one time, a charge upon his term-bill for the use of the library. He called on President Wheelock, and protested against the injustice of the charge, as he had never taken out a single book. The President replied that the charge was made to every student, presuming that all would choose to avail themselves of the privilege of taking out books; that if he had neglected to do so, the fault was his own, as the library had been open, and he might have taken such books as he wished. Grant paid the bill.

At the close of the next term he brought in an offset to the library fee, in this wise. Grant kept in his room certain articles for sale, such as cake and beer, by which he turned an honest penny. He presented to the President a charge for cake and beer. The astonished officer inquired what this meant, as he had received no such articles. Grant replied that he kept them for sale; that his room was open; and, if any college officer did not avail himself of the privilege, it was his own fault!

Mr. Webster always preferred to do the carving at his own table, and in this art he was very skilful. When no distinguished guests were present, the dinner hour was usually enlivened by a little quiet

humor, by quaint allusions to well-known events, or by the use of peculiar terms used in other parts of the country, but not always understood by those present. Besides his own family, some young friends, employés or agents, usually sat at his table at Marshfield. On such occasions, after helping the ladies, he would turn to some one of the young men present, and with great solemnity ask: —

"Is your name Leathers?"

By this, the person addressed understood him to ask if he would be helped to a portion of the dish. The origin of this singular form of address was this. Many years ago, a tribe of gypsies were living in New Hampshire, principally in Barrington and the adjacent towns. They made excursions all over the State, selling baskets and begging; indeed, begging was their principal vocation. A remnant of the tribe still exists, and some of their descendants have come to honor. On one occasion, a member of this mendicant tribe had an opportunity to do a personal favor to a rich trader in Boscawen named Dix, who, in requital for that kindness, gave out word that he would present to every man bearing the name of Leathers (which was the name of his benefactor), who should call at his store on a certain day, a pound of tobacco and a pint of rum. On the day appointed, the Leatherses mustered in great force, and proved to be a much more numerous body than he had expected to meet. After distributing his donation to the well-known individuals of the tribe, he became suspicious that many of the remaining crowd had no claims upon

his generosity by reason of any relationship to the Leathers race. As fresh applicants for his bounty came up, he addressed to each in turn the significant question: —

"Is *your* name Leathers?"

If the applicant succeeded in proving that it was, he received the coveted boon. This story being blazed abroad, the question afterwards became a by-word in that part of the State. Mr. Webster used it to put his sons and young guests in good humor, and remove the stiffness which sometimes arises from the presence of superiors. Sometimes he merely indicated his query by an inquisitive look, turned fully on the expectant guest; and, if he were a frequent visitor at Marshfield, he often replied before a word was uttered, "Yes, my name *is* Leathers."

Mr. Ruggles, of New York, once asked Mr. Webster if he had seen the junction of the Missouri and the Mississippi. Mr. Webster replied: —

"There is no junction. The Missouri seizes the Mississippi, and carries it captive to New Orleans."

On another occasion, when Mr. Ruggles was urging upon Mr. Webster the importance of the Mississippi as an indissoluble bond of national union, he spoke of it as "the great fact of this country." Mr. Webster, after a short pause, replied: —

"Sir, it may be a great fact; but let me tell you, the great chain of lakes is a very *broad hint!*"

Mr. Webster, talking one day to John Trout, said: "John, you are an amphibious animal." John,

who by the way was well known for drawing an exceedingly long bow, asked what that meant.

"It means, John," returned Mr. Webster, "an animal that lies equally well on land and on water!"

Dr. Danforth was a celebrated physician, but a most intolerably harsh man. Many of the best families employed him, on account of his great skill. He had an only son who was also a physician, and who inherited many of his father's traits. They had a bitter quarrel at one time, and had not spoken to one another for several years. The son, who lived in Dorchester, committed suicide. At the funeral, the house was crowded with the family and friends; and a very near neighbor of the young doctor, Mr. T. K. Jones, was present. The weather was warm, and as the old doctor sat near Mr. Jones, he said: —

"It's a warm day Mr. Jones."

The latter being a little deaf, said: —

"What did you remark?"

"It's a warm day," was the reply.

People started a little, to hear that commonplace remark at such a solemn moment; and Mr. Jones, hearing but partially, and thinking he must be mistaken in what he did hear, leaned forward, and said in an under-tone: —

"I am very deaf, and did not understand you."

"I said it was as hot as hell; do you hear that?"

Every hot day after that, Mr. Webster used to speak of it as "one of Dr. Danforth's days."

In 1850, soon after the passage of the Compromise bill, John Barney, of Baltimore, invited

about thirty Senators and Representatives to dine at a restaurant on Pennsylvania Avenue, in Washington. He had places set for only ten or twelve; but, to his surprise, the whole thirty came; and, to add to his discomfiture, the night happened to be a disagreeable one. Among others present was Mr Webster, then Secretary of State. Never were to be set down to a dinner a crosser or a hungrier company of men; and when at nine o'clock the thirty found places for only ten or twelve to sit at the table, there was a loud roar of laughter. Merriment took the place of anger. Cabinet ministers stood up and waited on foreign ministers, and U. S. senators, in great glee, discharged the duties of Scipio and Sambo. A few glasses of champagne let loose the tongues of all "honorable" gentlemen, and the dinner was long and pleasant, and never was a happier evening passed than was this.

The incident of the evening, or night rather, was between Mr. Webster and Mr. Foote, then Senator for Mississippi. The dinner was ostensibly given to Senator Foote, who was also the governor-elect of Mississippi, and on the eve of leaving Washington to assume his gubernatorial duties at Jackson. Mr. Webster was commissioned to deliver an address to the new Governor Foote. The orator took the head of the table, and began a speech in rhyme, with sparkles of pure poetry in it, that bubbled up and out as if from a Milton or a Byron; and the common rhyme and sparkling poetry ran on from him, it may be a full half hour, it may be more.

Here was Daniel Webster in a new character, — a rhyme builder, a poet. Everybody was astonished and delighted. The plaudits were vociferous; and Mr. Webster would seize hold of them, and other temporary incidents, and weave them into his rhyme.

A pleasant instance of his kindly playfulness is afforded by the following graceful letter. It was addressed to a young lady who had been spending a social evening at Mr. Webster's house, and on account of the rain had substituted a borrowed hood for her own bonnet; and the note in question was delivered with the bonnet, at the residence of the lady, by Mr. Webster, while driving to his office the next morning: —

MONDAY MORNING, March 4, 1844.

MY DEAR JOSEPHINE, — I fear you got a wetting last evening, as it rained fast soon after you left our door; and I avail myself of the return of your bonnet to express the wish that you are well this morning, and without cold.

I have demanded parlance with your bonnet; have asked it how many tender looks it has noticed to be directed under it; what soft words it has heard, close to its side; in what instances an air of triumph has caused it to be tossed; and whether, ever, and when, it has quivered from trembling emotions proceeding from below. But it has proved itself a faithful keeper of secrets, and would answer none of my questions. It only remained for me to attempt to surprise it into confession, by pronouncing sundry names one after another. It seemed quite unmoved by most of these, but at the apparently unexpected mention of one, I thought its ribbands decidedly fluttered!

I gave it my parting good wishes, hoping that it might never cover an aching head, and that the eyes which it

protects from the rays of the sun, may know no tears but of joy and affection.

Yours, dear Josephine, with affectionate regard,

DANIEL WEBSTER.

Of Mr. Webster's daily habits, when free from all restraints of company, I think I may say without egotism that I know as much as any man; for I was with him a great deal, and of course my presence imposed no restraint upon him. He was temperate. He would sometimes take with his dinner a glass of wine or two, but was not in the habit of drinking at other times. He was very regular in the hours of his meals. He rose (particularly at Marshfield) at four o'clock. He told me once that he never let the sun get the start of him; and I have myself heard him up and talking to the men in the field, in the summer, when I have been trying to catch a nap; and then perhaps afterwards he would come up into my room and pull the clothes off my bed, and go through the house, to his sons' room and others, and do the same thing. His habit was to rise in the morning at light, go to the little office in his garden, and begin his correspondence. If he had no secretary with him, he would write himself; if he had, he would dictate: so that sometimes you saw, when breakfast was announced, twenty letters, all franked and sealed and ready to go to the office.

"Now," he would say, "my day's work is done; I have nothing to do but fish."

He had an instinctive sense of propriety in dress as well as language. He discriminated colors as

accurately as thoughts, and wished to see both in their appropriate places. He was particular about the style and quality of his own apparel, and always appeared dressed to suit the occasion and the company. Seeing his little granddaughters dressed in white, he commended the taste that made the selection, observing that children should wear light and simple colors, like the flowers of early spring.

"In later life," he said, "we require gayer colors. In this respect we follow Nature, which brings out its brightest colors at the close of the year, and tinges the forest in autumn with varied and brilliant hues."

His mother's old garden was always cultivated in honor of its former owner. He ordered John Taylor to keep it in good condition, if it required the labor of an extra hand. Till death he loved those species of flowers which used to bloom in his mother's garden. The common carnation pink never failed to be acceptable to him on this account. He always received a bouquet of these flowers with peculiar gratitude. At the time of his great reception in Boston, in July, 1852, from the thousands of elegant bouquets showered upon his head as he drove through the streets a niece of his selected a bunch of carnation pinks, and presented them to him after his arrival at the Revere House. He kissed the hand of the donor, saying: "How fragrant, how delightful are these little flowers, such as bloomed in my mother's garden!" and received this little memorial of his mother's tastes with evident emotion. He gave directions for the

preservation of all the wreaths, and for the transcription of the mottoes attached to them by the donors, that he might read them at his leisure. He was greatly exhausted by the fatigues of the day. This being known to the crowd, with great delicacy of feeling they all withdrew from the house and left him to his repose.

On that day, a little girl said: "I am certain Mr. Webster looked at me, and bowed and smiled, when I threw the flowers into his carriage."

As I have already said, he had an enthusiastic passion for the sea. He did not like small freshwater ponds, — "martin-boxes," as he called them. "I am never lonely," he once said, "by the sea. If you ever build a house for a summer retreat, go to the sea. You will never be lonely there. These little martin-boxes, with their trees and paths, are nothing. Go to the sea for tranquil enjoyment."

It is well known that Mr. Webster never succeeded in accumulating a large fortune. Neither his character nor his tastes fitted him for this. It was fortunate for his country that he was thus constituted. Mammon, like other divinities, brooks no rival; he requires from his worshippers an exclusive devotion. There are several reasons why Mr. Webster did not amass wealth. He never coveted it as an end, but only as a means of doing good and of gratifying his peculiar tastes. This is apparent in many of his early letters. His very indifference to wealth, moreover, led him to intrust the management of his pecuniary affairs too implicitly to the skill and good faith of his agents. His generous

and confiding nature prompted him not seldom to lend his name and influence to enrich others, while embarrassing his own fortunes. He was often prevailed upon to enlist with others in enterprises which promised a liberal return for outlays; but in every instance he was a loser, either by the incompetency or the fraud of those whom he had trusted. It is safe to say that more than one hundred thousand dollars of his professional gains were thus swallowed up.

It is very likely that a different result would have followed in every case, if he could have given personal attention to such matters; but being engrossed in public and professional duties, his private affairs were grievously neglected. Moreover, his habitual liberality being known, he was importuned for public and private charities more than most men in his position; and he was always liberal to a fault. When, too, he engaged in public life, he sacrificed the income of his profession to the public good. By an exclusive devotion to the law, he could easily have earned twenty-five thousand dollars a year, while his income as a Senator or Secretary of State would scarcely support his family in Washington. He has himself given his own views of his character as a financier in a letter which is published in part in the "Memorials of Daniel Webster," by General Lyman. It is as follows:

Boston, Jan. 15, 1849, Monday, 12 o'clock. In C. Court United States, Many *v.* Sizer being on trial, and *Tabero dicente in longum*, and another snow-storm appearing to be on the wing.

My dear Sir, — We are in court yet, and so shall be some days longer. We have the evidence in, and a discus-

sion on the law, preliminary to our summing up, is now going on. I think it will continue the remainder of this day, if it lasts no longer. Mr. Choate will speak to-morrow, and I close immediately after. . . . I am afraid my luck is always bad, and I fear is always to be so. [Mr. Webster then proceeds to speak of what he expects, and why he fears a disappointment and its consequences. He then adds:] It will be said, or may be said hereafter, Mr. Webster was a laborious man in his profession and other pursuits; he never tasted of the bread of idleness; his profession yielded him, at some times, large amounts of income: but he seems never to have aimed at accumulation, and perhaps was not justly sensible of the importance and duty of preservation. Riches were never before his eyes as a leading object of regard. When young and poor, he was more earnest in struggling for eminence than in efforts for making money; and, in after life, reputation, public regard, and usefulness in high pursuits mainly engrossed his attention. He always said, also, that he was never destined to be rich; that no such star presided over his birth; that he never obtained any thing by any attempts or efforts out of the line of his profession; that his friends, on several occasions, induced him to take an interest in business operations; that as often as he did so loss resulted, till he used to say, when spoken to on such subjects, "Gentlemen, if you have any projects for money-making, I pray you keep me out of them; my singular destiny mars every thing of that sort, and would be sure to overwhelm your own better fortunes."

General Lyman adds: "Mr. Webster was the author of that short biography of most good lawyers, which has been ascribed to other sources; namely, that *they lived well, worked hard, and died poor.*"

In the same letter, says General Lyman, he relates the following anecdote of himself: "Sitting one day at the bar in Portsmouth with an elderly

member of the bar, his friend, who enjoyed with sufficient indulgence that part of a lawyer's lot which consists 'in living well,' Mr. Webster made an epitaph which would not be unsuitable: —

"'Natus consumere fruges,
Frugibus consumptis
Hic jacet
R. C. S.'"

At the close of the letter he added the following postscript, relative to the cause on trial: —

Half-past two o'clock. Cessat Taber; Choate sequitur, in questione juris, crastino die.

Taber is learned, sharp, and dry;
Choate, full of fancy, soaring high:
Both lawyers of the best report,
True to their clients and the court;
What sorrow doth a Christian feel,
Both should be *broken on a wheel?*

It should be said, to explain the last line, that the cause in dispute was a question of the infringement of a patent for making car-wheels.

George W. Nesmith, of Franklin, New Hampshire, was for many years a valued and trusted friend of Mr. Webster, and used to attend to many of his business matters about Elms Farm. In May, 1846, Mr. Webster received a letter from a person residing in Salisbury, soliciting aid and professing to be in very needy circumstances. He thereupon addressed to Mr. Nesmith the following letter:

May 28, 1846.

Dear Sir, — If you know the writer of this letter, and he is both poor and deserving, you may say to him when you

see him, that I am just about as poor as he is; that I have worked more than twelve hours a day for fifty years, on an average; that I do not know experimentally what wealth is, nor how the bread of idleness tastes: but that I have generally been blessed with good health in my person and my family, for which I give thanks to Providence; also that I have compassion for such cases of sickness and affliction as appear to have visited him and his family; and, if you think five or six dollars would be well bestowed, please hand them to him on my account. Yours, &c.,

D. WEBSTER.

Mr. Nesmith, upon inquiry, found the case to be one of real destitution and suffering, and bestowed the charity as directed, which was received with tears of gratitude.

Mr. Webster sometimes gave evidence of business tact and strictness, which showed that, if he had given attention to his financial affairs, they would have been well regulated.

Some time in the year 1840, he purchased some furniture of an upholsterer in Boston. On his return from Washington, after a few months' absence, the bill was presented. It was his impression that he had paid for the articles at the time of their purchase; and he asked the creditor to call at another time. The same bill was regularly presented every time Mr. Webster returned to the city. The creditor at length became insolent in his demands; he complained because he was compelled to call so often for a small bill, and intimated that he should not run after a debtor, if he were ever so great a man, any more; that the law was the same for the high and the low, the rich and the

poor, and he should not be slow in calling in its aid. Mr. Webster took all this very quietly, saying: "Call on me, sir, to-morrow at noon, and your bill shall be settled." The man replied that he would call at that hour, and should expect his money without fail. After he had withdrawn, Mr. Webster walked into the adjoining room, occupied by his partner, Mr. Healy, and observed that a man had called several times for the payment of a bill for furniture, "which," said he, "I have the impression has already been paid either by me or by yourself. I wish, Mr. Healy, you would look among my receipts for the last two years, and see if you do not find one for this account." Mr. Healy examined the files of receipts in the course of the afternoon; and, on the next morning, brought to Mr. Webster two receipts for the same bill in two successive years. "Lay them on my table, if you please," said Mr. Webster. The same day at noon, punctual to the minute, the injured creditor called. Putting on the air of one whose patience had been sorely tasked, he asked if Mr. Webster was ready to settle. Mr. Healy had taken the precaution to have the door between the two offices open, that he might witness the interview, expecting, as he said, an explosion. But in that he was disappointed; for Mr. Webster, without rising from his seat, simply scanned the man for a moment over his shoulder, and, holding out to him the two receipts, remarked: —

"The charges in this bill I always considered exorbitant. I thought them so when I paid it;

Mr. Healy had the same impression when he paid it, as my agent; and as you already have been twice paid, as appears by these receipts, it strikes me that, if a reasonable man, you ought to be satisfied."

The countenance of the proud creditor fell. He left the room without uttering a word. Mr. Webster never sought to recover back the money which he had overpaid.

Mr. Abbott, long Mr. Webster's private secretary, has given the following testimony to his strictness in the payment of his debts: —

"From my personal knowledge, derived from keeping the private accounts of Mr. Webster, I have some opportunity of knowing. Not a bill has been presented for two or more years during which I have been with him but has been promptly paid; and a few days before he died he called the overseer of his farm, gave him five hundred dollars to pay every man, and sent for the minister and paid all that was due him. So it shall not be said Daniel Webster died in debt to any man."

Mr. Barney, of Baltimore, who has already been referred to, gave the following testimony, a few weeks after Mr. Webster's death, at once to his indifference to money and his sensitiveness about receiving it in any other way than as a legitimate reward of services: —

"There was no subject on which this eminently great and good man was more sensitive; and I propose to add one incident, illustrative of the refinement of feeling which characterized him.

"Dining with him and Mrs. Webster alone, on the fourth of July, he being then very feeble, I urged on him to seek by change of continent to escape the annual return of the rheum, or hay fever, which attacked him periodically on the 20th of August, and from which he had been entirely free when in England.

"Knowing that the kind sympathy and generous affection of the President would induce him to assign to Mr. Webster any duty whereby his health and happiness might be promoted, I suggested his acceptance of the embassy to the court of St. James.

"He replied: 'Mr. Abbott Lawrence expends seventy thousand dollars a year in sustaining the dignity of this position. I am without means to meet any expenditure beyond the salary.'

"To this I said: 'Your numerous friends, who earnestly desire that you should prolong your invaluable life, will never permit your individual resources to be exhausted; and I am authorized to say that whatever funds are necessary will be promptly supplied.'

"'Sir,' said he, with a sternness never before displayed to me in an intercourse of a quarter of a century, 'I duly appreciate the kindness and liberality of my friends, but I cannot consent to be their pensioner. Never repeat such a suggestion.'

"I still shudder at the recollection of his indignant frown.

"He had fully realized the truth of one of his

own aphorisms: 'The man who enters public life takes upon himself a vow of poverty, to the religious observance of which he is bound so long as he remains in it.' And his poverty vindicated his integrity."

Mr. Webster liked to hear good anecdotes, whether humorous, historical, or personal, and always listened to them with attentive interest. He could appreciate a joke or a good "point," and caught it very quickly. Not only was he a good listener to anecdotes, but he loved to tell them himself; and often beguiled leisure hours by relating stories of his boyhood, of the neighbors and "characters" of his early home, and incidents connected with his practice at the bar, illustrating the traits of distinguished men. I gather here a few that he used to tell; and those who have heard him relate anecdotes know how well he did it.

There was a lawyer who lived in his neighborhood in New Hampshire, he said, who was famous for his skill in collecting debts. There was a great deal of litigation in New Hampshire at that time, and almost everybody was sued before a debt was paid. If a note was given to this lawyer to collect, he was sure to get the money from the debtor. He snapped at that kind of business; and anybody who had a note that they could not get in any other way, would go with it to him. He was out fishing one day on a pond, when his little craft was wrecked, and he was drowned. There was great consternation among his neighbors, and they went to raking and dragging the pond to find his body,

working in this way for days without any success. At last, a queer wag, who had been sued a good many times by this lawyer, was seen one morning standing on the bank of the pond, with a fishing-line thrown into the water. Somebody came along and asked him, —

"What are you fishing for?"

"Oh," said he, "for ———. There is a promissory note on the end of that line; and I think, dead or alive, if it gets to his nose, he will grab at it. If this won't fetch him, nothing will."

To illustrate the power of character and address upon a rabble, Mr. Webster related this anecdote. Shays's rebellion, so called, extended into New Hampshire; and the mob there, as in Massachusetts, resisted the law, and would not permit the courts to sit. In some parts of New Hampshire the mob was very violent. The courts were afraid to hold their sittings for fear of the mob, although no actual violence took place. The supreme court of New Hampshire was composed of some of the ablest judges in New England, before that time or since. The high-sheriff was old General Sullivan, of Revolutionary fame. He lived in Portsmouth, and had a high reputation for personal courage, which he had earned in the war; and he was, withal, a high-toned, earnest Christian. Being the high-sheriff, he had charge of the court. The question was mooted, whether they should attempt to hold a court in Sullivan County, where they knew the seat of this rebellion was. The judges were timid;

and, although they felt that it was a great wrong done to the law and the right for the court to be obliged to yield to a mob, they felt that they had no means to enforce their authority. They feared that the civil *posse* at their command could not protect them. General Sullivan was consulted, and he said: —

"We will go and open the court in Keene on the day when by law it is there to be held, and I will see that every thing is right."

So they prepared to set out. In those days the stage accommodations were not good, and most of the travelling by all classes was done on horseback. They put their clothes in their saddle-bags; and Sullivan, without the knowledge of the judges, put into his portmanteau his whole military suit, — coat, epaulettes, and sword, — the same that he had worn in the Revolutionary War. His servant took his luggage on one horse, and he rode on another; and, in this way, the sheriff and the judges started from Portsmouth. They were a day or two making the journey, and were constantly getting reports from Keene as to the sentiments of the people. There seemed to be a strong feeling of indignation and a determination to resist the holding of the court. The people were apparently resolved that the Rebellion cases should not be tried; and this sentiment seemed to be unanimous. As the judicial party approached Keene they stopped to dine, and were told that they could never get to the court-house; or, if they did, they never would be allowed to hold the court: and the

judges were half inclined to turn back. But General Sullivan said: —

"Be firm; all you have to do is to be firm."

When they got within about four miles of Keene, they began to receive reports directly from that place. Persons who had been there met the judges with the news, that hundreds of exasperated people were gathered from the surrounding country to prevent any judicial proceedings. The judges turned pale, and looked at Sullivan. They said: —

"We don't wish to be mobbed, and nothing can be gained by going on: we have no civil *posse* or power to enforce respect."

The old hero replied: —

"You follow me, and it all will end right."

When within about three miles of Keene, he dismounted from his horse and took out his military suit. The judges looked at him in amazement, while he attired himself in full uniform. He was a man fully six feet high, as straight as an Indian and as brave as a lion; and his military accoutrements gave him a still more commanding appearance. When he was all ready, even to the spurs at his heels, he mounted his horse, and told the judges to follow him and to keep close by him. He drew his sword, and rode his horse to the front. On the outskirts of the village, he met a crowd of men so dense as to completely block the road. General Sullivan shouted out: —

"Make way for the court! Let there be no obstructing the court!"

The people recognized the old general, and one

of the mob said: "I fought under him at such a place;" and they gazed at him. He bowed pleasantly to those he recognized. He halted to ask after the health of some of them and that of their families; and the old affection of his comrades in war was revived, apparently causing them to forget why they had thus assembled. Before the party reached the hotel, the crowd was around old Sullivan, overwhelming him with attention. They found the hotel full of people, and crowds standing about everywhere. The judges went into the hotel and sat down, when Sullivan said: —

"I would open the court and immediately adjourn it, giving as a reason that there are no lawyers present and no cases ready."

Acting upon this advice, they prepared to walk over to the court-house. General Sullivan called for the man who had the keys; who, when he came, said "it would not do to attempt to open the court." General Sullivan replied: —

"Take the keys of the court-house and go in front of me."

So he drew his sword, and they started, the janitor leading the way, General Sullivan coming next, and the judges following. When there appeared to be the slightest attempt to crowd the path or obstruct a free passage, the general would cry out, "Make way for the court!" and they finally reached the door. Then Sullivan said to the janitor: —

"Put in the key and open the door."

The frightened man did so, and the judges went in, the crowd pouring in after and filling up the

house. The judges took their seats, and the general sat down at the clerk's desk. He called upon the crier to open the court; and that form was complied with. He then said: "The court is now open," and took off his cap and sword and laid them on the desk; then he called upon the chaplain to offer prayer. That over, a judge rose and said: —

"There seem to be no suitors here and no clerk, and I will therefore adjourn the court for three months."

Sullivan got up, deliberately put on his cap and sword, and shouted: "Gentlemen, make way for the court!" and they returned to the hotel, mounted their horses, and rode off.

Mr. Webster said that the moral of this incident was the power of character over a mob. The feeling inspired among the mob at Keene was that it was of no use to resist General Sullivan; and three thousand exasperated men, who had come there with violent purposes, had been subdued by one man without any power and by the mere force of his character and courage. "That very thing," said Mr. Webster, "did more to quell that rebellion and allay the bitter feeling of the people than any other event. Despite the threats of the people, a court had been opened and had adjourned simply for the want of business. This fact gave the people a different idea of the real power of the law, and the respect which should be paid to it."

Mr. Webster used to tell a good story of Samuel Adams and Paul Revere. Samuel Adams was op-

posed to the Constitution. He was a strong Republican, and had fears about the powers of the general government. The mechanics were, in a body, in favor of the adoption of the Constitution, thinking that their interests would be promoted. They assembled in great numbers, Paul Revere at their head, and held a meeting at the "Green Dragon," for the purpose of passing resolutions to be sent to the Convention, declaring their opinion in favor of the Constitution. They appointed a committee, of which Paul Revere was chairman, to carry the resolutions to Samuel Adams. The committee accordingly repaired to him, and Revere stated that he was chairman of a committee of mechanics held at the "Green Dragon" on the previous evening, which had been appointed for the purpose of delivering to him the resolutions respecting the Constitution which the meeting had adopted. Mr. Adams said: —

"Mr. Revere, how many mechanics were there in the 'Green Dragon' when these resolutions were passed?"

"There were more mechanics in the 'Green Dragon' than the 'Green Dragon' could hold."

"There were more than the 'Green Dragon' could hold? Well, where were the mechanics that the 'Green Dragon' could not hold?"

"They were in the street."

"Well, how many mechanics were there in the street?"

"There were more mechanics in the street than there are stars in heaven, Mr. Adams!"

Mr. Webster used to say that he wished he had the time, as he had the disposition, to write an account of the early New Hampshire settlements. His father was one of the pioneers who went from the sea-shore, down near Portsmouth, and settled upon the extreme borders of civilization. All that lay between them and Canada was the primeval wilderness, inhabited by Indians and wild beasts. There were some incidents connected with the early history of those settlements, the recital of which, while truthful history, would be more interesting than fiction.

He related one incident to show the relations that existed between the whites and the Indians. The Indians used to make occasional incursions upon the settlements, so that the whites were often in fear, and resorted to various means to propitiate the Indians. They found it necessary to gather their wives and children in a block fort, from the top of which, when the Indians threatened, the women would blow a trumpet, in order to bring the men back from the fields, whither they always carried their guns. The Indians were treacherous, and the settlers felt that they could place no dependence upon them; their treaties never being regarded as secure. The settlers, however, made use of presents to pacify the red men, and finally many of the latter became much addicted to the use of rum and tobacco. In the neighborhood of Webster's father, there lived a man named John Hanson, a laboring man, who was often employed to do work for the Websters. His boys were

about Daniel's age. Hanson himself was somewhat addicted to strong drink, and when in liquor was very quarrelsome, and of great violence of temper. The Indian chiefs, particularly the young chiefs, often visited the white settlements, occasionally prolonging their stay for a week; at which times they were always treated with great hospitality. One of the old chiefs finally came, and stayed eight or ten days, paying his visit chiefly at Hanson's house. One morning Hanson and this old chief took their guns and started for Dover, — a pretty long jaunt. The next day but one, Hanson came back, but the Indian was not with him. Somebody asked him, —

"Where is the Indian?"

"Oh," replied he, "he went home by another way."

But there was something about Hanson's appearance that led the people to fear that all was not right. Hanson had evidently been on a spree, was a little excited, and did not give a very straight account of the Indian. In the course of a week or ten days, some men, as they were crossing a stream on a little log bridge about four miles distant, looked down and saw the remains of the old Indian. They took the body out, and found a bullet-hole through him. As it proved afterwards, Hanson and the Indian had got into an altercation, both being full of liquor, and Hanson had shot him, and thrown him into this brook. The whole settlement was filled with excitement. It was a bloody, murderous, and wicked deed in itself; and in its

consequences it was alarming. The vindictiveness of the Indians was proverbial. They were bound by their code to take vengeance upon anybody who had slain an Indian, and this was an old chief; so that everybody in the settlement looked for an immediate attack from the tribe. Hanson was at once arrested, and sent to Dover jail. A committee was then chosen to visit the tribe and apprise them of the facts. They proceeded to the Indian encampment, carrying with them the remains of the chief. They told them of the murder; that John Hanson had committed it, and that it was probably done in liquor. They added, that Hanson would be tried for his life, and, if found guilty, he would be hung; and they wished the tribe to know that this man's life would just as soon be taken for killing an Indian as for killing a white man. This was said to propitiate them, and seemed to have its effect. But by and by the sentiment that a white man's life should never be taken for that of an Indian gained ground among the settlers, and a re-action took place in favor of Hanson. The result was, that in the course of a few weeks a dozen stout fellows painted their faces black, signed a round robin, and started for Dover jail: they tore out the side of the jail, and set Hanson free. The whole region was greatly excited, but Hanson got away. The pursuit was not very vigorous, for the feeling was strong that perhaps Hanson, after all, might have had a real provocation from the Indian. The excitement gradually died out; but Hanson had a son (about Daniel Webster's age) who was

named for his father, and who, after his escape, began to express fears that the Indians would visit the iniquity of the father upon the son, which was their code. He said: —

"My father has escaped jail; the Indian says that he will have revenge upon the next of kin."

He could not work or even sleep. He imagined that every noise he heard was a band of Indians coming to take revenge. He was a strong, stalwart fellow, but he began to lose his flesh, so that his mother and friends became alarmed for him. At last he came to the conclusion that he would go and deliver himself up to the Indians. He said nothing of his purpose until he had resolved upon it. Then he told his mother, and started for the Indian camp, forty or fifty miles distant. He arrived there, and presenting himself to the chief, said: —

"I am the son of John Hanson, who slew your chief. My father has escaped, and I have come to offer myself in his stead. You may take me and do what you please with me."

This touched the magnanimity of the Indians, and they asked him how he would like to be adopted into their tribe.

He replied that, if that was their wish, nothing would please him more.

So they made an Indian of him: he put on the Indian costume, married a squaw, and was made a chief of the tribe; and he lived and died among the Indians.

Mr. Webster related this incident in the following connection. He said: —

"In 1840, during the Whig campaign, I went to New Hampshire to make a speech. It was a hot day in September; people had come from far and near, in the excitement of the time, to attend the meeting. After the speaking was over, a plain, farmer-like person came upon the stand and wished to be introduced to me.

"'I don't suppose, Mr. Webster,' said he, 'that you remember Jane Hanson.' I stopped for an instant, and then said: —

"'Yes, I do: what of her?

"'I am her husband, and we live in Bradford, on the opposite side of the river. I have come up here to see you; my wife says that she would give one of our best cows to see you!'

"'Well,' I replied, 'she shall see me for less than the price of a cow; for I will go and see her.'

"It was my intention to return to Hanover that night with Colonel Brewster; so we drove down on the other side of the river, a mile or two out of the way, to see the Hansons; and when we got there we found that the farmer had preceded us. There I saw one whom I remembered only as a girl of fourteen or fifteen, now a nice, respectable matron, with her children about her; the wife of a very well-to-do farmer. Our meeting brought up the reminiscences of early days, and she talked of them with tears in her eyes. I inquired about John, and she said she had heard from him, but had never seen him. All they knew of him was that he lived among the Indians, and was himself an Indian.

"The history of that border," added Mr. Webster, "for thirty or forty years, is filled with incidents of that kind; with hardships, heroism, self-denial, and the great fortitude with which that race of almost martyrs bore their rude civilization, — planting those institutions from which we are now deriving the benefit, without, as I frequently think, feeling and acknowledging the obligations we owe to them."

When Mr. Webster was in England, he dined on one occasion with the Archbishop (Howell) of Canterbury. There were about twenty guests present; and after the cloth had been removed the English custom of after-dinner speech-making, which was rather novel to Mr. Webster, was followed. It was customary, if a member of the Government was present, to call him out by drinking his health, and for him to acknowledge the compliment in a speech. Much to Mr. Webster's surprise, — for he did not suppose there was to be any thing of that kind, — an eminent lawyer, a relative of the Archbishop, but a man of whom he had never heard, rose and made some remarks, prefacing his speech by stating that they had for a guest a distinguished gentleman from America. In closing, he said: —

"I would propose, my lords and gentlemen, the health of Mr. Webster, a member of the Upper Senate of New York."

Mr. Webster's comment on this was that it was ludicrous; and he added, that he had often thought that if any prominent American, occupying a simi-

lar position in society and having had the same opportunities of knowledge, should make such a blunder and show such total ignorance of the English government and its forms, it would subject him to very marked contempt and ridicule at home. Ignorance like this, in high places, impressed him very much while in England. He had occasion to explain to a great many English gentlemen, and even eminent politicians, the theory and practice of the American system. In the course of conversation they would say, —

"You are a Senator of the United States?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, where, — in Massachusetts?"

They did not seem to understand our political distinctions; and he had to explain to his questioners the nature of those distinctions. He would say that the States were represented in the general government, each State being entitled to two Senators, and to Representatives according to their population. As soon as the Englishmen began to understand these distinctions, they manifested their surprise, and many of them received his instructions with great delight. Some went so far as to declare that ours must be "a miracle of government."

Mr. Webster said that about the time he was going abroad a pamphlet had been published, giving the statistics of the productions of Massachusetts, — her manufactures, commerce, and agriculture. It had been compiled under the administration of Governor Everett, and at his

suggestion. When Mr. Webster started for Europe, he put a few copies of this pamphlet into his trunk, thinking they might serve to answer questions and to interest himself. On one occasion, an English nobleman asked him, —

"Tell me what constitutes the wealth and labor of the State in which you live; what do the people do?"

Mr. Webster described the population, and said that he would send him a little pamphlet that would answer all his questions. The nobleman thanked him, and the next day Mr. Webster fulfilled his promise. On meeting him a short time afterwards at a dinner party, the nobleman immediately acknowledged the receipt of the pamphlet, and remarked that he had been very much surprised at the facts contained in it.

"Does your State borrow money in our market?" asked he.

Mr. Webster told him that he believed it did.

"Well," returned the nobleman, "I am going to order my banker to invest from ten to twenty thousand pounds in your securities. You are a busy set of bees in Massachusetts. The bonds of such a State must be good."

Mr. Webster was fond of moralizing upon the period in which he lived, and often talked of the rapid progress which civilization had made and was making in this century. His views of the race and its destinies were always cheerful; he seldom looked upon the dark side of things. He was profoundly interested in his kind. Once, in

speaking of the age in which he lived, he said to me: —

"I think our lines have fallen in pleasant places, and in a pleasant period of the world's history. I have reflected much on the past and on the future, in connection with events that are passing before our eyes: and I am rather inclined to the belief — though all generations of men think they are wiser than those who have preceded them — that, for discovery, this age has certainly surpassed every other of which history renders us an account. And I doubt whether any century in the future will be so prolific in discoveries beneficial to the race as ours has been. Take steam, as applied to the advancement of civilization and the progress of human society, — that one discovery has distinguished this age from all others. I remember well when Fulton was seeking aid from Congress, and sent his boat up to Albany propelled by steam. He was looked upon by those whose influence he sought as a wild visionary, an enthusiast; as a man better fitted for an insane asylum than for practical life. Very scientific men demonstrated that it was impossible to apply steam to the purpose of navigation, — that the amount of fuel required would alone prevent it. Now, think of it! merchant vessels are having more or less steam applied to their navigation. Think of steam as applied to the railroad, and the changes it has wrought in society! Then take the discovery of ether, — an event the full benefits of which we can hardly realize as yet. Just think of the human suffering prevented by that

discovery! think of the pain of amputations and other operations prevented in hospitals! But the miracle of miracles is the telegraph. Whatever improvements may be made in the instruments of telegraphic transmission, the agent itself cannot be improved. It is impossible, because it is as quick as thought. Steam, electricity, ether, and the ten thousand things that have grown from them, — think of it! What age has produced any thing like it, for the advancement of human society and the amelioration of human suffering? I think that we who live in this nineteenth century have, as far as the development of these great discoveries goes, the advantage over all who have preceded us; and I think we shall have the advantage over the generations that are to follow. That is my opinion; and I thank God that it has pleased Him to assign my life to just this age of the world."

CHAPTER XI.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS.

Mr. Webster thought often and profoundly on religious subjects. He had the most devout reverence for the Holy Scriptures, and was long in the habit of reading them every day. He often spoke of the delight their perusal gave him, especially the Gospels. He searched himself; and, while he had doubts and fears in regard to his own spiritual state, his conviction of the truth of the leading Christian doctrines was full and unquestioning. Throughout his life, this seems to have been the condition of his mind on religious subjects. The early lessons of piety taught by his revered mother were not forgotten to the end of his days. He always believed in a reverential keeping of the Sabbath. He wrote thus to Charles W. Ridgeley, secretary of a society organized to promote its better observance: —

"The longer I live, the more highly do I estimate the importance of a proper observance of the Christian Sabbath, and the more grateful do I feel towards those who take pains to impress a sense of this importance on the community. The

Lord's Day is the day on which the gospel is preached. It is the day of public worship throughout the Christian world; and, although we live in a reading age and in a reading community, yet the preaching of the gospel is the human agency which has been and still is most efficaciously employed for the spiritual good of men. That the poor had the gospel preached to them was an evidence of His mission which the Author of Christianity himself proclaimed; and to the public worship of the Deity, and to the preaching of the gospel, the observance of the Sabbath is obviously essential."

Many anecdotes and narratives have been given, illustrating Mr. Webster's devotional spirit, his reverence for all things sacred, and his frequent and serious contemplation of religious subjects. A venerable Presbyterian clergyman, who knew Mr. Webster in the early period of his public career, thus testifies to his religious character: —

"I was a student in Mr. Webster's office, in Portsmouth, during his second term in the lower House of Congress. He was then a communicant in the Presbyterian Church, of which Rev. J. W. Putnam was pastor. My own mind was there deeply awakened to the subject of religion. I united with the same church, and went for the first time to the communion-table in company with my esteemed preceptor. These important events in my own life led me to frequent conversations with Mr. Webster on the subject of religion as well as of law. The result was, I relinquished the

study of the law, with his approval and advice, for the study of theology.

"Mr. Webster was a man of deep religious feeling. He united with the church of the Rev. Thomas Worcester, in Salisbury, his native town, early after he entered on the practice of the law; and Mr. Worcester has told me that he then gave pleasing evidence of the sincerity and reality of his piety. During my residence in his office, the controversy was in progress between Doctors Worcester and Channing on the subject of the Trinity. The pamphlets of these distinguished theologians were received as they successively issued from the press, and were read by us together. Mr. Webster said that Dr. Worcester had 'not only the truth, but the argument.'

"Mr. Webster was a Bible student and a thorough theologian. His doctrinal views were those which naturally result from taking the sovereignty and infinite perfections of God as a stand-point, and investigating truth under the instructions of the Bible, implicitly received as a divine revelation to instruct our ignorance and enlighten our darkness. I never heard him conduct an argument on religious doctrine. I have often heard him state his convictions, and leave others to dispute. He was tolerant to those who differed from him, and expressed little preference for forms of worship or church order. Abstruse reasonings in the pulpit always gave him uneasiness; but plain, pungent preaching, which arraigned the sinner as guilty before a holy God and a holy law, always

gained his commendation. His closing scene of life was such as I always expected.

"After a long life of unsurpassed labor in his profession and in politics, as he felt the end approaching, he first disposed of his official business, then minutely dictated his will, and then fell back on his religious hopes, — giving his last hours to religion, as to a familiar subject, long cherished. He was a patriot: he was so to the last. He was a father: he blessed his family. But these and all other subjects were opportunely disposed of, and his closing thoughts were, as we should have wished them to be, as we shall wish ours to be, of God in Christ, and of immortality."

In early life, as stated in the foregoing, Mr. Webster united with the Congregational Church in Salisbury. On removing to Portsmouth, he took a letter from this church to Dr. Buckminster's, also Congregationalist. When he went to Boston, he carried a letter to the Brattle Street Church. This society he never officially left. He often worshipped at other churches, especially at Episcopal churches; but at Marshfield usually attended the Congregationalist Church.

A writer says of Mr. Webster, that he "seems to have been what is called an 'Orthodox man,' though with an enlarged liberality in his mode of thinking and acting, — making the Bible, and not any denominational creed, his rule of faith and practice."

Mr. Ely, of Rochester, in whose house Mr. Webster was paying a visit in September, 1848,

thus relates a conversation which he then had with the great statesman on various subjects, including religion: —

"One evening, Mr. Webster, Mr. Hall, Mrs. Ely, and myself, were in the parlor alone. Mr. Webster commenced conversation in a most pleasant manner, narrating many incidents of his early days. Among others, he mentioned that from infancy to manhood his health was extremely frail and feeble. No one of his friends expected him to live long. He had a perfectly distinct recollection, when very young, of having been a long time sick, and remembered that while in this state his father one day, entering the room with him in his arms, said to his mother, 'We must give him up; we never can raise this child.' His mother made no reply; but, rising, took him from his father's arms, and her tears fell fast upon his face as she pressed him to her bosom.

"The conversation then turned upon his early family friends, for whom he seemed to have entertained the most tender affection. The subject of religion next occupied him.

"He stated the fact of his having united with a Congregational church when not far from twenty years of age. He dwelt upon the importance of earnest piety on the part of the clergy, and also of greater attention to oratory and the arrangement of discourses. He regretted that so large a portion of them should be apparently indifferent to a subject so important as the manner of presenting the truth of God's word. He spoke of his

early and constant habit of reading the Scriptures, and enlarged upon the beauty and sublimity of the Gospels. It was to him a matter of astonishment that any enlightened mind could doubt their divine authority. He said he read them with increasing interest, and deemed them perfect models of simple beauty. No one, he remarked, had a higher estimate than himself of the power of the gospel to transform the character. He mentioned the sudden death of a number of eminent men with whom he had been associated, — who, like himself, had been almost wholly engrossed in public affairs; and remarked that they seldom lived beyond the age of seventy-two years. He himself, he said, could not expect to survive that period. His mind seemed to be impressed with the idea that he should die suddenly, probably while engaged in public speaking."

The following testimony to his bearing in church, and the conspicuous traits of his religious character, was given soon after his death, by one who had ample opportunity to observe him in this phase of his daily life: —

"Mr. Webster's appearance at church was striking. He entered the house of God with an apparent reverence, which is quite uncommon. He walked up the aisle to his pew in the church at Marshfield, as if he trod a hallowed floor. As he sat, his mind seemed impressed with the sacredness of the day, the place, and the spiritual themes that pressed upon him. He was fond of sacred music, and as the choir proceeded with this interesting part of

divine worship, he frequently joined it with his deep bass. During the service of prayer he stood up with the minister and congregation, after the manner of our Pilgrim Fathers, with great devoutness of manner.

"As the text was announced, it was his custom to look it out in a small polyglot Bible that was always before him, with the purpose, seemingly, of attending to the text with its connection. This being done, he was a devout and attentive hearer of the discourse. Though it would seem to be a difficult duty to preach before such a man as Daniel Webster, yet to the preacher who had made the best preparation he could, and who was in earnest in presenting the great themes of the gospel, it was an agreeable duty, for such a preacher always had the sympathy and earnest attention of his greatest hearer.

"His minister, on one Sabbath, preached two sermons on the immortality of the soul, from words in Job, — a book that Mr. Webster admired and studied, both for its food for the intellect and the heart. The words were, 'If a man die shall he live again?' Mrs. Webster and friends were present in the morning. In the afternoon, Mr. Webster was in his place, though his health was but indifferent. He seemed specially interested in that particular subject; and from conversations since, and from that remarkable discourse he gave upon it in his dying chamber, it is evident he reflected upon it much, and with great interest. During the same year, 1849, I believe, the words of

the text on another occasion, were those of Pilate to Jesus, 'What is truth?' From the insincerity and indifference of Pilate in proposing this question, it was attempted to show the manner and spirit that become religious inquirers, who would come to a saving knowledge of the truth.

"Mr. Webster was all attention from the announcement of the text, and kept his great black eyes fixed upon the speaker until he closed his discourse. Such piercing eyes were seldom, if ever, fixed upon a preacher in ancient or modern times; and one having felt their power can readily believe the anecdote that was told by the late Dr. Codman, of Dorchester, of a young minister fresh from Andover, who, under the influence of those same eyes, was struck dumb in the midst of his discourse and sank into his seat, leaving the doctor, who was more accustomed to face that distinguished hearer, to finish the discourse.

"Mr. Webster was not a critical hearer of sermons, in the sense of being fastidious in reference to language and manner. He *was* pleased with simplicity, devoutness, and earnestness in a minister of holy things, as becoming the man and becoming the theme. Any levity in the pulpit he could not brook. He wished to be instructed by a sermon; but, above all, he wished to be made to feel as a sinner, accountable to his God. In his own words, that have come to be immortal, he wished preaching to come home to him 'as a *personal* matter.' As an illustration of this, while Mr. Webster was on a summer visit to his farm in

Franklin, N. H., Rev. Mr. Knight, at that time pastor of the Congregational Church in that place, took occasion in the course of a sermon, in the presence of Mr. Webster, to address some words of exhortation adapted to men in public life and called to high places, evidently alluding to his distinguished hearer and occasional parishioner. Mr. Webster received the gospel message with all the kindness with which it fell from the lips of this simple-hearted and pious country clergyman; and, at the close of the service, waited until he descended from the pulpit, and then took him by the hand and thanked him for his fidelity to his Master and to him.

"All unnatural display in the pulpit, and exhibitions of *quasi* greatness, were displeasing to Mr. Webster. He preferred goodness rather than greatness, while affected greatness was painful to him. A clergyman in a town not very remote from Marshfield wrote what he fancied to be a great sermon, just the one to preach before Daniel Webster. Not long after, he arranged an exchange with the pastor of the First Church in Marshfield, and in due time made his appearance in the pulpit before the great man to whom he had come to preach if not to pray. He delivered his great discourse, accompanied with violent beating of the air. The mountain labored, but not even a church mouse was produced, though several, doubtless, were frightened away.

"The preacher still supposed he had made a great effort, and doubtless *he* had. Mr. Webster not remaining to compliment his sermon at the close of the service, early on Monday morning he hast-

ened to his mansion, two miles distant, to receive his praises, not doubting but that they would be showered upon him, with an apology for not returning his thanks sooner. Mr. Webster received him, acccording to the minister's account of the interview, rather ceremoniously, and treated him somewhat coolly. He made no allusion to the discourse. The clergyman was uneasy, and soon left for home, with a feeling, as his profession would say, decidedly Mondayish, and ever after contended that Daniel Webster could not appreciate a great sermon.

"It was generally admitted before the death of Mr. Webster that he was the foremost lawyer, statesman, diplomatist, and orator in the land. But the truth is, Daniel Webster, in the judgment of those who knew him best, was as good as he was great. Nor was he a mere theorist in religion. He was a practical Christian, eminently thoughtful upon God, upon His works, and His word; and the clergyman whose preaching and life met the approval of his judgment and conscience might feel quite sure that he was doing the work of his Master."

A gentleman who was present on one occasion at a dinner party at the Astor House, given by Mr. Webster to a few of his New York friends, relates an incident which took place at the table, in which Mr. Webster earnestly avowed his deep religious convictions. It was when he was Secretary of State in Mr. Fillmore's cabinet.

"There were twenty or so at the table. Mr.

Webster seemed wearied by his journey, and speaking but little, if at all, plunged into a darksome sort of reverie, not well calculated to enliven his friends. This at length became so apparent, and the situation of all so unpleasant, that one of the company urged upon a distinguished man present, a warm friend of Mr. Webster, to get him into conversation. It was thought he only needed to be jogged, to become as lively as they wished.

"This friend consented, and spoke to Mr. Webster, asking him some question that in ordinary circumstances and with ordinary men would have led to conversation; but it failed in the present case. The dark Secretary of State merely raised his head and answered simply, and crept into his cave again.

"Again the gentleman, frightened by his failure, was urged to renew the attempt to draw him out. He summoned courage and said to Mr. Webster:

"'Mr. Webster, I want you to tell me what was the most important thought that ever occupied your mind.'

"Here was a thumper for him, and so everybody thought at the table. Mr. Webster slowly passed his hand over his forehead, and in a low tone said to a friend near him:—

"'Is there any one here who does not know me?'

"'No sir, they all know you — are all your friends.'

"Then he looked over the table, and you may

well imagine how the tones of his voice would sound upon such an occasion, giving answer to such a question.

"'The most important thought that ever occupied my mind,' said he, 'was that of my individual responsibility to God!' — upon which, for twenty minutes, he spoke to them, and when he had finished he rose from the table and retired to his room. The rest of the company, without a word, went into an adjoining parlor, and when they had gathered there some of them exclaimed, 'Who ever heard any thing like that?' What Mr. Webster said in advocacy of his sublime thought I do not know; no one ever repeated it, and I presume no one ever will."

In the composition and delivery of sermons, Mr. Webster loved to see (as has been remarked) simplicity and directness. Many clergymen supposed that if Mr. Webster were listening they ought to be learned, profound, and argumentative; but they utterly mistook his taste in this respect. He preferred those sermons which appealed most directly to the conscience of the individual, and avoided topics of controversy. For a political sermon he had no relish, even when it accorded with his own views. After listening to an elaborate discourse on the Revolutionary movements in Europe, in 1848, based on the text: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come, whose right it is; and I will give it Him," he went home quite disquieted. He talked to his family and to a friend who was present of the folly

of attempting to interpret prophecy by passing events.

"In the first place," he observed, "the clergyman has not a sufficient knowledge of European politics to explain intelligently the causes or results of existing commotions. Secondly, the events are too near us, and exert too much influence over our sympathies, for us to determine what the divine purpose is in respect to them. Thirdly, the pulpit is not the proper place for such speculations. I do not," added he, "go to church to learn history; but to be reminded of duty."

It happened to Mr. Webster once, to attend divine service in a quiet country village. The clergyman was a simple-hearted, pious old man. After the introductory exercises, he rose and named his text; and, with the utmost simplicity and earnestness, said: —

"My friends, we can die but once;" then he paused.

"Frigid and weak as these words might seem at first," said Mr. Webster, "they were to me among the most impressive and awakening I ever heard. I never felt so sensibly that I must die at all, as when that devout old man told me I could 'die but once!'"

Mr. Webster exceedingly liked the society of intelligent clergymen. He always welcomed them to his house, and tried to make their visits pleasant. One summer when I boarded in Medford, Mr. Webster came out to dine with me; and after dinner, in the evening, I drove him to town in my gig. As we were about to leave, I said: —

"By the way, there is a very intelligent clergyman here, whom you perhaps know by reputation, and who in conversation has spoken of you with great respect and admiration, — Dr. William Adams of New York. He married the daughter of Mr. Thatcher Magoun, and has come on to spend his vacation. He is a great admirer of yours."

"I used to know Thatcher Magoun," he replied, "twenty years ago; suppose we drive up and see them."

So we drove up, and found Dr. Adams there. We spent a pleasant half hour with them, and, in parting, Mr. Webster told Dr. Adams that he should be very much delighted to see him at Marshfield. Dr. Adams thanked him, and we retired. While riding in, our conversation turned upon religious topics. It was seldom that I asked him any thing about his religious views. He talked very freely about them.

"Mr. Webster," said I, "you are a member of what we call the Orthodox Church?"

"Yes," replied he, "I am; I joined the church to which my father, mother, and elder brothers and sisters belonged, in my native town, — the Orthodox Congregational Church. I remember it well now."

I said: "When you came to Boston, you went to the Unitarian Church, and they now speak of you as a Unitarian."

"I am not a Unitarian," he replied. "I should be regarded as perhaps rather liberal in my views; but if I had, with my experience of life, and a good deal of reflection, to choose a church and form of

worship, I do not think I would change my church relations. The organization is simple, and still has enough of form. It imposes suitable restraints, but not enough to make the matter so formal as to substitute the thing signifying for the thing itself. When I came to Boston, many of my friends went to Brattle Street Church. Buckminster was its minister, one of whose brothers was my preceptor at Exeter. Then, the divisions were not so marked as now. Dr. Codman would preach in Brattle Street Church, and Dr. Little at the Old South. Afterwards, the division took place, but I never felt it worth while to change. I was not here a great deal; and at Marshfield I always attended the Orthodox Church, which I continue to do."

A few days after Mr. Webster's interview with Dr. Adams at Medford, the doctor came to me and said he was going to pay a visit in Duxbury; and added: "If I thought Mr. Webster was sincere in asking me to Marshfield, I would go down there and see him."

"He was perfectly sincere," I replied, "and would be delighted to see you."

Dr. Adams said he did not feel quite well enough acquainted with him to visit his house; yet if I thought he was really in earnest, he should venture. I told him to go by all means; Mr. Webster would certainly make him welcome. A few days after that he went down to Duxbury, and his host carried him one morning over to Marshfield. Mr. Webster was at home and was glad to see him. Dr.

Adams stayed through the day, Mr. Webster insisting upon his remaining; and he thought it was one of the most delightful days in his life. Their friendship from that time was one of great intimacy. Mr. Webster conceived a high admiration for Dr. Adams, who was a very accomplished and able man.

In February, 1851, Mr. Webster went to New York, to deliver an address before the Historical Society. As the 22d of February came on Sunday, the celebration was put off till Monday; and, on Sunday, Dr. Adams preached a sermon before the Young Men's Christian Association. There were fifty clergymen in the house, as well as many eminent gentlemen in civil life; and Mr. Webster and myself were present by invitation. The text was "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and upon it was founded a very beautiful address, — a sort of eulogy on Washington. As we left the church, Mr. Webster spoke of it very highly. He referred to Dr. Adams as a man of high attainments, a scholar and Christian gentleman.

Soon after Mr. Webster had delivered his 7th of March speech, the pulpits of the land began preaching on one side or the other of the Compromise Measures. Many of the sermons were published. I was in Washington that winter; and some of these discourses used to reach Mr. Webster through the mail nearly every day, being sent by their authors. His habit was to ask me to open his pamphlets, and see what they were about. I would open them, read the names of the authors, and occasionally an

extract. He usually paid but little attention, perhaps saying that they did not amount to much, or something of that kind. Finally, I came to one by Dr. Adams. "Ah!" exclaimed he, "that will be good. To-night we will read that." So that evening, we being alone, I read it aloud to Mr. and Mrs. Webster. It was a conservative, Christian, and dignified discourse; and Mr. Webster was constantly ejaculating through the whole of it, "Excellent!" When I had read it through, he said: "That is a most beautiful discourse; if the pulpits of America were all occupied by such men as that, — that great conservative influence, the pulpit, — this Government and its institutions would last for ever. That is admirable. I will write to Dr. Adams and thank him for it, if I never do another thing." He accordingly wrote a letter to Dr. Adams, which the latter told me afterwards he considered one of the most precious treasures he could leave to his children.

Mr. Webster had a strong affection for the devotional songs of Dr. Watts. He learned most of them by heart in boyhood, and repeated them and sung them, alone and in company, in manhood. A friend called on him one Sabbath evening, in New York. Having observed him at church during the day, the friend inquired how he had been pleased with the sermon. Mr. Webster replied that he had had his thoughts diverted from the discourse by opening the hymn-book and reading a stanza of that beautiful hymn of Watts, commencing —

"Welcome, sweet day of rest,"

and which had been altered as follows: —

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
Till called to rise and soar away
To everlasting bliss."

He was so vexed by the audacity of the compiler, who had mutilated the exquisite harmony of the original, and destroyed the beautiful allusion to the dying swan, that he could not enjoy the services. He then repeated, with evident feeling, the stanza as Watts wrote it: —

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

The year before Mr. Webster died, in the autumn of 1851, I was spending a few weeks with him at his place in Franklin. One pleasant morning he said to me: —

"I am going to take a drive up to Andover, and I want you to go with me."

Andover was about ten miles from his place in Franklin. He added: —

"We can start after breakfast, and it will take us an hour and a half or two hours to go. We shall only want to stay there an hour or so, and we will return in time for dinner. When we get into the wagon I will tell you whom I am going to see."

The horse was harnessed, and we started off. As we rode along, Mr. Webster had a great many reminiscences called to mind by different objects

that we passed. Such a man used to live here, he would say, and such a man lived in such a house, and there I remember such a man lived; and here he used himself to live when a boy, and there he used to pitch quoits, and in another place he used to play with John Holden's boys.

One incident to which Mr. Webster called my attention, connected with the early days of the Revolution, I must not omit to mention. A few rods from the bank of the river along which we were riding was a small tuft of an island, upon which stood a solitary tree. Mr. Webster pointed out this spot, and called my attention to the tree standing there alone.

"That tree," said he, "used to be a favorite mark in the target-practice of the band of minute men, who, when they went down from New Hampshire and took part in the battle of Bunker Hill, chose my father as their captain. These men, — many of them trained in the hard experiences of frontier life, and having a firm reliance upon their trusty rifles, — of course had good guns, and indeed took no little pride in them and in their skill in handling them. This tree was a target for them; and here they would come and exercise their skill. Being at long distance, the thing to be done was to hit the body of the tree itself; and the way in which they determined whether the tree was hit was rather a novel one. If the bullet did not strike the tree it would fall into the water beyond the tree, and the splash where it struck the water would be readily noticed; but, if

there was no disturbance of the surface of the water beyond the tree, it was taken for granted that the ball had struck the tree itself. My father used to describe to me these matches among the frontier marksmen; and he would say that when his turn came to try his hand with the others, he never failed of being set down as having hit the tree. These men were, of course, all under the command of my father whenever they were on duty in the field; but here, in the neighborhood of their homes, they were all on the same footing, and one was just as good as another. My father always used to take part in these competitive tests. And, as there never was any splash in the water after his shot, he got the credit of being the best marksman among them all.

"'How did you manage to do it?' I once asked him.

"'Oh, simply enough,' he replied, with a hearty laugh as he added: 'The fact is, I never used to put any bullet into my gun!'"

After Mr. Webster had recounted various pleasing reminiscences of this kind, he said: —

"Now I will tell you the object of this trip today. I am going to see a man by the name of Colby. John Colby is a brother-in-law of mine. He married my oldest half-sister, and was, of course, a good many years older than myself, — as she was. I have not seen him for forty-five years, as nearly as I can recollect. My sister, his wife, has been dead many, many years; and any interest I may have had in John Colby has all died out: but

I have learned some particulars about his recent life that interest me very much, and I am going to see him. I will tell you something about him. When I was a lad at home, on the farm, John Colby was a smart, driving, trading, swearing yeoman, money-loving and money-getting. In that rather rude period, when there were not many distinctions in society, when one man was about as good as another, and when there were very few educated persons, he was considered a very smart, active man. I remember him, however, with a sort of terror and shudder. He would pick me up when I was a little fellow, throw me astride of a horse bare back, and send the horse to the brook. The horse would gallop, and I had to hold on to his mane to keep from being pitched into the river. Colby was a reckless, wild, harum-scarum, dare-devil sort of a fellow. Well, John Colby married my oldest half-sister. She was a religious, good woman; but beaux were not plenty, and John Colby was a fine-looking man. His personal habits were good enough, laying aside his recklessness; he was not a drinking man, and he was, as the world goes, a thrifty man. Any of the girls in town would have married John Colby. After he married my sister, I went away to college, and lost sight of him. Finally, he went up to Andover and bought a farm; and the only recollection I have about him after that is, that he was called, I think, the wickedest man in the neighborhood, so far as swearing and impiety went. I used to wonder how my sister could marry so profane a man as John Colby. I think

she herself was very much shocked; and I know her father was, who was a religious man. And still Colby was considered 'a good catch.' I came home from college during vacation, and used to hear of him occasionally; but after a few years, — perhaps five or six years, — my sister died, and then, of course, all the interest that any of us had in John Colby pretty much ceased. I believe she left a child, — I think a daughter, — who grew up and was married, and also left a child.

Now I will give you the reason why I am to-day going up to see this John Colby. I have been told by persons who know, that, within a few years, he has become a convert to the Christian religion, and has met with that mysterious change which we call a change of heart; in other words, he has become a constant, praying Christian. This has given me a very strong desire to have a personal interview with him, and to hear with my own ears his account of this change. For, humanly speaking, I should have said that his was about as hopeless a case for conversion as I could well conceive. He won't know me, and I shall not know him; and I don't intend to make myself known at first."

We drove on, and reached the village, — a little, quiet place, one street running through it, a few houses scattered along here and there, with a country store, a tavern, and a post-office. As we drove into this quiet, peaceable little hamlet, at midday, with hardly a sign of life noticeable, Mr. Webster accosted a lad in the street, and asked where John Colby lived.

"That is John Colby's house," said he, pointing to a very comfortable two-story house, with a green lawn running down to the road. We drove along towards it, and a little before we reached it, making our horse secure, we left the wagon and proceeded to the house on foot. Instead of steps leading to it, there were little flagstones laid in front of the door; and you could pass right into the house without having to step up. The door was open. There was no occasion to knock, because, as we approached the door, the inmates of the room could see us. Sitting in the middle of that room was a striking figure, who proved to be John Colby. He sat facing the door, in a very comfortably furnished farm-house room, with a little table, or what would perhaps be called a light-stand, before him. Upon it was a large, old-fashioned Scott's Family Bible, in very large print, and of course a heavy volume. It lay open, and he had evidently been reading it attentively. As we entered, he took off his spectacles and laid them upon the page of the book, and looked up at us as we approached, Mr. Webster in front. He was a man, I should think, over six feet in height, and he retained in a wonderful degree his erect and manly form, although he was eighty five or six years old. His frame was that of a once powerful, athletic man. His head was covered with very heavy, thick, bushy hair, and it was white as wool, which added very much to the picturesqueness of his appearance. As I looked in at the door, I thought I never saw a more

striking figure. He straightened himself up, but said nothing until just as we appeared at the door, when he greeted us with, —

"Walk in, gentlemen."

He then spoke to his grandchild to give us some chairs. The meeting was, I saw, a little awkward, and he looked very sharply at us, as much as to say, "You are here, but for what I don't know: make known your business." Mr. Webster's first salutation was, —

"This is Mr. Colby, Mr. John Colby, is it not?"

"That is my name, sir," was the reply.

"I suppose you don't know me," said Mr. Webster.

"No, sir, I don't know you; and I should like to know how you know me."

"I have seen you before, Mr. Colby," replied Mr. Webster.

"Seen me before!" said he; "pray, when and where?"

"Have you no recollection of me?" asked Mr. Webster.

"No, sir, not the slightest;" and he looked by Mr. Webster toward me, as if trying to remember if he had seen me. Mr. Webster remarked, —

"I think you never saw this gentleman before; but you have seen me."

Colby put the question again, when and where?

"You married my oldest sister," replied Mr. Webster, calling her by name. (I think it was Susannah.)

"I married your oldest sister!" exclaimed Colby; "who are you?"

"I am 'little Dan,'" was the reply.

It certainly would be impossible to describe the expression of wonder, astonishment, and half-incredulity that came over Colby's face.

"*You* Daniel Webster!" said he; and he started to rise from his chair. As he did so, he stammered out some words of surprise. "Is it possible that this is the little black lad that used to ride the horse to water? Well, I cannot realize it!"

Mr. Webster approached him. They embraced each other; and both wept.

"Is it possible," said Mr. Colby, when the embarrassment of the first shock of recognition was past, "that you have come up here to see me? Is this Daniel? Why, why," said he, "I cannot believe my senses. Now, sit down. I am glad, oh, I am so glad to see you, Daniel! I never expected to see you again. I don't know what to say. I am so glad," he went on, "that my life has been spared that I might see you. Why, Daniel, I read about you, and hear about you in all ways; sometimes some members of the family come and tell us about you; and the newspapers tell us a great deal about you, too. Your name seems to be constantly in the newspapers. They say that you are a great man, that you are a famous man; and you can't tell how delighted I am when I hear such things. But, Daniel, the time is short, — you won't stay here long, — I want to ask you one important question. You may be a *great* man: are you a *good* man? Are you

a Christian man? Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ? That is the only question that is worth asking or answering. Are you a Christian? You know, Daniel, what I have been: I have been one of the wickedest of men. Your poor sister, who is now in heaven, knows that. But the spirit of Christ and of Almighty God has come down and plucked me as a brand from the everlasting burning. I am here now, a monument to his grace. Oh, Daniel, I would not give what is contained within the covers of this book for all the honors that have been conferred upon men from the creation of the world until now. For what good would it do? It is all nothing, and less than nothing, if you are not a Christian, if you are not repentant. If you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ, in sincerity and truth, all your worldly honors will sink to utter nothingness. Are you a Christian? Do you love Christ? You have not answered me."

All this was said in the most earnest and even vehement manner.

"John Colby," replied Mr. Webster, "you have asked me a very important question, and one which should not be answered lightly. I intend to give you an answer, and one that is truthful, or I won't give you any. I hope that I am a Christian. I profess to be a Christian. But, while I say that, I wish to add, — and I say it with shame and confusion of face, — that I am not such a Christian as I wish I were. I have lived in the world, surrounded by its honors and its temptations; and I

am afraid, John Colby, that I am not so good a Christian as I ought to be. I am afraid I have not your faith and your hopes; but still, I hope and trust that I am a Christian, and that the same grace which has converted you, and made you an heir of salvation, will do the same for me. I trust it; and I also trust, John Colby, — and it won't be long before our summons will come, — that we shall meet in a better world, and meet those who have gone before us, whom we knew, and who trusted in that same divine, free grace. It won't be long. You cannot tell, John Colby, how much delight it gave me to hear of your conversion. The hearing of that is what has led me here to-day. I came here to see with my own eyes, and hear with my own ears the story from a man that I know and remember well. What a wicked man you used to be!"

"O Daniel!" exclaimed John Colby, "you don't remember how wicked I was; how ungrateful I was; how unthankful I was! I never thought of God; I never cared for God; I was worse than the heathen. Living in a Christian land, with the light shining all around me, and the blessings of Sabbath teachings everywhere about me, I was worse than a heathen until I was arrested by the grace of Christ, and made to see my sinfulness, and to hear the voice of my Saviour. Now I am only waiting to go home to Him, and to meet your sainted sister, my poor wife. And I wish, Daniel, that you might be a prayerful Christian, and I trust you are. Daniel," he added, with deep earnestness of voice, "*will* you pray with me?"

We knelt down, and Mr. Webster offered a most touching and eloquent prayer. As soon as he had pronounced the "Amen," Mr. Colby followed in a most pathetic, stirring appeal to God. He prayed for the family, for me, and for everybody. Then we rose; and he seemed to feel a serene happiness in having thus joined his spirit with that of Mr. Webster in prayer.

"Now," said he, "what can we give you? I don't think we have any thing that we can give you."

"Yes, you have," replied Mr. Webster; "you have something that is just what we want to eat."

"What is that?" asked Colby.

"It is some bread and milk," said Mr. Webster. "I want a bowl of bread and milk for myself and my friend."

Very soon the table was set, and a white cloth spread over it; some nice bread was set upon it and some milk brought, and we sat down to the table and eat. Mr. Webster exclaimed afterward:

"Didn't it taste good? Didn't it taste like old times?"

The brothers-in-law soon took an affectionate leave of each other, and we left. Mr. Webster could hardly restrain his tears. When we got into the wagon he began to moralize.

"I should like," said he, "to know what the enemies of religion would say to John Colby's conversion. There was a man as unlikely, humanly speaking, to become a Christian as any man I ever saw. He was reckless, heedless, impious;

never attended church, never experienced the good influence of associating with religious people. And here he has been living on in that reckless way until he has got to be an old man; until a period of life when you naturally would not expect his habits to change: and yet he has been brought into the condition in which we have seen him to-day, — a penitent, trusting, humble believer. Whatever people may say, nothing," added Mr. Webster, "can convince me that any thing short of the grace of Almighty God could make such a change as I, with my own eyes, have witnessed in the life of John Colby."

When we got back to Franklin, in the evening, we met John Taylor at the door. Mr. Webster called out to him: —

"Well, John Taylor, miracles happen in these later days as well as in the days of old."

"What now, squire?" asked John Taylor.

"Why, John Colby has become a Christian. If that is not a miracle, what is?"

CHAPTER XII.

LAST DAYS AND DEATH.

One of the causes which, with little doubt, hastened Mr. Webster's death, was the accident which befell him in the early part of May, 1852. He was one day driving from Marshfield to Plymouth with Mr. Lanman, his secretary. As the carriage was ascending a hill, the body of the vehicle fell, and they both were violently thrown out. Mr. Webster was thrown headlong, and involuntarily put out his hand to check the force of the blow; and he fell upon his hand and badly crushed it. He was taken up and carried to a house near by, where he was carefully tended, until he was able to be safely removed to Marshfield. He had not recovered from this injury when he died.

Mr. Webster told me something connected with this accident, which moved him so much that, as he related it, tears came into his eyes. In Kingston, the town in which Mr. Webster was thrown from his carriage, there lived an old gentleman named Joseph Holmes, — a peculiar, energetic man, of considerable wealth. He was popularly regarded as cold, solitary, and forbidding in disposition; and, although Mr. Webster knew him, he had no liking

or sympathy for him. When Mr. Webster was taken up senseless, and carried into the house, the people round about, very much excited by the news of the accident, gathered in groups near the door; and, while the physician was being waited for, some of them were admitted to the room where the wounded statesman lay. Mr. Webster suddenly recovered his consciousness, and looked about him. He knew some of the people, others he did not; but the first person his eyes rested upon was old Joseph Holmes, who was leaning over his bed with an expression of intense anxiety and alarm. When fully restored to his senses, Mr. Webster said: —

"Mr. Holmes, how do you do? I am glad to see you."

The tears rolled down the old man's cheeks, and he turned away, saying, —

"Thank God, he is safe!"

Mr. Webster said that this incident moved him very much; for, although Mr. Holmes was a political friend, they had no special acquaintance, and it had never occurred to him that "there were any tears in those eyes."

The physician who was summoned to attend Mr. Webster on this occasion has made a record of a touching incident, showing alike Mr. Webster's strong sense of gratitude and his familiarity with the Scriptures.

"I was called to him in great haste as a physician," he says, "he (as the messenger represented) being thrown from his carriage and nearly dead.

After making all necessary inquiry, and he becoming more comfortable, the crowd dispersed and left me alone with him and his private secretary.

"While I was dressing the wound on his forehead, which was much contused and somewhat lacerated, Mrs. D., the lady of the house, entered the door of the chamber and passed to the opposite side of the room, with seeming awe, as if fearing to approach. Mr. Webster, casting his eyes on the woman as she passed, said: —

"'Madam, how very diversified is the lot of humanity in this our world! A certain man, passing from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves and was ill-treated. A man, passing from Marshfield to Plymouth, fell among a very hospitable set of people and was taken care of.'

"Behold the picture! here lay the mighty man, — his physical powers but just recovering from a shock which on any other subject would probably have suspended them for ever, scarcely awake as yet to things about him; his consciousness of outward life rising, like the rising beams of a summer's morning, calm and majestic, his first utterance the teachings of the blessed Jesus! These teachings and precepts of his Divine Master he applies to himself, as still a passing pilgrim of earth, — 'a man passing from Jerusalem to Jericho.'

"No man could see this picture as I saw it, without the assurance that, although 'all that is mortal of Daniel Webster is no more for ever,' he 'still lives,' not only in the hearts of his country-

men by his counsels of wisdom, but that 'mortality (with him) is swallowed up of life.'"

Early in July, 1852, not long after the sitting of the Whig National Convention at Baltimore, which, passing Mr. Webster by, saw fit to nominate General Scott for the Presidency, I accompanied him from Washington to Boston. He said to me, one day: —

"We will go this evening as far as Baltimore. That will make the journey easier, by taking a little off this end; and then we will take the train, when it comes up from Washington in the morning."

As the weather was very warm, we did as Mr. Webster proposed. At Baltimore we repaired to the hotel, and occupied the same room, which had two beds in it. Before going to bed, which he did quite early, he took some kind of a wash (perhaps bay rum) from his trunk, and bathed his limbs. Meanwhile, I sat by, reading. It seemed to me that his legs looked somewhat swollen, especially the left one; nor did he appear to attempt to conceal the fact from me. He saw that I noticed it, and gave his head a significant nod, as much as to say, "You see." I went up to him and said: —

"Mr. Webster, your leg is swollen."

"Yes," he replied.

"Were you aware of it?" asked I.

"Yes."

"Well," said I, "it alarms me: does any physician know it?"

"No; that," he replied, "is the enemy: don't for the world name this to any human being. I

would not like to have my family distressed by such a revelation. It can do no good; and it will come to their knowledge quite soon enough. So, say nothing on that subject."

I made no mention of it. That was the first knowledge I had of his trouble; nor did I even then fully comprehend the magnitude of the difficulty. He returned to Marshfield, went to Boston again, and then back to Washington, on business connected with the department, he being then Secretary of State. Remaining there a few days, he returned to Boston, and went to Marshfield again. There were by this time unmistakable evidences of the progress of the disease in his system. He could no longer conceal it from others, and he did not attempt to do so. He consulted Dr. Porter, a respectable country physician, one of his neighbors. Dr. Porter advised him to visit Boston and consult physicians here. He followed this counsel, and came to Boston. As it was the summer season, many people were away from the city, with their families. Instead of going to a hotel, he brought a servant or two with him, and went to the house of his son, Fletcher Webster, on Cedar Street. My house was on the corner of West Cedar and Chestnut Streets, so near to his son's house that we could speak across to each other. My own family were out of town, and I was not stopping at my house. On his arrival, he sent me a message, informing me where he was, and I at once went to him, before going out of town to where my family was stopping. He told me that he had

come to Boston to stay ten or twenty days, as the case might be, for medical advice, and should send that day to Dr. Jeffries, who lived near by in Cedar Street, and consult him in regard to his disease. He did so, and I met Dr. Jeffries there when I called the next day. On the second day after his arrival at Fletcher's I received a note from him, saying that he would like to have me call, if I could conveniently do so, as he was going home to Marshfield the next morning. I was surprised on receiving such a note, because I supposed he was going to stay long enough to see if he could be benefited by skilled medical treatment. I went to see him in the evening, and he told me that the cause of his return to Marshfield was, that Colonel Perkins had that day sent him a note proposing to make him a visit at Marshfield the next day; not knowing, of course, that he was not there.

"I could not bear," said he, "to say to him that I was not at home, and thus lose his visit. He is an old, valued, and trusted friend of many years; I have invited him many times to visit me at Marshfield, but he has never done so; he has now found time and inclination to come, and I want to see him at Marshfield. I have sent to Mr. Foster to let me have an easy carriage, and to drive me home."

I could not but remark the great thoughtfulness which this betrayed on his part for the comfort and pleasure of others, by putting himself to this great pain and inconvenience. That was the last time he was ever in Boston. I do not recollect the

exact day of the month, but it was about the middle of September. He returned to Marshfield too much exhausted and ill to see his guests that night: they had got there by rail before him. He was obliged to go immediately to his chamber. From that time he began to fail quite perceptibly from day to day; but he still continued about his business, keeping up his correspondence through the agency of his secretary, dictating important despatches, and carrying on the business of the State department from that sick and dying chamber. Sometime during the week or fortnight after that, I visited him again at Marshfield. It was on a Saturday. He was then confined to his chamber, and was under the care and treatment of the doctors. Dr. Jeffries had visited him several times, and was in consultation with Dr. Porter, who went to him daily. When Sunday morning came he said to me, —

"I wish you to drive to church with Mrs. Webster."

"I shall do so with great pleasure," I replied.

I mentioned his wish to Mrs. Webster. She said she had no heart to go. So we stayed at home, and I informed Mr. Webster of our decision.

"Well, then, my friend," said he, "I wish you and Mr. Paige to go up to the tomb."

Mr. Paige was the only other person in the house, except myself and Mrs. Webster. Mr. Webster had just completed a tomb in a lot which he had set apart and deeded to the town as a burying-place for ever.

Only a few days before he requested me to go with Mr. Paige to the tomb, he had had the remains of his family, which had been interred beneath Saint Paul's Church, removed and deposited in this new resting-place: they were of his first wife, her child and grandchild, — "all kindred blood," as he expressed it.

Mr. Webster was lying in bed when he asked me to go there.

"Wait until the sun is a little up," said he, "and then walk up and see what you think of it."

Mr. Paige and I accordingly walked, sadly enough, across the field, about half a mile, to the site of the tomb; and, after looking at it, we returned.

When I reached the door, after perhaps an hour's absence, Mrs. Webster met me, and said that Mr. Webster was promising himself to come down and dine with us.

"He cannot do so," she said; "he is not able; I pray that he may not. But he seems to be set upon it. I wish that, without saying that I have asked it, you would try and persuade him not to make the attempt; for I am afraid it will hurt him to come down."

When I went into his bed-room, he was very cheerful; he inquired about the weather, whether I had seen the tomb, and how I liked it. I replied that the fence had been put up, and every thing was as it should be. Then he said, sadly: —

"It will get more occupants soon." He hastily turned the subject, and remarked: —

"I have been studying natural history, since you went away. Here are these little leeches: to see them you would say, What can such creatures as those be made for? But when they are applied, and have dug as they have at me, five or six of them, for two hours, to extract this vitiated blood, you see then what the purpose of the Almighty was in making them. Nothing is made in vain," he added, earnestly. "Every thing of that sort, to the thoughtful mind, makes one realize the goodness of God to his creatures. He has made every thing to contribute to the happiness and well-being of his creatures. By the way, did you see the sheep on the side of the hill, as you came along?"

"Yes," I replied, "and a very handsome flock it is."

Mr. Webster, as I have said, was very fond of sheep.

"Well," remarked he, "I suppose they are carrying their heads up pretty high now;" and he laughed. "They begin to think, I suppose," he went on, "that nobody in Marshfield can eat mutton; but one of these days, friend Harvey, we will make them laugh out of the other side of their mouths. We will make them sing a different song."

Then, speaking of the cook, he added: —

"Monica is roasting as nice a leg of mutton as was ever put upon a man's table. It was ripe to-day. It is the ninth day since it was slaughtered, and it has hung in a place where it has kept

all its juices, and arrived at just the right condition. I have ordered it to be cooked. Friend, it is for your dinner; and I am going down to dine with you to-day off that mutton."

"It would give us great pleasure to see you down to dinner," said I; "but I suppose you are joking."

"I never was more in earnest in my life — never," he answered.

"But," said I, "pray, Mr. Webster, wouldn't it be injurious to you? Wouldn't you suffer from such an effort?"

"I am coming to dine with you to-day, suffer or no suffer."

I saw there was nothing further to be said. By that time it was one o'clock, or quarter past.

"I will excuse you," said he, "and ask you to call William Bean."

Bean, the valet, was called, and began the process of shaving and dressing his master. I left the room, and went down and told Mrs. Webster that persuasion in that quarter was useless; that he had made up his mind to try it. I think that Bean was two hours in making him ready. He shaved him, bathed him, and dressed him. As the time for dinner approached, — three o'clock was the hour for the Sunday dinner, — Mrs. Webster left the library where Mr. Paige and myself were, went to his room, and came back and reported.

"He is making a desperate effort to come," she said; "I dread his doing so, but there is nothing to be said."

At fifteen or twenty minutes before three, the library door being ajar, I heard a movement, which soon became a tramping down the broad stairway into the hall. I immediately left my seat and went into what was called the music-room, towards the stairs. Just there I met him. He was leaning heavily on Bean's arm; and it was then that the full force and gravity of his sickness struck my eye; for when in bed he did not seem seriously ill. He was dressed as carefully and elegantly as I ever saw him: he was always very particular about his dress. He had on a blue coat, buff vest, black pantaloons, white cravat, and collar turned down. He passed through the door of the music-room, connecting it with the hall. As soon as he saw me enter from the other side of the room, he stopped, straightened up to his full height, and paused. One of his beautiful smiles came over his face, and he said: —

"Now, William, I will dispense with you; you can leave me."

I immediately approached, when he took both my hands, and kissed me on the cheek.

"Now, then, if you will give me your arm, we will proceed," said he.

He took my arm, and, at a very slow and deliberate pace, we crossed the music-room and entered the library, which was a large and elegant apartment. There was a little fire in the grate. Meanwhile, Mrs. Webster, in her thoughtful attention, believing that he would find himself unable to sit at the table, had put a pillow on the very broad sofa,

LIBRARY AT MARSHFIELD.

moved back the library chair from where it usually stood, and caused the sofa to be put in its place. As we came along to the sofa, she said, —

"Here is a pillow for you, my dear, to lie down."

He straightened up, looked at the pillow, and then at me.

"I don't want any pillow," he said; "I came down here to dine, not to go to bed. I came down here to dine with my friends." Speaking to the servant, he added, "Roll back the sofa; replace the chair."

The chair was a large library, morocco chair. His order was obeyed. To get into the chair he had to turn around; and, leaning heavily upon my arm until he got quite opposite, he sank heavily into it, and leaned his head back, completely exhausted, — without, apparently, having strength enough to reach his hand out to mine. He pointed to the end of the sofa, and I sat down; he then held his hand out, and I grasped it. He said nothing for perhaps a minute. Then he looked at his wife, at Mr. Paige, and at me. He closed his eyes, and threw his head back; then he looked at us again.

"This," said he, "is better than all the medicine of all the doctors, — the countenances of one's friends! What is so consoling? What can give such comfort to a sick man as the countenances of his friends?"

He ceased speaking. We sat in silence. Just then the servant came in and announced to Mrs. Webster that dinner was ready. I immediately

rose, as did Mr. Webster and Mr. Paige. We stood around him, ready to assist him to the table. He looked again from one to the other, as if a little irresolute. At last, with a very bland smile, he turned to Mr. Paige, calling him, I think, by his Christian name.

"Willie," said he, "will you take my place at the dinner?" He turned to me and added, —

"My friend, will you hand Mrs. Webster to the dinner table? I will not go just now; I will come in a few minutes; but do you go."

Mrs. Webster took my arm, and we went to the dinner table, with sad, heavy feelings. Not a word was uttered; we could say nothing. Soup was passed, merely tasted, and put aside. The mutton, though quite as good as he had described it, was scarcely touched.

I had not been seated long at table when Bean came to me, and said that Mr. Webster wished to talk with me. I accordingly went to him, as he lay on the sofa; and then ensued the conversation, which I have given in a previous chapter, about the nomination of Scott, the destiny of the Whig party, and the character of General Pierce.

Between seven and eight o'clock the doctor came, and Mrs. Webster appeared at the door to tell her husband of his arrival.

"No, no," said Mr. Webster, "not yet; I must have this conversation out;" and he locked the door.

"Now," he went on, "for a few personal matters. You are going in the morning, and very

likely I shall never have another opportunity to speak of them. You know that I have received a large fee lately [that in the Goodyear case], and have applied it to the payment of my debts. If I could get two more such, I could die free of debt. It has been my constant aim and wish to pay my debts. They are not very large."

This was quite true. He had reduced them very much in the previous five years.

"Then," he added, "I should like to provide something for my family, and not leave them to the cold charity of the world. But Providence guides and overrules; I cannot help it, and therefore I submit to it. I should very much have preferred to have my widow dependent upon no one for her support, after my decease. She is a member of a wealthy family, and has connections not only by reason of her marriage with me, but in her father's family; so that she will be able to live without being indebted to any one,—not, perhaps, in the style that she has hitherto lived, or that I desire that she should. But she is not extravagant; she is frugal and careful. Then there is Mr. Appleton, the husband of my poor Julia who has gone to heaven, and who has left him with four children; he is a man of fortune, and I need therefore have no anxiety for their future, so far as money is concerned: I leave them without any regrets on that score. Now I come to Fletcher. When I think of poor Fletcher and his family, my heart bleeds. He has not been successful. He has much talent, but he does not seem to

have the knack of getting along in the world and making money. I wish that I could feel that he and his family were provided for; but that is out of the question. All I can say to you is, that I am quite sure that my friends will not see my own son driven to the necessity of begging his bread. There I must leave it, in the hands of an all-wise God; and through His providence I shall trust that Fletcher will be taken care of."

It was now nearly nine o'clock. There was some commotion outside, and Mrs. Webster was evidently worried about his undertaking so long a conversation.

"Give yourself no uneasiness," he said to her: "I have sought this conversation; and whether it makes me worse or not, it has relieved me. Now, you [speaking to me] must go to-morrow morning early; but come and see me again just as soon as you can."

"I will come right down," I replied, "just as soon as my business arrangements will permit."

"People will inquire of you what my bodily condition is. I do not wish to mislead or lie to anybody, nor have you do it; still, I do not want to be the subject of newspaper comment as to my health. Now, if you will assist me into the other room [a little room where he wrote his letters], I will dictate a letter to the President of the United States before I retire."

He sat down at the table, took his pen, and with a very significant look began to write; putting, perhaps, the date upon the letter.

"Now you can say," he remarked, "and it will be true, that you saw Mr. Webster, the Sunday night before you left him, writing at his table. You can say that truly, can you not? It will be an answer, and save me from annoyance."

He then dictated a brief letter to President Fillmore.

That Sabbath evening was a melancholy one, succeeding a sad day. It was one of the last occasions on which he sat up; but he was as anxious as ever for the comfort of his guests. He attended to every little thing, as though each was a matter of importance. He insisted that every one should do promptly what belonged to him to do. It was curious to observe his particularity in this respect. We had talked a great deal during the day, and the time came for him to retire. Calling his black servant, William Bean, he asked him, —

"Is Porter Wright in the kitchen?"

"No, sir," replied William, "he has gone back to his house."

"Tell Baker to come here."

When he came, Mr. Webster said: —

"Baker, go down to Porter Wright's, and tell him that I want to see him in about five minutes; and tell Monica to come here."

Monica came in, and he said to her: —

"Monica, Mr. Harvey is going home to-morrow morning. I don't want him to go without the best breakfast he ever had; and you know how to give it to him."

"I do, indeed, Mr. Webster."

"To-morrow morning, Monica, have the table spread, and a little fire built in the dining-room. Let me see. In the first place, give him the best cup of coffee you can; then, some toast; broil a steak; give him a bit of ham, and a boiled egg. Bake a potato; and put them all on the table smoking hot, precisely at half-past five by the Shrewsbury clock."

"It shall all be done just as you say, sir."

"And you, William, to-morrow morning at exactly five o'clock, — right on the moment, — take a cup of shaving-water to Mr. Harvey's room; and knock on the door till you get an answer, if you have to pound your knuckles off. And when Mr. Harvey gives you an answer, set down the shaving-water, and ask him for his clothes. Take them out, and give them a good brushing. Porter Wright [who had just come in], Mr. Harvey is going to the dépôt to-morrow morning. Have the horses harnessed and the carriage at the door at six o'clock, to a minute. Have it at the library door, and the coachman on the box; put 'Trenton' and 'Morgan' into Mrs. Webster's light carriage."

"Now," said he, turning to me, "I will take your arm, and go upstairs."

He leaned heavily on my arm, and went up to his room. We took an affectionate leave of each other, and the next morning I left Marshfield for Boston.

It was not long after this, when his life was rapidly drawing to a close, that he one day called

Mr. Hatch, one of his men, into his sick room. When he came in, Mr. Webster said: —

"Mr. Hatch, who is now in the room?"

"No one but William," was the reply.

"Very well; William will tell no tales. I have a secret for you. I want you to go, as soon as it is dark, and hang a lantern at the mast-head of my little shallop behind the house, and raise the colors. Be sure and keep that light burning every night as long as I live. Don't fail to do this. I want to keep my flag flying and my light burning till I die."

This little pleasure-boat was very dear to Mr. Webster, because it once belonged to his beloved son Edward. From the window of his sick room, as he lay in bed, he could see the light at the mast-head. He ordered it to be put up secretly, that the sight of it might give his family an agreeable surprise when they saw it for the first time glimmering in the darkness.

When Mrs. Webster came into the room that evening, he asked her if she could see the ducks in the pond. On going to the window, she was astonished to observe the lantern at the mast-head. On the very last day that he went downstairs from his chamber, — when he insisted on being helped down by his friends, — he put on his hat, and looked out on this sheet of water behind the house. There had been an autumnal gale the night before. He looked out, and cried cheerfully, —

"Halloo! I perceive that the home squadron has outridden the gale!"

He then returned to his room.

A week or ten days before he died, he insisted on having the cattle driven up the lane in front of the house; and he gazed on them with as much delight as a child on his playthings. He wished them to be girted, which was done by his farmer. Mr. Webster made guesses as to how much they would measure, and watched the operation with the liveliest interest.

I did not see Mr. Webster again, after the Sunday interview which I have given, until two weeks after, on the Saturday previous to his death. I had been to Vermont on business connected with the railway of which I was then treasurer; and had received daily bulletins, which Mr. Webster asked his secretary to send to me, as to the condition of his health. These bulletins made no mention of any marked change. In one of them there was a little encouragement. He said that the swelling of the abdomen had decreased, and this was regarded by the doctors as a favorable symptom. Otherwise, he remained about the same. I returned to Boston on Friday morning, and then received news of a sudden and serious turn in his disease. He had begun to vomit blood, which was an indication of a speedy termination of life. I started the next morning for Marshfield. When I arrived there, Mr. Webster was surrounded by his family; or rather, they were in the house, but not in his room. No one was then admitted to see him except his doctor. Mrs. Webster was in great distress; his life had become a question of hours. I

had been telegraphed to come, and Mr. Jackson had been down to meet me two or three times. Of course all hope was over. I met Fletcher, who seemed much gratified that I had come.

I found Mr. Webster at times suffering terribly from his fits of vomiting blood; at other times he was calm and free from pain. Dr. Jeffries, his attending physician, and Dr. Porter, had intimated that, unless he had some important communication to make concerning his affairs, it would not be well that he should see any one, as talking would only make him worse, and increase his sufferings. Fletcher said: —

"I want Mr. Harvey to see my father; he does not know he is here."

"You can do as you please," replied Dr. Jeffries; "I have forbidden everybody."

I said to Fletcher that there were others who should see him, especially his relatives; and that while I, of course, was anxious to see his father if it could be allowed, I had no desire to go to him in an invidious manner.

"You must see him," said Fletcher: "he is anxious to see you."

Being thus urged, I could no longer refuse to go in. The day was rapidly wearing away, and night was coming on. Dr. Mason Warren, who had been sent for, was expected every moment. We were all gathered very near the door of Mr. Webster's room, sitting on the stairs. Fletcher passed in and out, bringing news of his condition. In a few moments he came and whispered to me, —

"Now you must go in and see father. He is lying perfectly free from pain; and he looks like a king."

"Does he know I am here?" I asked.

"No; and I do not wish him to know, until you yourself tell him."

"I would rather not go in," said I, "until the doctor permits it."

Fletcher then asked the doctor if there was any objection. He replied that he would no longer object, and that probably Mr. Webster would not now be disturbed by my going in. I then followed Fletcher to the door, and went in. The room was not large; and as soon as I entered, Mr. Webster could see me, for the candles were burning brightly. As soon as he saw me, he exclaimed in a very distinct voice: —

"Why, is it possible that this is you? I thought you would come. Come to me."

I at once passed across the room, very much touched, and weeping. When I reached the bedside, he held out both hands, and put his arms around my neck and kissed me. Then he said:

"Kiss me."

"It is distressing to see you suffering so, Mr. Webster," I said, "and so ill."

"I am not so ill but that I know you. I am sick, but I am not too sick to call down blessings on you, faithful friend, — true in life, true in death. I shall be dead to-morrow," he added, softly.

"Do not leave this room until I am gone.

Promise me that you will not." He reached out his arms to me, and again kissed me.

"God bless you, faithful friend!" he said; repeating the words several times.

He still kept his arms around my neck. His hands, as he continued to hold me close to him, felt as cold as ice. It was a sad, sad moment. A few moments later I perceived that some one was gently removing his hands from me. It was the doctor. I left the bed-side. Those who had been waiting on the stairs came into the room, — Mr. and Mrs. Paige, Mr. George Curtis, Mr. Appleton, and others.

"Don't, don't leave me!" said Mr. Webster, imploringly, as I drew away from him. "You promised that you would not leave the room until I was dead."

"I shall keep my promise," I replied.

Mr. Webster then took a loving leave of those who had come in, shook hands with them all, and called them by name. After this agitating scene, the doctor thought it best that Mr. Webster should try to get some sleep, and asked those who had come in to leave the room. All retired, except myself. A few moments after, Dr. Warren came. Mr. Webster was very glad to see him, and said to him that he had taken the liberty to send for him. It was, he said, the last night that he should trouble any one on earth. He then inquired for the elder Dr. Warren, and sent a friendly message to him.

After this, he lay apparently comfortable for an hour, or an hour and a half. They were constantly

giving him opiates till his last moment. He lingered on some hours into the night, and as the clock struck two, Daniel Webster quietly passed away from earth.

I wish to add to this account of my illustrious friend's last hours that which Dr. Jeffries gave, soon after Mr. Webster's death, at a meeting of the Southern District Medical Society at New Bedford. On this occasion Dr. Jeffries said: —

"After the injury which Mr. Webster received by a fall from his carriage, he went to Boston, and was under my professional care for several days previous to his address in Faneuil Hall. I had visited him two or three times daily, and had reduced his diet below his usual mode of living, in consequence of inflammation in his arm. On the day of his address, I visited him twice in the morning, and dressed his arm particularly for the occasion. After dressing it I said: 'I have kept you very low, sir, for some time; and as you have an arduous duty to perform to-day, I think I shall advise you to take a glass of wine at dinner, and to eat a little meat.'

"He was walking across the room at this time, when he stopped, and, turning towards me, replied in a familiar but decided manner, —

"'I don't know, Doctor; I think I shall not. I have found the benefit of temperance. I shall take a cup of soup, retire to my chamber and lie down for two hours; then I shall dress and be ready for his Honor the Mayor when he calls to attend me to Faneuil Hall.'

"At his request I went with him to the Hall, and am fully convinced that he had not on that day, or for some days preceding, taken even the smallest amount of stimulating drinks. I admit that Mr. Webster was in the occasional use of wine, and sometimes of other alchoholic drinks, and gave as a probable reason that it was much more the custom in Washington than in this city; but I confidently express the opinion that no man can be produced, who can show that he knows, — although many might erroneously presume, as in the instance above referred to, — that his great intellect was ever clouded by stimulants; or that he was unfitted at any time, even for the production of State papers.

"At the time of his reception by the City, Mr. Webster appeared to possess his full intellectual strength. In reply to an apprehension expressed by me that morning, he said: —

"'I feel as able now to make a speech of two hours' duration as ever I did in my life.'

"But he was laboring under great physical debility, requiring the constant assistance of an attendant about his person. This was dispensed with, by a great effort on his part, as was also a sling for his arm, because he did not wish to appear before his fellow-citizens as a sick man.

"I have always found Mr. Webster perfectly obedient as a patient, especially in following strictly the diet and regimen prescribed for him.

"The nature of the complaints for which I have attended him has required that these restrictions

should be sometimes severe, and on one important occasion were directly opposed to his own view of his case; but he nevertheless yielded implicitly to my instructions.

"In his last sickness he required the most exact admeasurement of such stimulants as were thought advisable, and would take none without my express directions.

"I am also assured that he always practised the greatest self-denial whenever especially called upon for the exertion of his intellectual powers. The mighty productions of his pen exhibit the clearness of his intellect as much as the profoundness of his thought. The most rigid casuist may be defied to point to one line in his voluminous works which indicated the weakness of the inebriate."

At a late hour upon the night of his death, Mr. Webster remarked to Dr. Jeffries that he had better lie down and get some rest. Dr. Jeffries, knowing the character of the man, suggested that he should read a hymn which was supposed to be a favorite of Mr. Webster. Mr. Webster having made an intimation in the affirmative, Dr. Jeffries read the following hymn: —

There is a fountain filled with blood
  Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
  Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
  That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
  Wash all my sins away.

Thou dying Lamb! thy precious blood
  Should never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
  Are saved, to sin no more.

Since first by faith I saw the stream
  Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
  And shall be till I die.

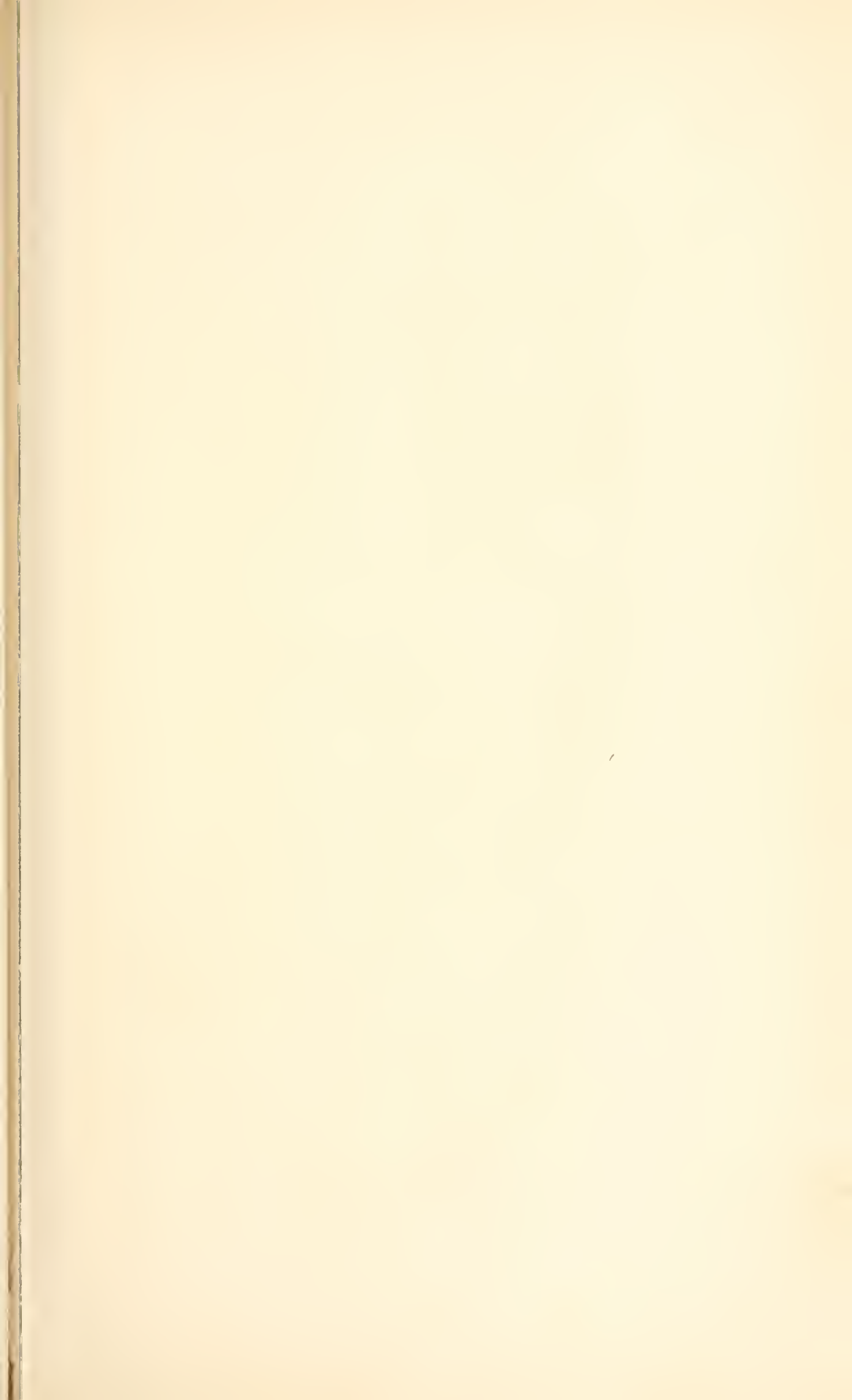
And when this feeble, stammering tongue
  Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
  I'll sing Thy power to save.

After Dr. Jeffries had finished reading this hymn, Mr. Webster, in a clear, strong voice, replied, "Amen, amen, amen!"

According to universal custom in the town of Marshfield, on the Sabbath of Mr. Webster's death, between the hours of seven and eight o'clock in the morning, the bell of the parish church was rung violently, to announce to the startled inhabitants within hearing that a death had occurred among them. Then it was struck three times three as a signal that a male person had died. Next, the bell was struck slowly and deliberately seventy strokes, to denote the age of the dead; and then there went up a mournful voice from every house, "It must be that Daniel Webster is dead," — "The pride of our nation has fallen," "Our great neighbor and townsman is no more."

The spot where Daniel Webster reposes is upon elevated land, and overlooks the sea, his mammoth

farm, the First Parish Church, and most of the town of Marshfield, — wide-spreading marshes, forests remote and near, the tranquil river, and glistening brooks. On a pleasant day the sands of Cape Cod can be descried from it, thirty miles directly to the east, where the Pilgrims first moored their ship. The spot is perfectly retired and quiet, nothing being usually heard but the solemn dirge of the ocean and the answering sighs of the winds. It is the spot of all others for his resting place.



LIBERTY AND UNION
NOW AND FOREVER
ONE AND INSEPARABLE
DANIEL WEBSTER

APPENDIX.

THE BURNHAM STATUE OF WEBSTER.

It is not inappropriate to the purpose of this volume to describe the remarkable and munificent testimonial offered by a citizen of New York to the fame of Daniel Webster, and to the reverence for his great intellect and the affection for his manly virtues which have kept his memory green. It was, indeed, the particular wish of Mr. Harvey that the memorable proceedings and addresses at New York, on the 25th of November, 1876, should be included in this work. He was present on the occasion, and he repeatedly expressed the hope that this crowning ceremonial in honor of his illustrious friend might have a place in his volume of Reminiscences.

Mr. Gordon Webster Burnham, a gentleman of large wealth and of artistic tastes, having an exalted veneration for Mr. Webster's character, tendered to the New York department of public parks, in 1874, a statue of the statesman, to be erected in Central Park. The following is the letter in which this offer was made: —

Henry G. Stebbins, Esq., President of the Department of Public Parks.

Dear Sir: In accordance with the suggestions heretofore made in conversation with your predecessor, Mr. Wales, and yourself, I respectfully offer for the Central Park a bronze statue of Daniel Webster, of colossal size, with an appro-

priate granite pedestal, the whole work to be executed by the best artist in a manner altogether worthy the grandeur of the subject and the conspicuous position it is designed to occupy at the lower entrance to the Mall.

This position, proposed by Mr. President Wales, and cordially approved by yourself and other gentlemen of no less excellent taste and judgment, will exactly suit my purpose in devoting so large a sum of money as will be required to adorn the Park, and to honor the memory of one of America's noblest sons; whose patriotic eloquence, devoted to the defence of her institutions during his life, will continue to animate and inspire to the latest time that sentiment of "Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable," which has saved the Nation, and will continue to protect it.

I trust that my offer to place this statue on the site proposed will meet the speedy acceptance of your Department, in order that the work may be duly completed by the Fourth of July, 1876, — the Centennial of American Independence.

I have the honor to be, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

Gordon W. Burnham.

No. 128 Fifth Ave., New York,
July 25, 1874.

Some opposition was at first raised to this project; but the proposed gift was so munificent, and the appropriateness of a statue of America's greatest statesman in America's noblest pleasure ground was so evident, that opposition was soon silenced, and Mr. Burnham's gift was accepted by the City.

The unveiling of the statue took place, in Central Park, on Saturday the 25th of November, 1876, — a date memorable in the Revolutionary annals of New York, — before a large concourse of people. The following description of this stately specimen of the sculptural art is taken from the "New York Times" of the next day: —

"'The centre of attraction was the statue itself, which towered above the throng with an imposing grace, which might aptly be compared with the prominence of its distinguished prototype among his fellows. It is, indeed, a noble work of art, and one well worthy of commemorating the fame of the great champion of the Constitution. Upon a massive granite pedestal, ornamented at the side with Corinthian columns imbedded in stone, rises a magnificent bronze effigy of Webster, of heroic size. The figure is attired in the old-fashioned dress coat of thirty years ago, with the right arm thrust in the folds, and the left hanging naturally at the side. Behind the figure the trunk of a tree is represented, partially covered by a cloak. The expression upon the countenance is one of commanding firmness, slightly tinged with sadness, and beneath all an intense mental power, which, together, form a happy reflex of Webster's prevailing spirit. Upon the front of the polished granite pedestal is the inscription, taken from the redoubtable reply to Hayne: 'Liberty and Union, Now and Forever, One and Inseparable;' on the reverse are the words: 'Presented by GORDON W. BURNHAM, July IV., MDCCCLXXVI.' The statue is the work of Mr. Thomas Ball, and was modelled at Florence and cast in Munich. Its height is fourteen feet, and its weight six tons. The pedestal weighs over one hundred tons, and is twenty feet in height."

The ceremony of inauguration took place at two o'clock. On the platform, among other distinguished persons, were GORDON W. BURNHAM, the donor, Mayor WICKHAM, Hon. WILLIAM M. EVARTS, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, Ex-Governor E. D. MORGAN, Governor INGERSOLL, of Connecticut, Lieutenant-Governor KNIGHT, of Massachusetts, Hon. PETER HARVEY, District-Attorney PHELPS, and WILLIAM R. MARTIN, President of the Department of Parks. The assembly was called to order by President Martin, who spoke as follows: —

"To-day, in the chief city of his country, we place on a pedestal of granite, standing on the basic rock, the statue of the man whose learning and eloquence did so much to establish the principles of the Constitution on enduring foundations, — did so much to fix in every heart that love for and faith in the Union which, like love and faith always, in the crisis, were our salvation.

"Surmounting all discord of interests and opinions, through the blood of the Revolution, a century ago, our fathers laid the foundations of the Republic.

"In the middle of the century these foundations were opened, fundamental principles were agitated anew, were resettled, and planted in the hearts of the people. In our day, they have survived the severest tests to which Liberty and Union could have been subjected. They have proved the strongest of all the forces, natural and moral, by which we are surrounded.

"Through this course of our history there was room, there was need, for a man — for many men, but for one supremely eminent — for the duty of standing between the past and the future, between the two wars, — the first successful to build up, the second failing to overthrow; need of a man with heart large enough to embrace all, mind large enough to comprehend all, and, upon all principles and all duties of our pride and our hopes, to build the temple and within it the altar of the country, before which all hearts are one and all discordant interests disappear.

"It is the noble acts of such a man that we to-day commemorate."

Mr. Gordon W. Burnham was then introduced, and thus addressed the Mayor: —

"Mr. Mayor: Having always been a great admirer of Mr. Webster, and having a strong desire that something should be done to perpetuate his memory, I have caused this statue to be erected, which I trust may be as enduring as his

fame, and the granite upon which it stands. I now have the pleasure, through you, of presenting this statue of Daniel Webster, with its pedestal, to the city of New York. I commit it to your guardianship, trusting that it may be faithfully cared for and protected in all time to come."

The statue was then unveiled by THOMAS BROWNELL BURNHAM, the donor's youngest son, amid loud cheers.

Mayor WICKHAM, in accepting the gift, said: —

"MR. BURNHAM AND GENTLEMEN: The city of New York accepts this statue with many acknowledgments for the munificence and public spirit which are shown now, not for the first time, by the donor, and with profound regard and reverence for the remarkable man whose features and figure it so admirably reproduces. The time is well chosen for reminding the people of all these United States, as this image does, of the greatness of the intellect and resources of Daniel Webster, and of the glorious use to which he put them in the public service. In the midst of the confusion made by contending parties, who struggle now for power in the Republic, this monument to the most illustrious of the sons of New England is eloquent of the moderation, the wisdom, and the abounding patriotism of his counsels, which helped to guide the country through so many dangers now happily passed. And, in the new perils to which constitutional government is to-day exposed, to turn the thoughts of men again to the great expounder of the Constitution himself, as these impressive proceedings will turn them, cannot but be productive of good influences. The city will guard and keep this noble gift with watchful care, that generations yet to come may learn the lessons taught by Webster."

President Martin then introduced Hon. WILLIAM M. EVARTS, who delivered the following Address: —

"Mr. Mayor and Fellow-citizens: I congratulate you, Mr. Burnham, upon the prosperous execution of a noble purpose. You did me the honor, in meditating this grand gift to the city and to the country, to ask my concurrence in this munificent act. I know that it proceeded, in your intention, from nothing but admiration of Mr. Webster, because he was a great servant of his country, and from your patriotism, that desired to perpetuate his influence in a form that should be as enduring and as eloquent as any preservation of his memory to his countrymen could possibly be. I congratulate you, Mr. Mayor, and the city of New York, for the grateful and graceful performance of a duty now for the second and third time of receiving noble monuments to the fame of great citizens of this country, and the acceptance of permanent and impressive decorations of our public places. And you, fellow-citizens, I congratulate upon the benignant sky and the genial air that in these last days of November, so apt to be the saddest of the year, have for this occasion given us the brightness and the joy of opening Spring. I congratulate you more deeply, that you and your children, from generation to generation, are here to renew the lessons of patriotism and of duty which Mr. Webster in his lifetime taught so wisely and so well. I congratulate you upon this evidence that public spirit does not fail in a Republic. It has been the reproach of equal society that it bred selfishness, and it has been a maxim that munificence belonged to kings and to nobles, and that splendor and elegance and magnificence flowed downward, and could never be the growth of an equal society; but our history has in this, as in so many other things, falsified these maxims of our race. Where will you find wider and better, more numerous or more noble, instances of charity, of public spirit, and of contributions to the public taste and public enjoyment, than this Republic of ours presents everywhere? And where will you find in other lands instances worthy to be recorded with this of Mr. Burnham, where a single citizen, doing his share as one of the people, for the good of the nation, has made and planned as great and noble a gift?

"Mr. Mayor, on this occasion we find no need of distinct eulogy. Whoever speaks to any of our countrymen of Mr. Webster, of his life, of his public services, of his genius, and of his fame, can tell them nothing new, nor can he hope to enlarge or deepen their admiring homage which attended him through a whole generation in his lifetime, and in the quarter of a century that has passed since his death has hallowed his memory. Nor, were it otherwise, would any thing but the briefest commemoration and the simplest eulogy befit the occasion. This noble restoration of his imposing presence, and the solemn echo which arises in every mind, of the last words which passed his lips, 'I still live!' — these speak to us to-day; and all other oratory is superfluous. There he stands, as he stood for a whole lifetime of assured fame, in the full blaze of a whole people's attention, crowned by his Maker with glory and honor — as he stood in the courts, in the Senate, in the popular assemblies, at the helm of State, amid the crowds that followed his steps in every public concourse. And yet I could not but yield, Mr. Burnham, to your request that I should share with Mr. Webster's friend, and our friend, Mr. Winthrop, in bringing to attention some of the principal traits of Mr. Webster's character, some of the prominent instances of his great public services.

"My first knowledge of Mr. Webster, in the way of personal association with him, occurred just as I was leaving college, and he, in 1837, was making that remarkable progress from the Capitol at Washington to his home in the East, on which his steps were delayed in every city by the instant demands of the people that they should see him and that he should speak to them. I had, as a school-boy in Boston, been familiar with his person as that of the principal citizen of that place, but in after life it came to be my fortune to be associated with him in public relations only during the last few years of his life. I can bear testimony that, without arrogance, yet full of dignity, he never sought to enhance, but always to lessen, the imposing influence which his mien and

his fame impressed on every one. The kindliness of his man ner and his affectionate attention to every claim made upon his duty or his favor, none who knew him will ever forget; and if my voice now can for a moment recall more nearly than the general recollection of his countrymen might do, what was great and valuable in his character and in his public service, it is an office both of affection and duty that I should so do.

"No one brings to his thoughts the life of Mr. Webster without instantly dwelling upon the three principal great departments of highest influence in which he moved, and where he showed his power, and shed in a shower of beneficence upon his countrymen and their institutions the great effulgence of his intellect and the warmth of his patriotism. I mean, of course, as a lawyer, as a statesman, and as an orator. No doubt, in the history of the country, names can be recalled which, considered singly and simply in relation to what makes up the character and authority of the lawyer, may compete with or may surpass Mr. Webster. No one can divide with Chief Justice Marshall the immense power of judicial penetration which he maintained through a life lengthened beyond eighty years; and eminent men of learning, of weight, of authority with the profession and with the public, may be named that at least occupy, in the simple character of lawyers, for learning and judgment, as elevated a place as Mr. Webster. But I am quite sure that there is not, in the general judgment of the profession, nor in the conforming opinion of his countrymen, any lawyer that, in the magnitude of his causes, in the greatness of their public character, in the immensity of their influence upon the fortunes of the country, or in the authority which his manner of forensic eloquence produced in courts and over courts, can be placed in the same rank with Mr. Webster. As a statesman, we must include in our mention as well the character and the part of the party leader, as that of the guide and guardian of the public interests in the more elevated plane of the councils of the country. And in this, whatever we may say of the great men who, at

the birth of the Nation and in the framing of the Constitution, and then, with lives prolonged, attending the first steps of the progress of the new-born Nation, established their own fame and contributed to the greatness and the safety of the country, we shall find no man in our generation — no man coming down to our generation from that preceding one — who has held such a share of influence in the popular assemblies, in the counsels of the party, in the State or in the Senate, or in the discharge of the duties of a Minister of State, who can at all contest with Mr. Webster the pre-eminent position of the statesman of the whole country, for the whole country, and in results which the whole country has felt. And then, when we come to oratory, he combined the intellectual, the moral, and the personal traits which make up that power in the Nation, which gave to one Grecian above all others of his countrymen — Pericles — the title of Olympian. Who so much in our time and in our Nation has combined all those traits so often severed as Mr. Webster? Whether he lifted his voice, *mirum spargens sonum*, in the court, or in the Senate, or at the hustings, or in the oratory of public occasions, and to select audiences, he spoke as one having authority with his people; and that authority was always recognized and always obeyed.

To these three recognized and familiar departments of his pre-eminence we must add a fourth, — his clear title in the sphere of literature to be held as one of the greatest authors and writers of our mother tongue that America has produced. We all recognize the great distinction in this regard of Burke and of Macaulay. In the flow of their eloquence as writers, and in the splendors of their diction, Mr. Webster did not approach them, nor would he have desired to imitate them. But I propose to the most competent critics of the Nation, that they can find nowhere six octavo volumes of printed literary production of an American, that contains as much noble and as much beautiful imagery, as much warmth of rhetoric, and of magnetic impression upon the reader, as are to be found in the collected writings and speeches of Daniel Webster.

"But, fellow-citizens, as a citizen and as a patriot, Mr. Webster was greatest in the opinion of his countrymen in his life, and greatest in the judgment of posterity since his death. What are all those mere gifts of intellect, however vast; what these advantages of person, of education, of position, and of power in the country, if their possessor fails or falls short in his devotion to his country, and in his service to the State? And he that will look through the preserved, recorded evidence of Mr. Webster's life will see at once that, from his youth to his death, he was as full of public spirit and as full of public labors, as if his life had not been busy and important in its private, professional, and personal relations. He served the State, and labored for and loved it from boyhood up. He withheld no service, he shrunk from no labor, he drew no nice distinctions as to opportunities or occasions. Whenever a word was to be spoken, and could be usefully spoken, to the American people, in the lecture-room, on the anniversary occasion, in the public assemblies, in the cities and in the country, on excursions and progresses through large stretches of our territory, North and South, East and West, always on an elevated stage, and in a conspicuous cause, he gave his great powers to this service of the people.

"What could exceed the breadth and generosity of his views, the comprehensiveness, the nationality, of his relations to the people! Born in the North-eastern corner of New England, the North-eastern corner of the country, seated for the practice of his profession and for his domestic life in the city of Boston, on the very outside rim of our country's territory, — I defy any one to find, from the moment he left his provincial college at Dartmouth, to the time that he was buried on the shore of Marshfield, a time when that great heart did not beat, and that great intellect did not work for the service equally of all the American people, North and South, East and West. We do not find all the great men of this country thus large and liberal in the comprehension of their public spirit, thus constant and warm in the exercise of patriotic feeling. I cannot even allude to

the immense and the frequent public services that Mr. Webster performed; but I have this to say, that I would rather that the men and the youth of this country should read the peroration of Mr. Webster's speech in reply to Hayne, and the peroration of his speech for the country and its peace on the 7th of March, 1850, than any equal passages in all the text-books and all the oratory of our politics from the time he died until now. I would like to have anybody that has been instructed by the last twenty-five years see if he could portray the evils, the weaknesses, the woes of nullification under the Constitution, the wretchedness and the falsity of the claims and schemes of peaceful secession, better than Webster could do and did do in advance. I would like to see one touch of art, one word of eloquence, one proof or reason that can be added under this stern teaching of a quarter of a century, that is not found in those great speeches now. His countrymen questioned him, his countrymen maligned him; but it was his country that he loved, and he would not curse it for anybody's cursing him.

"On Boston Common, in July, 1852, just before his death, when he stood in the face of Boston people, whom he had served for thirty years, he used these words: 'My manner of political life is known to you all. I leave it to my country, to posterity, and to the world to see whether it will or will not stand the test of time and truth.' Twenty-five years of our history has shed a flood of light upon the past, and emblazoned anew the records of Mr. Webster's public life. I shall not rehearse them, but I say this to you, and I challenge contradiction, that from the beginning to the end that record is true to the great principle that presided over the birth of the Nation, and found voice in the Declaration of Independence; that was wrought into the very fabric of the Constitution; that carried us, with unmutilated territory, and undefiled Constitution, and unbroken authority of the Government, through the sacrifices and the terrors and the woes of civil war; that will sustain us through all the heats and agues which attend the steps of the Nation to perfect health and strength. The

great principle embossed in enduring granite on this pedestal, and from the time it was announced from those eloquent lips, is firmly fixed in the consciences and hearts of this people: 'Liberty and union, now and for ever, one and inseparable.' The great names of our Revolutionary history, — the signers of the Declaration of Independence, the framers of the Constitution, the wise men who, surviving from that generation, confirmed the progress of the country under its Constitution and its new liberties, — no American will allow their fame to be disparaged or divided; and of the men that followed them up to your time, how many do you owe great obligations to? How much to Clay and Adams? How much to Jackson and Wright? How much to Seward and Chase, and all their contemporaries? But if I were to name two men whose services were incomparably above that of all others in making this new experiment of free government and of paper constitutions a living power to a great and strenuous nation; two that could not have been spared though all others remained, — I should say that to the great Chief Justice Marshall, and to the great forensic, popular, parliamentary defender and expounder of the Constitution, Daniel Webster, we most owe what we now enjoy. Who shall deny to him the title, 'of our constituted liberties the greatest defender'?

"And now, what shall we say of this great man in the personal and private traits of his character? I should say of Mr. Webster that, if there were one single trait conspicuous in him and pre-eminent as compared with others who have made for themselves great names in history, it would be the abundant charity of his nature. He never assumed for himself in private intercourse, or in public speech, any superiority. He never tolerated in his presence, and he never practised, either evil speech or evil surmise. His frown followed even their casual introduction about the table and in public discussions, and he never tolerated any confusion between intellectual dissection of an argument and moral inculpation of the reasoner. I do not know that one should question ambition, for it is the public passion by which great public talents are

made useful to a people. But I will say of Mr. Webster, that he seemed to me never to have any ambition but that which is an inseparable part of the possession of great powers of public usefulness, but that which is sanctioned by the injunction that great talents are not to be buried in the earth, and by the requirement that the light which God has given that it should shine before men is to be placed on a candlestick.

"And now within the narrower circle, not ill-represented here in the crowd before me, and on this stand, of those who enjoyed close and friendly intercourse with Mr. Webster; who knew, better than the world knew, the greatness of his powers and the nobleness of his nature, — shall we be guilty of any disrespect to the living, shall it not be pardoned to affection, if we say that the associations with those who survive seem to us but little, compared with the memory of him whose friendship we remember, and whose fame we rehearse? 'Eheu! quanto minus cum reliquis versari, quam tui meminisse.'"

The Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, of Boston, was then introduced. He spoke as follows: —

"I am here, Mr. Mayor, fellow-countrymen and friends, with no purpose of trespassing very long on your attention. I was doubtful almost to the last moment whether I should be able to be here at all to-day, and I am afraid that I have neither voice nor strength for many words in the open air.

"But, indeed, the Address of this occasion has been made. It has been made by one to whom it was most appropriately assigned, and who had every title and every talent for making it. It was peculiarly fit that this grand gift to your magnificent Park should be acknowledged and welcomed by a citizen of New York, — one of whom you are all justly proud, an eminent advocate and jurist, a distinguished statesman and public speaker, with the laurels of the Centennial oration at Philadelphia still fresh on his brow. The utterances of this hour might well have ended with him.

"I could not, however, find it in my heart to refuse altogether the repeated and urgent request of your munificent fellow-citizen, Mr. Burnham, that I would be here on the platform with Mr. Evarts and himself, to-day, to witness the unveiling of this noble statue, and to add a few words in commemoration of him whom it so vividly and so impressively portrays.

"Mr. Burnham has done me the honor to call me to his assistance on this occasion, as one who had enjoyed some peculiar opportunities for knowing the illustrious statesman to whose memory he is paying these large and sumptuous honors. And it is true, my friends, that my personal associations with Mr. Webster reach back to a distant day. I recall him as a familiar visitor in the homes of more than one of those with whom I was most nearly connected, when I was but a schoolboy, on his first removal to Boston, in 1817. I recall the deep impressions produced on all who heard him, and communicated to all who did not hear him, by his great efforts in the Constitutional Convention of Massachusetts, and, soon afterward, by his noble discourse at Plymouth Rock, in 1820. I was myself in the crowd which gazed at him, and listened to him with admiration, when he laid the corner-stone of the Monument on Bunker Hill, in presence of Lafayette, in 1824. I was myself in the throng which hung with rapture on his lips as he pronounced that splendid eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, in Faneuil Hall, in 1826. Entering his office as a law student in 1828, I was under his personal tuition during three of the busiest and proudest years of his life. From 1840 to 1850, I was associated with him in the Congress of the United States; and I may be pardoned for not forgetting that it was then my privilege and my pride to succeed him in the Senate, when he was last called into the Cabinet, as Secretary of State, by President Fillmore.

"I have thus no excuse, my friends, for not knowing something, for not knowing much, of Daniel Webster. Of those who knew him longer or better than I did, few, certainly, remain among the living; and I could hardly have recon-

ciled it with what is due to his memory, or with what is due to my own position, if I had refused, — I will not say to bear testimony to his wonderful powers and his great public services, for all such testimony would be as superfluous as to bear testimony to the light of the sun in the skies above us, — but, if I had declined to give expression to the gratification and delight with which the sons of New England and the sons of Massachusetts, and of Boston especially, and I, as one of them, cannot fail to regard this most signal commemoration of one, whose name and fame were so long and so peculiarly dear to them.

"Neither Mr. Evarts nor I have come here to-day, my friends, to hold up Mr. Webster, — much as we may have admired or loved him, — as one with whom we have always agreed, as one whose course we have uniformly approved, or in whose career we have seen nothing to regret. Our testimony is all the more trustworthy — my own certainly is — that we have sometimes differed from him. But we are here to recognize him as one of the greatest men our country has ever produced; as one of the grandest figures in our whole national history; as one who, for intellectual power, had no superior, and hardly an equal, in our own land or in any other land, during his day and generation; as one whose written and spoken words, so fitly embalmed "for a life beyond life" in the six noble volumes edited by Edward Everett, are among the choicest treasures of our language and literature; and, still more and above all, as one who rendered inestimable services to his country, — at one period, vindicating its rights and preserving its peace with foreign nations by the most skilful and masterly diplomacy; at another period, rescuing its Constitution from overthrow, and repelling triumphantly the assaults of nullification and disunion, by overpowering argument and matchless eloquence.

"Mr. Webster made many marvellous manifestations of himself in his busy life of three-score years and ten. Convincing arguments in the courts of law, brilliant appeals to popular assemblies, triumphant speeches in the Halls of

Legislation, magnificent orations and discourses of commem oration or ceremony, — are thickly scattered along his whole career. I rejoice to remember how many of them I have heard from his own lips, and how much inspiration and instruction I have derived from them. To have seen and heard him on one of his field days, was a privilege which no one will undervalue who ever enjoyed it. There was a power, a breadth, a beauty, a perfection, in some of his efforts, when he was at his best, which distanced all approach and rendered rivalry ridiculous.

"And if the style and tone and temper of our political discussions are to be once more elevated, refined, and purified, — and we all know how much room there is for elevation and refinement, — we must go back for our examples and models, at least as far as the days of that great Senatorial Triumvirate, — Clay, Calhoun, and Webster. There were giants in those days; but none of them forgot that, though 'it is excellent to have a giant's strength, it is tyrannous to use it like a giant.'

"Among those who have been celebrated as orators or public speakers, in our own days or in other days, there have been many diversities of gifts, and many diversities of operations. There have been those who were listened to wholly for their intellectual qualities, for the wit or the wisdom, the learning or the philosophy, which characterized their efforts. There have been those whose main attraction was a curious felicity and facility of illustration and description, adorned by the richest gems which could be gathered by historical research or classical study. There have been those to whom the charms of manner and the graces of elocution and the melody of voice were the all-sufficient recommendations to attention and applause. And there have been those who owed their success more to opportunity and occasion, to some stirring theme or some exciting emergency, than to any peculiar attributes of their own. But Webster combined every thing. No thoughts more profound and weighty. No style more terse and telling. No illustrations more vivid and clear-cut.

No occasions more august and momentous. No voice more deep and thrilling. No manner more impressive and admirable. No presence so grand and majestic, as his.

"That great brain of his, as I have seen it working, whether in public debate or in private converse, seemed to me often like some mighty machine, — always ready for action, and almost always in action, evolving much material from its own resources and researches, and eagerly appropriating and assimilating whatever was brought within its reach, producing and reproducing the richest fabrics with the ease and certainty, the precision and the condensing energy, of a perfect Corliss engine, — such an one as many of us have just seen presiding so magically and so majestically over the Exposition at Philadelphia.

"And he put his own crown-stamp on almost every thing he uttered. There was no mistaking one of Webster's great efforts. There is no mistaking them now. They will be distinguished, in all time to come, like pieces of old gold or silver plate, by an unmistakable mint-mark. He knew, like the casters or forgers of yonder Statue, not only how to pour forth burning words and blazing thoughts, but so to blend and fuse and weld together his facts and figures, his illustrations and arguments, his metaphors and subject-matter, as to bring them all out at last into one massive and enduring image of his own great mind!

"He was by no means wanting in labor and study; and he often anticipated the earliest dawn in his preparations for an immediate effort. I remember how humorously he told me once, that the cocks in his own yard often mistook his morning candle for the break of day, and began to crow lustily as he entered his office, though it were two hours before sunrise. Yet he frequently did wonderful things off-hand; and one might often say of him, in the words of an old poet, —

"'His noble negligences teach
What others' toils despair to reach.'

"Not in our own land, only, Mr. Mayor and fellow-country-

men, were the pre-eminent powers of Mr. Webster recognized and appreciated. Brougham, and Lyndhurst, and the late Lord Derby, as I had abundant opportunity of knowing, were no underraters of his intellectual grasp and grandeur. I remember well, too, the casual testimony of a venerable prelate of the English Church, — the late Dr. Harcourt, then Archbishop of York, — who said to me thirty years ago in London: 'I met your wonderful friend, Mr. Webster, for only five minutes; but in those five minutes I learned more of American institutions, and of the peculiar working of the American Constitution, than in all that I had ever heard or read from any or all other sources.'

"Of his Discourse on the Second Centennial Anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock, John Adams wrote, in acknowledging a copy of it: 'Mr. Burke is no longer entitled to the praise of being the most consummate orator of modern times.' And, certainly, from the date of that Discourse, he stood second, as an Orator, to no one who spoke the English language. But it is peculiarly and pre-eminently as the Expounder and Defender of the Constitution of the United States, in January, 1830, that he will be remembered and honored as long as that Constitution shall hold a place in the American heart, or a place on the pages of the world's history.

"Mr. Webster once said, — and perhaps more than once, — that there was not an article, a section, a clause, a phrase, a word, a syllable, or even a comma, of that Constitution, which he had not studied and pondered in every relation and in every construction of which it was susceptible.

"Born at the commencement of the year 1782, at the very moment when the necessity of such an Instrument for preserving our Union, and making us a Nation, was first beginning to be comprehended and felt by the patriots who had achieved our Independence,— just as they had fully discovered the utter insufficiency of the old Confederation, and how mere a rope of sand it was; born in that very year in which the Legislature of your own State of New York, under the

lead of your gallant Philip Schuyler, at the prompting of your grand Alexander Hamilton, was adopting the very first resolutions passed by any State in favor of such an Instrument, — it might almost be said that the natal air of the Constitution was his own natal air. He drank in its spirit with his earliest breath, and seemed born to comprehend, expound, and defend it. No Roman schoolboy ever committed to memory the laws of the Twelve Tables more diligently and thoroughly than did he the Constitution of his country. He had it by heart in more senses of the words than one, and every part and particle of it seemed only less precious and sacred to him than his Bible.

"John Adams himself was not more truly the Colossus of Independence in the Continental Congress of 1776, than Daniel Webster was the Colossus of the Constitution and the Union in the Federal Congress of 1830.

"For other speeches, of other men, it might perhaps be claimed, that they have had the power to inflame and precipitate war, — foreign war or civil war. Of Webster's great speech, as a Senator of Massachusetts, in 1830 — and of that alone, I think — it can be said, that it averted and postponed Civil War for a whole generation. Yes, it repressed the irrepressible conflict itself for thirty years! And when that dire calamity came upon us at last, though the voice of the master had so long been hushed, that speech still supplied the most convincing arguments and the most inspiring incitements for a resolute defence of the Union. It is not yet exhausted. There is argument and inspiration enough in it still, if only they be heeded, to carry us along, as a United People, at least for another Century. In that Speech 'he still lives;' and lives for the Constitution and the Union of his Country.

"Why, my friends, not even the Dynamite and Rend-rock and Vulcan powder of your scientific and gallant Newton were more effective in blasting and shattering your Hell-Gate reef, and opening the way for the safe navigation of yonder Bay, than that speech of Webster was in exploding the doc-

trines of nullification, and clearing the channel for our Ship of State to sail on safely, prosperously, triumphantly, whether in sunshine or in storm!

"Beyond all comparison, it was *the Speech* of our Constitutional Age. '*Nil simile aut secundum.*' It was James Madison, of Virginia, himself, who said of it in a letter at the time: 'It crushes nullification, and must hasten an abandonment of secession.' Whatever remained to be done, in the progress of events, for the repression of menacing designs or of overt acts, was grandly done by the resolute patriotism and iron will of President Jackson, whose proclamation and policy, to that end, Mr. Webster sustained with all his might. They were the legitimate conclusions of his own great Argument.

"Of other and later efforts of Mr. Webster I have neither time nor inclination to speak. There are too many coals still burning beneath the smouldering embers of some of his more recent controversies, for any one to rake them rashly open on such an occasion as this. I was by no means in full accord with his memorable 7th of March speech, and my views of it to-day are precisely what he knew they were in 1850. But no differences of opinion on that day, or on any other day, ever impaired my admiration of his powers, my confidence in his patriotism, my earnest wishes for his promotion, nor the full assurance which I felt that he would administer the Government with perfect integrity, as well as with consummate ability. What a President he would have made for a Centennial Year! What a tower of strength he would have been, to our Constitution and our Country, in all the perplexities and perils through which we have recently passed, and are still passing! 'Oh! for an hour of Dundee!'

"No one will pretend that he was free from all infirmities of character and conduct, though they have often been grossly exaggerated. Great temptations proverbially beset the pathway of great powers; and one who can overcome almost every thing else may sometimes fail of conquering himself. He never assumed to be faultless; and he would

have indignantly rebuked any one who assumed it for him. We all know that, while he could master the great questions of National Finance, and was never weary in maintaining the importance of upholding the National Credit, he never cared quite enough about his own finances, or took particular pains to preserve his own personal credit. We all know that he was sometimes impatient of differences, and sometimes arrogant and overbearing toward opponents. His own consciousness of surpassing powers, and the flatteries — I had almost said, the idolatries — of innumerable friends, would account for much more of all this than he ever displayed. I have known him in all his moods. I have experienced the pain of his frown, as well as the charms of his favor. And I will acknowledge that I had rather confront him as he is here, to-day, in bronze, than encounter his opposition in the flesh. His antagonism was tremendous. 'Safest he who stood aloof.' But his better nature always asserted itself in the end. No man or woman or child could be more tender and affectionate.

"And there is one element of his character which must never be forgotten. I mean his deep religious faith and trust. I recall the delight with which he often conversed on the Bible. I recall the delight with which he dwelt on that exquisite prayer of one of the old Prophets, repeating it fervently as a model of eloquence and of devotion: 'Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.' I recall his impressive and powerful plea for the Religious Instruction of the Young, in the memorable case of Girard College. I have been with him on the most solemn occasions, in Boston and at Washington, in the midst of the most exciting and painful controversies, kneeling by his side at the table of our common Master, and witnessing the humility and reverence of his worship. And who has forgotten those last words which he

ordered to be inscribed, and which are inscribed, on his tombstone at Marshfield: —

"'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.' Philosophical Argument, especially that drawn from the vastness of the universe, in comparison with the apparent insignificance of this globe, has sometimes shaken my reason for the faith which is in me; but my heart has always assured and re-assured me that the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be a Divine Reality. The Sermon on the Mount cannot be a merely human production. This belief enters into the very depth of my conscience. The whole history of man proves it. — DANIEL WEBSTER.

"I cannot help wishing that this declaration, in all its original fulness, were engraved on one of the sides of yonder monumental base, in letters which all the world might read. Amid all the perplexities which modern Science, intentionally or unintentionally, is multiplying and magnifying around us, what consolation and strength must ever be found in such an expression of faith from that surpassing intellect!

"I congratulate you, my friends, that your Park is to be permanently adorned with this grand figure, and that the inscription on its massive pedestal is to associate it for ever with the great principle of 'Union and Liberty, one and inseparable.' Nor can I conclude without saying, that, from all I have ever known of Mr. Webster's feelings, nothing could have gratified him so much as that, in this Centennial Year, on this memorable Anniversary, nearly a quarter of a century after he had gone to his rest, — when all the partialities and prejudices, all the love and the hate, which wait upon the career of living public men, should have grown cold or passed away, — a Statue of himself should be set up here, within the limits of your magnificent City, and amid these superb surroundings. Quite apart from those personal and domestic ties which rendered New York so dear to him, — of which we have a touching reminder in the presence of the venerable lady who was so long the sharer of his name and the ornament of his home, — quite apart from all such considerations, he would have appreciated such a tribute as this, I think, above all other posthumous honors.

"'There was something congenial to him in the grandeur of this great Commercial Metropolis. He loved, indeed, the hills and plains of New Hampshire, among which he was born. He delighted in Marshfield and the shores of Plymouth, where he was buried. He was warmly attached to Boston and the people of Massachusetts, among whom he had lived so long, and from whom he had so often received his commissions as their Representative and their Senator in Congress. But in your noble City, as he said, he recognized 'the commercial capital, not only of the United States, but of the whole continent from the pole to the South Sea.' 'The growth of this City,' said he, 'and the Constitution of the United States are coevals and contemporaries.' 'New York herself,' he exclaimed, 'is the noblest eulogy on the Union of the States.' He delighted to remember that here Washington was first inaugurated as President, and that here had been the abode of Hamilton and John Jay and Rufus King. And it was at a banquet given to him at your own Niblo's Garden in 1837, and under the inspiration of these associations, that he summed up the whole lesson of the past and the whole duty of the future, and condensed them into a sentiment which has ever since entered into the circulating medium of true patriotism, like an ingot of gold with the impress of the eagle: 'One Country, One Constitution, One Destiny.'

"Let that motto, still and ever, be the watchword of the hour, and whatever momentary perplexities or perils may environ us, with the blessing of God, no permanent harm can happen to our Republic!

"In behalf of my fellow-citizens of New England, I thank Mr. Burnham for this great gift to your Central Park; and I congratulate him on having associated his name with so splendid a tribute to so illustrious a man. A New Englander himself, he long ago decorated one of the chief cities of his native State with a noble Statue of a venerated father of the Church to which he belongs. He has now adorned the City

of his residence with this grand figure of a pre-eminent American Statesman. He has thus doubly secured for himself the grateful remembrance of all by whom Religion and Patriotism, Churchmanship and Statesmanship, shall be held worthy of commemoration and honor, in all time to come."

On the conclusion of Mr. Winthrop's address, a fine band of music, which had played before the ceremonies and between the addresses, struck at once into our National Airs, while the cheers of the assembled multitude for the orators of the occasion; for the statue and its accomplished artist, Thomas Ball; and, above all, for its munificent donor, Gordon Webster Burnham, — gave the appropriate close to the proceedings.

In the evening, Mr. Burnham gave a brilliant reception in honor of the occasion, at his house, 128 Fifth Avenue. Nearly a thousand invited guests were present, among the most note-worthy being Governor Tilden, ex-Governors Dix, Morgan, and Hoffman, Mayor Wickham, Mayor-elect Ely, William M. Evarts, Robert C. Winthrop, Parke Godwin, Peter Cooper, August Belmont, Manton Marble, Fitz-John Porter, S. S. Cox, Rev. William Adams, D. D., Rev. Dr. Morgan, Peter Harvey and several other members of the "Marshfield Club" of Boston, and many other political, clerical, literary, artistic, and business celebrities of the metropolis.

On November 27, 1876, the New York Board of Aldermen unanimously adopted the following preamble and resolutions: —

"*Whereas*, GORDON W. BURNHAM, Esq., having placed in the Central Park, at his own expense, the colossal statue in

bronze of Daniel Webster, with the granite pedestal on which it stands, did, on the 25th day of November, instant, present the same to the City; now, therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonalty of the City of New York, appreciating the illustrious character and services of the statesman to whom this monument is raised, and rejoicing in the possession of a work of art which is so notable itself, and which so eloquently incites to patriotism and to devotion to the Constitution, do now, in grateful recognition of this renewed expression of the munificence and public spirit of an honored fellow-citizen, present their thanks to Gordon W. Burnham for his memorable gift.

"*Resolved*, That the Mayor be, and hereby is, requested to forward to Mr. Burnham an engrossed copy of the foregoing preamble and resolution, duly attested."

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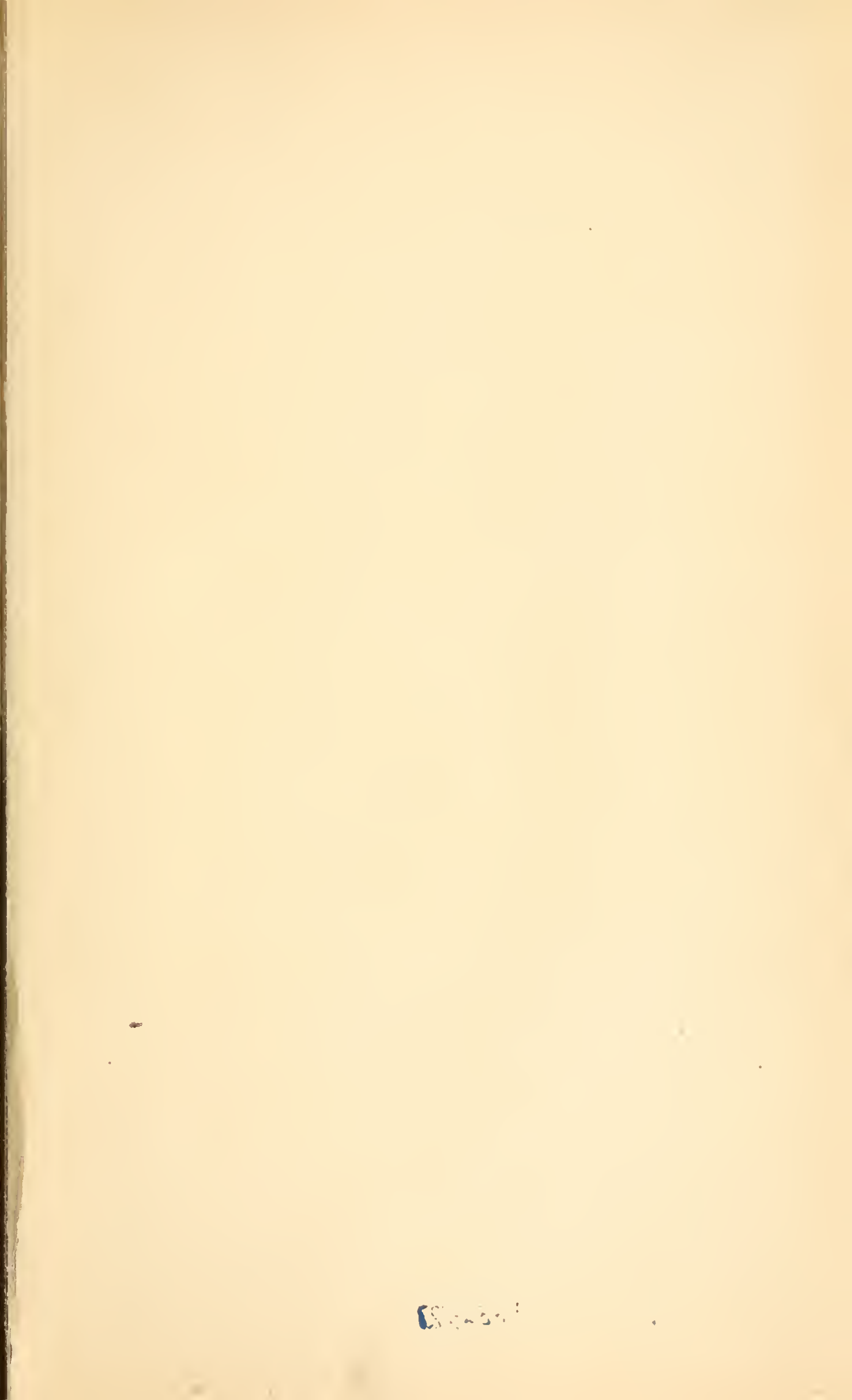

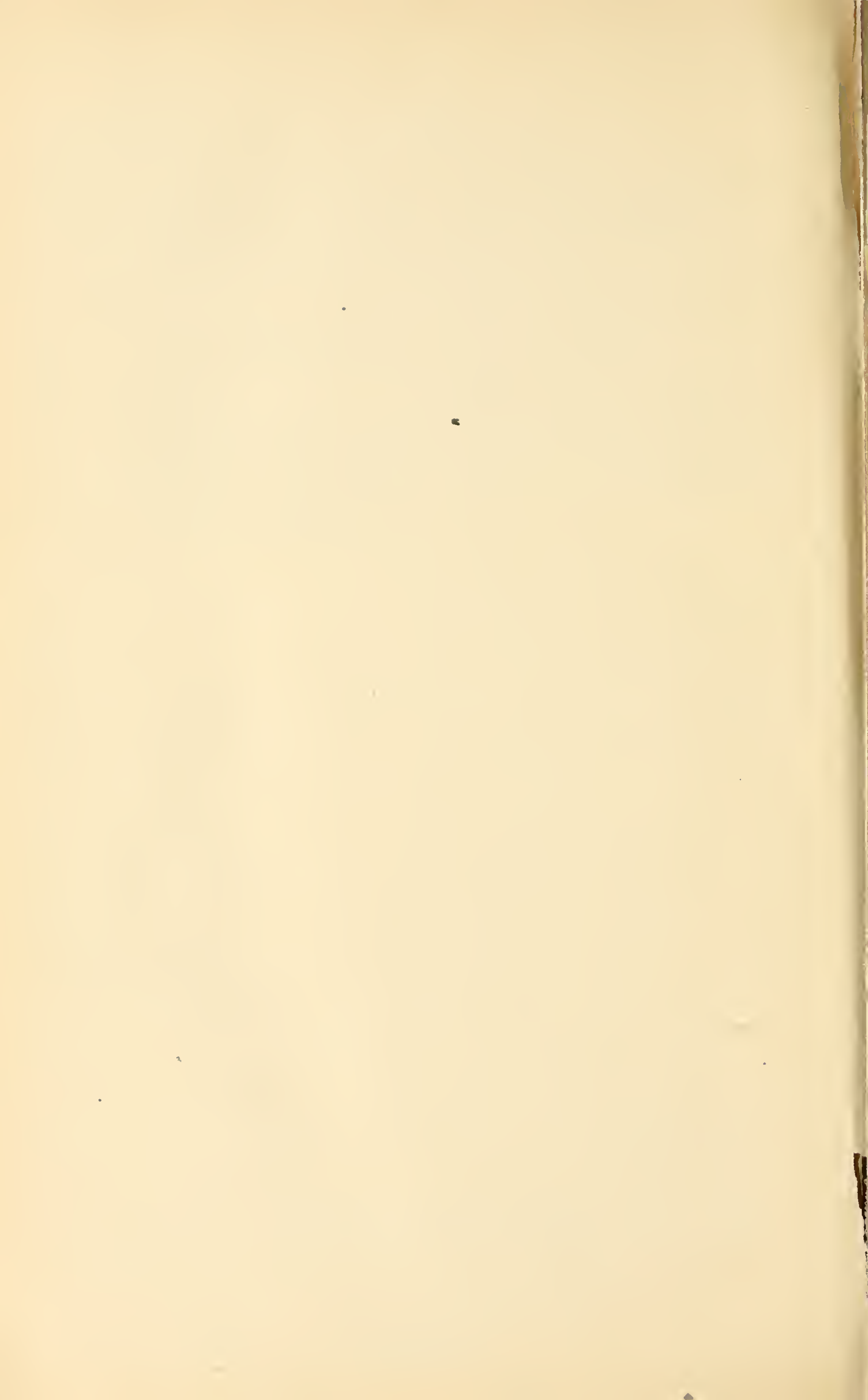

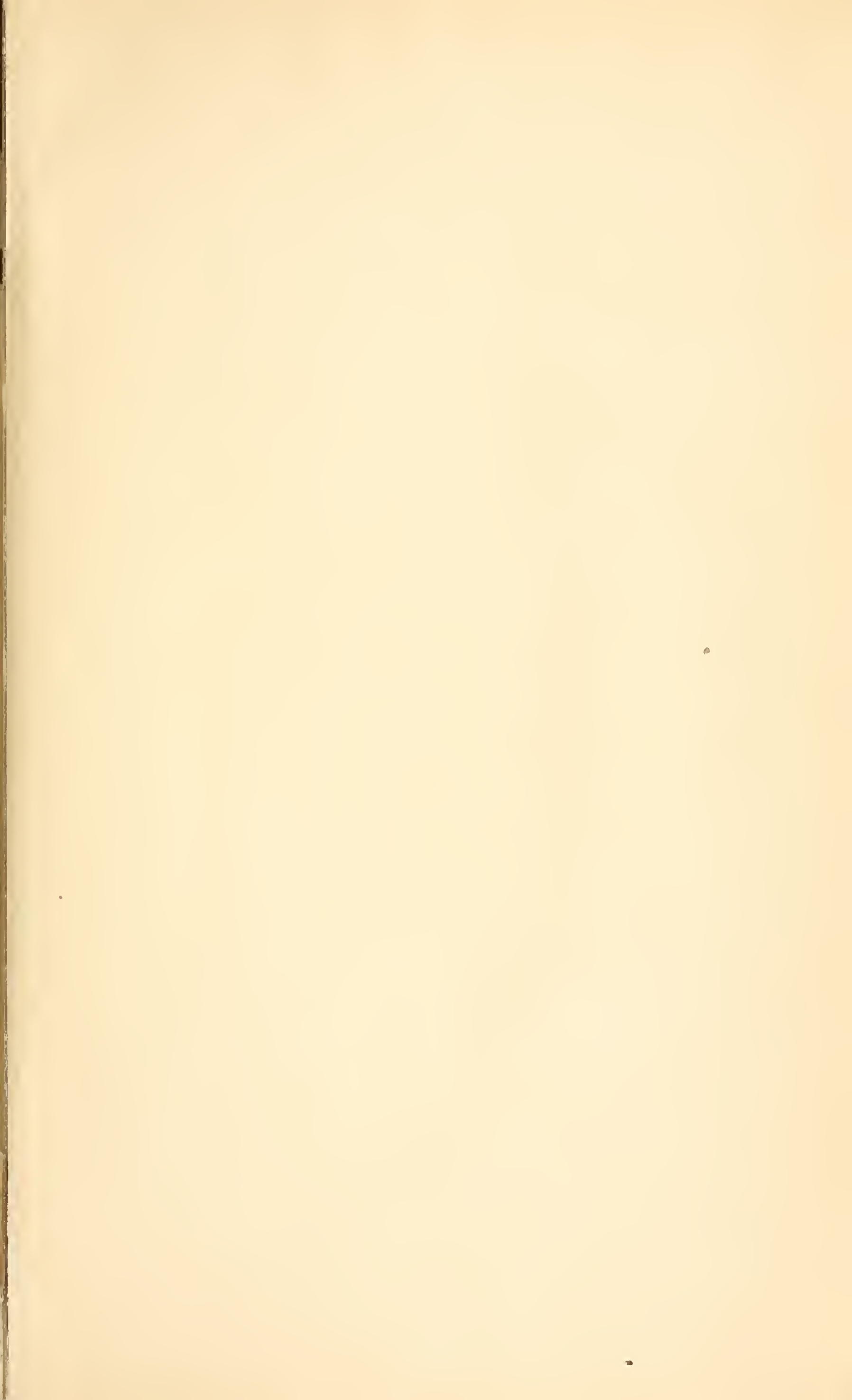

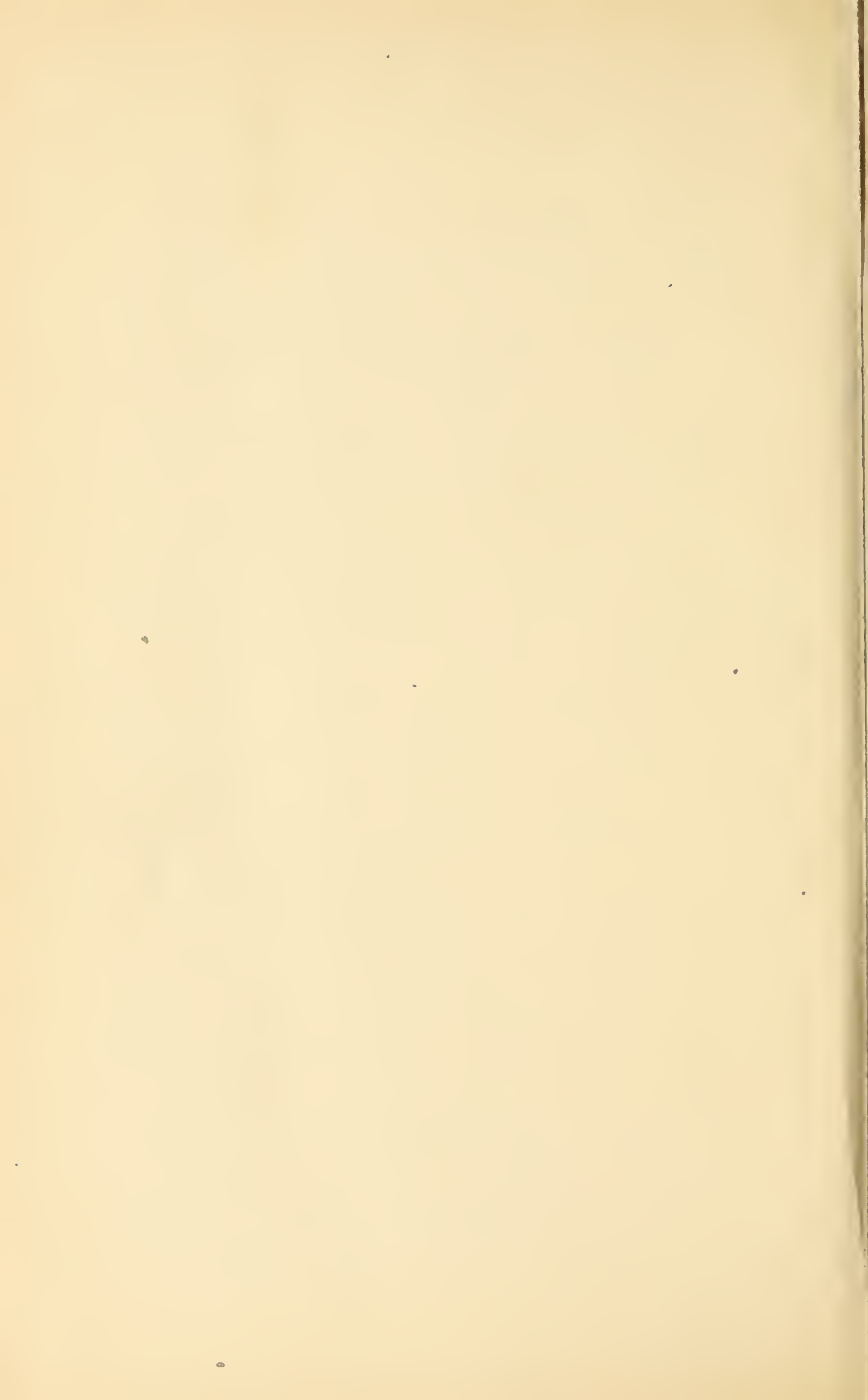

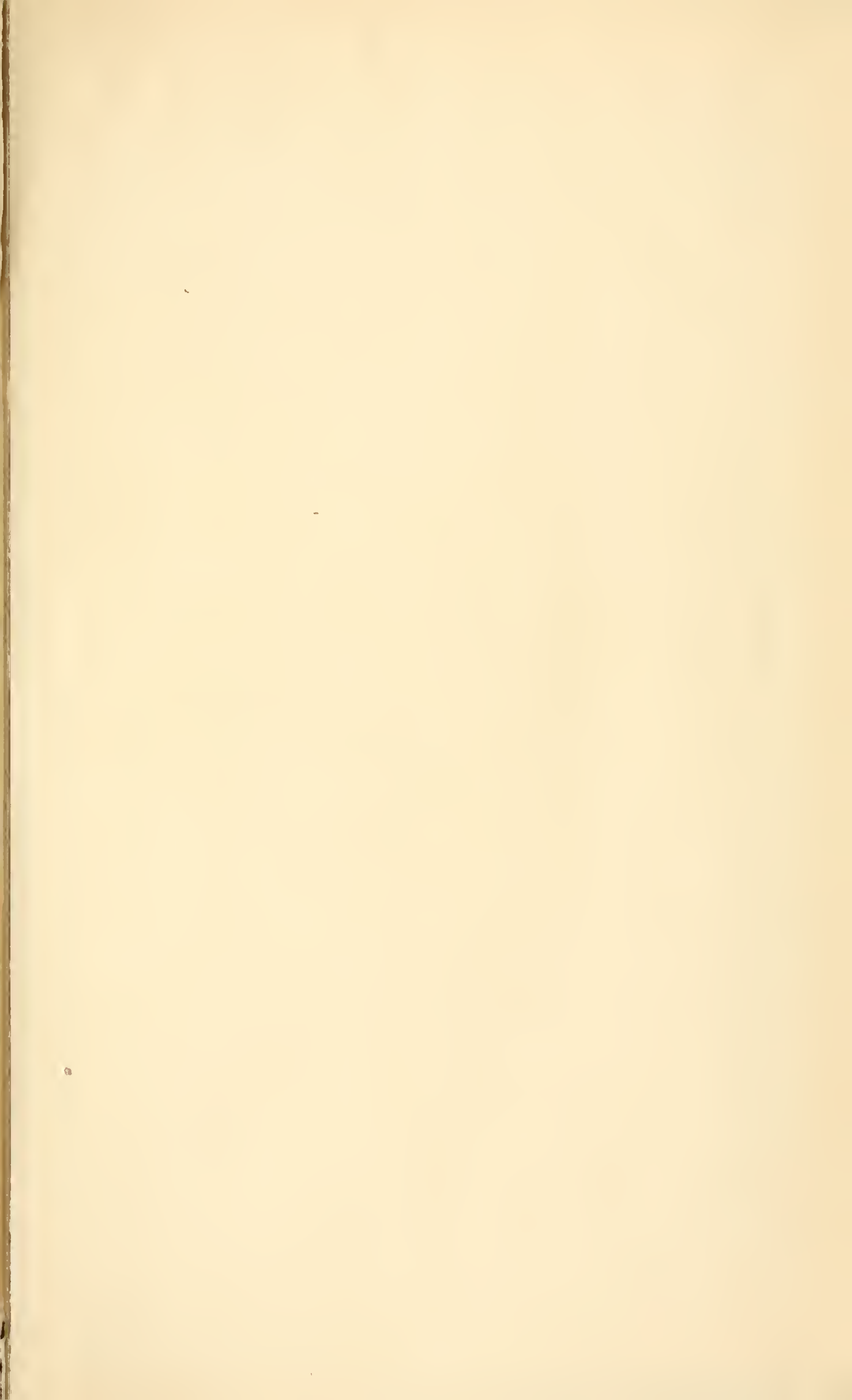

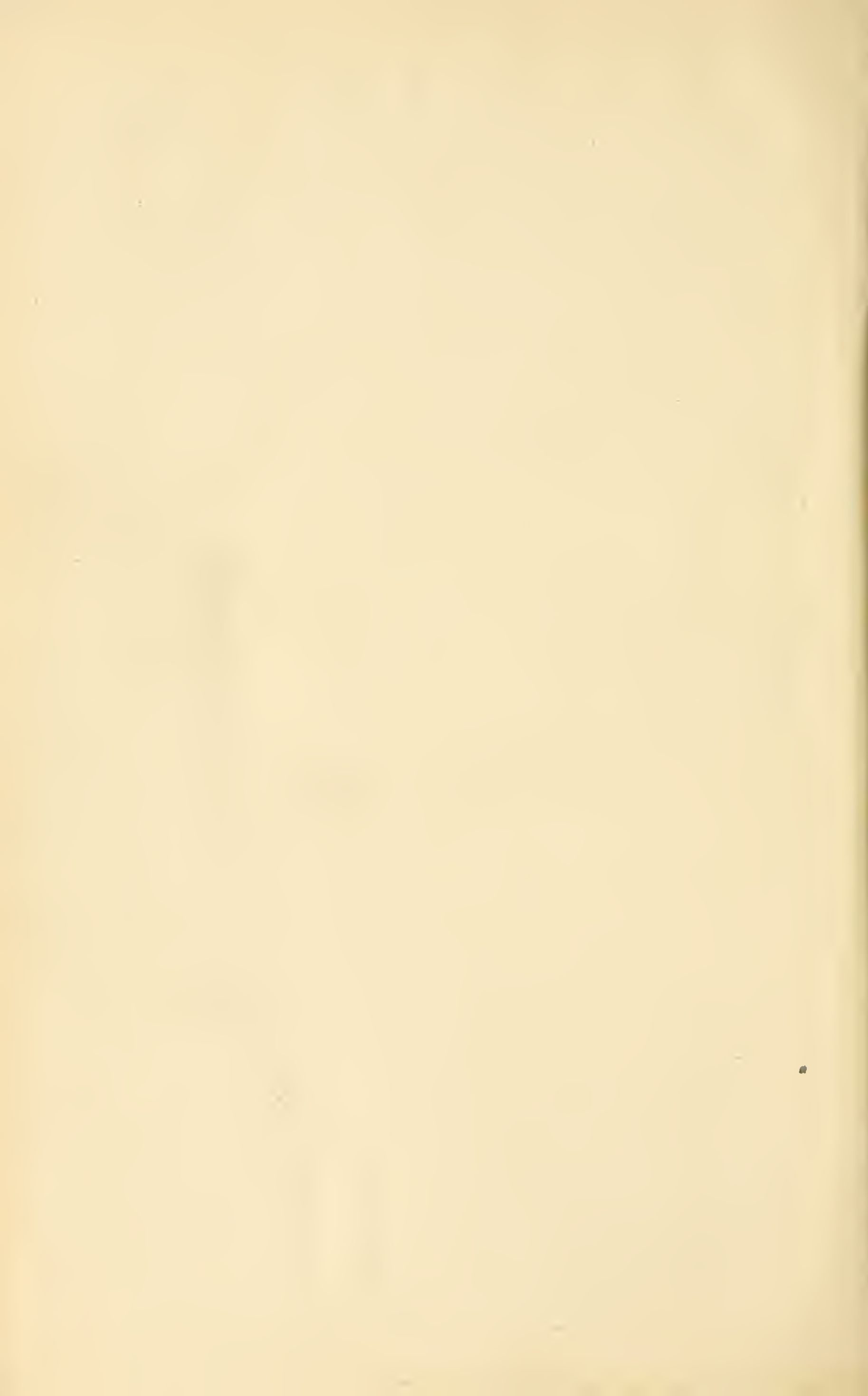

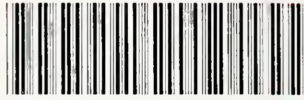
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