

took a prominent position, not only from the ability displayed in his speeches, but also from his complete mastery of financial questions and the details of business. From this time, with the exception of a short period of seven years, he remained constantly before the public till his death in 1852. During a part of this time he held office, and here as elsewhere the characteristics of the man were shown. Strict punctuality and attention to business, he followed as a rule of life. He allowed nothing to interfere with his duties as Secretary of State, and worked always with the industry of an apprenticed clerk, acting upon one of his own maxims, "No man knows a thing till he has learned it." He was an instance of what honest application can accomplish. He says himself that many of those sublime passages in his speeches were produced by intense thought and labour. During his public life as well as during his studentship, he was a laborious toiler. How true are the words of Longfellow —

"The heights by great men reached and kept,  
Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upwards in the night."

How instructive is the life of such a man. Commencing under difficulties, without connections to promote or patrons to recommend him, he fought his way up by his own indomitable will and perseverance. As one of his eulogists said of him, "A section of America rejoiced in the promise of the youth, and America altogether in the performance of the man."

Webster never became President. In 1844 the convention of his party gave Clay the nomination, and Webster supported him, though unsuccessfully. In 1848, his friends again put him forward, but his defeat was certain, owing to the popularity of the hero and conqueror at Buena Vista, General Taylor. In 1852 his name was again proposed, but General