

THE HONOURABLE DANIEL WEBSTER.

In connection with the brilliant sketch, published in the last number of this *Journal*, of the great Duke of Wellington's career from the pen of Guizot, the following educational and literary extracts from a funeral oration on the great American statesman, Daniel Webster, delivered by the Hon. E. Everett, LL. D., will be read with deep interest. Clay and Peel, Wellington and Webster, the most eminent men in the old and new worlds—have now become but celebrated personages of history. Dr. Everett remarked:—

I know, Mr. Mayor, how presumptuous it would be to dwell on any personal causes of grief, in the presence of this august sorrow which spreads its dark wings over the land. You will not, however, be offended, if by way of apology for putting myself forward on this occasion, I say that my relations with Mr. Webster run further back than those of almost any one in this community. When I was but ten or eleven years old, I attended a little private school in Short street, (as it was then called, it is now the continuation of Kingston street) kept by the Hon. Ezekiel Webster, the elder brother to whom I have alluded, and a brother worthy of his kindred. Owing to illness or some other cause of absence on his part, the school was kept for a short time by Daniel Webster, then a student of law, 47 or 48 years ago, and I a child of ten, our acquaintance, since then never interrupted, began.

When I entered public life, it was with his encouragement.—When he came to the Department of State in 1841, it was on his recommendation that I, living in the utmost privacy beyond the Alps, was appointed to a very high office abroad; and in the course of the last year, he gave me the highest proof of his confidence, in entrusting me to the care of conducting his works through the press. May I venture, sir, to add, that in the last letter but one which I had the happiness to receive from him, alluding with a kind of sad presentiment, which I could not then fully appreciate, but which now unmans me; to these kindly relations of half a century, he adds—"We now and then see stretching across the Heavens, a clear, blue, cerulean sky, without cloud, or mist, or haze. And such appears to me our acquaintance from the time when I heard you for a week recite your lessons in the little school-house in Short street, to the date hereof," 21st July, 1852.

In preparing the new edition of his works, he thought proper to leave almost everything to my discretion—as far as matters of taste are concerned. One thing only he enjoined upon me with an earnestness approaching to a command. "My friend," said he "I wish to perpetuate no feuds. I have lived a life of strenuous political warfare. I have sometimes, thought rarely, and that in self-defence, have been lead to speak of others with severity. I beg you, where you can do it without wholly changing the character of the speech, and thus doing essential injustice to me, to obliterate every trace of personality of this kind. I should prefer not to leave a word that would give unnecessary pain to any honest man, however opposed to me."

Those works, as a repository of political truth and practical wisdom applied to the affairs of government, I know not where we shall find their equal. The works of Burke naturally suggests themselves to the mind, as the only writings in our language that can sustain the comparison. Certainly no compositions in the English tongue can take precedence of those of Burke, in depth of thought, reach of forecast, or magnificence of style.

I think, however, it may be said, without partiality, either national or personal, that while the reader is cloyed at last with the gorgeous finish of Burke's diction, there is a severe simplicity, and a significant plainness in Webster's writing that never tires. It is precisely this which characterizes the statesman in distinction from the political philosopher. In political disquisition, elaborated in the closet, the palm must perhaps be awarded to Burke over all others, ancient or modern. But in the actual conflicts of the Senate, man against man, and opinion against opinion; in the noble war of debate, where measures are to be sustained and opposed, on which the welfare of the country and the peace of the world depend—where often the line of intellectual battle is changed in a moment—no time to reflect, no leisure to cull words, or gather up illustrations but all to be decided by a vote, although the reputation of a life may be at stake—all this is a very different matter, and here Mr. Webster was immeasurably the superior.

Accordingly, we find historically, (incredible as it sounds, and what I am ready to say, I will not believe, though it is unquestionably true,) that these inimitable orations of Burke, which one cannot read without a thrill of admiration to his fingers' ends, actually emptied the benches of Parliament!

The poor boy at the village school has taken comfort as he has read that the time was when Daniel Webster, whose father told him he should go to college if he had to sell every acre of his farm to pay the expense, laid his head on the shoulder of that fond and discerning parent, and wept thanks he could not speak.—The pale student who ekes out his scanty support by extra toil, has gathered comfort, when reminded that the first jurist, statesman and orator of the time, earned with his weary fingers by the midnight lamp, the means of securing the same advantages of education to a beloved brother.

The turning point of Webster's life. The following from a letter written by Mr. Webster in 1844 will be eminently interesting:—"On a hot day in July—it must have been one of the last years of Washington's administration, I was making hay, with my father, just where I now see a remaining elm tree, about the middle of the afternoon. The Hon. Abiel Foster, M. C., who lived six miles off, called at the house, and came into the field to see my father. He was a worthy man, college learned, and had been a minister, but was not a person of any considerable natural powers. My father was his friend and supporter. He talked a while in the field, and went on his way. When he was gone, my father called me to him, and we sat down beneath the elm, on a hay cock. He said, "My son, that is a worthy man—he is a member of Congress—he goes to Philadelphia, and gets six dollars a day, while I toil here. It is because he had an education, which I never had. If I had had his early education, I should have been in Philadelphia in his place. I came near it, as it was. But I missed it, and now I must work here." "My dear father," said I, "you shall not work. Brother and I will work for you, and wear our hands out and you shall rest"—and I remember to have cried,—and I cry now, at the recollection. "My child," said he, "it is of no importance to me—I now live but for my children; I could not give your elder brother the advantages of knowledge, but I can do something for you. Exert yourself—improve your importunities—*learn—learn*—and when I am gone, you will not need to go through the hardships which I have undergone, and which have made me an old man before my time." The next May he took me to Exeter, to the Philips Exeter Academy—placed me under the tuition of its excellent preceptor, Dr. Benjamin Abbott, still living. My brother Joe used to say that my father sent me to college in order to make me equal to the rest of the children!

"My father died in April, 1806. I neither left him, nor forsook him. My opening an office at Buscovan was that I might be near him. I closed his eyes, in this very house. He died at sixty seven years of age—after a life of exertion, toil and exposure—a private soldier, an officer, a Legislator, a judge—every thing that a man could be, to whom learning never had disclosed her "ample page." My first speech at the bar, was made when he was on the bench—he never heard me a second time."

INTEGRITY IN BUSINESS.

The following are Mr. Everett's remarks at the recent dinner at Boston to the Right Honourable Thomas Baring, M. P., of London. It is a great thing to have it said of a company of bankers or merchants, or of any other association, that has been engaged in immense transactions for 100 years, that, "of the almost uncounted millions that have passed through their hands, not one dishonest farthing has ever stuck by the way." The very mention of it must nerve the integrity of thousands. What worth is there in such examples!

"I am greatly indebted to you, sir, for giving me an opportunity to join you in this tribute of respect to Mr. Baring, who is on every ground entitled to the favourable opinion and friendly regards of this company. This is a topic on which delicacy forbids me to say on the present occasion all that might with truth be said at any other time and place; besides that our respected guest has made it almost impossible for me to give utterance to my feelings, without seeming to engage with him in an exchange of compliments.