

**DANIEL
WEBSTER**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649519736

Daniel Webster by Samuel W. McCall

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1902

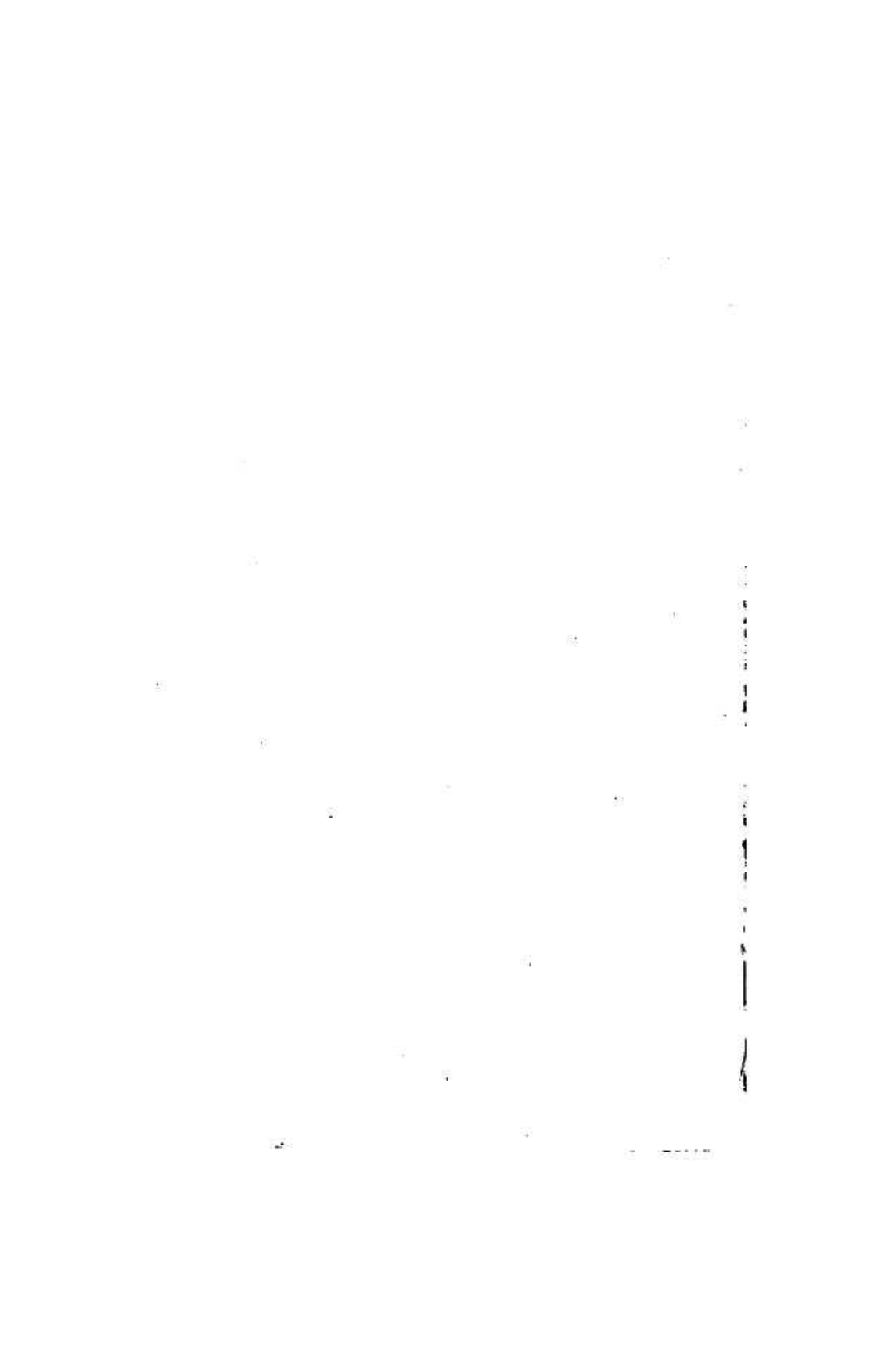
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Published May, 1902

NOTE.

DANIEL WEBSTER graduated at Dartmouth College in the Class of 1801, and in September, 1901, the college celebrated in an elaborate manner at Hanover, N. H., the centennial of that event. In compliance with the invitation of a committee of the trustees of the college, Mr. McCall delivered an address, — or, as it is termed in the college official report, — the “Webster Centennial Oration.” With the exception of some revision and the addition of a few sentences, the address is published here as it was prepared for the occasion. It was somewhat abridged in delivery on account of its length.

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NEARLY half a century has elapsed since the College gave formal expression to its sorrow upon the death of Daniel Webster. The life of that great statesman had just ended. On this very spot Rufus Choate spoke his eulogy. Sympathy in a common political cause and the attachment of a life-long friendship stimulated an almost unrivaled gift of eloquence to the production of a masterpiece among orations of that nature, a speech of which Mr. Everett expressed the opinion that it was "as magnificent a eulogium as was ever pronounced." It was a time for the eulogy of friends, and for the expression of a sense of desolateness over the departure of so transcendent a figure, but it was no time for a just

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estimate of Webster either as a man or a statesman. His career had been too great to be comprehended by a near view. It demanded that perspective without which only a distorted outline of vast objects can be obtained. The passion of partisanship was hot and surging. Above the deep tones of praise arose the sharp clamor of detraction. Across the horizon which shut out the near future could be heard the beating of the drums which he had set throbbing for the Union. The chief work of his life was yet to be tried in the furnace of civil war. It required that most inexorable of all tests, — the test of time.

Transient movements and the mere noises of unsubstantial reputations have had time to pass into the silence of oblivion. A generation that knew him not has come upon the scene. We can