



**Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of  
Henry Wilson, (Vice-President of the United  
States): Delivered in the Senate and House of ...  
Tributes of Respect (Classic Reprint)**

*Unknown Author*

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Excerpt from Memorial Addresses on the Life and Character of Henry Wilson, (Vice-President of the United States): Delivered in the Senate and House of Representatives, January 21, 1876, With Other Congressional Tributes of Respect

Henry Wilson was the product of New England. If there was iron in his blood, if there was strength in his muscle, if there was backbone in his frame, he owed it, in part, to the tuition of that sterile and rocky soil; to the cold and inclement, the stern and serious aspects of that uninviting coast to which the Pilgrims came. Ay, more than this, Henry Wilson was the product of the New England idea - now become the American idea: That man is man, and nothing can be greater; and that when God made man in His own image. He made him to have dominion, first, over himself, and, then, over just as vast an empire among men, as, under God, he could subject to himself.

Henry Wilson was ambitious. Let us thank God that he was. When, on the 16th day of February, 1812, he first saw the light of mortal life, he was the heir of three generations of poverty; the descendant of three generations of ancestors who had barely kept soul and body together; who, in that rough and rugged half-wilderness of his native New Hampshire, had, one after another, fought a losing battle with life, until the grave covered them. Apprenticed to a small farmer at ten years of age, and taking the hard knocks and sore deprivations of a chore-boy, at that period, when more favored young men are nursed and pampered and crammed in school and in college; studying the rudiments of his native tongue and the history and politics of his native country by the light of pine-knots, and by the midnight flashes of smoldering back-logs, he needed all his ambition.

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