

But we call those men self-made who have become men without these aids; who have gone out into the world and found other schools and other teachers, with longer terms and different books. They can work or shirk as they will; they can play with their books, or study them as they please; they can neglect their teachers, or learn of them, and there is none to find fault or discipline.

This world is a great University, with teachers and schools for all who come into it, and where not one need fail of graduating with the title of A. M.—“A Man.”

And there is always a peculiar interest in the life of those who, without the usual aids, have gained an education and attained to success. We like to know the process. We like to know what teachers they chose; what schools God sent them to, and how they used them, what books they learned their lessons from. And this is largely the interest that attaches to the life of Henry Wilson. A poor boy, with almost no early advantages, he walks from New Hampshire to Natick, Mass., seeking for work. He learns how to make shoes. As “the Natick cobbler,” he enters into political life and reaches the next highest office in the gift of his nation.

“With conquerless will,  
He climbed from the base to the brow of the hill.”

But what chiefly concerns us is *how* he climbed! Where did he learn his lessons of life, and who were his teachers?

I do not propose to state much that is found in the published story of his life. But there are many incidents floating around in this place where he lived so many years, and where the companions of his youth are still living, and we would gather up some of these to show who were his schoolmasters, and what were his schools.

1. Henry Wilson was a great reader from his earliest boyhood. He had to work all day long, and he said that all the spending money he had before he was twenty-one years old would not amount to one dollar, all told. And yet he had read seven hundred volumes before that age. Very few of them were novels, most of them were the leading works of British and American authors. They were borrowed from friends, and read evenings. After he came to this town he changed his boarding place so that he might be in the house where the village library was then kept. And it is said that he never forgot what he read. Indeed his wonderful memory was one of the necessary elements of his success.

There is no question but that the way a young man spends his evening hours is an almost infallible prophecy of his future life. While others were lounging around corner groceries, or ranging the village streets, Satan's own schools, where the devil's schoolmasters are training very many for uselessness or infamy, Henry Wilson was going to school, evening after evening, to the greatest minds, and studying the best literature of his day.

2. Soon after he came to town he joined with others in forming a lyceum to debate the questions of the day. There are not a few now here who were members with him, and some were more ready debaters. Since he died some of them have said to me that no one at that time would have marked him out for pre-eminence. But he had read more and remembered better than the others, and was always mighty with his facts. He owed much of his later power to what he gained by his faithfulness in preparing for these lyceum debates. As the Duke of Wellington, looking at the playground at Eton, said, “Here the battle of Waterloo was won,” so Henry Wilson might have said that many of his triumphs in Congress were gained in this village lyceum.

3. One of the chiefest differences among men, more than natural talent or circumstances, is the *power of hard work*. This Henry Wilson had in an eminent degree. He was accustomed to work or read fifteen or sixteen hours a day. There is a story here that he once set out to make fifty pairs of shoes without stopping to sleep, more than two days work, and he nearly accomplished it. He never seemed to tire. He worked in the same untiring way all through his public life, and those that were with him sometimes complained that he thought they could work as long as he could.

One time while he was sick he watched some carpenters at work on a neighbor's house, and pointing them out to me, he expressed great indignation at their lazy manner of working, and wanted me to preach a sermon on *stealing*, for the benefit of all such workmen.

4. But more than all these, his *moral principles* attributed to his success.

I do not know that he had any vices or foibles that weak-

ened him in body or mind. He had none of that pride which makes so “many self-made men worship their maker,” and no one would think of writing his biography with a series of I I I I I I I I I I as once was done of another. On the contrary he was one of the people, and seemed to treat all alike. He had almost no regard for money, and was always very free in giving it away. In him our temperance organizations and Young Men's Christian Associations have lost one of their largest supporters.

But it is the adoption of unpopular principles, or in circumstances which make them cost something, that tests a man's character. Any body can wear them, as the Crusaders wore their crosses on their shoulders, as soon as they become popular. As Harry Hotspur said of the popinjay, “But for these vile guns, He, himself, would have been a soldier.”

No doubt a principle is just as good when it is popular, but it is not as good a test of the man.

Now Wilson stood up for the right when it was unpopular. He adopted principles when his adherence to them would seem to crush his aspirations and shut the gates of success in his face; when the fiery darts of the Apollyon of temptation assailed him on every side. He could not, like Jacob, see the glory above the steps of his vision; but only the lower steps, named *Duty*, obscured above by clouds and storms, in which the steps seemed to end. But God taught him, and us through him, that—

“The path of duty is the way to glory.”  
“Let his great example stand  
Colossal, seen of every land;  
Till in all lauds, and in all human story,  
The path of duty be the way to glory.”

For he that receives great principles into his life, for which he is willing to sacrifice all earthly gain, takes up a heavy cross, but one that carries him more than he carries it. He bears his principles, but they bear him on to success, like Christophorus bearing the Christ child across the river, he receives courage and power from his burden.

Henry Wilson never could have succeeded without these principles of temperance and anti-slavery which, when he accepted them, seemed the one invincible bar to his success.

His religious experience: In his early life here he was much interested in religion, but did not become a member of the church until about ten years ago, when a member of the United States Senate, he was home on a visit. But he was an intimate friend of his minister from the first, and always deeply interested in all the religious affairs of the town, and knew all about them.

While he was a candidate for the House of Representatives, he said to a friend one Sunday that he must go home and write political letters. She urged him not to. But he assured her that it was a critical time, and he would lose the election if he did not. But she persuaded him to keep the Sabbath and trust in God. He yielded; but his sagacity was not at fault; *he lost the election*. Then he asked her if that was the way God treated those that did right and trusted in Him. She bade him wait, for he had not seen the end. In a short time the State Legislature elected him to the United States Senate, which it would not have done had he been chosen representative. After his election this friend then asked him, “How now about trusting in God?”

Till he was enfeebled by his last sickness he was often at the prayer meeting. There are those here who have been with him to the house of a friend, and all knelt together in prayer as they were trying to lead him to Christ.

The night before our church was burned we held an adjourned meeting to continue a discussion as to our best methods of work during the year, and he took an active and earnest part in the discussion.

There are many other reminiscences, but this article is already too long. We can only say that his trust to the last was only in Jesus Christ, and in “The Changed Cross,” his constant companion at last, many precious passages were marked, which show his feelings.

After the death of his wife and son he did not care to live, except to finish his book on the History of Slavery. He would rather have done that than to be re-elected as Vice-President, so set was his heart upon it. But he did not finish it, though it was so far done that other hands have it nearly completed.

These lines read to him on his death-bed express his feeling:—

“But after all these duties I have done,  
Must I in point of merit then disown,  
And trust in Heaven through Jesus blood alone?  
Through Jesus blood alone.”

## EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

BY REV. J. M. HOPKIN, D. D.

Professor of Homiletics in Yale College.

If it should be asked what style of sermonizing we would mainly recommend, not by any means as the exclusive one, but as the most ordinary method of preaching, year in and year out, for a pastor's regular work of instruction from the pulpit, we should answer, without making it a dry exegesis of the Scriptures, and without a narrow bibliolatry, the *expository*, or, rather, what might be called the “textual” as contrasted with the “topical” style of discourse. We use textual here not precisely in its technical sense. A “textual” sermon, technically, is one that follows in its treatment closely the words of the text—clause by clause and word by word—winding and turning with all the convolutions of the text. We would employ “textual” rather in the sense of “text-preaching;” that is, making the text the absolute subject of the sermon, and not an abstract subject evolved from the text; holding firmly to the text, drawing the real material, the real thought, and the real inspiration from the Scriptures. It is, in fact, “Biblical preaching,” instead of “theme-preaching.” It takes a long time to be emancipated from the tyranny of the topical, or theme-sermon, which has domineered over our pulpits. This, we grant, has done a noble work, and will continue to do so—the most cultivated audiences are best pleased with it, and also profited by it—but its exclusive use has engendered many errors of preaching, and has sometimes led astray from the true object of preaching. It has above all, spoiled variety and freedom. Topical preaching, as has been hinted, draws from the text a particular theme, or, what is often the case, takes a topic before taking a text, and makes that topic the subject of the sermon. Here is its unity. It requires an artistic handling like an oration, or a piece of sculpture. It is a perfect discourse formed upon the rules of art. It is something, after all, outside of the text, though it should be in strict accordance with it. It requires brief texts containing complete themes, and themes capable of didactic development. But this style of sermonizing is very apt to lead to a neglect of the Word of God. The sermon, in fact, hangs on the proposition, or topic, instead of the text: and many wrong topics, such as the text never taught, have been drawn out to serve as themes of this kind of sermon—*c. g.*, by a German preacher who made the subject of Acts xxvi. 24: “*Petrus said, with a loud voice, Paul thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad.*”—“The doubtful and perilous character of religious enthusiasm.” A sermon should spring up from the word of God within the circle of pastoral studies, needs and requirements, and sometimes the topic will be suggested before the text (though we think this is not a good rule), and there should be all proper freedom here since the pastor has two books to study, his Bible and his people; but when the text is once chosen, however, and whenever done, then it should be treated with honor and thoughtful attention, as the utterance of God upon the specific duty, or subject in hand. Topical preaching is needed for the wants and emergencies of the pulpit, and will continue in vogue, and all will follow it who aim at a high standard of scientific excellence in sermonizing; but uniformly pursued, it will present the human side of preaching, predominantly; will hide Christ and injure the cause of Christian truth; and a return to nature, to Biblical preaching, to the teachings of the “Spirit of Christ,” will constitute a real reform.

Textual preaching, in the sense in which we have explained it, where the text forms the actual basis of discourse and is immediately and mainly treated of, enables the preacher to interpret the word of God more closely, which course is in harmony with the main theory already advanced, that preaching is primarily interpretation—interpretation not of a dead but living sort, adapted to spiritual awakening and persuasion. It also enables the preacher to employ texts that comprise longer or shorter portions of Scripture, and this is the beauty of this method that the texts may be longer, and thus embrace a wider range of truth, like the parables of our Lord, or like the extended figures in the 15th chapter of Luke, 1 Cor. ix, 24-27, Eph. vi, 15-17; or narrative and historical texts; or texts containing some important subject fully treated as 1 Cor. 13, in Mark x, 33-50, where humility is the underlying lesson of the whole passage; or meditative texts, as many of the Psalms, in which the inmost religious life of the writer is set forth. The textual discourse honors the word of God, by thus keeping near to it and dwelling ever upon it. It