

NATIVE-AMERICANISM.

DETECTED AND EXPOSED.

BY A NATIVE AMERICAN.

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NATIVE-AMERICANISM.

A new political party, called the *Native American* party, has lately sprung into existence. Its members prefer to designate themselves as *American Republicans*. The name is of little consequence; the object of this tract is, to examine the thing; to consider the principles, aims and tendencies, avowed and unavowed, of this new party; to inquire how far it is entitled to the support and suffrages of the patriotic and the good. In pursuit of this object the truth will be spoken plainly and firmly; without partiality and without fear.

The founders of this new party allege, that these United States are in imminent danger of being overrun by foreigners, to the irreparable damage, and even the dislodgment, of the native-born citizens, and the destruction of our republican institutions. Very exaggerated statements are put forth by the organs of this party, as to the number of foreigners annually coming into the country; and their character is painted in the blackest colors. They are described in the "Crisis," a pamphlet purporting on its title page, to be "issued under the sanction of the General Executive Committee of the American Republican party of the City and County of New York," as for the most part paupers, if not criminals, degraded and depraved as it is possible to imagine, with no knowledge of our institutions, nor fondness for them, but with the strongest attachment to those of the countries they have left. The ignorance of these

foreigners is insisted upon with great emphasis. A large part of them, it is said, do not know the English language, and a great majority can neither read nor write.

This ignorance of English does not seem to be confined to foreigners. The authors of the "Crisis" are, probably, Native Americans; but very limited is the knowledge of the English language, or of English grammar, which that production displays. Perhaps, however, its patriot authors, in their horror of foreign dictation, scorn to speak or write English, and break through all the trammels of grammar, not because they are ignorant, but to show their independence of foreign control!

Of one part of the English language they must, at all events, be confessed to be masters. There is hardly a vituperative epithet in it, which they have not culled out, and applied to the foreign-born portion of our population. Their object appears to be, to kindle a blaze of passion in the minds of their readers, against which both reason and humanity shall be powerless; to work up the public mind to such a furious heat of mingled rage, fear, hate and indignation, as shall silence common sense, frighten away justice, and convert rational citizens into headlong bigots.

But there are some, who in spite of all excitements, will choose to keep cool. In the present generation there are many doubters. Those who have listened unmoved to the prophetic calculations and solemn warnings of father Miller foretelling the end of the world, will perhaps, be able to stand out against the kindred arithmetic and rhetoric of the orators of the Native American party, who just as confidently, just as solemnly, and no doubt just as sincerely, prophecy the speedy downfall of

this republic. Persons of this cool temperament may even attempt to gather consolation from the very statements designed to work them up to a phrenzy of terror. Some such may be disposed to ask,—if these foreign immigrants be indeed such a poverty-stricken, miserable, degraded, ignorant crew, how can they accomplish the great deeds marked out for them? Can such a set as they, usurp possession of the country, and revolutionise the government? Has it come to this, that a few hundred thousand foreign paupers and criminals, are more than a match for millions of intelligent, enlightened, virtuous native Americans? For the native Americans to be devoured by a set of foreign vagabonds, not a twentieth part their number, would be more miraculous even than the dream of Pharaoh; it would be as if one lean, decrepid, half-starved yearling should swallow down a whole drove of fat oxen.

But our Native American orators are not thus to be silenced. They are ready with a reply to these doubting questioners. They aver that the foreigners, by selling their votes to the leaders of the great political parties, already control the politics of the country. What is more, the greater part of these foreigners are Catholics, and as such, completely under the control of their priests. These priests, we are told, to a man, are Jesuits, and intriguers of the very worst description, the sworn agents and servants of the Pope, whose object it is, assisted by the Catholic princes of Europe, to overturn our republican institutions, and to establish a despotism in their place, with an inquisition, penal laws against heretics, censorship of the press, and all the other machinery of wholesome Catholic government, such

as exists, at this moment, in the Pope's own Italian dominions. Here is a plot indeed; a horrible, treasonable, gun-powder plot; a damnable popish plot, as true and as terrible as that which Titus Oates invented. — With such a plot staring him in the face, who can hesitate a moment to join the Native American party?

This is a brief, but correct and comprehensive account of the statements, reasonings, apprehensions, inventions and appeals, of the Native American leaders. The palpable falsehood, or the gross exaggeration of some of these statements, the absurd and childish folly of others, might lead us to conclude, that few, except fools and priest-ridden women, could be thus seduced into a crusade against our foreign-born fellow citizens. This, however, would be a hasty and a false conclusion. Exaggerated, absurd or childish as most of these statements and apprehensions are, they are directly addressed to two of the cruelest and most unreasoning of human passions, — national antipathies and religious hate!

It is these two terrible passions, as history informs us, that have, in times past, been the greatest scourges of mankind. Antipathy on the part of one community towards another, handed down from father to son, and constantly aggravated by the mutual infliction of new injuries; religious hatred by which fellow men have been held up to each other, not merely as each other's enemies, but as servants of the devil, and enemies of God, — to what terrible evils, to what bloodshed, tortures, horrible cruelties, have these delusions given rise! Under their influence the very worst of human actions have been perpetrated, — actions which exhibit men in the frightful character of demons incarnate, priding

themselves upon excess of wickedness. National antipathy leads the savage to drink the blood, to devour the flesh, to exult in the tortures of his enemy; religious hate has sanctified the rack, and kindled the slow fire!

It is the boast, the high boast, of the age in which we live, that the civilized part of mankind are beginning to rise above the influence of such barbarous and barbarizing sentiments. It had been, for ages, the dream of poets and philosophers, that mankind are, or ought to be, a band of brothers, all members of one great family. Thanks to the facilities of intercommunication, the increased force of the sentiment of benevolence, a more enlightened perception of self-interest, and a more accurate knowledge of the means of promoting human happiness, the present age has seen the first advances towards realizing that blessed idea of a golden age of universal brotherhood!

The authors of our American independence, may claim to have been the first practical statesmen, who recognized, by their public political acts, the brotherhood of the family of man. In forming the government under which we live, they went back to first principles. It was not any narrow notion of local privilege, or national immunities, upon which they based their political system. It was not the rights of Americans, but the *Rights of Man!*

So with respect to religious opinions. They steered wide and clear of that union of church and state, which has been and is the source of such scandalous abuses and such horrid tyranny. While they protected all in the enjoyment of their particular opinions and usages, they took care that no sect, nor any alliance of sects, should be allowed to lord it over the rest, or to suppress

that freedom of inquiry and opinion upon which the progress of knowledge so intimately depends.

The leaders of the Native American party, as if offended at these opening prospects of peace and happiness, seek to undo this great work of our fathers. They are striving to wake from the oblivion to which the common sentiment of all enlightened men has consigned them, those horrible demons, national antipathy and religious hate.

It was only by assuming the garb of virtues, that these bloody and barbarous passions were able, in times past, to exercise such an influence over human feelings and actions. National antipathy took the name of Patriotism; while religious hatred, with the sword in one hand and the torch in the other, passed itself off for Piety and Benevolence! It is under these same disguises, that these same hateful passions are now again offered to our embrace. These American Republicans, take their own word for it, are the most patriotic, pious, benevolent of men. Upon this point, however, it were better to draw our information from other sources. I shall accordingly proceed to inquire, who are these men that have set themselves thus diligently to blow into a flame the expiring embers of barbarism; who have commenced preaching in our midst, a politico-religious crusade of the most dangerous character?

The different members united to form the Native American party, as at present it exists, may be symbolized as the Head, the Body, the Feet, and the Tail of that party. Each shall be described in order.

The Head of the party, or what evidently aspires to become so, is that monied faction, which ever since the formation of the constitution of the United States, has

been struggling, though hitherto with very little success, to obtain the control of the government. A certain well-known orator, whom it is needless to name, may be taken as the representative of this faction. He holds, and they hold, that property is the true basis of political power; and that the citizen ought to be allowed a weight in the political scale just in proportion to the heaviness of his purse. We may observe by the way, that the example of that gentleman himself might seem to be a sufficient refutation of this doctrine, — for, were it strictly enforced, what business would he have to meddle with politics?

This monied, aristocratic faction looks to the government of England as the true model. Universal suffrage they hold in utter abhorrence; and they can hardly pronounce the word, democracy, without disgust. Every plan to limit the right of suffrage, naturally enough finds favor with them. They easily see that if foreign-born citizens are debarred of the right of voting, on the ground of poverty and ignorance, an excellent foundation will be laid, for presently extending the same rule to the native-born. Besides, this faction has a special quarrel of its own with the foreign population. Our foreign-born fellow citizens, whatever may be said of their political ignorance, have always had wit enough to know their friends from their enemies. Having fled from aristocratic oppression at home, they have no fancy for helping to introduce that sort of government into the country of their adoption. Hence they have always voted, almost in a body, against the would-be aristocracy, — giving their united support to the party which, for the time-being, professed the most liberal principles. Hence these tears; hence this rage

of the monied faction, against the exercise of the right of voting by foreign-born citizens. Hence, it was, that John Adams procured the passage of the alien law; hence, the harping upon this subject, by the high-toned federal and high-toned whig papers, from that time to this; and hence, the opening of the flood-gates of Mr. Webster's indignation against foreigners, in his late speech at Faneuil Hall.

This monied faction long ago found out, that the open avowal of their political principles, is a certain means to ensure their defeat. Hence they are obliged to bring them forward under cover. Some of the more brazen-faced, even venture to assume the character of democrats; and flourish forth sentiments in their public addresses, which they repudiate in private, with the bitterest scorn. But this constantly playing the hypocrite is an irksome business. Nothing could delight them more, than to find a subject upon which they can speak candidly and sincerely, and yet hope to carry a certain portion of the people with them. Hence the eagerness with which they have clutched at Native Americanism. What better sport for these would-be-aristocrats, what more likely to confirm them in their opinion of the incapacity of the people to govern themselves, than to entangle their fellow citizens in the net of prejudice, to convert their antipathy against foreigners, into a snare for themselves?

The Body of the Native American party, that which gives it such strength and force as it has, and whence alone it is likely to become formidable, consists of a great number of all stations in society, and of all shades of political opinion, many of them intelligent and well-intending men, who dread and hate their foreign fellow

citizens, not so much because they are foreigners, as because they are Catholics.

This Anti-Catholic sentiment is very deeply rooted in these United States; nor is it to be wondered at. It is a natural consequence of the atrocities which, in former times, the Catholic clergy committed, in order to retain their despotism over the public mind. The members of a sect whose priests and leaders have claimed and exercised the right to proscribe, denounce and excommunicate every body else, need not be surprised at finding themselves excommunicated and denounced:

But though this Anti-Catholic sentiment be natural, and to a certain extent, just, we must take good care that it does not betray us into unjust measures. The heaviest charges against the Catholic faith are, that it does not recognize the liberty of religious opinion; and that it calls in the aid of the secular power to punish heresy, and enforce conformity. Shall we, out of hatred of these tyrannical doctrines and practices, be ourselves guilty of the very same thing which we charge upon the Catholics? Shall we, out of love of religious freedom, refuse to recognize the liberty of religious opinions, and punish the Catholics with political disabilities?

Impatience of contradiction, intolerance of opinions different from their own, fondness for despotic power, and the claim to be God's representatives on earth, are, by no means, peculiar to the Catholic clergy.

The priests of all religions are alike.

Toleration is not a religious, but a philosophical doctrine, which no priesthood has ever admitted, except just so far as circumstances compelled it. What stronger proof of bigotry and intolerance, could we have, than the zeal with which so many clergymen and church

members of the principal protestant sects, have been at work, for the last fifteen years, trying to kindle up in the public mind, a dread and hatred of the Catholics? Considering our history and education, one would think that the popular mind was quite enough imbued already with such sentiments. What then shall we say of those who have made it a business, with very little scruple as to the kind of means they employed, a business in which they have succeeded but too well, to inflame these sentiments to the height of riot, arson, and murder?

These men pretend to preach a religion of peace, charity and good will; — yet is there more than one perfumed flourisher of white cambric pocket-handkerchiefs among them, afraid to advocate the cause of the slave, too timid to preach against the grog-shops or the distillers, who seek popularity by the safer and more congenial task of maligning the members and clergy of another sect, who must be very bad Christians indeed, if they have half the bitterness, malice, recklessness of truth and justice, pitiful time-serving, and fondness for filthy lucre, so obvious in their assailants.

It belongs to the laity of all denominations to keep these rampant priests, whether Catholic or Protestant, in order. No doubt, could they have their own way in this matter, they would soon bring back the times of the religious civil wars. The scenes lately enacted in the streets of Philadelphia, are quite enough to show, that we are somewhat nearer those times, than many have imagined. They ought to satisfy us too, of the great danger to the public peace, attendant upon the preaching and agitation of fiery bigots, of whatever sect. There are, in all sects, a number of men, whose religion seems wholly to consist in a violent hatred against those

who entertain different opinions; such men are quite as numerous, it is to be feared, and quite as active among Protestants as among Catholics.

Surely our thoughtful and intelligent countrymen, whatever opinions they may entertain of the Catholic religion, do not intend to put themselves under the guidance of such leaders. The doctrine of civil disabilities on account of religious opinions being once proclaimed and established, who can tell where we shall stop? The Catholics are the victims now, but when the Catholics are disposed of, whose turn will it be next? There are three great protestant sects in the country, Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, who call themselves *par excellence*, Evangelical, and who declare that the Unitarians and Universalists are not Christians. If a man is to be deprived of his right to vote because he is a Catholic, surely, just as little ought he to be allowed to vote, if he be not a Christian. Once introduce the principle of making a man's civil rights dependent on the church to which he goes, and the very worst doctrine which Catholicism ever proclaimed, the very worst practices which it ever established, will have become part and parcel of our free institutions. Is this what is meant by American Republicanism?

We pass now to the third of the members of which the Native American party is composed. This third member has been designated as its Feet, and consists of a knot of political adventurers, lately hangers-on upon the other two political parties, who finding their services little valued and but slenderly rewarded, have embraced this opportunity to set up for themselves. It is they who have put this Native American party into

motion; and they doubtless expect to attain by means of it, to stations of political consequence and emolument. If they can but succeed in that, they care very little what mischief they may do, or what firebrands of discord they may scatter through the community.

The fourth member, the Tail of this Native American party, consists of all the idle, vicious, and depraved, who unfortunately are too numerous, among our native-born population. All such are but too apt to believe, especially when they have rich men, priests, and politicians to tell them so, that the poverty and degradation, the results of their own idleness and vices, or of grog-shop seductions, have been forced upon them by the competition of foreigners ready to work for half wages.

Such then is the motley composition of this new party; purse-proud aristocrats, bigoted priests, shuffling politicians, the sweepings of the grog shops;—all these would be little formidable, were it not that they have carried with them, a considerable body of honest men and good citizens, whose prejudices they have succeeded in taking advantage of, and whom they mean to make the instruments of their evil designs.

The aristocrats wish to limit the right of suffrage, and thus take the first steps towards getting rid of democracy. It is by such means, that democracies have always been supplanted, sooner or later, and aristocratic governments introduced in their place. The priests wish to do that very thing, which they charge against the catholic clergy. They wish to establish religious tests, religious penal laws, and to compel people to join their communion by the terror of political disabilities. The political adventurers wish

to elevate themselves upon the whirlwind of social strife; and the sweepings of the grog-shops chuckle over the idea of rioting and destroying with impunity. The good and sober citizens who have been betrayed into an alliance with such associates, have no such evil designs. Misled by prejudices artfully fomented, deceived by false statements, inflamed by declamation, they believe that the country is really in danger. They are persuaded that the foreigners are indeed those terrible creatures the Native American orators paint them,—a flight of devouring locusts, an invading army of evil spirits, against whose machinations it is necessary to guard.

Let us proceed then to examine, somewhat in detail, the particular allegations upon which the Native American writers rely; and to inquire, how far those allegations afford any foundation for the edifice of terror erected upon them.

As to the number of foreign immigrants. It is estimated, but without any sufficient data, by the American Republicans; that the number of foreigners immigrating into this country, has averaged one hundred and fifty thousand annually, for the last ten years. Probably this estimate is at least twice the truth. It is assumed that within these ten years, the annual number of immigrants has doubled; and it is taken for granted that the same ratio of increase will continue indefinitely. Then, supposing that none of these foreigners die—and the Native Americans have endowed them, among other attributes of devils, with the gift of immortality—within ten years, we shall have in the country, in addition to those already here, *three*

millions of foreigners; within twenty years, *nine millions*; within thirty years, *twenty-one millions*; and within the next thirty-five years, *thirty-three millions* of foreigners! (See Crisis, p. 22.)

Surely the authors of this calculation either must be fools themselves, or must reckon largely upon the folly and credulity of others. Within thirty-five years, the rate of immigration is to reach two millions four hundred thousand a year, bringing into the country, in ten years, twenty-four millions of immigrants! This is considerably more than the entire population of Ireland and Northern Germany, whence the great bulk of our immigrants come; and this too notwithstanding the same countries in the preceding thirty-five years, will have parted, according to this account, with eighteen millions of their inhabitants!

It is probable, upon the largest calculation, that the number of persons born in foreign countries now resident in the United States, may amount to a million, or about one in twenty, of the whole population. If we suppose the average immigration for the next five and thirty years to amount to two hundred and fifty thousand a year, which is a very liberal allowance, there may be in the country at the end of that period, making due deduction for deaths, some five millions of foreign-born inhabitants. But by that time, the entire population will amount to upwards of fifty millions; so that even then, the foreign-born will be but one tenth part of the entire population.

But this balancing and contrasting the numbers of the foreign-born and native-born inhabitants, proceeds altogether upon an assumption as dangerous as it is false.

It assumes that there is, and must be, something hostile between the two classes. The only ground upon which the increase of the foreign-born population can reasonably be deprecated, is, that there is something about foreign immigrants incompatible with their becoming good citizens. This indeed the American Republicans allege.

The *first* charge brought against the immigrants by the American Republicans, is, that they are poor. It is even pretended that the greater part of them are paupers fresh from the alms-houses of Europe, sent hither to relieve their parishes of the burden of supporting them, and immediately on their arrival, seeking relief from charity. This is one of those reckless assertions which shows, how utterly careless of truth the American Republicans are; and which must soon destroy their credit with all intelligent and thinking men. A few paupers no doubt, have been sent to the country. These are rare exceptions. Every body who has eyes knows perfectly well, that the great mass of our foreign-born citizens, are industrious hard-working men, who support themselves by the sweat of their brows, and who would scorn to ask or receive charity from any body.

So far from being the sweepings and offscourings of their native countries, as the American Republicans pretend, the great bulk of those who emigrate hither, are the very elite of the laboring population of Europe. It is only the better part of the European laborers, the more industrious and economical, who can find the means to emigrate; it is only the more enterprising, thoughtful, and better informed, who have the disposition.

Nor is it true that the immigrants are so universally destitute of means as the American Republicans represent. A large portion of the German immigrants bring money with them, and they constitute a wealthy, as well as a highly respectable and valuable portion of the population of several of our new Western States.

But grant the charge in its fullest extent,—grant that these foreign immigrants are poor. Is poverty so desperate and unpardonable an offence, that all guilty of it, are to be disfranchised; declared incapable and unfit to exercise the right of citizens? Here we see the cloven foot of the monied aristocracy! Here we see an entering wedge for the principle, that no one shall be allowed to vote, who has not a certain pecuniary qualification.

Of all the numerous immigrants who annually leave New England, to seek their fortunes in the other States of the Union, how many are rich? How many have much more than the clothes on their backs? Yet from this immigration do many of the sister States derive their legislators, their judges, their most worthy and influential citizens. If poverty is to work disfranchisement, where shall we stop? Is not poverty just as great a sin in a yankee as in a foreigner?

If the truth were known, a good deal of this late outcry against foreigners, has arisen not so much from their poverty, as out of envy at their wealth. Already have many who arrived here with nothing but their hands, succeeded by industry, economy and the exercise of their sagacity, in amassing considerable fortunes. The possession of this property makes them objects of envy to many native-born citizens, infinitely below

them in every good trait of character; and from envy, it is but a short step to hatred and abuse.

Thus "The Crisis," with admirable consistency, after dwelling with great emphasis upon the poverty and destitution of our foreign-born citizens, grows vastly indignant, a few sentences after, at its own account of the great sums remitted home by the Irish in this country, to assist their friends and relations, in coming hither.

But according to the Native American oracles, not only are the foreign immigrants who arrive here, poor, they are intolerably idle. Were this charge alleged against certain rather conspicuous American Republicans, abundant evidence might be produced to sustain it. When brought against the body of our immigrant population, it is utterly false, and has indeed been answered already. There are idle individuals among the immigrants, as there are among the native Americans; but the great body are industrious hard-working men. Who have dug our canals, and built our railroads; who sweep our streets and clean our common sewers; who do the largest part of the hardest and least inviting work? Is it not those very immigrant foreigners thus unjustly accused of idleness? The Native American editors cannot even dispose of their newspapers, except by employing Irish boys to sell them. The authors of "The Crisis" (p. 10) refer to certain official documents as showing, that the greater part of the immigrants who arrive here, have no occupation whatever! This means, being interpreted, that after deducting the women and children, of those who remain the greater part have no profession or trade, but are merely day laborers.

The *third* charge against the foreign immigrants is, that they are drunken, dissolute, and a large proportion of them criminals. Unfortunately it is too true, that numbers of immigrants, as well as a still greater number of native-born citizens, fall victims to the hundreds of grog-shops, set like traps in every nook and corner of our great cities. They are first seduced into drunkenness, and then betrayed into crime. But the remedy for this is obvious, and easy. Shut up your grog-shops!

With all the progress which the glorious cause of temperance has made, our towns and cities hold out to the unwary, greater facilities and temptations to drunkenness, than any other spots upon the face of the globe! It is we who are to blame in this matter, not the immigrants. They are but the victims.

Of the crimes committed by foreign-born residents, by far the greater part can be traced to the grog-shops. Close them, and you may shut up half your prisons at the least.

As to the idea insinuated, if not directly charged by the Native American organs, that a large part of the emigrants who arrive here, have been criminals at home, it is one of those extravagant falsehoods which serve to prove, that whatever other vices we may have derived from abroad, the vice of lying flourishes here in full-blown native perfection.

But up come the American Republicans, with a *fourth* charge. The emigrants are intolerably ignorant, whether in a literary or political point of view, and therefore utterly unfit to enjoy the rights of citizenship.

It is alleged that half the immigrants who arrive in this country, are unacquainted with our language. This no doubt is a misfortune,—but that it is a fault, is not

quite so clear. Though the American Republicans may not have thought of it, it is possible nevertheless, for a man to be very well informed, and yet not know English. There are in the French and German languages, some writings almost as valuable perhaps as our American Republican newspapers, and pamphlets. In those parts of the country where the Germans have settled in bodies, they have newspapers of their own, and the laws and public documents are officially published in German. Where they are less numerous, they find themselves obliged to learn English for their own convenience.

But it is alleged that the larger part of the emigrants are totally illiterate, and cannot read or write in any language. This statement is greatly exaggerated. The Germans all come from countries in which instruction is rigidly enforced by law; and where every body is obliged to learn. Many of the Irish are quite uneducated; but the immigrants from most other countries, possess at least the rudiments of education.

If, however, we are going to lay it down as a rule, that nobody shall have the rights of citizenship, who cannot read and write, we shall have to disfranchise quite as many native-born, as foreign-born, citizens. It appears by the last census, that in the state of Virginia, *one* in *twelve* of the free population over twenty, are unable to read. The same ratio prevails in South Carolina. In the state of Tennessee it is *one* in *eleven*; in North Carolina, *one* in *nine*; in Kentucky and Georgia, *one* in *thirteen*. It is perfectly notorious that in all these states, the number of foreign-born citizens is very small. Nothing can exceed the mendacious dishonesty of the "General Executive commit-

tee of the American Republican party of the city and county of New York," in sanctioning the statement, contained in their pamphlet, "The Crisis," (p. 39,) that not more than one in twenty of these uninstructed persons is a native American. The truth is altogether the other way;—in the states enumerated, not one in twenty is of foreign birth.

It is plain, then, that this proposal to disfranchise a part of our fellow citizens on the ground of their ignorance, will take a pretty wide sweep, and involve in common degradation, no small number of the home-born. This may be very agreeable to that aristocratic faction which regards with disgust the extension of the right of suffrage, and which eagerly clutches at every means of curtailing popular influence. But those among the Native Americans who are sincere democrats, those who are indisposed to give up the control of the government into the hands of an aristocracy, may as well think a little what they are about. To deny the right of voting to those who cannot read and write, is but the first step; and according to the French proverb, it is but the first step that costs. Once establish the principle, that want of information is to disqualify from voting, and how easy it will be to go on limiting the number of the qualified!

But, say the American Republicans, these immigrants whether they can read or not, are politically ignorant in the highest degree, with no knowledge of the forms, much less of the spirit of our institutions, and therefore unfit to be received as citizens.

It were to be wished that political ignorance were confined to immigrants. There is too much reason to fear that it prevails to a most alarming extent among

native-born citizens. One Mr. Green, editor of the *New York American Republican*, made his appearance a few nights since, in Faneuil Hall, in Boston, and there delivered a speech which was received with unbounded applause; and yet that speech, as reported in the *Daily Pennant*, one of the new Boston organs of the American Republican party, exhibited a most lamentable degree of political ignorance. Among other things, this orator asked—"What are the rights that the foreigner has? Tell me what right he has to any thing in this country. I never yet could find the man who could tell me of a single thing to which a foreigner was entitled here, until the people, in their sovereign capacity and generosity choose to give it to him."—

This then is the doctrine of American Republicanism. This double-distilled essence of despotism, was proclaimed in Faneuil Hall by a traveling apostle, as the creed of this new political party. It was received there with applause. I blush for my townsmen when I write it! If no living voice of rebuke was heard, at least the venerable portraits on those consecrated walls, must have sighed out a lament over their degenerate sons! What!—are Mr. Green, and the Bostonians who formed his audience, now to hear, for the first time, of the *Rights of man*—rights which appertain equally to all members of the human family, wherever born? "What are the rights that the foreigner has?" quoth Mr. Green,—and an audience of Bostonians re-echoed the question. They are the rights of man,—the same rights that you have, and that I have. It is upon these rights that our free constitutions are based. The people, in adopting those constitutions, have but proclaimed these rights, not enacted

them. God forbid that our rights should depend upon the good will, or be held by the allowance of any despot whether with one head, or a million. The sovereignty of the people is but a limited sovereignty: they neither created the rights of man, nor can they take them away.

This is the grand fundamental principle of our American democracy; it is this which distinguishes it from every government that ever existed; nor do I believe that of all the immigrants who ever landed on our shores, there could be found one so benighted, as not to have had at least some glimmering idea however indistinct, of this great principle. It is indeed the light of this principle gleaming in the far-off western horizon, that attracts, more than any thing else, so many foreigners to our shores. It is not so much bread they seek, it is not so much money, it is human rights. Yet Mr. Green and his Boston applauders, were ignorant of this principle, or forgot it! Born and bred in the full blaze of the light, they saw it not. Had they been serfs fresh from the plains of Russia, or eunuchs from the seraglios of Constantinople, they could not have exhibited a more total ignorance of the very principles upon which our political system is founded. And yet they presume to call themselves Republicans,—yes, American Republicans! I say to these political pharisees, “first cast the beam out of your own eyes, and then you may see clearly to cast the mote out of your brother’s eye.” First acquire yourselves some little knowledge of the first principles of our government, and it will then be quite time to propose to disfranchise others for their political ignorance!

A *fifth* charge brought against our foreign-born citi-

zens is, that they are obstinately attached to the usages and manners of their native countries, and are quite indisposed to assimilate with us.

It would be strange indeed, it might well constitute a serious charge against our immigrant population, if in coming hither, they were to throw off all recollections of their father-land, all regard, sympathy, and tenderness for it. No wonder that they remain attached to whatever may serve to remind them of the pleasant days of childhood, to call up before their eyes the mother who carefully tended their infancy, the father upon whose knees they played, the cottage about whose door they sported. No wonder, if when removed far away to this western world, they fondly cling to whatever tends to renew and brighten such sweet and tender recollections. Otherwise they were not men. Neither are they to be blamed, but on the contrary to be highly commended, for continuing to feel a strong and deep interest in all that concerns the political destiny of the countrymen they have left behind. But if it be alleged that these sentiments of natural affection make them insensible of the oppressions from which they have escaped, or cause them to undervalue the liberty they have acquired, the charge is false; nor is there any thing in the history of the country to give any countenance to it. In fact, it is their very attachment to our democratic institutions, which renders them objects of such bitter dislike to one great section of the Native American party. They are too good democrats, they are too strongly attached to the doctrine of liberty and equality, to give satisfaction to those who hold universal suffrage in abhorrence. In the eyes of these persons

their great political sin consists in what is denominated their *radicalism*, that is to say, their dread and dislike of that aristocratical system, of which they have had such bitter experience at home.

◦ It is charged, *sixthly*, against the immigrants, that they suffer themselves to be made the instruments of great political frauds. It is alleged that the leaders or active agents of the Whig and Democratic parties, have been in the habit of bringing up great numbers of unnaturalized foreigners to the polls, and of causing individuals among them to vote many times over, thus, in closely contested elections, determining the majority.

◦ A great hue and cry is raised about election frauds. This is a crime which both parties charge upon each other. The charges are very sweeping; the proofs, in general, very slender. It is difficult to tell how much to believe. Yet take every thing that is alleged for granted, and it is still evident that the immigrants are not principals in this business, but only instruments and accessories. Why not proceed at once against the principals? The law is ample to punish such offences, or might easily be made so. The courts are open. It is plain that no change in the naturalization laws, not even their total repeal, would remedy the evil; nor would that object be accomplished even by the total exclusion of foreigners from the country. So long as political leaders can tamper with the ballot-boxes with impunity, they will never be without the means of manufacturing spurious votes.

We come now to the *seventh* and last great charge against our foreign fellow-citizens,—that which in the minds of the largest and most respectable section of the American Republicans, has more weight than all the

rest,—the charge, namely, that they are Catholics, and as such, necessarily hostile to our republican institutions, and ready instruments in the hands of their priests for the establishment of a spiritual and temporal despotism. This subject has already been adverted to; but its importance justifies the reconsideration of it.

In the first place, this charge of Catholicism does not touch a very considerable portion of the immigrants annually arriving among us, nearly or quite half of whom are Protestants; while it does include no inconsiderable number of native-born citizens, to whom the Catholic faith has descended as a religious inheritance from some of the earliest settlers in the country; or who have been persuaded to adopt it upon conviction of its truth.

The Anti-Catholics are in fact quite a distinct party from the anti-foreigners, though the two factions have thought it best to strengthen themselves for the moment, by uniting.

We must carefully distinguish also between the Catholic clergy and the Catholic laity. The great body of the Catholic laity, have no other reason for being Catholic except that they were bred so; the same reason, in fact, which the body of their Protestant fellow-citizens have, for being Baptists, Methodists or Presbyterians. They are not zealots; and though like the mass of the Protestants, they are willing to go to church and to pay the usual church dues, having been taught to regard that as but decent and proper,—they are no more under the control of the clergy, and no more disposed to submit to spiritual dictation, than their fellow-citizens the Protestants. As happens among the Protestants,

there are ten Catholic women who are priest-ridden, to one man.

As far as regards the Catholic clergy, it need not be denied that as a body, and with many individual exceptions, they are ambitious, aspiring, grasping, and ought to be carefully watched. But the same is true of the Protestant clergy; and as they are far more numerous and far more powerful, any danger to our liberties from priestly ambition, ought, for the present at least, to be rather apprehended from them. Have we not just seen a great convention of the evangelical sects assembled at Baltimore, to contrive means for enforcing a more rigorous and puritanical observance of Sunday, or as they affectedly call it, the Sabbath? Have not these same Sabbath zealots made strenuous efforts to stop the Sunday mails, and Sunday conveyances? Have they not, in many places, by law, prevented the barbers, confectioners, and newsmen from opening their shops on Sundays, and otherwise interfered with the business and recreations of the citizens? It may be said that these are small matters; but whether large or small, if the Catholics had attempted one hundredth part as much towards imposing their particular views and observances on the community, the country would have rung with it from one end to the other!

We are told fearful tales about the army of nuns and Jesuits in the service of the pope. But have we not quite as much to fear from those bodies of Protestant Jesuits, male and female, the church members of the several great Protestant sects? I call them Protestant Jesuits without intending any offence, but merely to indicate their relation to the sects to which they belong.

They are persons having a semi-clerical character, devoted as they say, to God and religion—just what the Jesuits say of themselves—and ready to compass the earth, as they do with their missionary societies, to extend the dominion of their sect by making one proselyte.

All religionists are despots in principle, hostile to civil, as well as religious liberty. They inculcate to the mass, implicit faith, profound submission, and humble obedience, as the greatest of virtues. The only difference on this point, between Catholics and Protestants is,—who is to be obeyed,—to whom is this submission due? The Catholic religionists say, it is due to the pope and to the Catholic church, that is, the Catholic clergy; the Protestant religionists say, it is due to the Bible,—which is only another way of saying that it is due to themselves; for unless you look upon the Bible as they do, and implicitly receive their interpretation of it as the revealed will of God, they denounce you without ceremony as errorists, blasphemers and infidels, the proper objects of social excommunication and legal punishments. The Catholic clergy pretend that they have received by an uninterrupted tradition from Peter and Paul and the other apostles, an exclusive right to administer the Christian ordinances, and the exclusive capacity of discerning religious truth. The Protestant church members claim to have received each a call from God, to have undergone a miraculous change, whereby their minds have been enlightened, their stony hearts turned to flesh, and they alone of all men made capable of discerning truth and acting right, while all the rest of the world are left wallowing in the pit of darkness and filth of iniquity.

Comparing these two sets of pretensions, we find that in arrogance of claim the Protestant professors do not fall one whit below the Catholic clergy. This indeed, is the true source of that furious zeal against Catholicism, which so many Protestant zealots have lately exhibited. Before the Catholic faith began to be diffused among us, there was hardly any body to controvert the lofty pretensions of our self-constituted saints. It is true the Unitarians and Universalists did modestly suggest some doubts. But they were few, feeble, and timid; and assuming the Bible as an inspired and invincible authority, it must be confessed that the Orthodox have altogether the best of the argument.

The Catholic clergy encounter our Protestant dictators in another spirit, and with other arms. They meet arrogance with arrogance, and claim with claim. They too possess the gift of the Holy Spirit, and tradition to boot; while they denounce the pretended election, sanctification, and enlightenment of the Protestant zealots as no better than delusions of the devil. It is this that stings them to the quick. It is this that makes them ready to put down the Catholic faith, by lies, by slanders, by proscriptive laws, by prohibiting Catholics from coming into the country, if need be, by riot, fire, and sword. Ignorant and thoughtless mobs were the instruments, but it was Protestant doctors of divinity who lighted the torches, that set fire to the convent of Mount Benedict! It was these same doctors who arrayed Protestants and Catholics with arms in their hands, and caused the streets of unhappy Philadelphia to be baptised in blood!

Let it not be overlooked that the first of that series of mobocratic acts, by which, for some twelve years past,

these United States have been disgraced, occurred in the sober, and peaceful Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in the close vicinity of the enlightened city of Boston, and was a natural result of the laborious dissemination of slanderous accusations, the diligent stirring up of old prejudices against the Catholics, on the part of spiritual rivals. Let it not be overlooked, that the first affray assuming the character of civil war, in which American citizens have shed each other's blood, occurred in this same religious quarrel, making it necessary to subject to martial law what was once the most staid, peaceful and tolerant of our cities.

If the spirit of religious hatred has made such a progress in twelve years, what have we not to dread for the future? Shall religious zealots be allowed to involve the country in the most terrible of all calamities, a war of religion? The great mass of the men of these United States are not zealots. They profess to belong to some religious sect; but that same liberty of worship which they claim for themselves, they are willing to allow to others. Let then the reasonable and moderate, with whatever religious sect they may be connected, unite together for the preservation of the public peace. Let the bigots of all sects, be given plainly to understand, that they must confine themselves to a war of words,—that they cannot be allowed to press fire, gunpowder, mobs, and penal enactments into the service of what they call religion.

The Romish church, whatever we may think of it, or however Protestant clergymen in their prayers and sermons may publicly denounce it as “the scarlet whore, the mother of harlots,”—is yet the fruitful mother of all the Protestant sects. Catholicism may disown them

as bastards, but that various brood are her natural progeny. The Catholic, is still the religious faith of three fourths of Christendom; it is the established religion of some of the most enlightened countries in the world. If we have no principle about it, no veneration for historical Christianity, no regard for the sacred rights of conscience and opinion, yet a decent respect for the prejudices of our brethren, with the very smallest tincture of common sense, ought to save us from the folly of attempting by penal laws, and civil disabilities, by the old worn-out, cast-off expedient of persecution, to exclude the Catholic faith from our country. The little success which our Puritan fathers had in the use of these same weapons against Quakers and Baptists, might serve as a warning to our modern Puritans. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church; and however the martyr spirit may have died out in the Protestant sects, Catholicism has never yet wanted those to whom the crown of martyrdom was the object of the most ardent desire. It is not persecution that Catholicism dreads. What she fears, what she shrinks from, is, that still small voice of reason scarcely heard amid the world's hubbub, but which, like the constantly dropping water, gradually wears away the most solid fabric of superstition.

It is one of the professed objects of the American Republicans, "to prevent all union of church and state." (*Crisis p. S.*) This object they propose to accomplish by forming a union between the state and the Protestant churches, for the purpose of disfranchising their Catholic fellow citizens! It is not by such means that the union of church and state is to be prevented. Most fortunate it is, that the religious zealots are split up into

so many sects and factions. Were they united in one compact body, with all their zeal, and untiring energy, and with their great influence over the public mind, it would not be long before they bent the state to their purpose. United they might easily convert their spiritual, into a civil, aristocracy such as existed in Massachusetts in the days of the Puritans, when no body but church-members had the right to vote, and nobody could become a church-member except by the consent and admission of those who already were so. It is in the division, the mutual hostility and distrust of religionists, that our only safety lies. They control already all the schools and seminaries of education; they have a most extensive influence over the public press; and if they could only unite, they would carry every thing before them. Our only safety consists in their divisions; and just in proportion as they go on dividing and comminuting, does liberty of opinion and action upon religious subjects, begin to establish itself.

All those who do not regard the predominancy of some particular religious sect as the great panacea for all social evils; all those to whatever sect they may nominally belong, who are really attached to freedom of opinion, will unite to preserve this balance of spiritual power, will take care that the stronger sects are not allowed to devour the weaker. Once give these religious zealots a taste of persecution, and their appetite will become insatiable; those who combine to devour a weaker sect, that sect out of the way, will presently begin to tear each other.

There is still another point upon which the professions of the American Republicans, are quite at variance

with the necessary tendency of their doctrines, and proposed measures. They profess not to wish to put a stop to foreign immigration, but only to limit the right of citizenship. But if their principles are to be adopted, it were better for all parties, to come up to the mark at once, and peremptorily to exclude all foreigners from settling in the country. Such is the policy of the Chinese,—a policy which according to John Q. Adams, is an outrage upon all civilized nations, and a sufficient excuse for the war lately waged by England against them.

It is not to be thought of, that we are to have growing up a numerous, and presently a wealthy body, among us but not of us,—marked as aliens, cut off from the possession of civic rights, hostile therefore to us, nourishing bitter feelings of hate and indignation, and ready to join any foreign invader, or to take part in any domestic insurrection, by which our peace might be disturbed. This was the policy of most of the ancient Greek republics; but they paid dearly for it. They were perpetually torn by civil contentions, and they all at length fell a prey to foreign invaders. The Romans were wiser; they admitted the vanquished nations of Italy to the rights of citizenship, and thus strengthened themselves for new conquests.

The people of the United States must renounce the fundamental principles of democracy, they must subscribe to an entirely different system of political doctrines, before they can adopt the measures recommended by the American Republicans. This is what the great mass of the people are not yet prepared to do. Native Americanism is a good enough hobby for monied and religious aristocrats, for political adventurers and na-

tive-born loafers to ride, but it is not the sort of locomotive to which the true and sincere friends of liberty and equal rights, will choose to trust themselves. It is rather too crab-like in its gait. The American people are not yet ready to begin to advance backwards.

It is highly proper that before admitting foreign immigrants to the rights of citizenship, the law should subject them to a reasonable probation, and should require proof of their *bona fide* intention to become American citizens. If, as is alleged, the present naturalization laws are liable to be evaded by the artful frauds and perjuries of political hacks, let them be amended in those particulars,—though perhaps, after all, the best security against this sort of frauds will be found, in the rigid prosecution and punishment of the guilty parties, those more especially, who are the authors of the crime, the politicians, the contrivers and promoters of these frauds.

Such is a brief but comprehensive account of this new American Republican party, its composition, allegations, proposals, aims and tendencies. It has not been an object to treat this new party with harshness; but it was necessary to speak with plainness and emphasis, in order that the many liable to be deceived and led away by bold assertions and plausible declamations, might be made to understand in precisely what sort of an enterprise they were about to embark, and under what sort of leaders.

Upon those, and they are but too numerous, the descendants and representatives of the old federalists, who in their hearts, whatever masks they may put on, or grimaces they may make in public, are enemies to the

principles of democracy, holding the idea of universal political equality in utter abhorrence,—upon such, it were vain to expect to make any impression. Just as little hope is there of moving those Protestant zealots, unfortunately also too numerous, who regard the Catholics with all the traditional hate and prejudices of three centuries of religious struggles; for however they may descant in public about the virtue and the blessings of toleration, they secretly long to retort upon their Catholic brethren of the present day, the fires of Smithfield and the racks of the inquisition. We hardly need expect to bring over to the side of reason, justice and common sense, the political adventurers whose only hope consists in the triumph of passion and prejudice, nor that crowd of thoughtless boys and grog-shop loungers, who find in riot and arson a pleasurable amusement; and who are always ready to do the bidding of more discreet and cautious prompters.

But the great mass of the thoughtful, prudent and sober citizens, however they may have yielded to the first impulse of prejudices and antipathies in the midst of which they have grown up, and which so much pains have been taken to inflame and excite, will be very cautious how they give in their permanent adherence to this new party. They will look carefully to it, lest they lose the substance in clutching at a shadow; they will take good heed lest in assailing the rights and liberties of others, they prepare the way for the sacrifice of their own.