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## SPEECH OF EX-GOVERNOR BIGLER, OF PENNSYLVANIA, DELIVERED AT HARTFORD, CONN.

*Fellow Citizens of Connecticut:*—This is my first visit to the New England States, and I should do injustice to my feelings, were I not to thank you for the gratification excited by the frank hospitality of the people, and by the evidences of general prosperity and comfort which I have met at every point. Your country, naturally rugged, has yielded to the influences of industry and art, until its exterior is beautiful, and its productions abundant. Your manufacturing establishments, in great variety, the evidences of industry, are found interspersed with the school-house, the church, and the asylum, emblems of intelligence, religion, and charity.

I must beg you to believe that I have come amongst you in no spirit of vanity. I do not believe I can tell you anything which you have not heard before, or tell it better. My presence is rather to manifest the deep solicitude which the Democracy of the old Keystone State has for the fate of their brethren of Connecticut, just now engaged in a struggle with the common enemy. I would aid the Democracy if I had the power. I would certainly persuade you to join that party, and maintain its principles.

I am, besides, persuaded that intercourse of this kind, between the people of the several States, seldom fails to exercise a most salutary influence upon our social and political relations. Its certain tendency is to remove error and prejudice, and to unite us in bonds of imperishable fraternity. Why should it be otherwise? The imaginary lines dividing the States do not mark the limits of a people strangers to each other; nor are they high walls or deep chasms, that they may not be passed. We are mainly the descendants of the same parentage; heirs to a common inheritance, actuated by similar motives and impulses, and protected by the same general laws.

I am gratified to find so many of the Democrats of Connecticut in council on this occasion. It is the right of freemen, it is a cherished feature of our republican system that has made such counsels lying together proper and necessary. The elective franchise, the medium of self-government, makes each citizen a component part of the government, vested with privileges and prerogatives, and clothed with responsibilities. It is not only your privilege to vote, but it is your duty to do so, and to understand, as far as practicable, the consequences of the suffrage you are about to cast.

As an advocate of the Democratic party, I set out with the general proposition, that the best interests of the nation require the ascendency of its principles and policy, and the entire prostration of the nondescript opposition. The Democratic party is not only the oldest, but it is the purest and most patriotic political organization that has ever existed in the country. It is the only party now in existence, maintaining principles and a policy applicable to all parts of the Union. The scene before us is a beautiful illustration of its nationality. One of your guests on this occasion, Colonel Orr, is from South Carolina, an original State on the Southern boundary. Another, Senator Weller, is from California, the youngest member of the family, on the shores of the Pacific, distant three thousand miles or more; and myself, from the Keystone of the arch, where the Declaration of Independence was adopted, and the Constitution framed; and yet, our principles and doctrines are in perfect harmony on every topic, and have been enthusiastically embraced by the Democracy of New England. In all past struggles, though occasionally suffering defeat, in the end its policy has been sustained by experience and popular will. The opposing party, by whatever name known, has been as uniformly wrong. Whatever they did when in power had to be undone; whatever they objected to has proved to be wise and proper for the country. Now, we common-sense people think that, for these reasons alone, the Democratic party is entitled to the confidence and patronage of the people. We never employ the mechanic or artist a second time, who has ruined the business the first; and the rule is just as good when applied to the science of government. These gentlemen, have always failed. They did so in my State, and in your State, and in the whole nation; and now they have the boldness to ask another opportunity. This should not be granted. The lessons of experience are not to be trifled with in this way.

But for the evidence of some of these assertions, Thomas Jefferson was the author of our faith, and our first leader. He had a great struggle with Alexander Hamilton, the ablest leader of the Federal party, at the time the government was first shaped. The latter was the advocate of a system assimilating to a limited monarchy; he wanted a President for life, and senators for life, and other features consistent with a powerful central system; he maintained that the British Government presented the best model the world had ever seen; but the views of Jefferson prevailed, and hence our present representative system. Party lines were not clearly drawn, however, until Adams became President. His election was a triumph of the enemies of Jeffersonian Democracy. The distinguishing acts of his administration were the Alien and Sedition laws. Under the former it required fourteen years probation to become a citizen of the United States, and under the latter, a citizen was liable to be lashed, or banished from the country, for words spoken against the President and other officers of the government. Under this feature citizens of Berks county, now the Gibraltar of Democracy in Pennsylvania, were punished. But when Mr. Jefferson came into the Presidential chair, these laws were repealed. Were they in existence

at this time, some of the present enemies of the Democratic party would be hourly in danger of the penalty.

Under Jefferson's administration the great contest was in reference to the acquisition of the Territory of Louisiana. The opposition denounced the purchase as a prodigious waste of the public money, and a reckless extension of the limits of our government. The press teemed with trash of this kind; and the rostrum, and even the pulpit, echoed the notes of alarm. But the purchase was made, and who can count the value of this single feature of Democratic policy. Had the doctrines of the opposition prevailed, the Mississippi river would now be in possession of France or England. The States of Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa and the Territories of Nebraska, Kansas, and Minnesota, would not be ours, but compose a part of a jealous, if not a hostile power. Their inhabitants would not now enjoy the blessings of a free government; and who, at this day, will dare to say that this measure of the Democracy was unwise, or who would ask to have so many flourishing States driven out of the Union.

During the administration of Mr. Madison the great issue was one of war with England. When that insolent power claimed the right to search American vessels on the high seas, and press American citizens into the ranks of her servile army, the great heart of the nation repelled the indignity. The enemies of the Democratic party, in the main, were against the declaration of war. Some went so far as to meet in your own State at Hartford, to plot resistance, if not treason. But war came and went, and who will say now that it was not the policy of this nation to have it? In its progress and consequences it honored our flag, elevated our character as a warlike people, fixed more firmly the position of our government as one of the family of nations, and settled great rules of national intercourse and comity, which are now respected by all.

The periods of the administrations of Mr. Monroe and the younger Adams were not so remarkable for partisan issues and great results. Under the former, the Territory of Florida, now a State, was acquired. Gen. Jackson was the next President, and during his term the question of a national bank was the great issue. The opposition held that such an institution was indispensable to the business of the country; that we must have a great regulator of the currency, of exchanges and values. But when the bank determined to regulate the politics of the country, Jackson determined to regulate it; and when its appliances had secured the passage of a re-charter through Congress, that man of iron will put his heel on it. The sensation produced by the act was awful. The cry of ruin and tyranny was heard in all parts of the land. Old women and political hydropicists were in hysterics. Panic committees were seen wending their way to the White House to remonstrate and implore. But all they could get from the Old Hero was a firm declaration of wholesome truths, touching the future trade and commerce and currency of the country, evincing a foresight on his part which I have ever regarded as more wonderful than his achievements on the field of battle. But now the bank is rated an obsolete idea; its former advocates concede the wisdom of the policy that terminated its existence. Many other great things were done by Jackson. When the French hesitated to pay, Jackson said "by the Eternal," and the money came. When a sovereign State, dissatisfied with the revenue laws, threatened resistance, the same potent voice produced peace. Under the administration of Mr. Van Buren, the sub-treasury was made a leading issue. The purse and sword were notes of alarm. But this issue has been settled in our favor. The institution has worked well, and the sword has been orderly.

In 1840 our opponents attained power once more. Coming in through a kind of political phrenzy, they had a long programme of measures on hand. What did they do? Contrary to their pledges they attempted to fasten another bank upon the country. They did pass a bankrupt act, which in the short space of one year wiped out hundreds of millions of honest debts, and was then repealed in accordance with the indignant voice of the nation. The issues on the question of the tariff, so prominent at that time, have all been settled in accordance with Democratic policy. The next great issue was the annexation of Texas. The measure was supported by the Democracy, and resisted by most of the opposition. But who, among them now, will say that Texas ought not to be ours? Who regrets her admission into the Union, save only a few fanatics? The opposition said war with Mexico would follow, and it did follow. This was the only bid they had made for a long time. War did commence by the act of Mexico, and what then? Why the opposition press again teemed with denunciations against the President and his party. The war was denounced as unjust and aggressive on our part. The rostrum and the pulpit again echoed the alarm, and joined in defaming the government. Even members of Congress went so far as to say that American soldiers in Mexico should be swelled with bloody hands to hospitable graves." But the great heart of the nation pulsated in union with the government, and State after State, company after company, and man after man tendered their services to the President. The spectacle was a proud one, and astounded Great Britain and other jealous powers. The war was a brief and brilliant one, and peace was made on our terms. Had the policy of the opposition prevailed, Texas, long ere this, would have been forced into an alliance with England and France, and California, the richest State in the Union, so wonderful in her past growth, and promise for the future, would still be an integral part of the degraded republic of Mexico, and be inhabited by an ignorant and tubercle people. Had the Democracy no other claim to the favor of the people, this achievement alone should secure them many years of ascendancy and rule. But all the old issues

have been settled in favor of the Democracy. Indeed, had it not been the avowed purpose of the opposition to be uniformly wrong on every question, whether of foreign relations or domestic concern, of peace or war, they could not have succeeded so well. Of all the measures they ever proposed there is not now a vestige to be found in the policy of the country. One by one, in turn, their hobbies have fallen at the hand of time; been discarded by the people, and abandoned by their authors. It will be so with those now pending. Not only are their hobbies gone, but some of the old parties are gone also. It was the sagacious Webster who wrote, that after 1852 the Whig party would exist in history only, and we have the verification of his prediction.

Now, fellow-citizens, what I wish to impress upon your minds is this: That in this long history covering many important epochs, there never was a time when the Democratic party occupied a nobler position than just now. There never was a time when its ascendancy was more essential to the peace and the progress of the nation; and I am quite sure I have never seen the day when I was so proud of my humble membership in it. In a distinct struggle for the constitutional rights of the States, and the rights of the citizens of each State, the virtues of this old party are best reflected. My friend, Senator Weller, says, that the old opposition party was only intended to perform the offices of a brake on the track. When Democratic locomotion got too high, the opposition answered for a brake. I have compared it to a dead weight on the skirts of progress.

We are rapidly approaching a Presidential election which will involve vital issues. The Democracy will be arrayed on one side, and the combined elements of fanaticism and bigotry on the other. Black Republicanism, alias Abolitionism, will compose one wing of the enemy, and Know Nothingism the other; and notwithstanding the striking dissimilarity in the character of these organizations and the doctrines they hold, I predict their united action against us in the Northern States. Had I not witnessed this humiliating union in my own State, and did I not see evidences of it in yours, I might hesitate to express this opinion. But as was the effect in Pennsylvania, so I trust it will prove to be in Connecticut, and that a large number of the best men of the old Whig party will, by such means, be induced to join the Democracy.

Now, let us analyze the elements of these two parties for a moment, and see how far their union will be consistent with decency and common sense. The Abolitionists would arrest the extension of slavery; they would sever the shackles of the slaves; they would secure greater punitive and social rights and opportunities; all this they would do because they say it is humane and philanthropic. The Know-Nothing, on the other hand, seek to make birthplace and religious belief a test for civil office, and on these principles would humiliate the large class of white citizens by sinking them below the condition of their neighbors. The latter move in darkness and in secrecy, whilst the Abolitionists act in daylight, promulgating their sentiments everywhere with peculiar boldness. Who would venture to predict that two such parties would fraternize? Imagine them in juxtaposition. With a shade of white on one side, and a shade of black on the other. The one seeking the elevation of the colored man, and the other concerned exceedingly for the humiliation of white people. The triumph of Abolitionism is the triumph of the colored race. The success of Know-Nothingism involves the degradation of a large class of white citizens! But, offensive as the spectacle may seem, you are bound to witness it. I witnessed it in Pennsylvania in 1845, and again in 1855. At the election in the latter year, each of these parties had presented their candidate for Canal Commissioner, a Know-Nothing and an Abolitionist or Republican, so that each voter might express his peculiar views. But, on the eve of the election, the leaders withdrew the names of these gentlemen and presented another in their stead; the willing and embodiment of all the ills, and the mass of electors found themselves in a position when they had to take the whole or nothing. The foreign born or Catholic abolitionist or republican could not reflect his cherished views without, at the same time, endorsing the doctrines of the Know-Nothing, which were intended to proscribe him from civil office. The Know-Nothing, on the other hand, however national in his views, could not declare his principles without speaking in a voice of Abolitionism also. The result of this shameless attempt to prostitute the ballot-box was a Democratic triumph. A large element of the dissolving Whig party could not stand the whole dose at one time, and they came over to our ranks; and I doubt not such will be the result in Connecticut.

But let us look at these parties separately, and inquire what good thing each would do for the country. And we should not neglect to notice that they are the two parties against which Washington, with wonderful foresight, admonished the people in his farewell address. For one is a secret society, to accomplish political or partisan ends, and the other is clearly geographical in its organization. Read the address for yourselves, and see how striking the application. First then, comes the Republican or Abolition party. It is certainly much older, if not much better than its competitor. Its movements are associated with my earliest recollections of political affairs. It has been diligent in its lamentations over the evils of slavery; and has bewailed the unhappy condition of the colored race in this country for a long time; but has as long failed to present, for the consideration of the people, either a practical or legal remedy. When pressed to answer the question, the most fanatical will admit, that as citizens of a free State, they have no legal right to interfere with the institution; that it is the clear constitutional right of each State to have it or not; will they claim that the States have

failed to exercise this right. When the Constitution was adopted, all the States, save one, embraced slavery. Now we have fifteen slave and sixteen free States. Connecticut and Pennsylvania have abolished it. Virginia and Maryland have retained it. The people of the latter States have no proper right to complain against the action of those of the former, and vice versa. Nor will it do to say that constant and bitter denunciation by the people of one State against the institutions of another, is no interference; barren as to practical results, it is still fruitful of ill feeling. The certain tendency of which is to alienate the feelings of the people of the several States, and, at the same time, defeat the end in view. Were the people of Pennsylvania to indulge in unkind criticisms of your institutions, I am sure the only tendency would be to force you to cherish them more closely. Such has been the only effect of political Abolitionism. When southern men, with Clay at their head, started the Colonization Society, what did the Abolitionists do? Did they second the movement? By no means. Nothing would satisfy them but immediate and unconditional emancipation. Their lecturers commenced to harangue the people, and their colporteurs were sent into all parts of the Union with inflammatory documents, to accomplish this end. The consequence was, that the southern people became alarmed and receded from the position they had taken. The opportunities of the slaves were restricted, their education neglected, and the southern people constrained to adhere to their constitutional right to have the institution with increased tenacity. So much for the folly of interfering without a proper right to do so. But suppose no constitutional obstacle intervened, or that the South should agree to emancipate the slaves at a stated period, provided they were taken away or maintained, what could be done? Who would employ, clothe, and feed these helpless beings? How many would Massachusetts take? How many would Ohio take? And how many would Pennsylvania and Connecticut take? Not one! But if they could be brought North, in what particular will their condition be improved? Will they live better? Will they have better ideas of civilization and Christianity? Will they be elevated in the scale of moral being? The answer to all these questions is, to a certain extent, furnished in the pitiable condition of the free blacks. True, there are those who would be willing to give the negro equal, social, and political condition with the Anglo-Saxon; but I am not one of those, and have no patience to even discuss this offensive idea. What then should these abolitionists do? Why, mind their own business. That is generally possible. Abolitionism, as a party, is not accountable in any way for the wrongs of slavery. Nor should the people of New England forget that they had an agency in propagating the institution. Their delegates in the convention that made the present Constitution, consented to the continuance of the slave trade. Prior to that time this disgraceful traffic had been legislated against by the States of Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina. All the New England States voted for the clause continuing the slave trade up to 1818, whilst Virginia and Delaware voted against it. It was this trade that first propagated the institution and regulated its growth. For the increase during that long period, the New England States are largely responsible, and this fact should at least constrain them to a charitable view of this vexed question. The extent of the institution is not to be measured by the Territory over which it may spread, but by the number of beings in bondage. Where is a citizen of Kansas, I should vote against slavery; but in doing so, I would not feel that I was lessening the number of slaves, or doing them a special kindness. Nor would the restoration of the southern slaves to the condition of their ancestors in Africa, better their condition. To change would reduce them to the lowest state of barbarism, and the act would be an outrage upon humanity. But my object is only to suggest these ideas, not to elaborate them. I have no doctrine to present on this point of the subject. I only wish those who are so constantly exercised on the question, to point out their remedy; to tell us what can be done. Nor would a dissolution of the Union free the slaves. The southern States would go together, and of course retain the institution, so long as it might be the pleasure of the people.

The fugitive slave law is one of the favorite hobbies of the Republican party, and I desire to call your attention to the inevitable consequences of their doctrine, for a moment. This is a question of obeying or disobeying the letter of the Constitution, and the Republicans, or Abolitionists, in the main, favor resistance. The Constitution declares that no person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due. These are very explicit terms. They furnish a distinct guarantee to the citizens of the slave-holding States, that the fugitive should be returned, and made to carry out the condition. The Union is the offspring of the Constitution. The two are inseparable. The former could not survive the destruction of the latter. Nor can the Constitution be maintained in part, and disregarded in part. It must be respected as a whole. Those who resist the letter of any part of the Constitution, virtually repudiate the whole; and those who do this, rebel against the Union; and, doing this, are reckless of the true welfare of both races, and of mankind generally. Those who exclaim against the law with so much vehemence, should remember that it is the creature of the Constitution, and whilst it may not be perfect it is not probable that it will do more to return all the fugitives. Were it to do less, it would not be what the Constitution intended. The law of 1793, though very similar to that now in existence, excited but little resistance at

the time. It passed the Senate without a division, and received 45 out of 56 votes in the House of Representatives. Massachusetts cast 6 votes for it, and 1 against it. But now other councils prevail, and every man who says that this part of the Constitution must be carried out, is denounced as a "negro driver."

But I must speak of the question of slavery in the Territories. This has long been a topic of angry controversy in Congress. The question was regulated in what was known as the Northwestern Territory, by the ordinance of 1787, a kind of compact between the people of the Territory, the State of Virginia, and the United States under the first confederacy. In the Louisiana Territory it was disposed of by the adoption of what is familiarly known as the Missouri Compromise—an act of Congress, declaring that slavery should not extend north of the parallel of 36 degrees 30 minutes. When Texas was acquired, the question was disposed of in the same way. The acquisition of new Territory from Mexico, at the close of the war, presented the question again. An effort was made to dispose of the controversy by extending the Missouri line to the Pacific ocean, but the proposition was rejected, and mainly by the votes of the North. The necessity for some other mode of adjustment was thus presented. The party now complaining most of the Nebraska law, contributed to the creation of this necessity by their hostility to the Missouri line. There seemed to be no alternative left but to refer the whole question to the people of the Territories. Clay, Cass, Webster, and others recognized this policy in the compromise acts of 1850, and it is for this principle that the Democratic party are now contending—the broad doctrine of non-interference by Congress, and the right of the people in the Territories to decide the question for themselves, on the principle of self-government. As a candidate before the people, I maintained this doctrine; I thought it sound in theory, and that it could not fail in practice. I think so still. Without stopping to inquire how far Congress might legally interfere, I was convinced that it was wise for Congress to forbear. The principle of non-interference, or popular sovereignty in the Territories, is in beautiful harmony with our whole Republican system. The inherent right of self-government, and the capacity to exercise that right, are not determined by geographical lines. A man is none the less competent because he resides in a Territory, nor are his reserved rights under the Constitution less. Many of your neighbors and mine have gone to the Territories. Are they less qualified to judge of their own interests than when they were citizens of Connecticut or Pennsylvania? Certainly not. Is it reasonable that the people of the Territories should regulate the domestic institutions under which these men are to live? Suppose the men composing this meeting had determined to go to Kansas, would they consent that those who remain in Connecticut, through their representatives in Congress, should decide their local policy on any question? The proposition seems absurd. The question is admittedly one for the disposition of a sovereign State, and so it should be for the people of a Territory. When the people of a Territory become a State, their will is to be omnipotent. Why should it be restrained during the existence of the territorial government? Why not permit the full power of the people, under the Constitution, to operate at once? It will do its work in the end anyhow. But this whole question is magnified by the opposition with the view to political capital. They speak of the action of Congress as determining the policy of the people of the Territory forever. That is not the case. The people of a State may change their policy as often as they please. Connecticut had the institution of slavery. She could have it again, and no power on earth dare interfere. Just so with any other State. Kansas, or any other territory coming into the Union as a free State, can afterward establish slavery, and vice versa. Congressional control at most, therefore, can only operate during the territorial probation, and the whole controversy is reduced to this one point; as the people of a State can do as they please on a question of domestic policy, shall they be permitted to do so while a territory. The Democratic party say yes. The Isms say no; and on this the issue is made. But it is diligently asserted that the Kansas law legislates slavery into the territory. That is not true! The words are explicit: that it is the "true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any State or territory, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof, perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States." Under this provision it is true Kansas may become a slave State. It might have become so in the end, no matter what Congress might do in the premises. Specific action, as in the case of the Missouri line, if constitutional, would be binding on the people of the territory; but the shackles would fall off so soon as they became a State. The laws of nature will more certainly shape the policy of the State than the laws of Congress. If the climate and soil invite the institution, it will be difficult to keep it out. If they are against it, no agency of Congress can maintain it. For one, I am willing to leave the question with the people, and regard the question as finally settled in that way.

But Democrats are charge with inconsistency for having, at one time, favored the Missouri line; I have already given a sufficient answer to this allegation by showing that the Abolitionists forced the necessity for a new mode of adjustment. But how stands the case on the other side? Wonderfully consistent! When James Lanman, your Senator in 1820, voted for the Missouri line, this party burnt him in effigy. When Isaac Toucey, in 1854, voted for its repeal, they served him in the same way. The Republicans in Congress struggled for two months to make Mr. Banks Speaker, because he is opposed to slavery, and for this they claim the

thanks of Anti-Slavery men in all parts of the country. Within two days thereafter, these gentlemen turned around and elected Gen. Colium, of Tennessee, a slaveholder, their Clerk—and for this they may claim the thanks of the other side. But you are told that the Territory of Kansas has been invaded by the people of Missouri, and the voice of the *bona fide* citizen has been smothered. It is quite clear to my mind that excesses were indulged in the election; that the ballot box has been abused; that men have voted who had no right to vote.— Bitter conflict, if not actual violence, was the certain consequence of the circumstances surrounding the organization. The attempt to cram the Territories, on the one hand, and the counteracting efforts on the other, could scarcely fail to lead to abuse of the right of suffrage. But this is not fatal to the theory of the law, nor to its ultimate workings. All sides are being pledged to the protection of the ballot box in future.— Southern men as well as Northern—and I think it may be safely assumed that the next election will be a fair one. That uncontrolled and unawed, the voice of the *bona fide* citizens of the territory will be expressed. If the free State party are in the majority, as is so confidently claimed, they will elect the next Legislature and repeal the objectionable laws, and shape the policy of the territory to suit themselves.

I shall now speak of the Know-Nothing organization. This is a party of bad principles and worse practices. They propose to make birthplace and religious belief a test for civil office, and to accomplish the end through the agency of secret and out-bound societies. At least such is their plan of operations in my State. They profess to believe that our institutions are in danger from the influence of forcing born citizens and the power of the Catholic church. They fight under the motto, that "Americans must rule America." They complain of great evils and then determine to practice them.— They claim to be peculiarly American, but maintain doctrines distinctly anti-American.— Professing deep concern for the stability of our republican institutions, they make war on the noblest characteristics of our whole system, civil rights and religious freedom. Depriving secret and clandestine movements in others, they have adopted the practice themselves. Discarding, in terms of bitterness, Jesuitism in matters of religion, they have determined to try it in politics. Professing peculiar reverence for the name of Washington, they have chosen a plan of political organization against which that good man admonished the people.

Alarmed about the power of the Catholic church! Why, according to the census, we have over 25,000 Protestant ministers—thirty of the latter to one of the former. There is surely no cause of alarm in such a state of facts, nor can there be any sincerity in the pretension.— According to the same census, we have twenty-three natives to one foreign born citizen. Is this startling? Can't twenty-three Yankees take care of one Irishman or Dutchman? But I deny the premises and the conclusions. Our institutions are in danger from no such cause.— We have more to fear from elements longer in the country than the most dreaded foreigners.

But who originated this new scheme, and what is its nature? It is an old enemy in a new garb, one whose long ears the lion's skin does not entirely conceal, as it goes about to scare people. The leading spirits in getting it up are the same who denounced the Democratic candidate in 1852, as a bigoted Protestant, and attempted to prove it by a certificate signed by Whig Catholics in New Hampshire; the same who circulated the famous pictorial biography of Gen. Scott, their candidate, displaying him in the midst of raw Irishmen, listening to their complaints, and ministering to their wants, and all this to prove that he was a generous man, who would not neglect the poor down-trodden foreigner. It was the candidate of these Know-Nothing leaders who travelled the country in the last Presidential contest to win the votes of the foreign-born citizens by ridiculous twaddle about the "rich Irish brogue" and the "sweet German accent." It was their candidate who proposed to interpolate a new plank in the platform, to the effect that any species of humanity mustering in the army for one year should have the right of suffrage. Notwithstanding Gen. Scott's identity with the Catholic church, these Know-Nothing voters for him, and they would have done so had the Pope been his daily companion. But Scott was not elected. Some such courted people voted as they vote for the Democratic, and some for the Whig candidate, thus vindicating themselves against the charge of clannishness now so freely made. But a change came over the views of their former admirers, the Know-Nothing. The foreign accent lost its charms, and the groups of Irish with whom Scott had mingled, as well as the church with which he was identified, have been converted into hideous monsters to alarm the weak and ignorant; and hence Know Nothingism.

But is it not unjust to disfranchise a man because of his place of birth? He could not help it. Geography is not understood in the pre-existent state. Birth a standard for office! Why the idea is only worthy of ridicule. Birth is not a virtue, it is an accident or circumstance. It may be a good thing to be born in this favored country, but it would be better were it a matter of choice. It is the virtue of the animal. The buffalo and catamount have it. The Indian and the negro have it. Tiger-tail, the Indian chi-f, can boast a better title to it than the oldest of the Know-Nothing. It may be a God-send to political bankrupts to set up a standard of political virtue, which equalizes the meaneast with the best; by which Mr. Hiss would outrank John Wesley, and Benedict Arnold would be preferred to Lafayette. But honest men will repudiate the idea. They will estimate the man by a higher standard, the head, the heart, the soul. They will never consent to look behind the swaddling clothes, or pry into the con-