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AMERICAN POLITICS.

SPEECH OF MR. BANKS,

OF MASSACHUSETTS,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

December 18, 1854.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. BANKS said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In the speech of the distinguished gentleman from Missouri, (Mr. BENTON,) just read by his colleague, (Mr. OLIVER,) it is stated that he, at the last session, intimated to some members of this House from the eastern States his belief that the movement for sending emigrants to Kansas and Nebraska would excite sensations in that country injurious to the cause in which the people of the East were engaged. The gentleman from Missouri, now absent, made such a declaration to me; and I wrote to some of my friends, who were interested in that movement, expressing his views and my concurrence, in some degree, in the fears he entertained. So much stated in regard to myself, is strictly true; and I have no doubt that it is true with regard to others.

But there is another statement in which I do not concur; and that is, that the State of Massachusetts, and the State of Missouri, are equally culpable in the efforts made in the Territories referred to. The people of Massachusetts, so far as they engaged in the emigration movements, acted in good faith—They sent to the new Territories of Kansas and Nebraska its best men; men who were calculated to advance the prosperity of any State, to establish sound institutions, and who intended to do injustice to no section of the country. But it was not with Missouri as it was with Massachusetts. Within a few days an official letter, a kind of *quasi* proclamation, has been received here from Governor Reeder, in which he declares distinctly, that a public meeting, held in Kansas, for the purpose of controlling the government of that Territory, was composed of the citizens of Missouri, and not those of Kansas; and that they did not come there to act as citizens of that Territory, but for the purpose of controlling its institutions, in which, as citizens of Missouri, they had neither interest nor right. They were organized for that purpose, and they seem to desire, not only to participate in the election of a territorial Delegate, but also manifest a determination to influence the Governor in the performance of his executive duties. These are his words:

"The meeting was not of the 'citizens of Kansas,' as your proceedings will show, if you will produce them. It was a meeting composed *mainly of citizens of Missouri*, and a few of the citizens of Kansas. Your own body, whom I am now addressing, contains *two undoubted residents of Missouri, one of whom is your chairman, who resides with his family, in the town of Liberty, Missouri, as he has do neither secret nor*, and whose only attempt at a residence in Kansas consists of a card nailed to a tree, upon ground long since occupied by other settlers, who have built and lives upon the claim. The president of your meeting was Mr. John Dougherty, a resident, and large landholder in Clay county, Missouri, as he has stated to me since the meeting, and will not hesitate to state again, as he is a high-minded and honorable man, above all concealment and disguise. The gentlemen principally composing your meeting came from across the river, throughing the road from the ferry to the town, on horseback, and in wagons, in numbers variously estimated by different persons, *at from two hundred to three hundred*; and after the meeting was over, *they returned to their homes in the State of Missouri*. These are facts as notorious here as any public occurrence can be, and every man who had eyes to see, and ears to hear, is cognizant of them."

No such charge has been made, or can be made, against emigrants from Massachusetts. They neither attempted nor desired to interfere with the political affairs of any other State or Territory, except that in which they had planted themselves as settlers. They have done for those Territories exactly what the citizens of Massachusetts have done since the commencement of the history of this country—they contributed what was in their power to the settlement of new territory with intelligent, honorable, and brave men. So much their duty required of them, and so much only have they done. Those who desire to promote the prosperity of Kansas will never regret the advent of Massachusetts emigrants.

A little while ago, I desired to speak somewhat at large upon topics introduced by the gentleman from Georgia, (Mr. STEPHENS)—I shall seize an early opportunity to do so—but now confine my attention, as seems to be expected of me, to the remarks of the honorable gentleman from Mississippi, (Mr. BARRY,) who has just taken his seat.

I had not anticipated a debate upon the subject he introduced, and am not altogether prepared to participate therein. I may say, however, that it admits of, if it does not call for, more thorough investigation than he has given it. Indeed, it embodies the great questions of government; it touches the fundamental rights of the people of this Union; it goes to the heart of every nationality on the face of the earth, and it is well worthy our attention. I do not regret that my friend has introduced it. I have listened to his remarks with pleasure, and with many of his conclusions, taking his point of view, I might concur. But the principles which lie at the basis of political associations, and the rights of parties interested in them, are so various and so profound that, in the investigation of this matter, I can well entertain different views, and arrive at conclusions differing from those which he has stated.

And, first, let me comment on the proposition, not first in the order of his remarks, but which lies at the foundation of his opinions—that a man in the United States is bound to promulgate his political views. I take issue with him on that question. We are a people occupying an independent section of the earth, with a Government of our own. It is a Government which springs from the people, republican in its nature; in which the interests, rights, opinions, and commands of the people constitute, not only the guiding, but original power, and no man who discharges his duty as a member of the social compact, who executes his will, and, according to the forms of law, impresses his convictions upon the political institutions under which he lives, is accountable for his actions or opinions to any other man. He is not even accountable to the Government. He is accountable to God alone. Acting in his capacity as an original member of that compact not as a Representative, mark you, Mr. Chairman, he is entitled to that degree of privacy which is necessary to secure his natural, indefeasible, and absolute right—the free expression of his opinion. How far he will modify that opinion and his action, by communion with other minds, he has a right to determine for himself. When a citizen of the United States is called upon to vote for President, for a member of the House of Representatives, or for any other officer of delegated trusts, or in framing the organic laws under which he lives, he is not only entitled to vote, uncontrolled, unawed by individual or governmental influence, but he has the right to give his vote in profound secrecy. And that Government which shapes its material influences or statutes, so as to trammel or control a citizen in the exercise of this, his private, but absolute right, which seeks to wring from him publicity of his views or action, strikes at the basis of republican institutions, and ought to be swept from the face of the earth.

Sir, the right of opinion is the right upon which we stand. God gives to us the power to form opinions, the Government secures to us the right to act upon those opinions, and to no individual, organization, or society, attaches the right to control us in the exercise of these high prerogatives. So far, then, I take issue with the honorable gentleman from Mississippi. I claim the right to form my own opinions. The Constitution and Government under which I live, secures me the right to express them, and privacy, or if it please the gentleman better, secrecy, may be convenient or necessary for me in the exercise of that privilege. The gentleman from Mississippi asserts it to be a duty to promulgate and publish opinions entertained. If so, it must be for the purpose of influencing others, or that the individual shall be subject to the influences of others, or of government. Any influence except that which legitimately springs from the action of reason upon reason is wrong, and no wrong can be a duty. If privacy of opinion be a right, its expression must be a voluntary, and not a compulsory act.

Mr. BARRY. Will the gentleman allow me to ask him a question?

Mr. BANKS. If it is pertinent to the subject upon which I am speaking, most certainly.

Mr. BARRY. It is a pertinent question. I desire to know whether an association has the right to control the vote of a member of that association?

Mr. BANKS. I will come to that presently.

Mr. BARRY. And I desire to know further, whether the New York Council has the right to make members of that council tell for whom they voted?

Mr. BANKS. I will answer the gentleman's question presently. I was proceeding to say, that I have the right to form my own opinions. The Constitution and Government under which I live give me the right to express my opinions as I please.—They give me the right to vote by ballot—the ballot is a secret institution; and that secret institution enables me to cast my vote in secrecy, unknown to any, and uninduced by fear of any man.

In considering a public wrong it is very well for us, in the first place, to consider the power which perpetrates the wrong; because, by studying the motives and interests which actuate the perpetration, we can form a better idea of the wrong itself. The gentleman from Mississippi has stated very clearly and, I doubt not, very conscientiously, that the association to which he alluded is wrong.—Sir, what is that association? Who are its members? The people of the United States. What is the nature of this association of the people of the United States which holds its meetings in secret? It is not an institution or association limited by numbers; but it seeks numerical strength. It seeks, by its numbers, to control the elections of the country. It is, therefore, popular in its nature; and, so far as its secrecy is concerned, it is enough to say, that any association of men, wherever they are, who undertake to control the Government of a country by its numerical votes, has an element of popularity in its nature which makes secrecy impossible. And, so far as that is concerned, I will say to the gentleman, that I think he may relieve himself from fear of any considerable public danger.

As to the Councils of New York, sir, as I am not a member, and know nothing of their action or organization, I do not propose to enter into their defence. But I will say that they, undoubtedly, have the same right to control their members that other parties have—and that the exact limit to which their influence shall extend is always to be determined by the individual member who is its subject, and he has always an unlimited right of resistance or absolute secession. The connection of an American citizen with any party is voluntary. He makes it and he ends it. The beginning and the end being his own work, it is his fault if, between these extremes, his rights or privileges are in any degree impaired.

Sir, the gentleman from Mississippi alluded to the class of people who compose that organization, and I have no doubt he has stated the facts correctly, for he has evidently given the subject some consideration.—Who are the people who compose this organization? He says that in one section men belong to it who have been connected with the Whig party, and in another men belong to it who have been connected with the Democratic party. All this is, no doubt, very true and reasonable. These men have left their old partisan organizations for reasons satisfactory to themselves, and which neither you nor I have the right to question. I have no doubt that every member of this association in Mississippi has his reasons for becoming such, and I have no doubt that the same is true in Massachusetts. I can very well conceive that there may be different views of the necessities under which men act. I can conceive that there may be reasons why a body of men, a large body of men,—if you please, a majority of the citizens of any or every State in the Union, should leave the political organizations with which they have heretofore been connected, and form new organizations for themselves. There may be necessities which drive men to such political action and which justify them in it.

And now, a word as to such necessities.—I speak of them by way of illustration, and not to cast any aspersion, or to make any complaint. But, there are influences which have been exercised upon the citizens of this country, not in consonance with the spirit of our institutions, and which, not only call for, but which justify the resistance of political organizations. The United States Bank controversy was of this character, and there are others, of immediate as well as pressing concern, and to them I propose for a moment, to address myself.

Sir, political power, what is it? It should be the independent and intelligent action of the citizens of a State. But men will be influenced by other men, and properly enough. Moral and intellectual superiority, the wisdom that varied attainments and experience convey, will always have their influence upon men. This is in accordance with our nature. It may also happen that political power and influence may be the product of wealth. Indeed, wealth may sometimes take such a form as to control the entire political action of a State, and secure an influence that learning or experience rarely confers on men.—In my own State we have our share, it may be, perhaps, more than an equal share of the wealth of the country. We have agricultural wealth and commercial wealth. We have manufacturing wealth and mechanical wealth—all the product of the industry and enterprise of our citizens. This is, indeed, a public blessing.

But, sir, wealth is far more efficient in promoting general prosperity, when generally distributed, than when it aggregates in few hands. It is better when in the hands of moral men rather than artificial persons; and it contributes in a greater degree to the general happiness of a people, when it assumes the permanent form of real property, rather than the unstable, inconstant form of personal estate. Sir, I disclaim hostility to the institutions of wealth in any form. I will go as far to foster and enlarge its legitimate interests as any man. But, I mean especially to deny its right to govern, or any claim made in behalf of its right to construct or direct the machinery of Government.

Let me illustrate the views I have presented by a reference to some of the causes which have led to the great political changes that have occurred in the State I have the honor, in part, to represent. Look at the city of New York, for instance, with its immense population, having increased from less than one thousand, in 1654, to nearly three fourths of a million in 1854—a period of two hundred years—and with a wealth corresponding to its position and population, dispersed thro' all its veins. The city of New York, with half a million people in 1850, had less personal estate than Boston, with a population of one hundred and thirty-six thousand. The State of New York, with a population of more than three millions, had $50,000,000 less personal property than Massachusetts, with less than one million people. *

	Real Estate.	Personal Estate.
Massachusetts	$344,129,932	$201,976,892
New York	564,619,049	150,719,379
	[*De Bow's Com. of Census.*	
Boston	$97,764,500	$64,595,900
New York city	187,315,386	59,837,917
	[*American Almanac*, 1849	

This remarkable difference may be in part accounted for by the fact that Massachusetts has given existence to something like twenty-five hundred business or trading corporations, whose aggregrated capital would exceed $430,000,000; while the entire valuation of the real and personal property of the State did not exceed, in 1850, $600,000,000. In addition to the subtle influences of this peculiar species of property, which is affected by the minutest and constant changes of life, whose delicate organization is elated or depressed by every form of legislation every movement of public or private bodies, and, indeed, by vague rumors of the street, it has the unceasing attention of those immediately interested therein, and the watchful care of ten or twelve thousand officers or agents, acting in various capacities, paid by salaries running from the cost of bare subsistence to six and ten thousand dollars a year, who are naturally intent upon advancing the interests upon which their own prosperity depends.—Such influences are sleepless, as well as powerful; and from the nature of the case, in a greater or less degree, they assume a political character. It has, also, a vigorous, and almost irresistible influence upon the public press—an agent of power as subtle and vivacious, as irrepressible and energetic as the stock exchange itself. I mean the power of public opinion. Where such elements constitute a principal basis upon which successful political organizations are erected, they become irresistible. The barriers which, under other circumstances, are effectual to check and control legislation, and government, and political action—the independence of individual opinion, municipal organizations and interests, associations formed to perpetuate local or individual rights—are all swept away. It requires nerve to meet constant checks of business, to face denunciations of the press, to withstand the taints of political associates, the tyranny of conventions, and the flattering appeals of power—more than to brave death, when one has once inhaled the hot breath of battle. It fills every avenue of a State with its power, and remorselessly it hurls down whoever dares oppose its decrees.

I might name men of lofty elevation, great men, who have experienced the truth of what I say, in my own State. This country has produced few men superior in the majesty of intellect to Robert Rantoul, jr., who died a few years since, in the service of his country, as a Representative of the district for which, in part, I hold my seat. He was a man of rare attainments, and of almost limitless intellectual power. His mind had the grasp of Hamilton's and the analysis of Calhoun. His habits were stamped with the simplicity of childhood, and his mild spirit with an almost feminine beauty. He devoted a life to the study of financial and statistical science. He was foremost among the advocates of commercial and personal freedom; and he supported the monetary policy of Jackson, at a time when giants only could tread in his footsteps. As a reformer, he was the Romilly of the New World. His life was one of unequal, though not of fruitless, contest. The diamond of his intellect broke in the effort to engrave upon the hardened surface of Eastern politics truths now universally received; and he died, not in great tears, but, except by this House, and the immediate neighborhood, almost without notice.

Such influences as these, reach all classes of society. They touch one man in his fortune, another in his ambition, another in his religion, and another in his means of livelihood. All interests succumb to it; and even the trenchant blade of Webster was turned by it. We talk of the patronage of the Federal Government! What is it compared with such elements of power!

It is but a few years since we asked for a secret or independent ballot, in virtue of the right of every man to give a vote, not only uncontrolled by, but unknown to, other men. It only perfected the right of citizens to vote by ballot, for the ballot itself is a secret institution; but no proposition could have excited greater commotion than this.

Other difficulties were not of rare occurrence; that element of power which is now exciting such attention throughout the country, which seems to have hitherto held a balance of power in nearly all communities, and to have decided nearly every contested election, upon a policy dictated by its leaders, was not without its power among us; and a recent, and most important contest, so decided, has impressed a seated grief upon many thousand hearts. I mean the influence of foreign votes.

All these causes, some operating on one mind and some upon another, have produced discontent among men of all parties. It was not to be expected that ordinary men could rise superior or be wholly indifferent to them. Nor is it a recent nor sudden ebullition of feeling. For many years indications of revolt have been noted. New combinations have appeared and disappeared. One by one, men have abandoned their former organizations, with more or less success, but not in such strength as to give courage to the timid or security to the weak; and the masses of men remained in camp, waiting only a fitting opportunity to escape party drill. At length it came. In that mysterious manner so aptly described by the eloquent gentleman from Mississippi, somebody constructed a covered way, a sort of subterranean passage, a low browed cavernous avenue, by which men could pass from one point to another and one camp to another, seeing nobody, knowing nobody, and saying nothing to anybody. Sir, you should have seen them go. Eighty thousand men, of every pursuit and opinion, in the brief space of three months, attested their belief in its efficiency and necessity. And was it not their right? Who will say that the people—the sole depositories of political power—discontented with existing parties, may not, even in this mysterious manner, make new combinations for the transaction of their own affairs, and erect new standards of policy for themselves? Is it not their right?—Who says not? Their justification stands not so much upon their necessities as their convenience; and who can point out a more effectual or natural method of doing what they have done—the transposition of the rank and file of all parties into a new organization, excluding nobody but the leaders, taking everybody inside that desires to come; and leaving nobody outside but the driver?—Who will say it is not the right of THE PEOPLE? Does the gentleman from Mississippi complain of their secrecy? Is it secrecy that make the wrong? Sir, secrecy is their. It belongs to them. No man and no power can justly take it from them. What have they done? As yet they have done nothing. You cannot punish men for that. The gentleman from Mississippi I think intimated that there were to be some indictments, and a friend of his suggested that a Pennsylvania judge had charged a grand jury against the "Know-Nothings." Well, sir, these men have done nothing yet, except to carry an election here and there, and that is not treason, even though a Pennsylvania judge did charge a jury that certain things could be done, or ought not to be done, or were criminal in point of law. Sir, it is the people who are passing through these avenues, those make who judges & district attorneys, & they will take care of them all. They will take care of the juries and sheriffs as well as judges.

Let me again ask you, Mr. Chairman, if there may not be a necessity that would justify this action, and its short limit of possible secrecy! I do not propose to say whether it was justifiable in Massachusetts or not.

Mr. WALSH. Has this avenue you have been speaking of any connection with the "underground railroad?" [Laughter.]

Mr. BANKS. It has not. It is altogether another line of business. I own no stock that corporation. [Renewed laughter.]

Well, sir, I think have substantiated my view of Government, and of the rights of the people to act in this way; and I now call the attention of gentlemen here, who are interested in this matter, and particularly that of my friend from Mississipi, [Mr. BARRY,] who has presented the question, from his point of view, in a fair, manly, sensible light, to the fact, that in the first instance those who do the wrong he complains of are the people—the majority of the people of the United States.

In the second place, nothing has yet been done which makes them amenable to prosecution or censure. There is nothing in what they have done, or in what they propose to do, so far as secrecy is concerned, which makes them amenable. If they do not deem it right to give publicity to their views and designs, that is their business, and they may do in that respect as pleases them.

Now, a word upon secrecy in politics—who made the President of the United States? The people, you will say, have elected him to the office. But who laid the train, to which the people set fire? Sir, there never has been a presidential election in this country which has not been controlled by secret associations and combinations; and let me say, too, by a combination which has no popular elements; which has no popularity in its constitution; which operates through a few privileged members; and it is, in fact, such combinations that control the government of the country. How happens it that Governor Reeder denounces combinations of men to affect the election in Kansas who belong to Missouri, and who are citizens and leading men in that state? Did it not come by means of secret combination and arrangement—a combination and arrangement by which the rank and file were excluded, and the leaders only initiated? Who can undertake to say that the next presidential conventions will not be controlled by coteries of men whose only power is the secrecy with which their plans and purposes are held? Who will deny that it has been ever thus, or that it will be ever thus? Why is that criminal in the people which has been the constant practice of politicians?

But I am for publicity as well as secrecy. I go beyond the gentleman from Mississippi in that respect. I am for publicity when a man assumes to act for other men; but when he acts for himself, I say that no man has a right to require him to divulge his purposes or views. If he chooses to wear them on his sleeve, it is his right to do so; and if he choose to keep them in his own breast and say nothing, and know nothing, (laughter,) it is equally his right. But when a man assumes to act for others, then sir, he has not the right, as a representative party, to secrecy; and if the original power call upon him for a development of his policy he cannot withhold it.

I may say here, in passing, that the secrecy which this country has, in some degree, contributed to fasten on the diplomacy of the world, is an element of power which is doing more to crush the nations of the earth than any other element of oppression. The five millions of men who are this hour in arms, under whose heavy tread the earth shrikes, are not doing one tenth part of the wrong to the generations now existing, and yet unborn, which the secret and false diplomacy of the world is producing in its effects upon them; and so far as this country contributes, in any degree, to sustain the secrecy of diplomacy, so far, I say, its policy should be changed; and therefore I voted—is I think my friend from Mississippi did not vote—for an exposition of what our friends and diplomatic agents were doing in the congress of Ostend.

Mr. BAYLY, of Virginia. Oh, let that alone.

Mr. BANKS. Yes, if the committee will report soon. (Laughter.)

Then I ask the attention of the committee for a moment to the programme which the gentleman from Mississippi exhibited as the proposed operations of what he calls the Know-Nothings. I do not know whether he is right or wrong; but in a paper published in Pennsylvania, I read some months since an expose of what the purposes of that organization are, and of the means through which they intend to operate. In the first place, I did not see anything there about the natural-ization laws; nothing of their repeal nor the limitation of the term; nor any other matter or topic referring to that subject.—The Pennsylvanian published the document and it was copied in our section of the country, as a full, entire, and perfect *expose* of the purposes of the secret association existing in Pennsylvania, and having its ramifications throughout the country. Therefore, it does not appear that interference with the naturalization laws is one of these purposes. I looked carefully to that point, but I saw nothing referring to that, nor to the Catholic Church or Catholic religion.

Mr. BARRY. Will the gentleman allow me to correct him. I read here from the same paper, the Pennsylvanian, and if the gentleman admits this to be an authentic copy of the rules of the body——

Mr. BANKS. Sir, I admit nothing. I know nothing. (Laughter.)

Mr. BARRY. I hold in my hand the paper to which the gentleman from Massachusetts refers—the Pennsylvanian—and I find in the oath which the member is required to take, the following sentence:

"That you will support, in all political matters, for all political offices, second degree members of this order, provided it be necessary for the American interest; that, if it may be done legally, you will, when elected to any office, remove all foreigners, aliens, or Roman Catholics from office, and that you will, in no case, appoint such to office."

Mr. BANKS. I call the attention of my friend to the fact, that in his speech he used the term "Catholics," he now reads it "Roman Catholics."

Mr. BARRY. Well, in our section of the country, Catholics are understood as Roman Catholics.

Mr. BANKS. I beg the gentleman's pardon if I say that there may be a distinction in the terms.

Mr. BARRY. I venture to say that no other gentleman in the House misunderstood me, in speaking of Catholics, except the gentleman from Massachusetts, who might do so on Know-Nothing principles. (Laughter.)

Mr. BANKS. I noticed the distinction, and I purpose to speak of it. I have no objection to any man of the Catholic Church, or faith. Here is our friend from Pennsylvania, (Mr. CHANDLER,) an amiable, learned, and eloquent man; I might be willing to vote for him. Catholic as he is in preference, perhaps, to others nearer my political faith than he is. What he thinks of the Seven Sacraments, or how many he accepts, is no concern of mine. To me it is no objection that he receives the interpretation of the Council of Trent, as to the doctrines of original sin and justification. It can not concern me and it can concern no man, that, as a matter of faith, any person cherishes the doctrine of transubstantiation, accords the full measure of Catholic veneration to sacred relics or images, and accepts every article of the Nicene creed. Each man is accountable for his own faith, as I for mine. And, even though my name were appended to the declaration, read to us by the gentleman from Mississippi, from the Pennsylvanian, I might still vote for such a man, if otherwise it lay in my way to do so.

But there is another branch of this subject. It is a current belief that the Pope, the head of the Roman Church, who stands as the Vicar of God, and is invested with his attributes of infallibility, is not only supreme in matters of faith, but has also a temporal power, that can not only control Governments, but, in fitting exigencies, may absolve his disciples from their allegiance. I am aware, sir, that this is disputed ground. But it is a well attested historical fact, that often in times past, the claim to secular power has been made; and I am yet to learn that by the Pope, or any general council speaking with his acquiescence—the only authorized exponents of the true faith—that this claim has ever yet been disavowed. It has not been done in England. The power was asserted in England under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, and it has never been disavowed there, nor in Spain, nor in any other land, Catholic or Protestant, by the authority of the Roman Church. My name is not appended to the *expose* read to us here, nor do I know much about it; but I will say that if it be true, that the Pope is held to be supreme in secular, as in sacred affairs, that he can absolve men from their relations with others not of the true faith, it is not strange that men should hesitate in support of his followers. I would not vote for any man holding to that doctrine, and I doubt not other gentlemen here would concur with me in that feeling.

And then again, as to our foreign population. I bear no enmity towards foreigners. In my political action, I have always endeavored to be just to all men. I have my own faith, I make my own creed. I stand upon my own platform, and I have never yet refrained expressing my honest convictions, whenever I have had occasion to state them. I have been just, so far as I have been able, to all classes of men, and to all sections of the country. I have defended the South, so far as my conscience would permit, and I have stood by the adopted citizens of my own State, without any distinction of person, whatever, whether they were high or low, rich or poor. But if they hold as the supreme head of secular power the Pontiff of Rome, and consider that he can in any case absolve them from their allegiance to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or to the United States, why they have no claim whatever upon any man for support. If they understood that their interests are separate from those of American citizens, if they take direction from their spiritual guides in political matters, and by preconcerted and private arrangements, form associations, and make parties of their own, seeking to obtain and hold the balance of power, throwing their weight first into one scale and then into the other, as they may understand their own interest to dictate, they will force upon American citizens the alternative, either to make similar combinations against them, by refusing to divide upon the ordinary measures of party policy, or to abdicate the seats of political power. A balance of power, under such circumstances, is absolute power, and the direction of public affairs is in the hands of those who wield it.

Now, I understand the breaking up of pre-existing organizations, that were based upon the minute differences of opinion upon past questions, thus throwing an unfair balance of power into the hands of a small minority of citizens, not of national origin, and possibly of only *quasi* national interests, to be the purposes and object of the American organizations, that have been so vigorously denounced. Of course I must admit that the necessity of such combinations to guard against the public dangers, arising from causes I have stated—obedience to ecclesiastical direction in political affairs, and the silent assumption of that position which gives to a small number of men a despotic balance of power—is denied. But I hesitate not to say that, in my own State, many thousand people entertain the belief that there is cause of fear, and my experience in its recent political history forces upon me a participation in that conviction.

I repeat, sir, I bear no hostility to foreigners, as such, and I desire to do them no harm. I am honored with the friendship of one among my colleagues, who was born under the jurisdiction of Great Britain—a man eminent in his profession, distinguished by attainments that would do honor to any statesman, whose character gives to him power both to serve and adorn every circle of life, public or private, and constitutes him an honorable and useful member of this House, esteemed here as at home; and I would cheerfully vote for him for filling political stations as for my friend who sits near me, from the Worcester county district, though born within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, (Mr. DE WITT.) But if my friend from the Essex county district gave me reason to believe that he accepted direction in political affairs from ecclesiastical authorities, acknowledged allegiance to a foreign ecclesiastical court who claims to temporal power were of undefined and doubtful extent; if he invested its chief with vivacious attributes of Deity; if he professed no fixed political theories, voting sometimes with one party, and at other times with another party, and always falling *silently* into that position which secured the balance of power and a victory to him and his friends, if such were his policy, as I know well it is not, he could not challenge of me, nor of any man, support, nor denounce opposition as based upon the narrow and selfish prejudice against men not of native origin.—Such is the distinction I make, and, under the circumstances I have suggested, that distinction involves questions of great importance.

Can it be denied that there are those interested in public affairs to whom this description, in some degree, applies? Can it be denied that the power to control governments in other lands has been assumed and exercised by the Roman Church, that is so much dreaded by a portion of our citizens?—And is it not true that, amid repeated instances of attempted exercise of temporal power in the last thousand years, it has never once been disavowed or disclaimed by any pontiff, or general council, acquiesced in by the Pope? I ask the honorable gentleman from Mississippi to point to any historical fact, from an authorized source, proving such disowval or disclaimer.

Mr. BARRY. I understand that application was made to various Catholic universities, within the last century, to assert such a power, but the expounders of ecclesiastical law denied that power, and affirmed their independence of the Pope in all temporal matters. I agree with the gentleman, fully, in the position he takes, that any man who is bound in such temporal obedience, has no right to citizenship.

Mr. BANKS. I plant myself upon the ground that the Pontiff of Rome has never, in any authoritative form, so disavowed the right to control the members of the Roman Catholic Church in secular matters: I know the universities of France and Spain have disclaimed that power. The gentleman says that his Catholic friends have disclaimed it to him. So my Catholic friends have disclaimed it to me. But they have not the right to private opinion, much less the right to determine the faith of their Church. That is the right of Protestants. The Roman Church has never disclaimed it. I am told that the Pontiff stands upon my ground, and that he has a right to keep his own affairs to himself. Undoubtedly he can do as he pleases in Rome, where he has political power; but he can not in the United States, where he has no political jurisdiction.

Now, sir as to the subject of naturalization, to which the attention of the committee has been directed, not so much by members of the new party, as by other gentlemen, for certainly so far as this session of Congress is concerned, those gentlemen who have distinctly presented it for legislative action, have especially disclaimed that connection.

I desire to call the attention of the committee to the present condition of the country, as it regards emigration and to contrast its results with that period when the Constitution and the early statutes of naturalization were adopted. Then the emigration from abroad, according to the estimates of Professor Tucker, was at the rate of five thousand per annum. It was said by Roger Sherman in the convention that framed the Constitution speaking for Connecticut, than which no State was more liberal to citizens of foreign States, that she "United States had never invited foreigners here, nor pledged their faith that they should enjoy equal privileges with native citizens." But, it is just to say, that the country had been opened to them, through the legislation of the several States, and they came at the rate of five thousand each year.

Look, now, at the returns made to us of European emigration. Within the present year, the last quarter of which has not yet expired, the foreign emigration will amount to very nearly four hundred thousand persons. I have no complaint to make of this. It is enough to say that it is so ordered by Providence. I would not shut down in this swelling tide of emigration had I the power, if it came only to add to the industry and prosperity of the country. Let me call attention, however, to a single fact. Since 1850, there have been arrivals, from foreign ports, to the number of one million eight hundred and seventy-nine thousand persons, exclusive of citizens of the United States—making an average of nearly three hundred and seventy six thousand each year. Should this emigration continue, without increase for three years, we shall have received, in eight years as many emigrants from foreign States, within a small fraction, as came to this country in sixty years—from 1790 to 1850. The ordinary increase from year to year since 1850, would make the number much larger. They come to us by millions. In ten years from 1850, foreign emigration will reach nearly, if not quite, four millions of persons. Here are the less I have compiled from Mr. De Bow's Compendium of the census, and the returns obtained from the State Department for the present year:

From 1790 to 1820, Professor Tucker's est. 234,000

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